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**HEGEMONIC CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF CONTESTATION IN THE MIDDLE
EAST: A CASE STUDY OF IRAQ**

BY

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

Declaration:

I the undersigned, Aviwe Kwitshi, hereby declare that the research study is my own original work and that it has not been submitted, and will not be presented at any other University for a similar or any other award.

Signed:



Date: 9 September 2020



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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to the Kwitshi family.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge the Kwitshi family (Wonga, Thembeke, Likho and my daughter Mbalientle) who supported me through my academic journey.

My utmost gratitude goes to the Department of Political Science at the University of Fort Hare particularly my supervisor, Dr Pamela Johnson, for her unwavering support throughout my academic career. Thank you for the encouragement, support, advice and believing in me. The successful completion of my Master's dissertation was because of her relentless efforts and guidance.

Last but not least, I am indebted to my creator, God Almighty, for giving me the strength, capacity and ability to embark on this journey.



ABSTRACT

This dissertation illustrated how the production of discourse defining 'terrorism' evolved after the emergence of the United States as hegemon, a position that enabled it to develop meaning narratives to arrive at discursive constructs that were self-rewarding, in that they justified its invasion of Iraq in 2003.

This study was able to analyse the construction of the 'war on terror' discourse used about the Middle East (ME) as a result of the US hegemonic position, using both Gramsci's analysis of discourse and Foucault's concepts of power relations. Gramsci proposes the production of discourses through the concept of 'hegemony'. On the other hand, for Foucault (1980: 93), "relations of power cannot in themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse".

This study focuses on the period after World War II, drawing on events in the Middle East, in particular Iraq, and examining the influence of the US in the region during this period. In addition, this study addresses the conceptualisation of 'terrorism' and discourse around this phenomenon as a function of power and a generally accepted outcome of the exercise of hegemony.

The study illustrates how power works through discourse based on Foucault's conceptualisation of the relationship between power and discourse, and the hegemon's intention of utilising its discursive power in shaping the views and actions of others.

Key concepts: hegemon, discursive power, terrorism, United States, Middle East

Table of Contents

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY	iii
DEDICATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
ABSTRACT	vi
ACRONYMS	ix
CHAPTER ONE.....	2
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY	2
1.1 Introduction	2
1.2 Brief Background	2
1.3 Problem Statement.....	4
1.4 Research Questions.....	5
1.5 Aim and Objectives of the Study	5
1.5.1 Aim.....	5
1.5.2 Objectives	5
1.6 Significance of the Study	6
1.7 Scope of the Study	6
1.8 Research Methodology	6
1.8.1 Research methods.....	6
1.8.2 Data collection methods.....	7
1.8.3 Research methods linked to research questions	8
1.8.4 Data analysis	9
1.9 Ethical Considerations	9
1.10 Structure of the Study	9
CHAPTER TWO.....	11
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	11
2.1 Introduction.....	11
2.2 Foucault's Theory of Discourse Analysis and Power	12
2.2.1 Institutionalised discourse	18
2.2.2 Theorising hegemonic power in international relations	20
2.3 Hegemonic Discourse About Terrorism	30
2.3.1 Early discourse about terrorism, conventional definitions of terrorism	31
2.4 Conclusion	37
CHAPTER THREE.....	38

US HEGEMONIC POSITION AND THE OCCUPATION OF IRAQ	38
3.1 Introduction	38
3.2 The Rise of the US Oil Economy	40
3.3 The Decline of the US Oil Economy After WWII.....	45
3.3.1 Saudi Arabia–US relations	48
3.3.2 US-Afghanistan relations.....	49
3.3.3 Iran–US relations	52
3.3.4 1980s Iran–Iraq war	55
3.4 The 1990s and 2000	57
3.4.1 The Persian Gulf War of 1990	57
3.5 Towards the Occupation of Iraq	59
3.5.1 9/11 attacks on the US: A turning point	60
3.6 Conclusion	64
CHAPTER FOUR	67
TERRORISM CONCEPTUALISED BY HEGEMONY AFTER THE COLD WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST	67
4.1 Introduction	67
4.2 The Discourse Constructed Around ‘Terrorism’.....	70
4.3 Post-9/11 Conceptualisations of the Middle East.....	73
4.4. The Role of Media Discourse and its Target: The Public.....	82
4.4.1 The image of a ‘terrorist’ as Muslim.....	85
4.4.2. Weapons of mass destruction in media discourse	86
4.5 Counter-conceptualisations	89
4.6 Conclusion	92
CHAPTER FIVE	96
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION	96
5.1 Introduction	96
5.2 Summary of Findings	98
5.2.1 First research question.....	98
5.2.2 Second research question.....	100
5.3 Conclusion	104
5.4 Recommendations for Future Research.....	105
REFERENCES	107

ACRONYMS

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INC	Iraqi National Congress
ME	Middle East
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
WB	World Bank
WW I	World War One
WWII	World War Two
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
US	United States



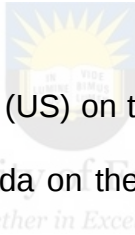
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

In examining political violence, it is imperative for intellectuals and policy developers to interrogate how, in modern history, notions about what is acceptable political violence (war between states or political entities), as opposed to non-acceptable political violence (usually considered as attacks on ordinary civilians), have been developed. This has to be examined in relation to forms of action taken to achieve social, political and economic goals.



After the attacks in the United States (US) on the Twin Trade Towers and Pentagon building by the Islamic group Al-Qaeda on the morning of 9 September 2001, also referred to as 9/11, the term 'terrorism' was exploited in the Western-dominated political arena in institutions such as the United Nations. However, the term remains highly controversial due to the fact that there is no precise definition on the meaning of this word. Instead, more than 260 definitions have been generated since the end of World War Two (Hoffman, 2013).

1.2 Brief Background

Since the end of World War Two (WWII), external superpowers have attached great significance to, and showed great interest in, the Middle East. The US and Russia, formerly known as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), have been the major external powers in this region. The international economic demand for oil since

World War II had a significant impact on the actions of the superpowers in the Middle East. During the Cold War, the superpowers had similar and conflicting interests in the oil reserves in the region and their policies often clashed, as a result of which Soviet and later Russian interests in the region provoked American policy responses (Reich, 1998). The first example of US response to Soviet activity in the Middle East can be traced back to the first official US policy statement, the Truman Doctrine of 1947. This policy proposed that there was a Soviet threat in Greece, Turkey and Iran; therefore, protecting the region was left to the US, as no other Western country was capable of doing so. The United States committed to employ military force if necessary, to deal with the problem.

According to Al-Marashi (2004), following the demise of the USSR after 1990, the US emerged as a sole superpower, which accelerated the process of promoting democracy in the Middle East. After the surprise attacks by Muslim extremists belonging to the Al-Qaeda movement on US civilian targets and the Pentagon on 11 September 2001, the US changed their justification of military involvement in the Middle East. The previous justification of defending democracy was replaced by that of war in the name of self-defence, using unprecedented force. Harding (2004) argues that the desire to protect the world's largest oil reserves and secure access and control of oil prompted US intentions in the Middle East.

From the above information it is clear that post-World War II era, the struggle for global hegemony between the two super-powers of the US and the United Soviet Socialist Republic dominated the discourse that defined what was politically acceptable and desirable, with the US promoting democracy as the primary focus of its legitimising

discourse for interference in the Middle East. However, subsequent to the disintegration of the USSR and the demise of socialism as an ideological force, 'terrorism' has become the central element of Western discourse in relation to the ideal global political system – the modern democratic state – and threats to it. Terrorism has mutated into two extremes: that of the US/Western concept and that of Muslims living in the Middle East (Hülse and Spencer, 2008).

This study therefore examines the different perspectives (Western and Opposing) and the origin of these perspectives in relation to pre- and post-9/11 events, particularly in Iraq.

1.3 Problem Statement

The existence of bias in the debate around 'terrorism' has been referred to above, and, as a consequence of its position as the global hegemon after 1990, it was the US which assumed the right to define 'terror' and to place the blame on Arab states in the Middle East. Apart from the fact that Arabs and Muslims are the biggest victims of terror (Perl, 2007; Zeng & Tahat, 2012), the dilemma of balance in bias between the two extremes is intensified by the continuous framing or labelling of Muslim violence as 'terrorism' by the US (Nacos, 2002). The attempt by the West to promote and impose values such as Western democracy upon the Middle East have aggravated the emergence of resistance movements in defence of the Muslim against Western dominance.

The discussion thus far has illustrated the point that 'war on terror' is indeed a matter of political discourse and the problem is thus in exploring and unpacking the discourse

and events behind it, as well as the relationships of power between states, that result in particular phenomena, people and events being defined as ‘terrorist’ or ‘terrorism’.

Drawing from the above, the following research questions are posed:

1.4 Research Questions

- How did the rise and decline of the US as global hegemon culminate in its invasion of Iraq in 2003?
- How was ‘terrorism’ conceptualised by the hegemony in the period after the end of the Cold War, in relation to events in the Middle East, and what was the material basis for this conceptualisation?

1.5 Aim and Objectives of the Study

1.5.1 Aim

The aim of this study is to investigate the conceptualisation of ‘terrorism’ in the context of the declared ‘war on terror’ by the US, focusing on the Middle East and using a case study of Iraq. To achieve this aim, the following objectives will be considered:

1.5.2 Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

- To illustrate how the US hegemonic position laid the foundation for the occupation of Iraq.
- To investigate and interpret conceptualisations of ‘terrorism’ by the hegemon in relation to events in the Middle East in the period after the end of the Cold War.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study provides a critical analysis of the conceptualisation of 'terrorism' in the period after the end of the Cold War. This study is therefore beneficial to researchers and scholars interested in security, war and conflict studies.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study focuses on the era after World War II, drawing on events in the Middle East, in particular Iraq, related to the involvement of foreign powers, the USSR and the US in the area. It addresses the conceptualisation of 'terrorism' and discourse around this phenomenon as a function of power and a generally accepted outcome of the exercise of hegemony.

1.8 Research Methodology



1.8.1 Research methods

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This study employs a qualitative method of data collection and analysis in order to explore and investigate the multifaceted nature of 'terrorism'. The study therefore relies on both primary sources in the form of original documents that are available in the public domain and secondary sources in the form of published books and articles (Groenewald, 2004). A primary source can be defined as an original document containing first-hand information about the subject discussion at hand, examples of which are data and research results contained in archival reports, (statistics) video footage and photographs, interview transcripts, newspapers articles and observations. In this regard this study makes use of official and unofficial reports of organisations and government agencies such as: Central Intelligence Agency (CIA),

ISS (Institute for Security Studies). Transparency International, World Bank, documents, foreign policy reports, and reports by the US department of defence.

