

Order is what states make of it. Interregnum, world-scale problems, and multilateralism

Fulvio Attinà

The life cycle of the American world order has entered the transition mode. The number and severity of world-wide problems is increasing. Multilateralism, after the Second World War the way of responding to these problems, meets the mistrust of policy makers and experts. Understanding how such developments interlock one another will widen our knowledge about the future of the world polity. In the first section of the present chapter, the spotlight is on the current order transition or interregnum, the Gramsci's concept recently reused by social scientists to underline the little knowledge available about such theme. The second section draws attention to multilateralism as the fit-for-purpose way of responding to collective, world-scale problems, problems generated and perpetuated by the structure of the international system, sovereignty included, that are widespread over the entire planet. The assumption of the present chapter, based on existing knowledge (Ruggie 1993) and the Author's research on the world climate policymaking (Attinà 2021a), is that using multilateralism to address world-scale problems has an impact on the future of world politics and can be the game-changer of the world political order. The future of world politics is one of the themes Umberto Gori has given fundamental scientific contributions. He drew my interest in such topic since the first course of International Relations he gave to the students of the Faculty of Political Science of Florence. I was one of them. He pointed out to me the way of how to forecast the continuity and change of world politics.

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1. World order and interregnum

Over the past 50 years or so, the political order the coalition of Western countries built under the leadership of the United States has lost its grip on the world. The core policymaking institutions, the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization that in 1995 succeeded the General Agreement in Trade and Tariffs, have been less and less capable of restraining violence, mastering sovereignty conflicts, and increasing economic stability, the essential public goods of the world order. In the contemporary world, order results from two related conditions. First, the establishment of institutions to which the states confer the political authority of forming world policies in response to collective problems of world reach. Second, the formation of legitimate world-reach policies binding all the states. Legitimacy is conferred to the policies by the states that accept the decision-making procedures of the world institutions. Like the national policies, also the world policies may receive their legitimacy from the output, that is from the positive evaluation of the effects that the subjects attribute to the policy, irrespective of the form of decision-making. The legitimacy of the policies is essential to increase the probability of compliance and implementation by all or almost all the states. In fact, the present world disorder stems from the de-legitimization raised by the dissatisfaction of leaders, also of the Western countries, that see their expectations not considered by the existing world policies.

Who leads the process setting up the policymaking institutions that bring to life the policies and order? Who drives order transition when order effectiveness hopeless declines? Educated and ordinary observers say that the great powers and friendly states are the main actors of the world order since they have the same understanding of problems and the ways and means, namely institutions and policies, useful for responding to problems. Political scientists share such answer and support it with theory-based, empirical research. Two theories are the most remarkable to such discourse, the power transition theory and world hegemony theory.

In the 1950s, Kenneth Organski (1968) proposed the power transition theory to explain the foundations of the world order and address the order transition issue. Organski's research strategy was based on investigating the consequences of the growth differential between the most powerful, world dominant state, and the second most powerful, the challenger. Several scholars followed Organski and researched the courses of action, including the risk of war, that arise at the time the challenger approaches to and overcomes the power of the dominant state (see Tammen, Kugler, and Lemke 2018), a circumstance of utmost importance today because of China's economic growth (Yi 2021).

The world hegemony theory is a set of schools that share the assumption of the primacy of one state over the others in ancient, modern, and contemporary international systems. Clark (2009) distinguished two versions, the hegemonic stability theory and the Gramsci's hegemony theory. Kindleberger (1981), who developed the former one, demonstrated that one state is the hegemon of the world in so far as it provides the public goods the other states eagerly ask for. In

return, the hegemon gets compliance with the hegemony rules. In the Gramsci's version, instead, hegemony is the ability of a social group to exercise the function of the "political and moral direction" of the society (Gramsci 1971). Both versions have inspired political scientists such as Gilpin (1981), Modelski (1999), and Ikenberry (2001) to develop their own theory-based analysis of the contemporary hegemonic world. They explain the role of the hegemonic state with the command such a state has of the leading sectors of the world economy, the military and diplomatic capabilities necessary to prevail in the world war, and the political will of the ruling class to keep the post-world war order in action for a long time. The studies of these authors share the assumption of the conflict between the status quo states, which are favourable to maintain the existing order, and the revisionist states that want to install new principles and institutions of order. In the past five centuries, such conflict ended in the world war that marked the hegemonic order transition and gave to the leader of the winning coalition the new hegemonic role.

