

## AUTHORITY STRUCTURES IN NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONS

### In Place or In Crisis?\*

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*SUMMARY: I. The North and South as paradigmatic jails. II. First World socialization versus Third World culture. III. Global authority structures. IV. Authority structures in North-South relations. V. Beyond crisis.*

So much has been written about the big issues of our time —about war peace, about conflict and cooperation, about East-West tensions<sup>1</sup> and North-South antagonisms— that oft-times it seems fruitless to undertake still another effort to probe such matters. What can one say that is new, revealing, or insightful that has not been said before? Recent decades have witnessed such substantial progress on the part of social scientists toward unraveling the dynamics of individual and group conflict that there appears to be little room left for innovative theorizing. No longer does confusion surround our grasp of the bases and processes through which perceptions and misperceptions unfold, the foundations and mechanisms through which authority and legitimacy evolve and persist, the interactive stimuli and reinforcements through which tensions escalate and wane —to mention but a few of the relevant dynamics underlying the course of events. On the contrary, solid data and competent theories have become available to trace the operation and evaluate the meaning of global issues. Or at least progress along these lines is sufficient to make one wonder whether the knowledgebuilding task is still urgent.

In short, social scientists might justifiably argue that the world's problems are not ones of insufficient understanding, but of politicians and publics applying the newly-developed knowledge and adjusting their goal-seeking energies to the constraints and opportunities inherent in what is now known about individual and group behavior. We have

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done our job, the social science community is entitled to assert, now let officials and elites take advantage of our labors. Let them ponder what has been accumulated about the sources of conflict and the underpinnings of cooperation.<sup>1</sup> Let them pause to appreciate the development of numerous studies that depict the frailties of their authority and the legitimacy on which it rests.<sup>2</sup> Let them acknowledge that much has been uncovered about how they perceive and misperceive their adversaries as well as their fellow policy makers and their constituencies.<sup>3</sup> Most of all, let them recognize that the secrets of the human world have begun to give way at a pace comparable to that which has marked knowledge about the physical universe.

Yet, we who study human affairs cannot rest on our laurels. There is always more to learn, obscurities to reveal, details to fill in, contradictions to resolve. More importantly, global life appears to be undergoing profound change and, accordingly, we are continuously faced with a relentless need to revise and extend our perspectives and theories. Evolving technologies and changing capabilities may give rise to alterations in the value of key variables, thus requiring us to update our understanding of the structures and processes of world politics. In my view the pace of change is so rapid today, perhaps even to the point of fostering a global authority crisis, that we cannot afford to pause in our quest for comprehension. Notwithstanding all the progress in uncovering how cognitive processes and authority structures sustain and shape global conflicts, for example, our hard-won knowledge about these two master variables is subject to obsolescence unless we continuously monitor the forces that are transforming world politics in this waning millenium.

More specifically, the pace of change is such that our recent progress may fall short of accounting for, among other things, the dynamics of East-West tensions and North-South antagonisms. Some phenomena that have long been treated as constants, such as the direction of group loyalties and the level of citizenship skills, have lately shown signs of considerable variation, thus necessitating reconceptualization of how the dynamics unfold. In addition, the findings relative to cog-

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Oye, Kenneth A. (ed.), "Cooperation Under Anarchy," *World Politics*, vol. XXXVIII, october 1985, pp. 1-254.

<sup>2</sup> A good point of departure in this literature is Eckstein, Harry, and T.R. Gurr, *Patterns of Authority: a Structural Basis for Political Inquiry*, New York, John Wiley & Sons, 1975.

<sup>3</sup> Many of the findings in this field are summarized in Jervis, Robert, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1976.

nitive processes, escalatory conflicts, and authority structures tend to be isolated from each other and are in need of synthesizing.

In short, the task is not fruitless. There is still much new ground to cover and good, urgent reasons to explore the big issues yet another time. Politicians need assistance in coping with change, in adjusting to new dynamics and the possibility that their long-standing beliefs about the world need to be updated and refined if they are to manage the big issues successfully.

A number of these big issues revolve around the North-South tensions that have come to mark world politics in this era when sharp and rapid change may be fostering global authority crises. To what extent are the tensions linked to the authority structures through which both Northern and Southern collectivities conduct their affairs and confront problems? In what ways do the dynamics of change affect the authority relations between the North and the South? Such questions are but a few of the many that need to be pondered if North-South tensions are to be grasped and ameliorated. Such is the task of this paper: while recognizing that the source of North-South relations are numerous, here the purpose is to probe how one source, authority relations, may be shaping and reinforcing the tensions that divide the more and the less developed worlds.

## I. THE NORTH AND SOUTH AS PARADIGMATIC JAILS

Some years ago I had the privilege of assisting in a series of monthly seminars that Dean Acheson conducted at Princeton after he left office. The participants in these seminars were his closest advisors in the Department of State. Their collective task was to assess their actions and policies during the Acheson Secretaryship (1949-1953). The results of the seminar served as the foundation for Acheson's book, *Present at the Creation*<sup>4</sup> (a fact that later led me to conclude that I had the good fortune of being present at the creation of *Present at the Creation*).

One of my most distinct memories of that marvelous opportunity was a tense moment when one of the seminar participants asked Acheson, "Dean, do you really think the countries of Africa and Asia are important?" He hemmed and hawed, paused some more, then indicated that he did not regard them as important, but that for symbolic reasons it was necessary to sustain active relations with them.

<sup>4</sup> Acheson, Dean, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department*, New York, W.W. Norton, 1969.