On the other hand, secondary source is interpretation, analysis, or evaluation of the subject matter based on primary source evidence. Secondary sources review, compare, and assess information to draw relative findings and conclusions on the topic discussed. Examples of secondary sources include; bibliographies, journal articles, books written about the topic, reviews of books, movies, musicals, newsletters and professional news sources (Neuman, 1997: 68). Again, in this instance this study interrogates various secondary sources such as journals, books, videos and bibliographies to bring forth critical evaluation and analysis of the phenomenon of 'terrorism'.

1.8.2 Data collection methods



According to Babbie and Mouton (2003), in the instance of data collection, the more diverse the data sources, the better for the study. In this particular study, both primary and secondary primary sources used include first-hand evidence, such as policy pronouncements by governments and organisations dealing with the main research questions identified for this study, i.e. primary report documents from the White House, Opposing leaders, UN Security Council meetings, among others. Secondary sources used include books, journals, articles, and broadcast/online video footage.

1.8.3 Research methods linked to research questions

<i>Research question</i>	<i>Data sources and methods</i>	<i>Justification</i>
How did the rise and decline of the US as global hegemon culminate in its invasion of Iraq in 2003?	Mainly secondary sources in the form of books, journal articles and online searches for verifiable information. Primary sources include official reports on war, conflict and political violence in the area.	Data on developments that led to the hegemony of the US in the Middle East after 1990 and the form of resistance to its hegemony. Primary sources contribute to the data available.
How was 'terrorism' conceptualised by the hegemon in the period after the end of the Cold War, in relation to events in the Middle East, and what was the material basis for this conceptualisation?	Primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include official reports from organisations, states and non-state agencies, video footage and documentaries. Secondary resources will include books, journals and articles.	Primary sources provide information on discourse used and its origins. Visual material enhances interpretation of concepts developed around violence. Secondary sources contribute to interpreting

		discourse around violence and terrorism.
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1.8.4 Data analysis

According to De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011), qualitative data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to mass data. The process therefore reduces the volume of data, sifting out only the relevant and most applicable information for the purpose of the study. In this study, a thematic analytical approach was employed to explain the obtainable data in lending support to the core thesis of the study. The goal of a thematic analysis is to recognise themes that are important, and use these themes to address the research topic. This is much more than simply summarising the data: a good thematic analysis interprets and makes sense of the subject matter (Clarke & Braun, 2013).

1.9 Ethical Considerations

Babbie and Mouton (2003) explain that ethical conduct entails conforming to the standards of conduct of a given profession or group. Essentially, ethics are concerned with morality, that is, with what is right or wrong. To observe ethical considerations in this document, all authors were duly acknowledged, guarding against plagiarism.

1.10 Structure of the Study

Chapter One: According to Bryman (2012), the structure and organisation of a research study needs to consider all the elements of a research process, as the sequencing varies according to different research strategies and approaches. One of the important elements being the selection of cases and its organisation, this study is

divided into five chapters and begins by revealing the purpose of the study, dealing with subsequent standard research elements such as: problem statement, significance of the study, research aims, objectives and research methodology.

Chapter Two: The second chapter provides an interpretive understanding of 'terrorism' through a literature review and theoretical framework, within which the phenomenon was evaluated, interpreted and explained.

Chapter Three: This chapter focuses on the first question and deals with the involvement of the US in the Middle East in the period since the end of the Cold War and outlines how the rise and decline of the US as global hegemon culminated in its invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Chapter Four: The fourth chapter analyses the political discourses of President Bush and his administration, in order to illustrate how they used the political discourse to justify the 'war on terror' campaign, which was later extended to the war in Iraq.

Chapter Five: The final chapter provides a comprehensive conclusion and presents final findings on how dominant states, such as the United States, used their power to expand and maintain their hegemonic position within the international configuration of states.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses how, firstly, according to a Foucauldian perspective, knowledge is constructed. Secondly, and more specifically, in relation to this research, it examines the relationship between power and discourse in the context of international relations. Finally, it explores how Western scholars have conceptualised the meaning of, and disseminated knowledge about, the topic of 'terrorism'. Because 'terrorism' is a contested term, despite its widespread use, having been accepted according to a conceptualisation of Western origin, according to Western norms and values, this term is presented in inverted commas, due to the academic controversy surrounding the meaning of the term.

The first part of this chapter begins by providing an in-depth analysis of the concepts of hegemonic power and discourse and the use of these terms, which is based in the values and beliefs of dominant societies. This analysis is necessary as it portrays the interrelationship between hegemonic power and discourse and the extent to which they are mutually influential and reinforcing. The next part of the chapter explores how the concept of 'terrorism' has gained a controversial status, primarily in terms of its varying interpretation between Western and Middle Eastern Arab societies, as a result of relatively recent historic developments, leading to it becoming an contested concept, whose meaning provokes endless dispute, but no resolution (Connolly, 1969).

Since the prominence of the term during the 1970s in contemporary international relations, 'terrorism' has been hard to define. Instead, the term has continuously evaded definitional efforts from various actors and scholars in the political arena (Easson & Schmid, 2011). The conceptualisation of the term 'terrorism' is problematised by comparing historical understandings of the term with its presentation by ideologues of Western origin.

As discussed in Chapter One, after the 9/11 attacks by Muslim insurgents associated with the Islamic extremist group Al-Qaeda against the US, in the form of aerial suicide missions with civilian and military targets of the Twin Towers in New York and the Pentagon in Washington respectively, Western discourse around war and 'terrorism' has shaped international dialogues. This has led to a particular general understanding and conceptualisation of the term in Western international relations writings and debates (Bergen, Sterman & Salvyk-Virk, 2019). In summary, discourse emanating from the dominant society, the US, has shaped public understanding of the nature, form and purpose of 'terrorism'.

Analysing the concept of hegemony is therefore essential for this particular study, as it allows interrogation of the role of hegemony in shaping discourse and understanding around matters central to global politics. Furthermore, comparing the conceptualisations of the Arab and Western positions allows the study to reveal critical analyses of 'terrorism' as a construct shaped by the hegemonic power.

2.2 Foucault's Theory of Discourse Analysis and Power

This study borrows from discourse theory, as represented in the Foucauldian theory of discourse, better known as discourse analysis, which offers radical epistemological

explanations of knowledge and truth. The concept 'discourse' originates from Latin *discursus*, meaning 'running back and forth', and generally refers to 'written or spoken communication'. According to Epstein (2008), discourse is an "organised collaboration of ideas, concepts and classifications about a specific object that frame that object in a certain way and, therefore, restrict the possibilities for action in relation to it". In simple terms, discourse refers to conversation or information, yet, as Epstein indicates, the connotation of *framing* meaning implies not only signifying, but also placing limits on the interpretation of meaning. Foucault's (1977) broad proposition contends that discourses are more than ways of thinking and creating meaning. They set up the 'nature' of the body, unconscious and conscious mind and emotional life of the subjects they seek to govern (Weedon, 1987).

To all intents and purposes our knowledge about ourselves is created through discourse; our interpretation of 'reality' and 'the truth' is created through discourse. Knowledge is the product of discourse and discourse is the outcome of relations of power. Therefore, the link between epistemology and power becomes evident in the way that the social dynamics that operate in the epistemology of power determine what particular form of knowledge is central to human life, both individual and communal. As a feature of power, the dissemination of knowledge is vested in the political arena. Knowledge is disseminated through discourse, which links the hegemonic power to knowledge creation and dissemination, and society accepts the reality with which we are presented as the truth.

This gives rise to Foucault's (1982) argument that even the knowledge that we consider to be the most 'natural', that is, the spoken word, or speech, does not have universal meaning, but is given particular meanings by both speakers and listeners according to the situation in which the knowledge is being transmitted. In other words,

context is crucial for interpretation and understanding of speech. Also, every context occurs within socially constructed norms and values that direct our understanding towards a certain conclusion. Furthermore, knowledge (information) is not limited to representing a particular type of reality; it also plays a role in the very construction and maintenance of that reality. There is a dialectical relationship between the information (knowledge) and context through which knowledge is produced. Texts are both constitutive of and, in turn, constructed by their context.

Foucault (1982) uses the term 'discourse' to signify a historically provisional social system that produces knowledge and meaning. He argues that discourse is distinctly material in effect, in that it produces "behaviours that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1969). According to Foucault, discourse is a process of organising knowledge that builds the structure of social relations at national or international level through the shared understanding of the discursive logic and the acceptance of the discourse as social fact (Lacan, 2007). Foucault (1969) states that the logic produced by a discourse is structurally linked to the broader structure of knowledge in the period in which it arises. He further argues that discourses are produced as a result of power within a social order; such power promotes particular rules and categories which define the conditions for legitimising knowledge and truth within the discursive order; the power of discourse lies in its ability to provide legitimacy for certain rules while undermining others, and in its ability to create subject positions, and to turn people into objects that can be controlled. For Foucault (1969), it is in this way that discourse disguises its construction and capacity to produce indisputable knowledge and meaning.

Foucault (1969) argues that discourses arise from repetitive discussion. Therefore, through the reiteration of a discourse in society, the rules of discourse set the meaning of statements to be favourable to the political rationality that inspires its production.

Considering the power of discourse, it can be a useful tool in politics to achieve specific political goals, since discourse can be used to influence the way individuals act and think in the social world (Foucault, 1982). The main concern of politics is power, and that power is not contested. This power includes making critical decisions about the rules by which society will live, and control resources, and the power that enables leaders to influence the behaviour and values of others.



From this it becomes clear that the Foucauldian concept of discourse sets up a constitutive relationship between meaning and power in social practice. Essentially, in order to create meaning the subject needs to possess power, both structuring and structured by the social positions available within the practice. Because of the power vested, any meaning created becomes accepted as 'truth', even though this is not the truth but always a truth *effect*, a truth that seeks to re-constitute and re-establish power through meaning. In this instance, however, Foucault (1982) is not claiming that meaning and power pre-exist as causal conditions of existence for social practice in relation to the social world. What he claims, rather, is that meaning and power are encountered in complex networks of co-articulation within every social practice. They are the historically produced and institutionalised priorities of the social world that form the rules in which socially accepted values are embedded (Foucault, 1982).

According to Foucault (1980), power can be defined as the ability to control the thinking and behaviour of others without a physical force or threat. Power becomes a force that creates the world, in the sense of how society understands the world and events that take place in it in a particular way, through discourses, knowledge and systems of truth (Longhurst, Smith, Bagnall, Crawford & Ogborn, 2008). Power is productive, in the sense that it constructs ideas, and identities, but also because it categorises our knowledge. In this way, human intellect tends towards a certain understanding of the world and society.

Power emerges, or becomes evident, in society through discourses (Anderson & Schlunke, 2008). A discourse eliminates alternative ways of interpretation of phenomenon. More often, discourse constitutes several exceptions, inconsistencies, or even contradictions. However, these do not usually become disruptive of it, since people do not usually question the ontological or epistemological core of the discourse (Jackson, Smyth & Gunning, 2009). This then can be attributed to the flexibility and endless process of discourse and how it is continuously reconstructed to maintain coherence. Ultimately, discourses create and influence the way we think, talk and behave through the configuration of power (Longhurst, et al., 2008).