The power transition and world hegemony theories have much in common, but differences are not minor at all. In both, for example, power is the ability of the most powerful state to influence or alter the interest and goals of the other states and advance its own interest and goals, but in the hegemonic order, the leading state uses power mostly to raise consensus while in the dominance order, it does it to get the obedience of the others.

In accordance with the Modelski's model of the hegemonic order development through the amplification, de-legitimization, coalition reconfiguration, and macro-decision phase, the present section draws attention to the two gone phases of the American world order. The analysis highlights the importance of multilateralism to establishing world order in the first phase, and the de-legitimising effects that the growing disagreement on multilateral institutions and policies had on order in the following phase. In the Modelski's model, the world hegemonic orders of the past five centuries entered effect after a world war. Recently, Thompson (2020) has discussed such topic and noted that the long-term transformations of war, leadership, and trade are making today's world different from the past when the global war led to leadership and, in turn, leadership expanded trade and stable relations between major powers. Accordingly, long-term transformations can alter the coalition reconfiguration and macro-decision phases, make the present order transition uncertain, and consequently put on us the task of forecasting order transition from a different angle. Scholars that share such a perspective (Babic 2020; Bauman 2012; Stahl 2019) recall the 1931 Gramsci's sentence '*the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear*' (Gramsci 2005).

1.1 Multilateralism and the American hegemony before interregnum

Soon after the end of World War II, the Western coalition countries created multilateral political institutions to respond to the problems they considered to

be the main causes of international conflict, that is strengthening the safety of the states from aggression, rebuilding and stabilizing the world economy, and ending colonialism. To reduce violence and increase the security of the states, they gave to the UN Security Council the power to authorize economic and diplomatic sanctions and the use of military means against the state committing aggression against other states. To give to the national economies the opportunity to grow, and to the world economy the conditions to stabilize and grow, the Bretton Woods institutions (the IMF and the WB) and the organization that born from the conference on the General agreement on trade and tariffs (GATT) approved world policies for currency exchange stability and the free circulation of investment capitals, and for trade tariff reduction. Building sovereign, democratic, safe, and economic viable nation-states replacing all existing colonies was the remit of the colonialist powers with the support of the United Nations and even the Bretton Woods institutions.

The policies addressing such problems were consistent with the values and principles of the Western coalition countries. The values were primarily the equal sovereignty of the states, the primacy of law and diplomacy, and the equality and freedom of all human beings. The main corresponding principles were constitutionalism, democracy, national self-determination, international cooperation and solidarity, freedom of enterprise, and the capitalist market tempered by social welfare policies. In a few decades, the policy towards ending the colonial rule was accomplished by enforcing the self-determination principle. In many instances, such policy had disappointing results. Especially in Africa, the new states met with political disorder and economic inefficiency. The policy addressing security from military aggression was implemented by creating the peacekeeping operations mechanism. The mechanism has achieved the goal of impeding the conquest of a state by military aggression (Attinà 2011, 115–19) but had mixed results in other violent conflict instances such as the partial territorial occupation of a state and civil wars. The world policies for economic stability and growth, and trade tariffs reduction took the national and world economies out of the war crisis but with unequal outcomes and benefits for different groups of countries.

In the late 1960s, the economic growth of the Western countries reached its high. Since after, turbulence hit the financial markets with consequences both on the developed countries wealth and on the stagnant economy of the new independent states. Economic problems had negative impact on international politics from the centre to the periphery of the world. France was on the forefront of the protest and accused the United States monetary policy of destabilizing the currency markets and damaging the European industries with the unbalanced flows of trade between the two sides of the Atlantic. The protest also reached the political domain. Western leaders blamed US leaders for subjecting their foreign policy to American interest. Larger effects on delegitimizing American order had the protest of the new states frustrated by the lack of opportunities for stability and growth. The Group of the Seventy-seven mobilised the developing countries against the unfair policy of the free trade and the lack of eco-

nomic take-off prospect. In general, the flaws of the policies towards building sovereign, national, and democratic states in the former colonial areas undermined the world order. External interference in the national affairs of new states turned their sovereignty into a formality. In some instances, the local rulers were deprived of the authority to build the post-colonial state on solid foundations. In other, they were unable to face the tremendous problems of ruling the multi-ethnic society inherited from the colonial powers by ruling the parliamentary regime that, at the time of decolonization, had been modelled in the same way as the European one. In almost all the Global South countries, economic problems, external interference, and the inexperience of the policymakers caused the fall of the recently born democracy and the rise of various types of dictatorial regime.

