

## *A Response to Maria Ryan*

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One fears Maria Ryan may have been one of those busy ‘pot-hollers in Trans–Dniester’ when handed the manuscript for review. Ryan does not, at any instance; endeavor to critique the article’s anti–‘revolutionary’ theme. What is more, and despite the papers ink not being of a wholly neo–conservative persuasion, Ryan tries her damndest to deflect the argument to a topic conveniently encompassed by her doctoral research (though her thesis covers the neo–conservative evolution in the post–Cold War era not post–9/11 or the Iraq war). This response in particular is in retort to the dismissal of historical parallels presented; thereafter Ryan’s auxiliary comments are addressed.

Stating the hegemonic character is not ‘rhetorical shock and awe tactics’ but the reality presently in filling the *horror vacui*; though would concede that it can be divisive because it appears discretionary in a system that the previous episodes were not. The deficiency of a symmetrical antagonist tends to obscure Ryan’s necessity for a guardian of world order whilst she indistinctly pronounces an international insecure corollary to U.S. hegemony. Moreover, the international strategist Colin Gray reminds us, that strategic history has a spiteful custom of ambushing those complacent self–righteous ones.<sup>1</sup> Put simply, the post–1945 system of sovereign states, bound loosely together by an evolving system of international law, cannot easily deal with contemporary asymmetrical threats because there are too many nation–states where the writ of the “international community” simply does not preside.

A citation Ryan may want to scribble down is projected from Karl Marx who stresses that, ‘the tradition of all past generations weighs like a mountain upon the brain of the living.’<sup>2</sup> Indeed, far greater students of international relations than either of us have ‘relied...on abstract analogous examples’ of periods of historical hegemony.<sup>3</sup> This is reaffirmed by a ‘contemporary’ source when Robert Kaplan asserts that “the greater the disregard of history the greater the delusions regarding the future.”<sup>4</sup> Undaunted, one continues to believe the manuscript is underpinned by the authority of history in collusion with valid judgment of contemporary geo–politics.

Despite a surprising dismissal of an original historical parallel, a most elementary modern illustration is at hand for Ryan’s benefit. Modern history illuminates the condition of

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<sup>1</sup> See Colin S. Gray, “The Sheriff: America’s Defense of the New World Order,” 2004 p.60.

<sup>2</sup> See Karl Marx, “The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,” 1852/1919 p.9.

<sup>3</sup> See Colin S. Gray, “The Sheriff: America’s Defense of the New World Order,” 2004 pp.59, 132. Gray points out that ‘strategy in the ancient Greece of the city–states, or of the ancient China of the Warring States (403–221 B.C.) can be understood and should be analyzed in terms of the same dimensions...as strategy for the American sheriff of the twenty–first century.’ What is more, Ryan ought to remember that, ‘Thucydides and Sun–tzu wrote works that are timeless and relevant because their subject, statecraft–naturally including the threat and use of force–shows continuities in all essentials through the centuries, indeed the millennia.’

<sup>4</sup> See Robert Kaplan, “Warrior Politics: Why Leadership Demands a Pagan Ethos,” 2003 p.39.

international relations when there is no primary state extant. World politics from the outset of the twentieth century to the expiration of World War II provides *the* example of a leaderless condition: between the demise of Great Britain as the supreme power balancer in the Hanoverian and Victorian Ages' and the embryonic formulation of the U.S. as the 'hyper-power.'

Kissinger's sardonic comment –“a pity they both can't lose” –reflected the dilemma the U.S. confronted in the Iran/Iraq War. In a feat of *Realpolitik* during the 1970's, the U.S. hegemon provided assistance to both sides. If the outcome of the Gulf War was neither side lost, it owed something at least to American Machiavellianism.<sup>5</sup>

Since the end of World War II, the U.S. has sought a hegemonic position in the Gulf and in particular the oil system. Hurst states that, by integrating the Gulf oil producers into the World Capitalist System (WCS) and acting as guarantor of a reliable flow of oil to the *entire* WCS the U.S. reinforces its hegemonic position through the core states dependence on its role on securing the oil flow. Why is this necessary?

The author questioned Hurst what is the strategic worst-case scenario if the Iraq war was not waged.<sup>6</sup> He replied that the corollary would be incipient antagonism among each of the states' 'national interests' –what the author interpreted as a possible 'scramble for oil.' Thus the Iraq war has 'kept a lid on conflicts that would otherwise explode.'

At this juncture four of Ryan's additional comments are attended to.

Yes, the PNAC's letter to Clinton revealed the 'WMD' pretext for war –though both administrations (Clinton and George W.) staunchly held the belief that a state could not develop WMD on its territory. Carl von Clausewitz called war “not merely an act of policy, but a true political instrument...a continuation of political intercourse.” “The political object is the goal,” he argued; “war is the means of reaching it.” Ferguson states that, ‘there is no question that in its readiness to use war to achieve its objectives, the Bush administration after 9/11 was more Clausewitzian than its predecessor.’ One consequence of 9/11 was to smash to smithereens eternally the illusion that the U.S. could retreat behind a missile defence shield –consigning to the rubbish bin neo-con manufacture.<sup>7</sup>

The anti-Semitic slice is hardly voluminous (in deep contrast to Ryan's devotion in the critique) comprising only a small number of paragraphs and is the forerunner to Toenjes's data-set which in actual fact, lends support to a Jewish cabal's manufacturing.

One appreciates Ryan's research that neo-conservative can be correlated with 'hawk,' though Ryan misinterprets that the author's contention is in regard to its double-barrel stylistic misapplication. This was most evident in Rice's recent visit to Liverpool when protestors branded banner's referring to the Secretary of State as a 'neo-con hawk.'

<sup>5</sup> See Niall Ferguson, “Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire 2004 p.119.

<sup>6</sup> Political Studies Association (PSA) 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, 3–6<sup>th</sup> April 2006.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.150–151.

People may well legitimately pronounce that she is a 'hawk' –though a neo-con she most definitely is not.

Finally, the tuition that Bush received from an assortment of conservatives; be they conservative nationalist and/or neo-conservative is not disputed, though Ryan is suffering from 'knowledgeable ignorance' in trusting that, akin to the *Manchurian Candidate* the president is manufactured and privately owned and operated. The common tale purports that the neo-cons leaped into Bush's head with big steel toe-boots, table cutters and a chainsaw going to work on his head, exposing neurons, rewiring circuits and obliterating brain cells.