In this way, discourses create new realities, new identities and new knowledge which become generally accepted as natural and evident; discourses permit agents to think and act in a certain way, they generate what will be considered as 'normal' practices, perceptions and attitudes in reference to a specific object/subject. Consequently, these normative beliefs and values will not be consciously reviewed, but will be put into action without cross-examination (Bourdieu, 1991).

It becomes clear that the power vested in discourse creates a society wherein people become both enabled and constrained to think in particular ways through the assimilation of discourses. Foucault (1982: 25) argues that this is because “in any society, there are multiple relations of power which permeate, characterise and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot ... be ... implemented without ... a discourse”. What we know – or believe that we know – about the world is a product of different discourses that permeate through power and knowledge (Foucault, 1994).

Discourses maintain coherence by presenting themselves as ‘the truth’ or ‘legitimate’. The creation of discourse is not linear, and the process is never-ending. There is a constant struggle of new ideas and amendments that try to reinvent the ‘regime of truth’ and reach their legitimisation in this way. Moreover, all discourses continue being hegemonic by discrediting rival discourses. And they need to present themselves as the only truth about the referent object in order to maintain their legitimacy (ibid).

Furthermore, Foucault foregrounds the necessity for hegemonic discourse to restrain counter-hegemonic discourse from emerging.

Truth is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it gives rise to regular effects of power. Each society has its system of truth, its “general politics” of truth, meaning that system is limited to only those types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is certified; the techniques and procedures accorded

value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (Foucault in Rainbow, 1991).

These 'general politics' and 'systems of truth' are the result of scientific discourse and institutions, and are reinforced through the education system, the media, and the flux of political and economic ideologies. In this way the 'battle for truth' is not for some absolute truth that can be exposed and accepted, but is a battle about "the rules according to which the true and false are separated and specific effects of power are attached to the true..." a battle about "the status of truth and the economic and political role it plays" (Foucault in Rabinow, 1991).

Finally, therefore, discourse shapes what is considered as truth, morality and meaning. It is constructed and propagated by those who possess power and the means of communication, allowing for principal powers to control, select, organise and redistribute discourse in a particular manner to avoid any uncalculated risks.

2.2.1 Institutionalised discourse

Weedon (1997) draws from Foucault's analysis of the relationship between discourse and institutions. Foucault explains that discourse is a part of our everyday lives embodied in institutions such as schools, law courts and even households, in the form of hard and soft rules. In this case, such institutions play a key role in producing and transforming power relations in society. The structural design of the institutions shapes how truth is acquired and the status of those charged with saying what is considered as truth. Hence, Foucault's view that each state has its own system of truth, its politics

of truth, its type of discourse accepted as truth, and unique techniques employed to determine what is to be considered true or false.

Foucault (1987) makes an example of the education system. In his illustration, education is the platform through which the state maintains relation of power. Discourses are designed and directed through discursive practices that enter into power relations. State discourses in relation to educational policies (curriculum, assessment criterion) are founded as objects and instruments of power where state discourse can be transmitted to the broader society. In this way such institutions (schools) sustain what is perceived as truth through control over the power of legitimacy, due to the fact that all textbooks are received as being infused with the ethical values of Fordism, Taylorism, behaviourism and bureaucracy. Foucault (1972) adds that educational systems qualify the legitimacy of discourses with the power and knowledge they bring with them. Moreover, education is the fundamental building block for every individual. For example, basic education in some states is accessible to everyone and even subsidised to ensure accessibility for all individuals. This allows platform for discourses to be embedded during an early age where people grow up with the presented 'truth'. In this way, almost everyone is exposed and introduced to discourses. Essentially, educational systems are used as political instruments to maintain the adoption of discourse, with the knowledge and the powers it carries with it.

Foucault (1978) argues that discourse can be an instrument and effect of power and at the same time used as a tool of resistance. In this instance, it becomes apparent

that discourse (knowledge) and power are inseparable, with the ability to forge the oppression of 'others' in society. As noted before, actors with authority and power control, select and organise knowledge for society. Main actors therefore have the responsibility to evaluate the knowledge considered to be unclassified. Control of knowledge is a form of oppression, whereby others are denied access to certain knowledge. Herein, resistance materialises, whereby the dominant group advocates for the rights of the marginalised. It is based on these foregoing observations that Foucault contends that discourse seeks to control not just what, but also how, subjects are constructed. Ultimately, speech, thought, and desire are regulated and managed through discourse embedded in institutions.



2.2.2 Theorising hegemonic power in international relations

The term 'hegemony' is historically rooted in the ancient Greek term '*hegemonia*', expressing the dominant and oppressive status of one element in the international system over the others. The origins of this term and its continued use are still located in the context of international relations. The concept of hegemony provides a better understanding of current international relations and power relations (Yilmaz, 2010). The international system is composed of a hierarchy (Donnelly, 2012). The most powerful state is ranked highest and the weakest at the bottom. Power acts as an organising value.

Gramsci defines the State as "the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance, but manages

to win the active consent of those over whom it rules" (Carnoy, 1986: 66). Gramsci provides that the state assumes two functions: an educative function and a formative function. This educative function of the State creates nations by training people to adapt to the principles and mentality of the masses to the logic of the production process. The state functions so as to create obedient citizens who adopt the most restrictive aspects of the national state policy and accept them as their natural 'duties', without reasoning otherwise. The power in ideas varies; the authority carried by some ideas supersedes others. It is important, therefore, to note what makes some ideas more effective in influencing and shaping knowledge. Gramsci's (1971) notion of hegemony explains this power inequity of ideas very well. He describes hegemony as the intellectual and moral leadership of a social group exercised within society. According to Gramsci, this leadership relies on the use of force by the leaders, but also on the consent of those led, making it necessary for leaders to establish their authority and legitimacy in society as a whole (Howarth, 2000). Ultimately, hegemony allows for ideological subordination through consent (Anderson, 1976). At the same time, 'counter-hegemony' refers to opposition to dominant ideas and discourse; the challenge to dominant values.

For Gramsci, power needs to be accepted as legitimate by those who are subject to it; the legitimacy of power is conditioned through the manipulation of social norms (Scott & Marshall, 2009). This manipulation of social norms leads this study to Gramsci's notion of ideological hegemony. Gramsci uses hegemony to explain how the state and civil society produce and maintain consent to the existing status quo (Stoddart, 2007).

For Gramsci, power is based on two elements: consensus and coercion. Consensus is based at the level of civil society, whilst coercion rests at the level of the state, more especially at the level of 'political society'. In this instance, hegemonic rule is shaped by the predominance of consensus over coercion, which produces a balance, an equilibrium between 'political society' and 'civil society'. 'Coercion' refers to the state's ability to use violence and force over individuals in society who refuse to comply with the ideologies of the leading class (Stoddart, 2007). 'Consent' includes hegemonic power that "works to convince individuals and social classes to subscribe to the social values and norms of an inherently exploitative system" (Stoddart, 2007: 201). Hegemonic power is a form of social power that relies on persuasion and legitimation that make the ideas of the ruling superior to those of the subordinate class.



This section discusses the comprehensive argument offered by critical theorist Robert Cox (1977) that hegemony cannot be reduced to a single dimension of dominance based on the economic and military capabilities of states. Instead, Cox draws from a neo-Gramscian perspective, which broadens the domain of hegemony. Hegemony is manifested in the acceptance of ideas and supported by material resources and institutions, which are initially established by social forces occupying a leading role within a state and then projected throughout the global community. Cox (1997) further argues that 'reality' is not limited to the physical environment, but also extends to the institutional, moral and ideological context that shapes human thoughts and actions.

Cox (1983) reveals that the modern state has emerged with a similar concept, which relies on the military and coercive mechanisms employed by the principal Western

powers to support their economic and financial interests. Critical theory, such as the ideas of Gramsci, brings out the economic shortcomings of structuralist Marxism. Critical theorists argue that knowledge is always socio-political and hence connected with social practice and interests (Steans, Pettiford, Diez & El-Anis, 2010). Critical theory provides alternatives and solutions for a better social and political life, in terms of creating “possibilities of human emancipation from oppressive forms of social relationships” (Steans et al., 2010: 106). This perspective promotes the possibility of change of the structure and indicates how the forces of the social and political system change over time. To explain the powers of hegemony, critical theory scholars emphasise the role of culture and ideology in shaping social order internationally (ibid.).



Ultimately, Cox, based within international political economy, argues that critical theory, especially rooted in the ideas of Gramsci serves to further the theoretical understanding of IR and maps out a critical conception of world-order (Steans, et al. 2010). Cox (1981 in Farrands & Worth, 2005: 54) describes knowledge as always being “for someone and for something”, denying the possibility of objective knowledge. Critical theory makes major contributions to IR in approaching world order and institutions through a critical perspective of the state, not just as an actor in the international system, but in terms of its actions as a regulator of capitalism.

Central to critical theory in international relations is the notion that the most powerful state assumes the right to determine rules in the international system. These rules regulate government relations within the international system. To execute such

regulations, the international institutions give effect to these rules. Following World War II, the US assumed military and economic dominance. It became the first of the hegemons in the modern state system that utilised ideological and persuasive power to cement hegemony by the institutionalisation of its values and norms in the modern state system. The US position as hegemon enhanced its ability to transfer its values and interest to the international institutions, as it played a leading role in their establishment. This presentation of how power defines and formulates what became globally accepted norms and a common understanding of the realm of IR resonates with Foucault's depiction of the outcome of historical relations of power, in terms of which the global state system is considered *a priori*, presented as though it is neutral and natural (Foucault, 1969).



Neoliberal theories choose rather to emphasise the significance of international norms with a view to regulation of the relationships between states without having recourse to the politics of power. The liberal idea rests on the assertion that peace within international relations may be realised through regulation of state behaviour (Steans, et al., 2010). One of the main features of neoliberalism is the possibility and emphasis of cooperation in a system of revolutionary states and the complex interdependence of institutions (Steans, et al., 2010).

However, in the post-war period, the institutionalisation of the principles of liberalism in, for example, the Bretton Woods system, shows how entangled the economic order is within the overall political order in the international system (Steans, et al., 2010). Robert Keohane (1984), a staunch neoliberal scholar who opposes the neorealist

conceptualisation of international relations based on a power zero-sum game, emphasises interdependence and cooperation in world politics. Keohane (1984) rejects the notion that relations between states are mainly characterised by distrust and competition. Keohane (1984) argues that states are generally not concerned about each other's successes, but rather look forward to benefitting from cooperation. Keohane (1984) states that a state will become a hegemonic state when it has a combination of military, economic, political, institutional and ideological strength that will enable it to incorporate ideological and moral leadership over and above coercive capacity. Moreover, the hegemon must have strong ties with other major powers and also trade with the majority of states globally to enhance its economic relations. These networks will ultimately advantage the hegemony, as most rules that govern international political as well as economic affairs will be in favour of the hegemony and its partners. In this way, the hegemonic country will be able to determine the conditions of discourse in global relations. At the same time, the economic might of the hegemony becomes the base for the dissemination of its political values and interests.