The United States and the Western allies intervened directly and through the United Nations peacekeeping mechanism to limit violence in the international and civil conflicts that were increasing number especially in Africa and the Middle East. Overall, the UN peacekeeping missions achieved the objective of limiting violence in the conflict area but in many cases failed to bring stability, not to say economic growth. Non-UN, unilateral peace operations started to grow in number and gave a de-legitimizing blow to multilateral security and the world order. Generally, the countries participating in unilateral missions mix the official objective of containing violence and their own goal of interfering in the local disorder. The most advanced, democratic states like the European Union states moved to reducing their participation in the UN operations and being selective in launching of new unilateral operations (Attinà 2014).

Unilateralism prevailed on multilateralism also in economic matters. The ruins of the 1971 end of the Bretton-Woods monetary and financial policy were not fixed by the IMF. World finance was overpowered by private investors. GATT trade policy met with increasing resistance towards approving tariff reduction of strategic products. Gradually, it was sided by regional trade blocs and unilateral agreements.

The de-legitimation of the American hegemony was also the effect of the US foreign policy in Asia and the Middle East that alienated the allies of the United States. The European Community countries decided to harmonize national foreign policies. In the 1973 Declaration on European Identity, they claimed that European, not Atlantic, identity was the guiding principle of the common foreign relations. The declaration did not cause significant consequences but signalled the origin of a distancing between the United States and European countries that lasts to today, as witnessed by the 2021 declaration on the strategic autonomy of the EU.

1.2 Revisionism and coalition power at the time of the interregnum

The diminishing return of the financial and trade policies and the consequent de-legitimation of the policymaking institutions went hand in hand with greater activism and foreign policy flexibility of important countries. Post-Soviet Rus-

sia accessed the WTO. China joined the UN, the IMF, and the WTO. The new industrialized countries aspired to invest the economic achievements in the political domain and build the nucleus of a new political alignment. Brazil, Russia, India, China, and later South Africa started to coordinate in the BRICS group. Since 1999, the G20 meetings have brought together leaders from countries with different views of the American order showing the shaky condition of the present world hierarchy. However, foreign policy elasticity did not trigger the process of reconfiguring the coalition. The ball is at the court of large states, the United States, China, and Russia. They are not taking any decisive step towards the reconfiguration of the coalitions. The second ranked big states such as India, Brazil, Iran, and Turkey, are facing the plans of the three main ones and wish to play primary roles in world politics.

Do the United States, China and Russia aim to close the cycle of the current world order? Does each of them have the will, resources, and qualities to build the new world order? The United States has the resources necessary to be the leader of the world order should, as it did after the world war, divert a deal of national resources from national needs and targets towards providing public goods to all countries in the world. In addition, the US is the one of the three that has proven to be able to lead a worldwide coalition of countries. China is close to the size of the economic resources and technological capacity of the United States. It has a reputation for being able to dominate the surrounding states. The imperial China's tributary system is taken into great consideration by the current leaders of China. Russia is not as resourceful as the other two. She keeps the will of the Soviet Union to lead a coalition of submitted states and is willing to use resources for this purpose though not as much as the past communist leaders. The Russian leaders, like the Chinese, repeat that they are for the development of a multipolar world, which means a world in which a few large states take on themselves the right to decide how to respond to the world's major problems. Briefly, the future of the world order is uncertain because the leaders of the three countries have not yet developed their own position about choosing between revisionism and status quo concerning the world institutions and policies, and about developing their coalition power as the condition for driving the transition process (Attinà 2021b).

In politics, revisionism is the inclination to change something that has been decided and is in effect. To this end, the revisionist state develops the national economic and financial power, engages itself in armament build-ups, and cultivates diplomatic abilities to enlarge the circle of the friend states. Additionally, the revisionist state does not comply with the existing policies as it used to or is expected to do. On the contrary, it aims to change the existing agreement over the policymaking institutions and to qualify its own values as appropriate to the world order. The status quo state, instead, accepts the existing world policies and defends the policy-making institutions that ensure the existing order.