That reaction serves as a poignant measure of the extraordinary changes that have occurred in world affairs since 1954. There may be some today who still see the global arena exclusively through East-West eyes, but most Western practitioners and students of international politics would give quite a different response to the question in the 1980's. For all kinds of familiar reasons the countries of the Third World, both singly and collectively, have become major foci of world politics. The modern-day Secretary of State devotes considerable attention and energy to Third World problems, not because of their symbolism, but because they are rooted deep in the aspirations and conflicts that comprise some of the prime issues on the global agenda.

To acknowledge new actors and issues, however, is not necessarily to recast conceptual equipment so that it is more appropriate to understanding their dynamics. Just as politicians and publics in the Northern regions have often misread the values, motives, and structures that comprise life in the Southern regions —the U.S. blunders in Vietnam being but the most obvious of many examples that could be cited— so it may be that Northern students of world politics have inappropriately imposed their Western conceptions of international processes on the interactions that sustain relationships among countries of the Third World and between them and the First and Second Worlds. Analysts in the North proceed from the premise that international actors ordinarily ground their behavior in a mix of legal and rational calculations which, whatever their ultimate effectiveness, involve compliance with certain rules through which comity and a minimal degree of order is maintained. Even resort to violence and war is presumed to be undertaken in the framework of Western precedents and constraints. Whether the same mix of decisions rules operates as unflinching in the Third World, however, has not been adequately conceptualized and is thus open to question.<sup>5</sup> So there are good reasons to explore the circumstances wherein modifications of our First World concepts might lead to more incisive comprehension of North-South relations.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> In this regard, see Korany, Bahgat, "The Take-Off of Third World Studies? The case of Foreign Policy", *World Politics*, vol. XXXV, April 1983, pp. 465-487.

<sup>6</sup> The ensuing discussion uses a variety of general designations interchangeably to distinguish "the North" from "the South". The former embraces such terms as the West, the First and Second Worlds, industrial democracies, and developed societies, while the latter is also indicated by the Third World, the nonWest, and underdeveloped countries. In some contexts, to be sure, useful distinctions among these labels can be drawn, but the concern here is to differentiate broadly between

Such an exploration is not as easy as it might seem at first glance. Indeed, it may not even be possible. Involved is nothing less than stepping out of one's paradigm, a formidable task since we are, inevitably, prisoners of our paradigms and hard put to see beyond them. They serve us well, providing us not only with a coherent view of the world in which we live, but also with a basis for rejecting any alternative explanations of why and how that world functions as it does. For First World analysts to seek to grasp the international behavior of Third World officials and publics is thus to attempt to escape from their paradigm long enough to glimpse its limits and the operation of decision rules and social processes that may not be identifiable, much less explicable, in a Western context. While it follows that the odds against engineering a jailbreak are enormous, I am nonetheless encouraged to believe we might succeed, or at least get a momentary glimpse of alternative decision rules, by virtue of our capacity to recognize that we are imprisoned. Hopefully our ability to see the problem is the first step toward solving it.

## II. FIRST WORLD SOCIALIZATION VERSUS THIRD WORLD CULTURE

Perhaps the most clear-cut statement one can make about the problem is that it does not consist of either-or, dichotomous dimensions. The capacity of the dominant Western State system to control the socialization of nonWestern actors is too great for the latter to adhere to norms and practices that are entirely apart from those that sustain the former. One need only monitor the way in which the People's Republic of China, since Mao, has been yielding to the international trading and investment norms of the West to recognize the power of the Western state system as a socializing agent. Contrariwise, the capacity of Third World actors to undertake actions that negate First World norms and practices is too great to allow for a presumption that the former march exclusively to the beat of Western drummers. One need only reflect on the external behavior of Khomeini's Iran

the two cultures and forms of economic organization and development generally subsumed by the North-South distinction. For an insightful discussion of these terminological nuances, see Berger, Peter L., Brigitte Berger and Hansfried Kellner, *The Homeless Mind: Modernization and Consciousness*, New York, Random House, 1973, pp. 10-11. For an attempt to trace the emergence of the Third World as a collectivity, see Rosenau, James N., "The Elusiveness of Third World Demands: Conceptual and Empirical Issues", in Hollist, W.L. and J.N. Rosenau (eds.), *World System Structure: Continuity and Change*, Beverly Hills, Sage Publications, 1981, pp. 262-288.

or Kadalfi's Libya to appreciate the extent to which cultures in the Third World allow for deviations from the fundamental principles of the Western state system.

In short, if North-South interactions do present a conceptual problem—and here we are only assuming that they do—<sup>7</sup> it is a partial problem, a delicate matter of ascertaining how, where, and when the dominant Western mode underlies international conduct, how, where, and when the dominant mode is thoroughly rejected, and how, where and when a synthesis of the two occurs. In effect, it is a problem of extending rather than replacing the standard conceptual equipment used to analyse international politics, of assessing the dynamics that are likely to unfold when the requirements of the Western state system come into direct conflict with those of nonWestern systems.

But how to proceed? How to diminish the value biases in our conceptual equipment so that it is equally sensitive to the dynamics of Northern and Southern actors and enables us to analyze their actions and interactions in a common context? How to facilitate comparisons between, say, the Iranian seizure of the U.S. embassy and the U.S. protection of the Soviet embassy against protestors, comparisons that are rooted in empirical observations rather than normative judgements? How to free ourselves of Western prejudices when analyzing the behavior of Third World countries in UNESCO? How to frame explanations of the conditions under which nonWestern actors resort to terrorism, resist superior military force, defy threats of economic sanctions, unilaterally cancel international debts, or otherwise engage in practices that violate the underlying values of the Western state system and capitalist world economy?