Keohane (1984) goes on to put great emphasis on economic factors. He argues that to acquire the status of a hegemonic power in the global political economy, it is essential to have access to crucial raw materials, control over major sources of capital, maintain great markets for imports, and hold comparative advantages in goods with high value added, which yield high wages and profits in a manner that supersedes any other country in the world.

Joseph Nye (2004), also supporting the neoliberal school of thought, explains that rather than relying exclusively on military power "to do things and control others...

[and] to get others to do what they otherwise would not” (Nye, 2004: 5), the US drew on its non-coercive power to cement its hegemonic position globally. For Nye, the basis of US soft power, or hegemony, is the power of ideas and values to influence others, embedded in liberalism, a new arrangement of international political orientation since the end of WWII, which is characterised by liberal democratic politics, free market economics, and fundamental values such as human rights, in essence, liberalism. For Nye, this approach is effective for the reason that soft power co-opts people rather than coercing them, meaning it has the ability to shape the preference of others by simply presenting values that people want to follow. For Nye (2004), the democratic politics of the US present attractive features and benefits such as political values, policies and institutions, which were received as legitimate and having moral value.



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The great significance of this will be seen in Chapter Three, in which the rise to power of the US as global hegemon is traced back to its emergence as the dominant economic power after World War II, which enabled it to develop the rules and norms relating to global trade. The Bretton Wood system, International Monetary Fund, and the United Nations are international institutions that were either re-established or newly created during this time. The United League of Nations was terminated and replaced by the United Nations in 1946. Following the end of WWII, with the US rising to a role of the hegemon in the international state system, it played a leading role in establishing the United Nations, to the extent that then-president of the US, Franklin Roosevelt, coined the term ‘United Nations’ and even drafted the Declaration of the United Nations, which was signed by 26 other nations. Befitting its hegemon’s role of upholding the rules, the United States has played a consistent role as the ultimate

arbiter and mediator in international conflicts since the end of World War II. At the same time, the UN holds an important position in US foreign policy, mostly when the UN and its agendas are in line with the future plans US has for itself (Bercovitch & Schneider, 2006). It becomes evident that hegemons such as the United States establish and finance international organisations like the United Nations to spread their principles and values throughout the international system and to also solidify their grasp on power.

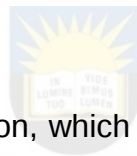
In comparison with realism, structuralism shares the emphasis of conflict being structural; and with liberalism, the interconnectedness of international economic relations and the role of non-state actors (Steans, et al., 2010). The structuralist approach is mainly concerned with relations of domination and dependence and global economy as a conflictual system (ibid). Susan Strange, advocate of structuralism, theorises financial power and its role in the political economy. Strange's (1987) perspective is relevant to this study, as she names the four structural conditions that strengthen the hegemon's position on a global scale. Firstly, the hegemon needs the military capacity that can either protect or threaten other countries' security. Secondly, the hegemony must have the ability to control global systems of production of goods and services. Thirdly, the hegemon must shape the global financial market by leading the international capital market of finance and credit. Lastly, it must have the ability to shape development and the transfer of knowledge. Strange (1987) contends that these elements are vital in building the strength of a hegemonic power. These elements are interrelated to each other. For example, if only the military-security element is strong, but the other elements (production, financial and knowledge-technology, ideology) remain volatile, this would mean the hegemon cannot maintain

its position and power in global relations. Therefore, all four elements are essential in maintaining the position of a hegemonic power.

For the structuralists, the hegemon, therefore, assumes the role of establishing rules (derived from its values and ideology) that regulate the international system through its combination of military, economic, financial as well as ideological influence within international relations. A combination of all the various elements constituting state power advances the position of the hegemon in the global arena. This proposition resonates with Gramsci's contention that power does not rely only on force, but also on 'the cultivation of consent' (Ciocchini & Khoury, 2018). The rules to which states in the international system conform are not forced upon the states, but rather presented in the form of international norms, code of conduct and laws by which the modern state is supposed to abide. A modern state is presented as a necessary governing model deemed to be the ultimate beneficial and appropriate model to keep up with the modern international relations of the global political economy. In reward, states which comply with the hegemon's economic and political architect are deemed to be modern states that form part of the international order that constitutes the status quo. The international system, based on the model of the modern state, transmits conditions supporting open system policies where the hegemon's interests are promoted. By using this strategy, the hegemon's economic and political footprints can be traced even in sovereign states, as most states adopt this modern state model as if it were the ultimate form of governance. This extra-territorial representation of hegemonic power therefore sustains and enhances the hegemon's dominance globally. Power is institutionalised and exercised from various powerful sources in civil society, and one of them is financial institutions. Strange (1987) is not a Marxist, but she nonetheless

confirms Gramsci's position that civil society is complicit in the 'cultivation of consent' through the values that are reproduced by its most powerful institutions – in today's world, that would be the media and financial institutions.

Van Dijk (1998) draws from Foucault's assertion that ideology is a system of ideas which hold and justify an existing or desired arrangement of power. Ideologies are shared and reproduced in social practices and in the end these ideas are confirmed, changed and perpetuated through discourse. In this instance, hegemons not only use economic and militant might to exercise power in the international system, but also discourse to influence the thoughts of society.



Drawing from the preceding discussion, which has presented the diverse theoretical positions related to the hegemon in international relations, the earliest conceptualisation by Antonio Gramsci can be seen to have laid the foundation for the subsequent presentations, in that a hegemon may triumph based on a coherent combination of material (economic and military) power, notwithstanding the prevalent collective acceptance of certain norms through a set of institutions which administer the hegemon's ideology with a certain semblance of universality within the entire international arena. In this regard, hegemony is a form of dominance, but it is derived from a consensual order. Ultimately, dominance by a powerful state is a necessary condition of hegemony – but not a sufficient one (Gramsci, 1982).

At the same level, this study emphasises that it has been the spread of the Western ideas of liberalism, democracy, free trade, and consumerism, that has provided the

hegemon with even greater success in imposing its 'consensual' hegemonic control over the international system. The process of hegemony therefore cements the dominant position of the West. Although economic and military interests remain important and other coercive strategies continue to be accepted, the key objective of hegemony is to create and reproduce the ideas, beliefs, values, and even culture necessary to advance Western dominance and preserve its hegemonic control over the international system.

2.3 Hegemonic Discourse About Terrorism

Prior to the 9/11 events, there had been a conventional assumption by state actors, academics and the international community that the main aim of a 'terror' act is to cause fear and intimidation; however after the 9/11 events terrorism took on a very specific form: Arab extremist, anti-US, and Jihadist. Consequently, this assumption has been accepted as a key definitional characteristic of 'terrorism'. This study seeks to illustrate these assumptions as a function of hegemony and will further pursue this aim in Chapters Three and Four.

This section will firstly provide an inclusive framework for a discussion of 'terrorism' by interrogating conventional concepts, definitions and descriptions of 'terrorism' by academics, state actors, observers and practitioners against ideologues by various 'terrorist' doctrines, as identified by David Rapoport (2004). This comparison will enable the study to reveal the position of 'terrorist' versus conventional conceptualisations.

2.3.1 Early discourse about terrorism, conventional definitions of terrorism

To analyse the problematic conceptualisation of the term 'terrorism', this section begins by reviewing the historical trajectory of the term 'terrorism,' predating it to the first contemporary usage of the term during the French Revolution. Since this period, this term has been used to label those groups, states and individuals who refuse to cooperate with, or consent to, 'common sense' views of the principle powers. The French revolution's 'reign of terror' was a strategy employed by the government to end monarchical and conservative structures of governance in a bid to launch democratic system of governance. The 'reign of terror' signified a radical departure from monarchical rule. This posed threat to the elite, the dominant powers of the time and through hegemonic processes, the principal powers were able to label as 'terrorists' their specific enemies or opponents within the international system.



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During the 1970s, General Jorge Rafael Videla was the commander and chief of the Argentinian military, who came to power in a coup d'état that deposed Isabel Martínez de Perón. Videla employed terror tactics with the view that this was necessary to defend Argentina from 'subversive threats' in its fight against communism. These acts of terror, backed by the United States, became known as the 'Dirty War' which took place from 1976 to 1983 as a part of Operation Condor. In this time, military and security forces and right-wing death squads, in the form of the Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance (AAA, or Triple A), hunted down any political dissidents and anyone believed to be associated with socialism, left-wing Peronism or the Montoneros movement (Borger, 2004). Videla asserted that a terrorist does not merely carry weapons, but also pronounces ideas that oppose Western and Christian

'civilization'. This assertion is prevalent in the current era within the modern international political configuration. After the 9/11 attacks, US former president George W Bush described Iraq, Iran and Korea as an 'axis of evil' threatening the entire 'civilised' world. After the demise of the USSR at the end of the Cold War in 1991, the Soviet Union was no longer the primary enemy to Western powers, and instead the threat shifted towards radical Islamic groups. This new shift was conferred to the Islamic group due to its continued anti-Western/anti-American stance, its 'anti-' or non-Christian ideology, and even its anti-modern/anti-capitalist orientation, which are counter-principles to the Western hegemony (Butko, 2006).

Since the 9/11 attack, 'terrorism' has gained great attention in global politics. Western political actors, academics and institutions have made several attempts to define 'terrorism'; however, most contemporary definitions of 'terrorism' are short-sighted because they neglect the hegemonic basis of its conceptualisation. They are limited to the nature of the violence and fail to scrutinise what is truly the only relevant issue: whether those who employ political violence in the quest for political objectives are hegemonic, or not 'us' or 'them', or our 'political violence' vs. their 'terrorism' (Chomsky, 1985). Essentially, conceptualisations of 'terrorism' are derived from the hegemonic state, and yet the phenomenon is usually a product of non-state actors engaged in counter-hegemonic activities. Hence, the discourse excludes non-state actors and their conceptualisations do not enter mainstream discussions and debates.

'Terrorism' can never be objective, in that violence is used regularly and alarming numbers of civilians are injured and killed as a result of such violence. This distinction

is made by power. As mentioned above, hegemonies possess control over moral and intellectual discourse; this is strengthened by their coercive might which allows them to label 'others' within the global system as the enemy or 'the terrorists'. Hegemonic powers therefore not only dominate the process of classification, but also have the ability to internationalise and enforce such a categorisation (Chomsky, 1985).