Since the aspiration of both the status quo and revisionist state cannot be fulfilled in isolation, sharing the own aspiration with a large coalition of states is essential. On such condition, the states that want to lead the conservation or

change of order must strive for building the intransigent coalition capable of defeating the opposite coalition also at risk of violent conflict. Briefly, they engage themselves in developing both material resources and ideational and entrepreneurial qualities, so-called soft power, that are the requisite for leading a large coalition of states.

The World War II put the United States in the condition of building a tremendous coalition of countries sharing culture and interests. Later, they have been able to bring in the coalition numerous and varied countries of all the world areas by creating special relationships and military alliances. The United States is at the heart of a network of groups of states of uneven cohesion, today altogether lower than in the past. The core members, the European countries, Canada, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand, never ceased to share the values of democracy, open society, economic liberalism, and free trade nor to the principles of the post-war order. Overall, they hold more than three-quarters of the global gross domestic product and military expenditure and support the status quo with their large resources. However, they are shaken by economic and political problems that the pandemics has aggravated. The coalition-rallying capability of the American Presidents has been decreasing. Should the American coalition have to respond fast to the emergence of the revisionist coalition, rewriting the new order project to contrast the antagonist coalition would be hard to do. Still, keeping unaltered the American coalition role in the transition to the second American hegemony is possible if the project of the new order is appealing also to some countries now leaning towards China and Russia. To reverse the effects of the past de-legitimation, the values and policies of the American coalition need to be adapted to the expectations of new members. Such an option can count on the huge resources the United States can allocate to their world role. The US economy has many pluses compared to the economy of China and Russia. The dollar continues to be the strongest reserve currency of the world economy. The American companies continue to be dominant in foreign direct investment. The US army is much ahead of the China's and Russia's army in terms of lethality, technology, and force projection. This asset is very much taken into consideration by the countries that worry for threats to their security by the America's foes (Ding and Sun 2021).

Since the 1950s, China shared the demand of the non-aligned and developing countries to change the world order and give to all the states equal voice in the world institutions. In the late 1980s, the China's foreign policy changed and gradually adjusted to the US-dominated world institutions and policies. Today, China's primary goal is achieving policy-making leadership at coequal status to the United States by increasing its economic power and creating close relationship with the states that share the view that some post-war order policies constrain the sovereignty of the states. The Westphalian order principle of no interference in the internal and foreign affairs of any independent country, instead, is the Chinese leaders' principle rallying likeminded state leaders that oppose Western principles such as the priority of the rule of law, and human rights in domestic politics (Yan 2018, 5). The sovereignty plus development model that

China offers to the countries in need of aid de-legitimizes the Western principles of order (Xuejun 2018, 68–73). The Chinese model of economy and society, based on blurred boundaries between public and private ventures, gives to China competitive advantage on the Western coalition because the Chinese model is similar to the form of society and economy of many Asian and African countries. Evidence that the Chinese leaders have a plan for building the revisionist coalition is missing but, since economy is the main basis of the China's growth, the political fungibility of the economic power raises the concern of the status quo countries. The pandemic has hit China, but her coalition power is expected to grow thanks to the finance and trade relations that are propelled by the Belt and Road Initiative. China exercises influence over the neighbouring countries by using the large national market and financial power that is invested in institutions such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Asian Development Bank in competition with the Bretton-Woods institutions. Also, China's presence in Africa has been growing fast. China's export and import with Sub-Saharan countries has overcome the traditional trade relations with the Western, mostly EU countries. Last, China's involvement in UN peacekeeping missions and post-conflict reconstruction in Africa has grown and will increase because the African rulers appreciate the Chinese approach that avoids to pressure for institution-building, legality construction, democratic elections, and interaction with civil society organizations (Hodzi 2018).