Doubtless a multiplicity of viable answers to such questions is possible. Here time and space limits permit inquiry into only one set of concepts, namely, those from which the mechanisms for achieving the compliance necessary to resolve conflicts and move toward goals are

<sup>7</sup> It is possible, of course, that the behavior of Northern and Southern actors differs only in form, that otherwise it derives from similar motives and stems from common sources, so that the same conceptual equipment can be used to compare and analyze them. It might be argued, for example, that in important respects Hitler was no different from Khomeini, and that therefore the same analytic concepts can be used to examine the conduct of any actors, irrespective of their geographic and cultural origins. To trace the extent of similarity and difference, however, would require a complex empirical inquiry that cannot be undertaken here. Thus, in the absence of relevant evidence on the issue, it seems preferable to assume that significant differences do exist. At the very least such a procedure forces us to assess the adequacy of our conceptual storehouse and, at best, it may lead us to new and important insights into the fundamental dynamics of global politics today.

derived in any national or international system, be it Northern, Southern, or some combination of the two. Hopefully an exploration along this line, with special attention being paid to the mechanisms derived from the concepts of authority, crisis and, even more pertinent, authority structures in crisis, will help clarify how the overall problem of recasting our analytic equipment might be addressed.

### III. GLOBAL AUTHORITY STRUCTURES

The most efficacious way to break free of conceptual jails is to do it boldly, all at once, cleanly. In our case such a daring break can be accomplished by founding analysis, not on the Western concept of a state system, but on structures and processes that are so universal as to be centrally operative in both the North and South. That is, with the globe becoming smaller and more interdependent, with causal flows cascading between and within collectivities in crazy-quilt patterns new to world politics,<sup>8</sup> and with Western perspectives no longer predominant, we can usefully break free by conceiving of humanity, not as a collection of countries or a system of states, but as a world of authority structures, some of which are coterminous with countries and states, and others of which are either located within or extend beyond state boundaries. Mapped in this way, the globe more nearly approximates present-day experience than does the conventional portrayal of some 160 territorial units. Such a map of the world highlights the many subnational, supranational, and transnational entities that have acquired salience as the complexity and interdependence of global life has become ever greater in recent decades.<sup>9</sup>

Equally important, such a perspective not only allows us to focus on the full array of North-South interactions without loading the analysis in a northerly direction; it also facilitates a probing of the debate over whether the world is entering a period of pervasive crisis and, if so, whether North-South relations are a major source of the burgeoning tensions. For some analysts, pervasive crisis is the major characteristic of world politics in the waning years of the Twentieth

<sup>8</sup> For a full discussion of the crazy-quilt patterns that sustain cascading interdependence, see Rosenau, James N., "A Pre-Theory Revisited: World Politics in an Era of Cascading Interdependence", *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 28, September 1984, pp. 245-306.

<sup>9</sup> Admittedly reliance on authority structure as a universal concept may not be as sure a route to a jailbreak as it seems. Quite possibly authority structures can serve as a universal concept "centrally operative in both the North and South" precisely because historically the former has imposed its conceptions of authority on the latter.



Century.<sup>10</sup> For others, global structures are considered to be as firmly established as ever, marked by the same tensions that have always sustained world politics rather than by the advent of crisis.<sup>11</sup>

The difference here is more conceptual than empirical. All concerned agree that conflict is pervasive on a global scale and few would argue that it has not intensified and spread in recent decades. Where they differ is on the significance of the intensification and the broadened scope, a difference that, in turn, is rooted in contrary conceptions of what constitutes the relevant global structures wherein change can matter. The politics-as-usual analysts are inclined to view only national and international structures as central to the course of world affairs, a conception which leads them to treat the inchoate states of the Third World as if they were comparable to the long-established, industrial states of the West. Those who discern a worldwide authority crisis, on the other hand, also include subnational collectivities and organizations among the structural dimensions of world politics and, accordingly, posit the tribes, religious factions, elite classes, and many other nonState actors of the Third World as equally relevant sources of the emergent global crisis. Hence, while the politics-as-usual observers interpret the growing pervasiveness of conflict as symptomatic of an especially turbulent period in world affairs that may sorely test the skills of statesmen even as established conflict-management institutions somehow enable them to muddle through, those who allow for subnational dynamics see the spread and deepening of conflict as signifying change that amounts to an underlying global authority crisis which may prove to be transitional in nature but which, as such, may also portend the evolution of a new stage in world politics.

Conspicuously missing in this important debate over the future is a discussion of what constitutes an authority structure and what occurs when it enters into crisis. Equally glaring is the lack of a rationale for positing a global authority crisis when a major feature of world politics historically has been precisely the absence of authority at the international level. Clearly, an effort to clarify these concepts can

<sup>10</sup> This perspective can be found in Ashley, Richard K., "The Poverty of Neo-Realism", *International Organization*, vol. 38, Spring, 1984, pp. 225-286, and Benjamin Roger, *The Limits of Politics: Collective Goods and Political Change in Postindustrial Societies*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1980.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Bull, Hedley, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1977; Gilpin, Robert, *War and Change in World Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981, and Waltz, Kenneth N., *Theory of International Politics*, Reading, MA, Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1979.



facilitate understanding as to where North-South relations may be taking global life late in the Twentieth Century.

At the outset it must be stressed that while the ensuing analysis articulates the world-as-authority-structures perspective, it is not intended to downplay the importance of nation-states. These remain central inasmuch as they continue to be prime sources of the action which transpires in world affairs. Due in good part to the emergence of the Third World, however, the significant action patterns of our time also emanate from authority structures other than those of states, and it is this additional activity, some of it formalized but much of it patterned informally, that seems especially relevant to North-South relations.