The following conventional conceptualisations can be analysed to examine the problematic nature of conceptualising 'terrorism'. This section does so by explaining the progression from instilling fear to disrupting the state. 'Terrorism' is mostly defined as 'a form of coercion'. However, it is important to distinguish between ordinary coercion and 'terrorist' intimidation. This section explores the relation between coercion, and terror and terrorization. This section contends that while 'terrorism' is not necessarily associated with terror in the literal sense, it does instil a mental state like terror in the populations that it targets, although such a state of terror might not be instilled through coercion and intimidation. Instead, this section reveals that one can try to instil terror as an act of punishment, or as an expression, or because one values the political consequences that might follow, or because one thinks terror is preferable, from an ethical point of view, to the oppression that affects the targeted population at present.

According to Hoffman (2006), 'terrorism' can be defined as the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence, or the threat of violence, in the pursuit of political change. He further argues that all terrorist acts involve violence, or the threat of violence. 'Terrorism' is specifically designed to have far-reaching psychological effects

beyond the immediate victim(s) or object of the terrorist attack. It is meant to instil fear within, and thereby intimidate, a wider 'target audience' that might include a rival ethnic or religious group, an entire country, a national government or political party, or public opinion in general.

In the United Kingdom, 'terrorism' is legally defined as "the use of violence for political ends, and includes any use of violence for the purpose of putting the public or any section of the public in fear" (Schmid, 1992, in Weinberg, Pedahzur, and Hirsch-Hoefler, 2004: 787).

Garrison (2007) defines 'terrorism' as the use of force or violence, or the threat of force and violence, to change the behaviour of society as a whole through the causation of fear and the targeting of specific parts of society in order to affect the entire society.

Harmon (2001) provides that terror groups set short-term and longer term aims related to power and political objectives, and then use 'terrorism' – the calibration of fear – to advance those aims.

Following the 9/11 attacks, the sphere of international relations saw a transitional shift, a distinctive advance from previous definitions which extends beyond fear. 'Terrorism' became characterised by a new tone of urgency and interdisciplinary. Scholars such as Norris, Kern and Just (2003) criticise maximalist definitions, which hold minimalist

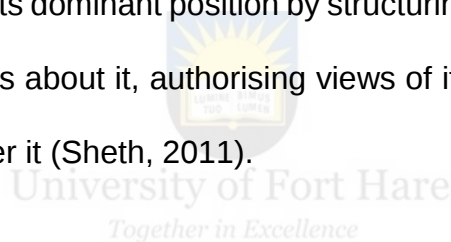
conceptualisations and exclude theoretically relevant attributes. This can be traced to the convenient shift of the term 'terrorism' from its original connotation of violence perpetrated by the state, to its current, predominantly Western-conceptualised identity and form, that terrorism is Arab, anti-Western, and Jihadist in nature (Abdulla, 2007).

Following the 9/11 events, international society has been polarised into two ends, on the one end 'Western cultures' and on the other 'Islam extremists', characterised by the 'war on terror' against the 'axis of evil'. This connotation has been expanded to interpret the 'friends' and 'enemies' of a state, with the notion of 'enemies' including all Muslims (Norris, et al., 2003). Tracing back to the modern history of terrorism, dating from the French Revolution through the anarchist and communist movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to the Islamic extremist groups of today, it becomes clear that the term 'terrorism' has been primarily applied to those states, groups, and individuals that have challenged or threatened the position of the dominant powers or states (that is, the 'enemies' of the status quo).

A historical overview of 'terrorism' as noted above reveals that 'terrorism' has been linked with the broader concept of hegemony. The historical trajectory of terrorism commencing with the first contemporary usage of 'terrorism' during the French Revolution shows the term has been applied primarily to those states and other groups who have refused to consent to the views of the hegemony or the dominant powers within the international system. The French Revolution initiated this period because it signified a radical change from the monarchical and conservative political structures of the previous centuries. Through this hegemony, the dominant powers are still able

to label as 'terrorists' their specific enemies within the international system. In many instances 'terrorists' have been labelled as anti-capitalist, anti-democratic, anti-Christian, anti-Western, or anti-American. In each case, from the radicals of the French Revolution, to the Communist threat, up till the Islamic fundamentalists of today, all were believed to pose a significant danger to the hegemonic powers of their time.

It is important to note that power does not exist outside of hegemony. Hegemony is articulated through a particular set of power relations attached to a system of meaning. This relationship functions through the supremacy of the West, its ideas and its ways of being and doing as the reference point. Through hegemonic dominance, the West has been able to exercise its dominant position by structuring how the 'terrorist' is dealt with, by making statements about it, authorising views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, and ruling over it (Sheth, 2011).



This hegemonic dominance underpins the war on terror discourse, from the way that terrorism and the 9/11 attacks are constructed to the subject positions available to Muslims in this discourse. This hegemonic system of meaning reinforces the securitisation process through which Muslims are constructed as threats and as 'terrorism suspects' (Nguyen, 2005). Ultimately, the relationship between terrorism and hegemony demonstrates how the power of hegemonic system of meaning works to define Islam and Muslims in the West today. This section has tried to illustrate the link between power and the construction of knowledge in the 'war on terror' discourse, which has reinforced and perpetuated negative constructions of Muslims as violent

and terrorist threats against the morally 'innocent' and 'good' West (Jamil, 2014). This will be illustrated by the examples of discursive text provided in Chapter Four.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has shown the approach to the notion of hegemony and the exercise of hegemony that draws on the thinking of Gramsci and Foucault. Foucault's (1977) exposition of the links between power, meaning and common understanding offers a framework for an investigation into the conceptualisation of 'terrorism' as a function of power and an outcome of the global configuration of relationships between states and societies. The 'war on terror' was named by the Bush administration in September 2001 to mark the US response to the 9/11 attacks and to identify those 'who are with us' and those 'who are with the terrorists'. The US 'war on terror' took multiple, concrete forms. It included international military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, domestic national security legislation and measures targeting Muslim populations, and the renaissance of a prejudiced cultural discourse about Islam against the west as an explanation for the 9/11 attacks. The 9/11 events and the US response represent an appraisal of the relationship between discourse and power. Moreover, this brings us to consider the position of the US as a hegemonic power in the global arena; hence, it is important for this study to investigate the nature of hegemonic power and discourse around terrorism, which will be dealt with in Chapter Four. But preceding this investigation is an illustration of the US's rise to hegemony, as well as the threats to its hegemony, which is the focus of Chapter Three of this study.

CHAPTER THREE

US HEGEMONIC POSITION AND THE OCCUPATION OF IRAQ

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the events leading to the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 and illustrates how this laid the foundation and provided the justification for what the US termed 'the war on terror', as part of its efforts to secure US supremacy within the international relations configuration of states. It also illustrates the rise of the US as a hegemon at the end of WWII, from which position it developed and defined the norms, values, beliefs and practices that were to prevail over the international arena.



This study borrows from both Gramsci and Foucault, linking hegemony to material power as well as ideological power, which shapes values, beliefs and discourse. Foucault's utilisation of discourse analysis illustrates that discourse is comprehended through discursive practices that are transmitted and distributed through institutions and situations that normalise values so that they become generally accepted, therefore reproducing relations of power by reinforcing bias and prejudice exercised against 'the other(s)' by the dominant society.

Foucault's (1994) perceptions of power provide a useful tool to reveal how the hegemon's post-1990 discourses on 'terrorism' became accepted. This chapter provides an overview of events that took place and how the US defined 'good' and 'just', as opposed to 'evil' and 'unjust', and which societies were targeted as 'evil'. It

becomes apparent that the US administration shaped what has become common understanding of what terrorism is during the discursive construction of the 'war on terror', assigning legitimacy to its vision of the social world and its divisions, and thereby shaping the globally accepted conception of 'terrorism' (Bourdieu, 1987).

Even though power is vested within the realm of the hegemon, Foucault states that discourse can be a site of both power and resistance, with the prospect of contesting strategies and rules of the 'dominant power' (Gaventa, 2003). Foucault explains that discourses are not always subservient to power or raised up against it. Foucault makes the point that a discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse "transmits and produces power, it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, and renders it fragile and makes it possible to challenge hegemony and develop counter-hegemony" (Foucault, 1977: 100-1).

This chapter answers the first research question: how has the involvement of the US in Iraq in the period since the end of the Cold War shaped the unfolding of resistance outside the sphere of government and formal international relations? This will be done by interrogating the interstate relations between the US and Middle East states, particularly in the period after WWII leading to the 9/11 events. Through the course of the chapter it becomes clear that the Middle East became important to US foreign policy from the 1970s. This is when control over oil resources, critical to the economic power of the US, was threatened through the formation of the oil-producing and exporting countries (OPEC), which was subsequently able to manipulate the supply

and price of oil. These circumstances led to the Middle East occupying a prominent part of US foreign policy and, when it became clear that many Arab states were not amenable to accepting the political strategies of the US to support its hegemony, the US utilised its military forces in order to secure its position as hegemon, in a Gramscian sense, of ideological influence backed by the “armour of coercion” (Smith & Hoare, 1971) where ideological persuasion fails.

Starting by examining the emergence of the US oil-based economy after World War I, this chapter traces the rise of the US as global hegemon and investigates its strategies in dealing with what were perceived as challenges to its hegemonic status.



Next, the chapter examines the various forms taken by the US presence in the Middle East. The chapter concludes that events such as the US oil embargo by OPEC, the 1979 Islamic revolution, and the Gulf War of 1990, illustrate the pattern of challenges to US hegemony that were countered by US coercion in the Middle East. These led to counter-hegemonic attacks on the US by Arab rebels belonging to Al-Qaeda in the form of the 9/11 assault on civic and state targets in the US.

3.2 The Rise of the US Oil Economy

From the early twentieth century up until the early 1940s, US was the first nation to become a mass producer and consumer of oil, giving rise to the industrial revolution in the US that saw the propagation of world-class oil industries, firms, service companies and marketers (Dietrich, 2008). The industrial revolution allowed the US to

build massive networks of pipelines, refineries, chemical and power plants that enabled it to deliver cheap energy on a global scale (Mokyr, 1999). This later enabled the US to enjoy an economic boom and improved standards of living, as well as ideally placing it as a supreme global power by the end of World War II (ibid). This supremacy came into focus during the First World War, where the use of machinery and demand for the US controlled oil became apparent in mitigating military prowess (Klare, 2007). Phillips (2006) argues that at the time when states were at war, the US already controlled 60 percent of the global oil supply, and its exchange of gold for oil resulted in the US owning the majority of the world's gold by the end of the war.

Subsequently, in an effort to maintain its gold reserves, the US Federal Reserve raised its interest rates, which meant that states that had borrowed during the war fell short in repaying their debts. This led to tariff wars, which eventually had a domino effect that culminated in the 1929-1933 stock market crash and subsequent global depression (Ferguson, 2008). The global depression was the direct result of the US having complete control over the world's gold reserves and this hegemonic power allowed it to dominate the international monetary system (Ferguson, 2008).