Putin's Russia is of the group of large and medium-large states such as Brazil, India, Iran, and Turkey that claim to organise the world as a multipolar system and strive for de-legitimizing the world order with no actual coordination of their foreign policy. In addition to disturbing NATO and the European Union as rival organisations sitting at the country doorsteps, the Russia's primary projection is towards the area on her South-Western flank. Intervention in Syria gives to Russia a primary role in world politics. Central Asia is another area of the Russia's coalition design. The Moscow leaders claim attachment to the project of developing the Greater Eurasia but have built a network of economic and security agreements only with Central Asian countries. In Africa too, Putin's Russia is looking for getting political gains from economic initiatives. Russia's trade with sub-Saharan Africa has been on steady rise in the past years so as the provision of armaments and a significant troop contribution to UN peacekeeping missions. Observers claim that the Russia's policy combines various order de-legitimising means and actions including intelligence operations, political manipulation, and information campaigns in addition to military actions, but the efforts to build a coalition supporting the design of the new world order do reach few countries. In conclusion, Russia can cause difficulties and troubles to the other parties of the transition process but cannot count on growing economic resources nor on effective leadership qualities.

In conclusion, drawing on the analysis of the little coalition reconfiguration and high revisionist pressure of the current interregnum time, attention must be drawn to the formation of the policy response to the world-scale problems that are caused by social, technological, economic, and ideological macro-transfor-

mations. The assumption is that *morbid symptoms* of the present interregnum time can be found in the world policymaking institutions where the change of order intertwines with the multilateral forming of the world policies towards the world-scale problems.

2. World-scale problems and multilateralism

In the common discourse, multilateralism is the name of many forms of international cooperation such as, to name a few, the regular consultation between state policymakers (such as the G7, G20, and QUAD), the operations agreed by small coalitions (such as the G5Sahel) and large coalitions (such as the NATO's ISAF mission in Afghanistan), the drafting of international treaties, and the establishment of international organizations. These types of international cooperation are essential to develop contemporary world politics, and different from each other in form and function. They are different also from the cooperation for which the term multilateralism came into use. In truth, it entered the dictionary of world affairs when the post-war conferences formed the collective political response to the problems that the policymakers of the victorious states considered urgent to address to restore the normality of international relations (Ruggie 1993). Today, multilateralism is under attack, even rejected by political leaders, experts, and activists that claim the primacy of state sovereignty. Contrary to such view and based on the lesson of history, the present section analyses multilateralism as the policymaking mechanism that continues to be used as the effective way of building world public policies to respond to the far-reaching problems that affect all states.

2.1 Why multilateralism

The proponents of multilateralism recognise its merits and accuse nationalism and populism of proposing the narrow view of national interest that hinders the multilateral decision-making process. The political leaders should react and, if necessary, reform multilateralism. The sceptics of multilateralism warn that the collective formation of world policies cannot work in the system of the sovereign states. Their vision does not consider the transformation of the territorial borders into ineffective screens of protection from flows and processes that no government can effectively stop by means of national legislation and policies that are not coordinated and convergent with those of other governments.

Rosenboim (2019) has noted that at the beginning of the last century, political leaders and scholars recognized the emergence of such change and reflected on the consequent emergence of the world political space, the space created by world-scale problems that must be addressed with world-range political responses. The change had to make governments aware of the opportunity to build a world-large polity, that is, the voluntary and conscious inclusion of the states into a complex of policymaking institutions that, based on authority and legitimacy given by the

states themselves, form policies to respond to the world-scale problems. Even before recognizing the coming into life of the world political space, the European states created agencies and offices, later called international organizations, charged to address the international side of functions that are normally exercised by the national government such as the transport and postal service across the state boundaries. After the First World War, the state leaders recognised the benefit of assigning responsibilities in the security field to an international organization, the League of Nations. The step forward was made after the Second World War with the establishment of the United Nations and of other organisations. It was not a simple and spontaneous progress. The main issue, of then and now, is sovereign states' recognition of being the members of one world polity and the consequent conferring to world institutions the authority of forming policies of world reach. To cope with such issue, the policies must be received as legitimate by the states. To be legitimate a world policy must be formed with respecting the principle that today is called of national ownership, that is with the participation of all states in the formation of the world policy and with the consequent formation of state-level implementing policies consistent with both the world policy and the policy culture of the state.