Obviously, authority structure are not entities unto themselves. They are, rather, one of the many structures that comprise any interactive cluster of people, be it a small group, a tribe, a large organization, a community, a nation-state, a transnational regime, or any other kind of membership entity. Among the other structures of any cluster, for example, are the patterns whereby its resources are generated, its values allocated, and its support mobilized. The authority structure is that entity pattern wherein some of its members are accorded the right to make decisions, set rules, and/or formulate policies for the rest. In many collectivities, of course, authority structures are formally incorporated into their interaction patterns through constitutions, by-laws, statutes, and judicial decisions. Yet, it would be erroneous to limit the conception of them only to formal structures in which the source of authority can always be looked up and cited. The exercise of authority also occurs in informal patterns, in decisions which evoke habits of compliance even though the right to make them has not been formalized in legal documents. Thus authority structures are to be found wherever people are organized to undertake collective tasks—in families, classrooms, religions, unions, athletic teams, business firms, revolutionary movements, terrorist organizations, and a host of other social formations as well as governmental entities—and any such structures that have international consequences can be considered part and parcel of world politics.

It follows that by authority structures I do not mean the ultimate, final say in a system. While some authority structures such as those in nation-states do possess an ultimate decisiveness, most are not of this character. What distinguishes an authority structure is not the ultimate nature of the decisions rendered by those authorized to act on behalf of the collectivity, but rather the relationship between those

who have the authority and those who comply with it. Thus, for example, we know that parents in a family have authority because children comply habitually with their decisions; yet there are a number of issues involving a child's welfare wherein the authority of the parents is subordinate to that of others (*e.g.*, teachers or public officials).

It is important to stress that authority structures consist of interactive phenomena. To speak of them is to refer to a relationship between those who make choices for a collectivity and the membership for whom the choices are made. The rules and procedures for making choices may be codified and cited as the "authority" for the choices, but this is only a short-hand, legalistic way of referring to complex relational processes. In any practical sense authority does not exist apart from the interaction between the leaders and members of a collectivity. Whatever the extent to which it is formalized in statutes and constitutions, authority is generated and sustained only to the degree the membership continues to treat the leadership as having the right to lead. Once such a right is established to the point where its acceptance is automatic and not challenged by those who accord it, the decisions, rules, and policies that flow from its exercise are said to possess legitimacy. Like authority, therefore, legitimacy is rooted in relational phenomena. The two are, so to speak, different sides of the same coin: authority attaches to the actions of leaders and legitimacy is the measure of acceptance attached to the actions by the membership.

The readiness of a membership to accept and abide by the decisions of its leaders can, of course, vary, and it is the patterns of variation in their relationship that form a collectivity's structure of authority. The variability occurs along two dimensions, the scope of the relationship and its degree of integration. The latter dimension can range from highly integrated structures in which the membership habitually and automatically complies with the leadership's decisions, to those in which the degree of compliance is in doubt. Between these extremes the habits of compliance may give way, progressively, to reflection over, skepticism of, anguish about, and eventual declination of the decisions. It is here, in the deterioration of habits, that authority crises originate: the more the membership moves away from automatic acceptance and toward outright rejection, the more does an authority structure undergo crisis. Indeed, the onset of crisis is signified by a breakdown in the compliance habits of the members or units of a collectivity. As the habits wane, the crisis deepens, lasting until either

the habits are reinvigorated and restored through effective bargaining or they collapse and are redirected to other structures.

The other variable dimension of authority structures, its scope, serves to highlight the substantive conditions under which they can enter into crisis. The variability here lies in the number of issues across which the readiness of a membership to abide by the decisions of its leaders is operative. Some structures —perhaps especially those sustained by governments and certain religious movements— have a broad scope in the sense that the habits of compliance can be evoked on a wide range of issues. Others —such as business firms and universities— embrace a limited number of matters with respect to which the leaders can rely on automatic compliance. Ordinarily leaders prefer to protect and husband their authority by not exceeding its scope, with the result that the fewer the issues it spans, the more is an authority structure likely to be integrated and the less is it susceptible to crisis.

But what about the issues facing a collectivity that lie outside the boundaries of its authority structure? Whether the issues are located wholly external to the collectivity or internal to it but outside the scope of its authority structure, they obviously cannot be addressed through interactions based on legitimacy. Rather persuasion, power, or other forms of bargaining have to be employed to move the collectivity toward goals on such issues. In bargaining structures compliance is sought and induced through the threat or use of force or through the trading of some benefit in exchange for the compliance. Under these conditions authority will be absent from the relationship as compliance occurs not because those who made decisions are felt to be entitled to make them, but because they are able to exact unwanted punishment if compliance is not forthcoming or because they are willing to give up some asset in order to achieve acceptance of their decisions.

When the boundaries between authority and bargaining structures are clear-cut and accepted, as is usually the case in stable collectivities, the habits of compliance are likely to remain intact. People can tolerate the uncertainty that accompanies bargaining structures, even those involving resort to force, if they know that in some areas of the collectivity's life authority is firmly established and not subject to rapid change. In democratic collectivities, for instance, calling out the national guard or bargaining over budgets is acceptable because all concerned are aware that such outcomes have been reached through legitimate procedures and that those implementing the policies will confine their activities within specified limits. However, much as the

leaders may prefer not to exceed the boundaries of their authority, these can undergo change as diverse forces at work within or external to the collectivity erode the readiness of its members to comply automatically with the leaders' directives. Sometimes the erosion reaches the point that the boundaries of authority are challenged so vigorously by dissident members of the collectivity as to incline the leaders to resort to increasingly forceful forms of bargaining as a means of maintaining their authority. By its very nature, such a shift in the nature of their leadership is likely to erode further the habits of compliance and give rise to the aforementioned processes of deterioration whereby authority structures enter periods of crisis. When demands at a bargaining table or guns at a confrontation, resistance and rejection are also possible, a circumstance that is bound to lead to uncertainty and commotion for any collectivity.