The outbreak of World War II in 1939 gave impetus to production in the US economy and stimulated the economy. The US rose as a strong economic actor, able to regulate economic activity and to moderately control the economy through spending and consumption. The US industry was rejuvenated by the war, and many sectors were by 1945 either heavily oriented to defence production (for example, aerospace and electronics), or completely dependent on it (atomic energy). While the US enjoyed

economic prosperity as a result of WWII, European countries experienced the opposite.

Europe was in ruins after WWII, as it had destroyed the continent's industrial productive capacity and caused the deaths of around 60 million soldiers and civilians. World War II was the first war that claimed the lives of more civilians than soldiers and included the first systematic genocide. In addition, many cities, towns and villages across Europe were completely destroyed by aerial bombing and heavy artillery. The obliteration of infrastructure resulted in economic plunder, and damaged transportation infrastructure, as railways, bridges, and ports had been specifically targeted by airstrikes, while much merchant shipping had been sunk. The destruction of transportation left Europe economically isolated. Unemployment and food shortages led to strikes and unrest. Agricultural production, industrial production and exports were affected most and had declined at alarming rates. None of these problems could be easily remedied, as most nations involved had exhausted their finances during the war (Van Zanden, 1998).

In an effort to rebuild the international economic system in July 1944, Allied countries assembled at the Mount Washington Hotel in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, United States, for the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference, also known as the Bretton Woods Conference. During this conference, the Bretton Woods Agreement was signed, setting up a system of rules, institutions, and procedures to lay the foundation for future financial and trade relations between states. The Bretton Woods system of monetary management established the rules for commercial and financial

relations between the United States, Canada, Western European countries, Australia, and Japan after the war.

This accord established the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD, later to become the World Bank), to reconstruct the international payments system and to provide finance for the rebuilding of economies in Europe and Asia respectively.

The Bretton Woods system was the first example of a fully negotiated monetary order intended to govern monetary relations among independent states. The chief features of the Bretton Woods system were an obligation for each country to adopt a monetary policy that maintained its external exchange rates within 1 percent by tying its currency to gold, and the ability of the IMF to bridge temporary imbalances of payments. Also, there was a need to address the lack of cooperation among other countries and to prevent competitive devaluation of the currencies.

The RDB and the IMF were responsible for the monitoring of the new monetary system based on the US dollar (Ocampo, 2016). At the time, the US controlled two-thirds of the world's gold. The US position as the only state with a functioning economy gave it a platform to dominate the decision making during this conference, during which the US insisted that the Bretton Woods system rest on both gold and the US dollar. This made the US dollar the *de facto* world currency and established the US as the dominant power in the global economy (Silver & Arrighi, 2003), creating the platform

for the US to emerge as the hegemon in terms of assuming ideological leadership as a result of its financial power.

Due to its emergence as global hegemon, the US influenced the values that were to be used as the foundation for international relations after WWII (Tarzi, 2014). In the aftermath of WWII in 1945, to prevent the states from using force to resolve matters, the US played a leading role in the establishment of the United Nations (UN), which succeeded the League of Nations. The pre-eminent role played by the US in the establishment of the UN was due to its position as a global hegemon assuming ideological leadership. As a result, the US was the largest financial contributor of the UN. In the end, the UN was a US-built international organisation embedded with the values of US (Novosad & Werker, 2019).



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The liberal and neoliberal principles that were rooted in the US were transferred into the domain of the global political economy and international relations via the UN. At the same time, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) was to become the site of competition between the West and the East, led by the US and the USSR, respectively.

Shortly after the end of the war, a trade conference was held in Geneva in 1947, aimed at establishing the future rules for international trade to prevent trade wars and a global depression that it was feared could culminate in another world war. The fundamental principles were to be agreed on by reducing or eliminating trade barriers, such as

tariffs and quotas (Brand, 1989) and to eliminate preferences, on a reciprocal and mutually advantageous basis (Azaria, 2009). The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was formed through a treaty signed by 23 countries into international law in 1948 (Irwin, 1995).

However, the regulations enshrined in GATT excluded regulations around trade in energy sources, primarily because petroleum producing and exporting countries were not involved in the 1947 GATT talks (Ming Du, 2011). The exclusion of this commodity was to later emerge as a challenge to US hegemony, which presented itself in the form of OPEC, established in 1960 by the five main oil-producers in the Middle East (Iran, Iraq, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia) and Latin America (Venezuela) (Luciani, 2005). In 1968, OPEC adopted a Declaratory Statement of Petroleum Policy, which highlighted the absolute right of all member countries to exercise permanent sovereignty over their natural resources in the interest of their national development. This encouraged the involvement of more oil-producing states in OPEC. By 1970, the following countries joined as members: Qatar (1961), Indonesia (1962), Libya (1962), the United Arab Emirates (1967), Algeria (1969), Nigeria (1971), Ecuador (1973), and Gabon (1975) (Rose, 2004). This development was to constitute a significant challenge to US industrial hegemony, as will be explained below.

3.3 The Decline of the US Oil Economy After WWII

On 15 August 1971, the US terminated convertibility of the US dollar to gold. Consequently, the Bretton Woods system came to an end, rendering the dollar a fiat currency – because, since the Bretton Woods accord pegged the value of the dollar

to the price of gold, the currency of various states had been pegged to the dollar. The US decision to abandon the Bretton Woods Agreement resulted in other currencies being vulnerable to its fluctuations. Britain's pound was left floating and other industrialised nations followed suit with their respective currencies. Anticipating that currency values would fluctuate unpredictably to rescue themselves from currency vulnerability, the industrialised nations increased their reserves by expanding their money supplies. The result was a depreciation of the dollar and other industrialised nations' currencies.

At the time, OPEC countries had not developed strategies to update prices in relation to changing market conditions in order to insulate their real incomes. However, through reducing oil supplies to industrialised nations by 25%, the OPEC countries were able to cause an increase in the price of oil, a strategy that was utilised in October 1973 and February 1974 (Paust & Blaustein, 1974). Oil-exporting nations began to accumulate great wealth, and control of oil became known as the 'oil weapon'. In the US, the price of oil increased by 43% between October 1973 and June 1974, with a devastating effect on the US and European domestic economy, as well as on developing nations that relied on industrialised nations' demand for their raw materials (Frum, 2000).

This price increase had a positive effect on oil-exporting nations, which had hitherto been dominated by the industrial nations, who were seen to have taken control of a crucial commodity. Cutbacks in production were aimed at the United States, Great

Britain, Canada, Japan and the Netherlands and the intent was to push them towards a more pro-Arab position.

The effect of the oil embargo on the US economy prompted the realisation of the need to address threats to US energy security (Ikenberry, 1986). Although the embargo was lifted in March 1974 after negotiations at the Washington Oil Summit, the effects lingered on throughout the 1970s. Consequently, this destabilised the US as a global power due to its inability to meet its domestic demand for oil with its own supplies, as it became a net importer of oil. This, accompanied by the transfer of oil ownership from US and European firms to new independent oil companies and sovereign states in the Middle East, created economic and political shocks that weakened the US supremacy (Fattouh, 2007).



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Another important outcome of the 1970s oil crisis was that the weakening in domestic consumer demand in the US, as prices increased, forced the US to shift its economic base to the production of military goods to offset the increased cost of oil imports (Penrose, 1987). This entailed finding new markets for military goods. Furthermore, despite the fact that GATT was unable to regulate energy prices, the privileged status of the dollar as the global currency (in which oil was sold as per Bretton Woods agreements) allowed for the new wealth of the oil-producing countries to be disproportionately 'recycled' through US banks and via arms deals and investments in the US (McKinnon, 2013).

US hegemony was based on the dollar as much as its military and, since the 1970s, oil hegemony has reinforced the US dollar hegemony. As a result, the economic status of the US dollar led to the US creating a tax on the world's economy to finance massive US military spending and imperial overreach, and to impose economic measures that hurt its competitors in order to retain its hegemonic position (Spiro, 1999; Mastanduno, 2009; Eichengreen, 2010). Also in a bid to secure its weakening oil-driven hegemonic position, as a result of the GATT's failure to include oil trade regulations and remove global oil trade barriers, the US sought to negotiate regional and bilateral agreements with various oil-rich states in the Middle East. In this way the US had an influence on the international oil market values through its overt interference in the domestic policies of Middle East states. Below is a discussion of the relationship between the US and key states in the Middle East, as well as the repercussions of US interference. The discussion begins with the state with which the US has enjoyed the longest and most consistently stable relationship of cooperation: Saudi Arabia.

3.3.1 Saudi Arabia–US relations

The United States and Saudi Arabia have enjoyed amicable relationships since the 1930s (Gause, 2003). The reorientation of the Saudis relations away from Britain and towards the US after World War II was influenced by the fact that the US had no prior history of occupation or mandate in the Middle East, and – at least in the beginning – it did not meddle in Saudi domestic politics as the British had done, and focused exclusively on increasing the commercial revenues of US oil companies (Boggs, 2005). The US administration under Roosevelt was the first to establish a relationship with the Saudi Arabian royal family, a symbiotic relationship through which the US

offered military protection in return for unlimited access to the seemingly endless reserves of oil in Saudi Arabia (Boggs, 2005). These bilateral relations built on security and business cooperation proved to be strategic for both countries who also share a common dislike of Russia, which, on the part of Saudi Arabia, is based on its mistrust of Russian intentions in the Middle East (Harvey, 2005). Nonetheless, it is significant that Saudi-US relations are essentially based on interests, and not common values (Bronson, 2008).

Saudi Arabia introduced to the Middle East the principle of '50-50' profit-sharing between governments and companies, despite the OPEC position to nationalise the oil industry (Parenti, 2004). As Iraq, Algeria and Libya proceeded to unilateral nationalisation, Saudi Arabia instead promoted the principle of gradually increasing government 'participation': a liberal approach (Harvey, 2005). Saudi Arabia has repeatedly overruled OPEC's price hikes; equally, the United States has been willing to supply major packages of the most modern weapons to Saudi Arabia (ibid).

By way of contrast, the relationship between the US and Afghanistan has been characterised by inconsistency and turbulence, as well as by long-term occupation in Afghanistan by US troops for the purpose of preventing the resurgence of power by the Taliban. The vagaries of the US-Afghanistan relationship are outlined below.

3.3.2 US-Afghanistan relations

In April 1978, the Soviet-backed Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) staged a coup against president Mohammed Daoud Khan, leading to the installation

of Nur Muhammad Taraki as president. Muslim loyalists to Khan formed the Mujahideen in a jihad against the new communist state, prompting 1979 intervention by the Soviets and the 1979–1989 Soviet-Afghan War. As the Mujahideen represented opposition to the Soviet Union, the US took a strategic decision to back them through military and financial assistance. The United States goal was to contain expansion of the Soviet Union and to prevent them from controlling the Persian Gulf. For the United States, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was most threatening because of its implications for the Persian Gulf and oil supplies (Roraback, 2004). The US response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was to set the tone for future US security and foreign policy postures in the Middle East. The fact that the decade-long war eventually precipitated the collapse of the Soviet Union, which was financially unable to sustain its military operations, meant that the US perceived its strategy of military involvement in the Middle East as effective in maintaining global hegemony (Gokay, 2015).