The double level process, world and national, not only sets up the legal obligations of the parties so as the process creating international law treaties, but gives life to a policy, which is the consistent set of principles, rules, and programs to address a problem using organizational, human, and financial resources. To this end, it must be agreed how to gather and distribute the resources and costs of the policies. The costs should be borne by all the states but distributed in proportion to the capacity of each state and to the benefits that each state derives from the policy. Assessing the costs of the multilateral policy is related to the policy paradigm, that is the shared understanding of the nature and causes of the problem that predetermines the goals and instruments of the policy. The paradigm is formed in the preliminary and early stages of the multilateral process by the institution officials, national diplomats, and policy experts. It avoids the continuous definitional debate but is not necessarily the optimal one and can make difficult and even impede the formation of the decisional agreement if it contrasts the views of some states or widens the distance between the positions of the parties (Coleman et al. 2021). Last, responding to any problem should not include uncertainty about the effects of the response to the affected actors. The term *wicked problem* has been coined to describe a problem that is not free from uncertainty about negative effects of the response for one or all the stakeholders, a common circumstance in the worldwide context (see Carr and Lesniewska 2020). Whenever such situations arise, the policymaking process could slow down, run aground, or end with a decision of low efficacy because the measures of uncertain effects are put aside.

Summing up so far, forming multilateral policies that are implemented with consistent national policies is the means to avoid the damages caused by different national policies colliding each other and perpetuating the collective problems. This is crucial in the contemporary world because the number of world-scale problems is growing. Today's disasters that are caused by climate warming, pandemics, and forced migration are on top the agenda of multilateral institutions,

specifically the UNFCCC for climate, the WHO for health, and the UNHCR, IOM and other international organizations dealing with forced migration. The world policy towards the problem of global warming is the fitting example of the positive features of today's multilateral policymaking. Over the past three decades, from the 1992 creation of the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) to the 2015 Paris Agreement, states strove to build the world response to the climate change that finally achieved by consensus. The Agreement, that has been ratified by all the states with the notable exception of Iran, Iraq, and Libya, engages the governments to produce national policies consistent with the objectives, standards, and timetable of the world policy that aims at decarbonizing industrial production, transport, infrastructure, air conditioning systems, animal breeding, agricultural crops, and everything there is to decarbonize. The climate world policy is a continuous process, but the model is clear (Abdenur 2021). The Agreement gives to the states the ownership of the policymaking and policy implementation, and assigns to the world institution, the UNFCCC, the organisation of the policymaking, the monitoring of the policy implementation by the states (see FCCC 2021), the organisation of the financial and technical aid to the states in need of implementation support, and the study of the necessary reforms and upgrading. It also includes the collaboration with non-state stakeholders that support the process with knowledge, counselling, independent monitoring, and other resources.

2.2 Multilateral policymaking and the policy implementation and updating

Ruggie (1993) pointed out the three conditions of multilateral decision-making (a) the policy principles must be agreed by all states at the beginning of the process, (b) equal decision-making rights are recognised to all the states during the process, and (c) non-discrimination in the policy implementation is enforced following the end of the process. The first condition ensures that the national governments for consistent internal policies because the world policy principles are consistent with their own national principles. The second condition is of great value to the legitimacy of the policies though equal so as unequal decision-making rights have flaws and strengths. The former forces to lowering the policy spectrum to avoid violating the interest of all the participants. The latter can bring the extra resources that are given by the states with special decision-making rights, but these states can reduce the flexibility and legitimacy of the policymaking to protect their own interest. The decision-making rules of the institutions that launched the founding financial and security policies of the present world order are not in accordance with this condition but have been legitimized by the states complying with the policy decisions. The third condition does not raise issues once it is accepted that the states with special decision-making rights have a leverage on policy implementation.

Multilateralism is the fit-for-purpose way to respond to world-scale problems on condition that the states form convergent policies. In general, the unilateral

and unilateral responses collide one another prolonging and even aggravating the problem. Additionally, multilateralism produces effective policies if the policy institutions accomplish two tasks. To increase the compliance of the states, the institution must (a) monitor the implementation by all the states and (b) assist the implementation of the policy by the states that need assistance. Monitoring includes the action against the conduct of the states that want to put the costs of the response on the budgets of the other states, i. e. free riding, but mostly consists in pushing for complying with the standards and the deadlines of the scheduled implementation of the policy. Assistance means giving financial and technical resources to the countries that are in need because they lack the necessary capacities. The outcome of accomplishing such tasks will be assessing the policy efficacy and, consequently, promoting the policy updating. In such a way, the multilateral policymaking method puts in place a loop involving both the institution and the national governments in the continuous process of policymaking.