Plainly, authority and bargaining structures are quite differently organized. The former tend to be essentially hierarchical and vertical in the sense that the interaction begins with those who wield authority and culminates with those who accept it as legitimate. Bargaining structures, on the other hand, tend more toward equality and are horizontal in the sense that none of the parties to them has legitimacy with respect to the others and the flow of their interactions is shaped by negotiation and/or confrontation rather than unquestioned compliance.

This is not to imply, however, that bargaining and authority structures are necessarily independent of or antithetical to each other. Such may be the case when the terms of the bargains struck in a collectivity undermine the habits of compliance that sustain its authority; but often the habits are reinforced and enlarged by bargains which the authorities make on behalf of the collectivity's membership. More accurately, just as some developments in the life of a collectivity foster grumbling about its authorities, so do bargained outcomes in other situations promote satisfaction with the legitimacy of their decisions. At the same time enthusiasm for the authorities can never be a full and enduring substitute for habitual modes of compliance. The test of viability of an authority structure occurs not when things are going well, but when turbulence marks the course of events and the membership falls back on the automatic impulse to accord its leaders the right to make decisions.

There is also a noteworthy link between the capabilities available to the authorities of a collectivity and the compliance they can evoke from the membership. Where force or persuasion are the bases of compliance, there is likely to be a close correspondence between the

tangible resources the authorities bring to bear and the degree to which the membership complies with their decisions. Where habit is the basis of compliance, on the other hand, the relevance of capabilities is not so self-evident. To be sure, the leadership of a collectivity is bound to facilitate its exercise of authority when it can back its decisions with the capabilities necessary to their implementation. Yet, authority structures do not depend on extensive capabilities for sustenance. Long traditions and habits of compliance can more than make up for a relative absence of concrete capabilities. This is another way of saying that the capabilities associated with the effective exercise of authority are often intangible and consist of high morale and cohesion within the membership. Indeed, facilitating as they do automatic impulses to comply, such intangible capabilities would seem far more relevant to authority relationships than do the instruments through which force is exercised.<sup>12</sup>

To a large extent, in short, authority relationships are embedded in the perceptions held by leaders of those toward whom the authority is directed and the perceptions held by the latter of the former. Yet authority relationships are not game theoretical. They do not persist through calculations and strategies. Rather they endure through confidence, memories, and repeated experience, thus rendering their foundations habitual and emotional rather than rational or intellectual. It is on these foundations that the calculative perceptions are built.

That authority structures are founded on habit —on unreasoned, voluntary, and automatic compliance— is crucial to comprehending the dynamics of North-South relations. For habit underlies the routines that sustain collectivities. Shorn of compliance habits, people would have to calculate whether to comply, or they would be selective as to when they complied, all of which introduces uncertainty into the processes whereby collectivities pursue goals, meet challenges, and otherwise conduct their affairs. Whenever uncertainty undermines the habits of compliance, it adds new and volatile turbulence to authority structures in the sense that collectivities so affected are bound to be less coherent and more indecisive, if not less cooperative and more conflictful, as they participate in the daily course of events. Neither the

<sup>12</sup> Another intangible that enhances an authority structure is the decisiveness of its leadership: so long as they stay within the normative bounds set by the culture of the collectivity, the more those possessing authority are clear-cut and effective in their exercise of it, the more secure —and thus the more entrenched— will the habits of compliance become. Authority can be weakened by its nonuse as well as by its misuse.

making nor the implementing of decisions can ever be routinized in crisis-ridden authority structures.

It follows that to posit a global authority crisis —as the ensuing analysis does— is to call attention to more than the presence of pervasive and intense conflict in world affairs. Indeed, there need be no correlation whatever between the degree of conflict and the extent to which authority structures are in crisis. On the one hand, two authority structures can be in conflict even as compliance occurs habitually in each, while on the other hand the habits of compliance can breakdown without intense conflict as the subunits of a collectivity amicably agree to part ways. Rather, the notion of a global authority crisis refers to a more fundamental condition of world politics. It focuses on the underlying and enduring relationships through which collectivities are able to concert their energies and cooperate on behalf of shared needs and goals. Put more pointedly, authority crises refer to deeper turbulence than even outright war because they involve the day-to-day patterns whereby organizations cohere and perform their tasks. Violent conflicts terminate, but the habits of cooperation —the readiness to comply habitually with decisions made by the duly constituted authorities— may not follow the cessation of hostilities.

Stated in another way, crisis in an authority structure is not necessarily indicated by the advent of pervasive defiance within a collectivity over policy differences. Members of the collectivity can feel defiant and make gestures to this effect without necessarily being ready to abandon compliance. To be sure, widespread expressions of defiance may be a precursor of a breakdown in compliance habits, but it is only when the latter occurs that an authority structure begins to lose its utility as a mechanism for resolving the collectivity's disputes and moving toward its goals. Authority structures that enter into crisis are thus fragile and marked by uncertainty. They connote change, collectivities in flux, regrouping as old lines of authority hover on the brink of breakdown and new ones strain to emerge.