Mujahideen had grown a vast financial and military network of power, and amongst the Mujahideen was a Saudi Arabian named Osama bin Laden, who also provided money, weapons and fighters. This led to the establishment of Al-Qaeda, the military wing created to take on future holy wars that Bin Laden wanted to pursue globally (Kinzer, 2007). After accomplishing its objective of driving the Soviets out of Afghanistan, the US maintained good relations with the Taliban regime and, especially during the first Clinton administration, it expressed supportive views about the Taliban (Rubin, 2000).

Subsequent to the Soviet war, Afghanistan was plagued with incessant civil unrest and a constant state of political instability. The Mujahideen religious factions, which had come together to drive out the Soviet, turned against each other and began a new civil war that was a result of ethnic religious differences amongst them (Roraback, 2004). The Taliban emerged victorious and was greatly indebted to the US, for the reason that its militants had passed through the training camps that were financially supported by the US CIA during the Soviet occupation (Kinzer, 2007).

The Taliban regime was initially welcomed by the US, which appeared unconcerned and indifferent about its social and judicial practices. One of the reasons for this related to lucrative commercial activities in Afghanistan, such as the American oil company Unocal's business prospect to build a US\$2 billion pipeline to carry natural gas from Turkmenistan to Pakistan and India (Rubin, 2000).



It was only subsequent to the events of 11 September 2001, once the United States embarked on the 'war on terror', that the Afghan Mujahedeen, formerly credited by the US for defeating the Soviet Union and triggering its disintegration, became formally reclassified by the United States as a central component of the global terrorist network and the new enemy of the twenty-first century (Kinzer, 2007).

After the 9/11 attacks, the US wanted to overthrow the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. For the US, Afghanistan had been a place of refuge for Osama bin Laden and his companions, but also a haven for global terrorism. At first, before declaring war on

Afghanistan in October 2001, President Bush demanded only that the Taliban overthrow its leader, Mullah Omar, and cut its ties to Al-Qaeda. Failure by the Taliban leaders to turn Osama bin Laden over to the United States led to the US attacking the Taliban Afghan regime (Kinzer, 2007). This war continued for months and seemed to be successful, from an American viewpoint (Rogers, 2006).

The main reason Bush decided to occupy Afghanistan for a short while was that his attention was concentrated on Iraq, and though he was aware of the significance of stabilising Afghanistan, his obsession with Iraq and Saddam Hussein overshadowed this. The US could not conduct two major military offensives at the same time and Iraq was strategically far more important than Afghanistan (Kinzer, 2007), as will be shown below.

3.3.3 Iran–US relations

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In 1952, Iranian prime minister Mohammed Mossaddeq initiated nationalisation of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC) that hitherto was controlled by Britain, and from which Britain derived 85% of the profits. The British retaliated with an embargo on Iranian oil that was supported by most international oil companies (Abdelrehim & Toms, 2017).

In this instance the US intervened and negotiated with Britain to moderate its position in the negotiations, implying that the US was on Iran's side. However, in spite of the efforts by US president Truman to support Iranian president Mossaddeq, without Truman's knowledge, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in Tehran successfully

launched a coup d'état to overthrow Mossaddeq. The operation initially failed, but a second attempt succeeded, and Mosaddeq was imprisoned (ibid).

Following the coup, the US government gave Iran \$68 million as emergency aid (Gasiorowski & Byrne, 2017). Subsequently, until the fall of the Shah in 1979, Iran was one of the United States' closest allies and the US played a role in founding the Shah's secret police to keep him in power. The Shah received significant US support during his reign, and frequently made state visits to the White House. The Shah's close ties to US and its modernisation policies enraged some Iranians, especially Islamic conservatives (Abdolmohammadi & Cama, 2020).



In 1963 the Shah implemented the 'White Revolution', a campaign of social and economic Westernisation that included redistribution of land. Islamic nationalist Ayatollah Khomeini rejected these policies and perceived the US agenda as manipulating Iran in order to advance its own interests in the Middle East. Khomeini campaigned against US interference and the Shah's alignment to US policies, and was arrested in one of many crackdowns on the Shah's opponents.

During 1979, political unrest increased and protests against the Shah intensified. During this period Khomeini returned from France, where he had been exiled and led the campaign to topple the Shah, rejecting US–Iran relations and Westernisation policies and instead calling for the reinforcement of Islamic law and the immediate end

to interference by foreign (US) nations in the affairs of Iran and other Islamic nations (Abdolmohammadi & Cama, 2020).

Backed by the Soviet Union, the resilience and perseverance of Khomeini's movement placed Iran in a state of turmoil, which led to business closures and decreased oil production (Abrahamian, 1991). However, despite the political instability in Iran, the US continued to support the Shah with military aid to sustain his power (Curtis & Hooglund, 2008). The US opposed Khomeini for a number of reasons: one is that if Khomeini were to come to power, he would terminate Western influence in Iranian policies, which were central to the US need for oil (Wise, 2011). The other significant threat came from the possibility of the Soviet Union succeeding in expanding its influence in the area (Bayandor, 2019).



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Following the 1979 Iranian revolution, Khomeini became Iran's Supreme Leader. This position was established in terms of the constitution of the Islamic Republic as the highest-ranking political and religious authority of the nation. Khomeini led Iran until his death on 3 June 1989. During his term, Khomeini removed Iran from the US sphere of influence. Consequently, since Iran had been a strategic place for the US to gather intelligence on the Soviet Union, this meant an end to US intelligence and spying on the Soviet nuclear and missile testing sites in Soviet Central Asia (Murray, 2009). The new oil policies marked an economic shift for both Iran and the US, as Iran began to benefit from its oil-generated profits; while the US was required to pay more for foreign oil (Nitzan & Bichler, 1995). In 1979, Khomeini officially cancelled US\$7 billion worth of US arms purchases, marking an extreme change in economic policies between the

two countries. This meant that the US had to find new buyers for the arms to prevent the US economy from weakening (Nitzan & Bichler, 1995). This shift caused economic implications for the US economy, as Iran turned to China and Russia and purchased arms from these two countries. US oil refining companies paid nearly US\$30 per barrel for OPEC's crude oil: double what it had been one year before and approximately ten times the price that was paid in 1970. These new oil policies marked an economic shift for Iran and the US generated more profits from its oil industry; while the US was required to pay more for foreign oil (ibid).

Following the Iranian revolution, Iran aimed to create a new geopolitical order in the Persian Gulf. At the same time, Iraq aimed at expanding its territory to include part of the oil fields of Iran. In addition, Iraq was concerned that the 1979 Iranian Revolution would lead Iraq's Shi'ite majority to rebel against the government.

The subsequent invasion of Iran by Iraq in 1980 and the consequences in terms of the balance of power in the Middle East and US relations with Iraq and Iran will be discussed in depth in the following section.

3.3.4 1980s Iran–Iraq war

Iraq is Iran's neighbour and the two nations share a 900-mile-long border. During the Cold War, Iran and Iraq were on opposite sides and the US had no formal relationship with Iraq, which was the beneficiary of large-scale Soviet military assistance. As Iran received aid from United States, the US had built its Middle East policy around Iran

and the Shah. During this period, Saddam Hussein, Iraq's leader, was the Shah's greatest enemy. Following the 1979 revolution, Iranian/US relations deteriorated, and Iran turned towards Russia for support. At this stage, Hussein feared that the Iranian Revolution in 1979 would inspire an uprising among Iraq's long-suppressed Shi'i majority, and he also had ambitions for Iraq to replace Iran as the dominant Persian Gulf state. The post-revolutionary instability and military weakness of Iran was further aggravated by their unpopular status with Western powers.

This gap provided Hussein with an opportunity to invade Iran in September 1980 (Chubin, 2019), using lethal weapons of mass destruction against Iranian soldiers, of which the US was secretly aware. The war continued for almost a decade until 1988, and although the US stood firm on its claim to being neutral, Khomeini blamed the US for the invasion, adding that the neutral stance purported by the US during the Iran–Iraq war was targeted at weakening Iraq and containing the new revolutionary Iran (Keddie, 2006). Fundamentally, the stance taken by the US was in itself a ploy to weaken both warring nations through sustaining a war that was to prove costly to both Iraq and Iran (Laipson, Sick & Cottam, 1995; Chubin, 2019).

The US utilised the war and hostility between the two states to establish relations with Iraq, creating an ally against Iran and the Soviet Union (Mueller, 2006). Iran was defeated by Iraq in 1988 and both states accepted the UN ceasefire and the UN Resolution 568, which set pre-war international borders according to the 1975 Algiers agreement (Kumral, 2016). In effect, the United States chose Iraq, led by Saddam Hussein, to be its proxy for policy in the Persian Gulf region and to counter the actions of Iran, which the United States perceived as its biggest threat. Saddam was also seen

as useful in acting as a check on the rise of Shia power. The rise of Shia power in the Middle East was seen as a threat by Sunni governments such as Saudi Arabia, who were powerful allies of the US. During this period the repressive acts carried out by Hussein against Iraqi citizens did not negatively affect US support for a dictator who represented the opposite of Western democratic ideals and values. This created one of the most prominent contradictions in US foreign policy and discourse, as will be shown in Chapter Four.

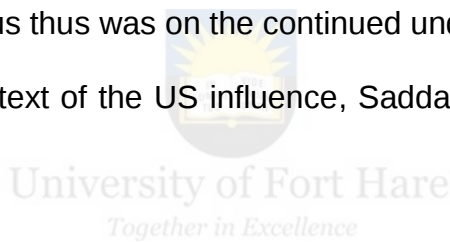
3.4 The 1990s and 2000

This period after 1990 marked a very important era in the arena of international relations, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and ending the Cold War, whilst heralding US hegemony. The world had become unipolar in a military, geopolitical and ideological manner under US hegemony. Significantly, this enabled the US to take the lead in disseminating the values and practices that corresponded to the dominant culture, so that principles of democracy, along with free-market economies, were established throughout the world. With the demise of the Soviet Union, the US no longer had to contain the Soviet in its interests in the Middle East. However, Iraq, led by Saddam Hussein, became increasingly aggressive and became a liability to the US when Iraq attacked Kuwait on 2 August 1990, as shown in the following section.