The multilateral policymaking loop contrasts the top-down and bottom-up model in use to analyse the agreements on world-range problems. The top-down model allocates the primary authority to the institution that shields the policy implementation to avoid noncompliance. The bottom-up model, instead, allocates primary authority to the states. In the loop model, the states and the institution share the decision-making and implementation authority, increasing both the legitimacy and efficacy of the policy. The post-WW II institutions that created the world finance and state security policies use mostly the top-down model. This was the deal imposed by the Western countries at the conferences that created the Bretton Woods institutions and the United Nations. The GATT/WTO and the world trade policy, instead, are the child of a different multilateral process that use the bottom-up model and to a moderate extent the loop model. The loop model came to life later and is well represented by the UNFCCC, charged with forming climate warming policy. Such policy is the clear example of how the loop model works. In addition to monitoring the national implementation with the mechanism of the five-year Nationally Determined Contributions or NDCs documents, the policy institution is mandated to raising the capacity building of the states that need assistance to implement the policy. The monitoring of the individual state's implementation requires the establishment of shared targets and of indicators and instruments of measurement and assessment of the measures put in place by each state to reach the targets. It entails, of course, the member state's faithful reporting to the designated office of policy institution. Since the duty of implementation put on all states depends on the specific circumstances of each state, the political institution must provide funds and resources to the states in need. The UNFCCC plans to accomplish such task with the support of donor countries and non-state stakeholders, including NGOs, the scientific community, and all relevant agencies (Ivanova and Escobar-Pemberthy 2021).

3. Conclusions

All countries face the effects of collective problems of world reach and are within the worldwide political space created by such problems. Consequently, the state political leaders recognize that the states are the sovereign and unequal members of a world polity that must form policies with the consent of the great, medium, and small powers. The governments cannot overlook the experience of multilateralism as an appropriate instrument of response to collective problems by creating world policies which they must implement with national policies converging with the world ones. Addressing world-scale problems by conceiving the power of the state as power-over is not as efficient as conceiving it as power-with. The former is '*the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests*' (Weber 1978, 53). The latter is the relational power exercised by states acting in concert, i. e. inside policymaking institutions that rest on open communication among states and in which all the states have equal decision-making rights (Brando et al. 2019). In the present phase of world order, the states accept to be the members of multilateral institutions that do not fully comply with the principle of the equal decision-making rights of the states. Additionally, some institutions have a reduced power to exercise control over the convergence of the national policies into the institutional policies. Briefly, today the full-fledged form of multilateral policymaking exercised through institutions that give equal decision-making rights to all the states and monitor the policy implementation coexists with the imperfect form of multilateral policymaking of the institutions that lack one of these conditions. In the current phase of order transition, both the full-fledged multilateral institutions and policies such as the WTO and world trade policy and the imperfect ones such as the Bretton Woods institutions and policies are the object of the dissatisfaction and delegitimizing protest of many states, including states that contributed to their formation. This is the case of the United States towards some rules of the WTO policymaking, and of China towards some IMF rules of procedure. The world policy towards the problem of climate warming, which is the result of a full-fledged multilateral process in the current interregnum, demonstrates that the decisive conditions of multilateralism are the equal decision-making rights of the states and the state ownership of the implementation under the monitoring and supervision of the policy institution.

The states competing for hegemony in the interregnum time should take in due consideration such *morbid symptoms* that are the imperative of forming multilateral policies towards the world's largest problems. Multilateralism is the essential instrument of today's world order. Since the multilateral policymaking of world policies impacts on the internal and foreign policies of the states, the world order is strengthened by the convergence of the response of the states to collective problems. More precisely, the world order is the result of two related conditions, the establishment of institutions to which the states give the authority to make world policies, and the implementation of these policies

by the states. Conversely, when the number of states dissatisfied with existing multilateral policies grows and these policies are not transposed into domestic policies or cease to be perceived by the states as binding policies, the delegitimization of the institutions and policies follows and, consequently, the world order declines. The delegitimization of the institutions and founding policies of the American world order since the 1970s are at the origin of the growing disorder of the world political system. This decreasing order affects the current situation of multilateralism and makes it difficult to complete the multilateral policy elaboration of new problems on a global scale. However, as mentioned above, multilateralism persists. The signing of the 2015 Paris Agreement and the start of the implementation of the climate warming policy, though such implementation is difficult and raises the dissatisfaction of some states, show that multilateral policymaking consistent with the loop model of decision-making continues to be received by governments as the fit-to-purpose tool to respond to world problems even in times of order transition.

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