To speak of a global crisis is also to have in mind authority structures that, prior to the advent of crisis, are established and stable, structures in which all of the participants know and accept their place and, accordingly, act only to sustain the structures through either exercising authority or complying with it. Such were the structures of world politics prior to the advent of cascading interdependence. Relatively speaking, actions were initiated and sustained through deep-rooted and long-standing autonomous and hierarchical structures, autonomous in the sense that the patterned causal flows occurred within



sovereign states, hierarchical in the sense that authority flowed downward from central governments to publics and collectivities at regional and local levels while compliance flowed upward through the same channels. Such horizontal flows as existed in the global system were much less patterned, being largely *ad hoc* foreign policies undertaken by states in bargaining rather than authority relationships with each other.

Although this neatly patterned world of the past underwent two global wars and many lesser conflicts, at no time during the first half of the Twentieth Century could it be described as having undergone an authority crisis. Structures in Russia and China did, to be sure, experience traumas, but these did not precipitate a global crisis as otherwise virtually all the state and subnational authority structures were in place and functioned effectively before, during, and after the conflicts. Indeed, citizenries went to war precisely because they automatically abided by the decisions of the authorities to do so. The advent of cascading interdependence in recent decades, however, has obliterated the neatness of many of the patterns and transformed the relative symmetry of world politics. As noted below, the habits of compliance have broken down in a vast array of structures, thereby giving rise to a global authority crisis. But, it can be asked, how can the present state of affairs be so designated when historically the international system has been marked by the absence of an authority structure? Is it not more accurate to conceive of national and subnational collectivities as breaking down on a global scale rather than of a global crisis in itself? Instead of a crisis in authority, is it not also more to the point to speak of crises in global effectiveness, responsiveness, power, or problem-solving capability?

The questions are important and the answers too complex to develop fully here. Involved is the nature of cascading interdependence and dynamics where the flow of authority within national and subnational structures have become so thoroughly linked to similar flows in other structures abroad as to evolve patterns that are transnational in structure and global in scope. Since World War II, moreover, this uninstitutionalized structure has been supplemented by the emergence of an extensive array of international organizations with rules of procedure that their members are obliged to heed. Overall, therefore, it is not inaccurate to speak of a global authority structure and to posit a breakdown in its compliance habits that contributes to but is apart from a series of authority crises occurring within a number of countries. Nor is it far-fetched to view the breakdown in the newly emergent global authority structure as so fundamental that it underlies and shapes



the multiple crises in effectiveness, responsiveness, power, and problem-solving capability through which the world is passing.

#### IV. AUTHORITY STRUCTURES IN NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONS

If we now employ the foregoing formulation to map the world in terms of its authority structures that have transnational consequences, and if we locate with a pink dot those functioning smoothly and for the remainder use varying shades of red, from light maroon for those in the early stages of crisis to dark purple for those that have undergone crisis and have been replaced by raw power or some other bargaining structure, we might be surprised by the vast splotches of fiery colors that flare across the continents. Of course, this is not the occasion to generate systematic empirical data with which to pinpoint structures on the map. Space limitations permit only a brief consideration of how Northern and Southern structures may differ and how these differences may affect relations on either side of the North-South divide. On the other hand, for present purposes it is sufficient to feel confident —as I do— with the observation that in its entirety the global map would not be lacking in brightness, that the uncolored areas representing authority structures without repercussions across national boundaries would be scarce relative to those with one or another reddish hue. The growing interdependence of global life has linked authority structures to each other in such complex and diverse ways that, with the possible exception of many families and courts, the flow of action within them is also likely to cascade across them. From local governments to ethnic minorities, from tribal factions to sports team, from the IMF to entertainment groups, from trade unions to the Arab League, from crime syndicates to the ANZUS Treaty, from rebel movements to automobile manufacturers, from women's groups to the Catholic Church —to mention but a few recent examples— it is hard to think of any type of collectivity whose compliance habits are not caught up in the world's proliferating interdependence. Indeed, by itself the IMF has lately become, either in fact or anticipatorily, an intricate part of what must be thousands of authority structures in dozens of countries.

In addition to the fiery blotches that dominate our global map, a second pattern seems likely to catch the eye: namely, the darker hues will be more conspicuous in the Southern areas, while those to the North will tend more toward the lighter end of the spectrum, a mixture of pinks and maroons that hints at but falls short of purple. Such

a pattern seems likely to emerge because the scope of authority structures in Northern collectivities tends, for a variety of reasons, to be much greater than in the Third World. This is not to say that the habits of compliance are more deeply rooted in the North than the South. Historically the tribal groups of Africa and the ethnic groups of Asia have doubtless been just as responsive to the decisions and policies of their chieftains and patriarchs as have the citizens in the modern industrial democracy to their leaders. Rather the lighter hues will be more dominant in the First and Second Worlds because they have had longer and more varied experience in fashioning authority structures out of plural groups and according them broad scope (*i.e.*, democratic governments). This means that legitimacy is likely to attach to decisions reached through bargaining within pluralistic collectivities in the North (election and legislative outcomes are examples here), whereas the policies and procedures of governments in the South may not evoke habitual compliance on the part of heterogeneous groups and thus their bargaining and police structures must serve as the bases of compliance.

Stated differently, an important difference that Northern and Southern actors bring to their relationships is a greater tendency on the part of the former toward verticality in their structures and a more pronounced inclination toward horizontality by the latter. To be sure, historically the South is seen as committed to traditional values and unquestioned order, while the North is conceived to be steeped in the practice of questioning authority and achieving order through hard-won contractual arrangements. Today, however, this distinction is reversed in the sense that the traditional order in Southern regions has begun to break down to the point where authority is not taken for granted, whereas in the North the tradition has evolved of investing the bargaining process that produces the hard-won contracts with legitimacy and as contained within and by a well-defined and accepted structure of authority.

It is here, in the different priority attached to vertical and horizontal structures, that Western observers are most likely to encounter obstacles in their efforts to engineer a jailbreak from their paradigm. The notion of attaching legitimacy to the actions of duly constituted authorities is so deeply embedded in the values of Western culture that a perspective which accords respect and acceptance only to certain outcomes of hard bargaining and the use of force seems misguided at best and immoral at worst. For the Westerner compliance achieved through such means is bound to be tentative and unstable, since the

capabilities underlying the horizontal balance of one moment can shift and produce a new balance the next moment. Unless circumstances become extraordinarily intolerable, Western analysts therefore contend, authority must be vested in officials whose processes of making decisions enjoy the highest legitimacy, irrespective of the nature of the bargains they make. For most Third World analysts the history of their pluralistic collectivities is pervaded with circumstances too extraordinarily intolerable to accept this vertical perspective. For them progress has occurred only through intense bargaining and the use of force, and thus they are distrustful of democratic authority and the dynamics whereby legitimacy attaches to unsatisfactory outcomes. They understand the Western paradigm not as an instrument to achieving peaceful change and a modicum of social order, but as a rationale for maintaining long-standing privileges and exploiting the underprivileged. Such a perspective tends to be an anathema for First World analysts and thus they are likely to run into difficulty trying to grasp it in other than a denunciatory or condescending context.

All of this is not to suggest, however, that the Northern areas on our global map are likely to be shaded only in light pink. Quite to the contrary, many will surely fade off into darker hues as Western governments fail to make headway with pollution, unemployment, inflation, and the other great problems that have been transnationalized beyond their full control, a process that elsewhere I have suggested contributes to the fragmentation of national collectivities and the redirection of their compliance habits toward more close-at-hand, less encompassing authority structures.<sup>13</sup> It is not sheer chance, for instance, that some of the most effective terrorist organizations have originated in West Germany and Japan. These can be seen as part of a larger process wherein First World collectivities have become part and parcel of the global authority crisis. At the same time it remains the case that, relatively speaking, many authority structures in the North (and particularly those in the Second World) are still essentially intact and working effectively compared to their more recent Southern counterparts, a difference that is central to the dynamics through which North-South relations unfold.

In short, states in Southern areas, being largely products of a colonial history, are fragile and their authority structures delicately narrow in scope as the habits of compliance toward such entities remain inchoate, if they exist at all. Viewed in this way, it is easy to

<sup>13</sup> See my "A Pre-Theory Revisited", pp. 290-298.

grasp why uncertainty racks the politics of underdeveloped countries to a much greater degree than is the case for developed societies. And in the absence of strong compliance habits, it is hardly surprising that terrorist organizations have found fertile soil in the Third World or that one of its countries now uses a new designation, "people's bureaus", to refer to its embassies. And even less is it surprising that rigid authoritarian regimes that achieve compliance through the threat and use of force have seized power in many Third World countries and virtually all of those in Africa.

There are two main ways in which relations between Northern and Southern collectivities are affected by the differences in their respective authority structures. One involves the interactions between them as autonomous collectivities, while the other occurs through their interactions in a larger institutional context (such as UNESCO or any international organization). In the autonomous-unit type of situation relations can be hindered by the difficulty and/o unwillingness of the Southern collectivity to grasp the reluctance of those representing the Northern entity to exceed the boundaries of their authority and, contrariwise, by the latter's difficulties and/or unwillingness to understand the fragile and narrow scope of the authority exercised by the former. Thus it is that First World officials tend to rely on the capacity of their Third World counterparts to make and carry out agreements and, then, to be surprised when the authority of the Third World leaders is insufficient to the task. It is as if the First World leaders are convinced that to comprehend why their Third World counterparts negate agreements is to acknowledge the delicacy of their own authority.

In a similar manner does the approach to authority held in the underdeveloped world confound North-South relations. Consider, for instance, the frequent complaint of leaders of Third World states and organizations that First World collectivities are rigid in their ways and unconcerned about the plight of people in the Southern areas. If their Northern counterparts really cared, the spokespersons for Southern collectivities frequently seem to be saying, they would act decisively, as if their authority structures were so flexible as to permit decisiveness on any matter they wished to expedite. Persuaded that compliance can be achieved though bargaining and resort to force, leaders of Third World collectivities are quick to interpret the slow, convoluted pace of policy-making in the West as evidence of a stubborn refusal to take their demands seriously. This may well be the case in some or even most instances, but is not invariably accurate. Often First World leaders are predisposed to accommodate the demands, but they can do so

only to the extent their authority allows; and it is this limitation which Third World leaders, unfamiliar with the constraints embedded in long-standing authority structures, have neither the patience nor the perspective to comprehend. It is as if Third World leaders are convinced that to understand authority structures in the West is to capitulate to the policies of the West. So they press for concessions and then denounce the West when its cumbersome procedures for legitimizing new policies do not result in immediate concessions.

And the less forthcoming are the First World's concessions, the more do the leaders of Third World collectivities turn to horizontal and retaliatory measures —seen as extreme in the North but as justified by and consistent with their bargaining norms in the South— such as seizing embassies, sponsoring terrorism, unilaterally restructuring financial debts, abrogating constitutions, and renouncing treaties. Put somewhat differently, actions such as these are interpreted in the First World as stemming from a desperation that leads to the violation of authority structures, whereas in the Third World they are seen less as a break with legal convention and more as a means of more effectively achieving goals. A quintessential example of this difference was evident when Prime Minister Mugabe of Ziumbabwe, after a landslide election victory in 1985, announced a plan to alter his country's constitution in ways that it prohibited. Asked by reporters why he would risk Zimbabwe's international reputation by breaking the constitutional agreement, he replied that "we believe we are righth <and> the Western world can say what it wants."<sup>14</sup>

Much the same conceptual confusion occurs when Northern and Southern collectivities are subject to the same authority and procedures in IGOs and NGOs. Both as representatives to and administrators of such organizations Westerners are inclined to treat the founding charter and statutory precedents as authoritative and thus setting limits within which compliance is mandatory. Instead of ignoring and redefining the limits if they ever become intolerable, moreover, delegates and officials from the industrial democracies are likely to reject the authority of the organization by leaving it. To do so, however, is to engage in such a severe violation of their habitual mode that the departure of a Western country from an international organization is likely to be accompanied by much anguish, hesitation, and argument within and among First World collectivities. Third World representatives, on the other hand, are more disposed to view the IGO and NGO less as a vertical structure of authority and more as an opportunity to bargain horizontally.

<sup>14</sup> Rule, Sheila, "Zimbabwe After Vote", *New York Times*, July 8, 1985.

For them the organization's rules and procedural precedents are sacrosanct not in themselves, but only to the extent they serve large purposes. Thus, in those circumstances when the organization's policies become intolerable, delegations from the Third World may either avoid participation (as Africans have done with respect to the Olympics) or treat its rules as sufficiently flexible to permit respect to the Olympics) or treat its rules as sufficiently flexible to permit conduct consistent with the policies they espouse (as apparently has been their recent practice in UNESCO).

The result of these conflicting conceptions of compliance, of course, has been to draw international organizations into the global authority crisis. Virtually by definition, an authority structure is bound to undergo crisis if its members have very different notions of the bases of compliance with its directives. Consequently, even the most technical of the U.N.'s special agencies has been politicized as its Northern and Southern members have discovered that no problem is so technical as to be outside higher authority and thus relieve them of disputing who has jurisdiction over its resolution.

## V. BEYOND CRISIS

Yet it is not enough to note the many fiery blotches that dominate our map of global authority structures. To discern them as widely in disarray is not to anticipate what structures lie ahead as the crises culminate and wane. Authority structures cannot be permanently in crisis. Collectivities may fragment into parts and the parts may break up into still smaller fragments, but at some point these processes of deterioration have to stabilize and give rise to new authority structures that enable the newly truncated collectivities to serve their needs and move toward their goals. Stated differently, the world is too interdependent for its affairs to be unstructured and shorn of some who govern and many who are governed.

Accordingly, even as we develop new conceptual equipment with which to analyze the clashing perspectives over the nature of authority in North-South relations, so must we seek conceptual guidelines for probing beyond crises of authority and analyzing how crisis-ridden structures are likely to evolve. In doing so one concept, that of learning, comes immediately to mind as offering a way of tracing the post-crisis phases of authority structures. That is, the future of North-South relations seems likely to turn on what those from either side of the divide may learn as both their relationships and the organization in

which they share membership found and move toward dissolution as they live out their conflicting conceptions of authority. Will those from the North learn that their conceptions of compliance are too rigid and ought to be scaled back in those areas where bargaining structures may be more appropriate? Is it possible that the long-run consequences of North-South clashes involve a deterioration of Western norms with regard to the sanctity of law and the inviolability of the legitimacy that attaches to the products of the policy-making process?<sup>15</sup> And what do Third World officials and collectivities learn when their by-passing of Western authority structures results in the diminished availability of Western resources? Do they learn that some rules and regulations may be worthy of compliance even if they sometimes yield noxious policies, that it is possible to win as well as lose in situations where all concerned are willing to abide by the decisions of duly constituted authorities? Put more empirically, what have the Iranians learned from the aftermath of their seizing and holding the U.S. embassy? What do IMF and Western officials learn from the threats or policies of Third World countries to default on their debts? What have Third World representatives in UNESCO learned about the limits of authority from the U.S.'s quitting the organization and the threat of other Western countries to do the same? What did both First and Third World women's groups learn as a consequence of their conflicts that nearly produced a paralyzing stalemate at their international conference in Nairobi?

The answers may be a source of encouragement for those who fear the global authority crisis is leading to a Hobbesian world in which all are at war with each other. They did reach a last-minute agreement in Nairobi. Third World countries have adopted the austerity programs required by the IMF even as the lender institutions in the West seem likely to accept Peru's new scheme for paying its debt outside the authority structure of the IMF. (Indeed, it is significant that Peru insists that it respects the legitimacy of the instruments through which it incurred the debt and thus has every intention of paying it off.) The administrators of UNESCO have agreed to open their books and revise their accounting procedures. The hostages in the hijacked TWA flight were released and efforts to improve airport security policies have been undertaken on a global scale.

<sup>15</sup> It is noteworthy that such a process of deterioration provides a cogent explanation of some recent events that otherwise seem so anomalous and contradictory. It clarifies, for example, how it was possible for the Reagan administration to reject the World Court's jurisdiction over its actions in Nicaragua even as it claimed the Court could properly consider Iran's actions in the hostage crisis.



It just may be, in short, that the global authority crisis contains the seeds of its own resolution. Through the dynamics of learning and an appreciation of overlapping needs, and perhaps even despite assertions to the contrary, conceivably new authority structures will evolve, hesitantly at first and then with greater speed as the learning reinforces itself and as the bargaining fostered by the crises of existing structures becomes patterned and habitual. Put more dramatically, even as old habits of compliance have given rise to new habits of defiance, so may the latter undergo obsolescence and generate new forms of the former.