3.4.1 The Persian Gulf War of 1990

The Iran-Iraq war left Iraq in debts estimated to be over \$60 billion. This amount was borrowed to finance the war and from that amount \$14 billion was borrowed from

Kuwait (Simon & Benjamin, 2000). Additionally, President Saddam Hussein requested the Emir of Kuwait Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to clear Iraq's debt without repayment conditions, and also for Kuwait to reduce its share of oil production in order to hike prices to provide relief for Iraq's war-crippled economy (Carlisle, 2009). Kuwait declined both requests and instead increased OPEC oil production by 50%, meaning that the price was not affected upwards through decreasing oil stocks, which further impacted negatively on Iraq's already crumbling economy (Leeb & Strathy, 2006). Subsequent to the defeat of Iran during the Iran/Iraq war, which lasted until 1988, the leader of Iraq, Saddam Hussein, in 1990 revealed his intentions to invade Kuwait to the US ambassador April Glaspie. The US indicated that it had no opinion or say when it came to Arab conflicts, a sign that the invasion was not against US interests (Arend & Beck, 2014). The impetus thus was on the continued understanding that as long as Iraq played within the context of the US influence, Saddam Hussein could do as he saw fit (Huntington, 1997).



The invasion was launched on 2 August 1990 and lasted for only two days, after which Iraq laid claim to Kuwait as an extension and additional province to Iraq. This successful invasion of Kuwait saw Iraq controlling over 20% of the global oil supplies and having greater access to the Persian Gulf (Lieber, 1992). Instantly, on the first day of the invasion, the international community through the UN opposed the invasion and ordered Iraq to withdraw its troops. Iraq ignored the order and continued its occupation of the oil-rich Kuwait. The defeated leaders of Kuwait sought refuge in neighbouring state Saudi Arabia. In this instance more than 32 nations including Britain, Egypt, France and Kuwait joined a coalition under the command of the US (Yetiv, 2010).

Consequently, this led to the UN enacting an international trade ban on Iraq (Hamilton, 2011).

The US backed coup was not successful and the US withdrew its military intelligence support and sought alternative strategies to end Saddam Hussein's regime (Khalidi, 2004). One of the alternative measures introduced in a bid to topple Saddam was the CIA strategy aimed at establishing a partnership with an Iraqi opposition movement founded in 1992, known as the Iraqi National Congress (INC) (Lieber, 1992).

The INC's principal objective was to gather intelligence information and cascade the US intelligence and media with 'defectors' claiming that the Iraqi government was hiding weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and concealing its ties to Al Qaeda terrorists. The 'defectors' provided by INC advanced a political advantage creating a platform to discredit the Iraqi leader and thereby illustrating an anti-democratic system which was propelling for an urgent intervention (Parry, 2015). Finally, the US put forward humanitarian arguments, such as liberating the Iraqi people from Saddam Hussein's dictatorship and his terrorist associations. The intervention, they contended, would bring freedom and democracy to Iraq.

3.5 Towards the Occupation of Iraq

During President Bush's tenure as president, the US failed to unseat Saddam Hussein, but after President Bill Clinton succeeded Bush in January 1993, US foreign policy focused on a 'dual containment' policy (Butt, 2019), based on the assumption that the Iraqi and Iranian regimes were both hostile to US interests in the Middle East region.

The dual containment relied on maintaining US military presence in the Middle East (ME), in order to contain the military ambitions of both Iraq and Iran. However, the US relied on regional allies Turkey, Egypt, Israel and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the political and economic alliance of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman to preserve a balance of power in favour of US interests. Finally, the dual containment policy aimed at creating conditions that made it impossible for Iraq to comply with UN resolutions on arms, so as to weaken the power held by Saddam Hussein by increasing economic sanctions and isolating both Iraq and Iran (Byman & Waxman, 2000).

Following the 1991 Gulf War, UN inspectors confirmed that Iraq's physical capacity to construct nuclear bombs had been destroyed and economic sanctions limited the import of materials that could be used to manufacture WMD. This ensured that Saddam had little opportunity to develop nuclear capabilities (Pfiffner, 2008).

3.5.1 9/11 attacks on the US: A turning point

The attacks on US civilian and military targets by Islamic insurgent group Al-Qaeda on 11 September 2001 constituted a revenge for the decades-long interference by the US in the affairs of the Middle East. Although the US response was shock and outrage, there was no immediate plan for retribution by then-President Clinton.

Although this event provided a plausible reason for a US counter-attack, it was to take a backseat to the invasion of Afghanistan and subsequent defeat of Al-Qaeda and Taliban carried out during the presidency of George W. Bush from 2002 – 2008 (Hersh,

2003). During early 2002, US intelligence agencies did not consider Iraq among their five most pressing concerns, as Saddam Hussein had been successfully contained, even if they were not certain that he was fully disarmed. However, on 20 January 2001, George Bush was inaugurated as US president, succeeding Bill Clinton. US foreign policy was now dominated by Bush's campaign against Iraq, centred around the elimination of weapons of mass destruction in order to get rid of the 'Iraqi threat' (Everest, 2004).

Prior to the 9/11 events, the United States had enjoyed global hegemony with its material capabilities and was a universally uncontested hegemonic power, but a successful anti-state operation against it by non-state actors was testimony to the existence of considerable counter-hegemonic sentiment in the Middle East that extended deeply into Arab society. Consequently, the United States felt the need to re-establish itself as an aggressive global power. To re-establish its reputation as the hegemon, the US had to prove that it could punish by fighting and winning a war. Bojang (2017) argues that the defeat of an intractable rival like Saddam Hussein would serve this purpose and that invading Iraq would allow the United States to reaffirm its strength to a global audience and re-position itself as hegemon.

On 29 January 2002, Bush presented his first State of the Nation address, labelling Iraq as a member of an 'axis of evil', along with Iran and North Korea. Subsequently on 7 March 2002 a meeting between Iraq and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and UN Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) Executive Chairman Hans Blix was held to discuss the return of arms inspectors to Iraq for the

first time since 1998. Accordingly, on 16 September 2002 Iraq accepted the return of UN inspectors and requested time to prepare for the return of UN inspectors. The US rejected the request, contending that the Iraqis were delaying deliberately to prolong the inspection process. During the UNSC briefing on 5 November 2002, US Secretary of State Colin Powell continued to engage the Security Council in an effort to convince members that Iraq was undermining the inspections process. In this instance, the Bush administration pressured the UN Security Council to approve a new UN resolution 1441, calling for Iraq to give weapon inspectors unrestricted access and to authorise the use of force if Iraq failed to comply (UN Security Council Meeting, 8 November 2002).

The resolution was accepted by Iraq on 13 November 2002, and shortly thereafter, on 27 November, UNMOVIC and IAEA inspections ensued in Iraq (Isikoff & Corn, 2006). On 7 December 2002 Iraq submitted its declaration “of all aspects of its weapons of mass destruction programmes” as required by UN Resolution 1441 and on 19 December UNMOVIC and IAEA inspectors reported to the UN Security Council that the declaration contained little new information (ibid). However, the report by Iraq was deemed unsatisfactory by the US and UK, who declared that Iraq was in “material breach” of Security Council resolutions and that the Iraqi declaration contained a “pattern of systematic...gaps” that constituted “another material breach” of Iraq’s disarmament obligations (UN Security Meeting, 8 November 2002).

The US and UK pressurised the UN Security Council to support a new resolution for “use of force” against Iraq, contending that this was necessary to deter Iraqi’s military ambitions for developing weapons of mass destruction, and that Iraq was still hiding

such weapons and interfering with inspections. However, the remaining UNSC members advised against military action and instead France, China, and Russia encouraged new strategies of inspection (ibid).

On 24 February 2003, the United States, United Kingdom, and Spain collaborated to draft a new Security Council resolution, stating that Iraq had failed to cooperate with the final opportunity afforded to it by Resolution 1441. In response, on the same day, Russia and France submitted a memorandum stating that military force should be a “last resort” and that force should not yet be used because there is “no evidence” that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction (Chilcot, 2016). The memorandum recommended strategies including continued inspections and regular report submission by inspectors to the UNSC. Measures to strengthen inspections included increasing staff and boosting technical capabilities. These suggestions were ignored by US, UK and Spain and none of the proposed measures were adopted.

However, despite the US announcement that it would seek a United Nations Security Council vote for the new resolution, after US-led diplomatic efforts to build support for the new resolution had failed, the US decided not to do so (Woodward, 2004). On 17 March UN Secretary General Kofi Annan announced that UN weapons inspectors would be withdrawn from Iraq and at the same time President Bush announced that Saddam Hussein and his sons had 48 hours to leave Iraq or the United States would initiate military action. Accordingly, on 19 March the US launched an attack, supported by troops from the UK, Australia, and Poland. On 1 May Bush confirmed that US forces

had not discovered any Iraqi weapons of mass destruction since the occupation of the country.

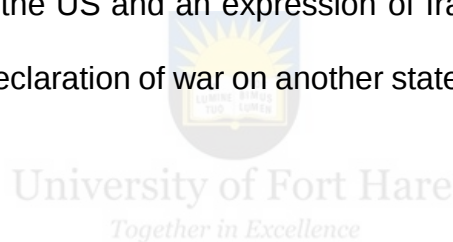
In this summary of events of the 1990s and 2000s, it has been demonstrated that the United States took military action against Iraq subsequent to the 9/11 attacks to demonstrate to the global community that it would remain the global hegemon. It is important to note that there was no possibility of Iraq avoiding war, and the US invasion and occupation of Iraq illustrates the US decisions to exercise hegemony through coercion where its diplomatic strategies failed to secure collaboration and consent by various regimes in the Middle East (Bojang, 2017).

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter provided an illustration of the rise to hegemony of the US and its response to threats to its hegemony. This chapter outlined events that took place following the end of WWII and the collapse of the Soviet Union, which ended the Cold War and precipitated the emergence of the United States as a global hegemonic power. This chapter noted that the US hegemon was oil based and as a result of oil, US industry was boosted. However, the US industry grew faster, and was consequently unable to meet its domestic demand for oil with its own supplies. This saw the US creating several interstate relations in the oil-rich Middle East in order to secure cheap oil supplies. The objective of the interstate relations by the US was to create allies and friends, although the measures utilised by the US military and the CIA – coercion and subversion respectively – illustrate the fundamentally bullying nature of the hegemon's

relationship with Middle East states, particularly after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the collapse of Russian influence in the region after 1990.

However, the 9/11 events marked a great shift in the US discourse about the Middle East, as 'terrorism' emerged as a global security issue. Saddam Hussein had previously been the greatest ally of the US during the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988), following the Iranian revolution of 1979, which led to the overthrow of the US-backed Iranian monarchy (Pahlavi dynasty) under Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and its replacement with a republic under Ayatollah Khomeini. However, the invasion of Kuwait in 1991 by Saddam Hussein was an indication of the latter's defiance of the apparent hold wielded by the US and an expression of Iraqi sovereignty in the most extreme form, through a declaration of war on another state that was an ally of the US.



The 9/11 events were an illustration of the intensity of anti-US sentiment in the Middle East, and the fact that the attack had been directed at civilian as well as military targets in US territory posed a definite threat to US hegemony. At the same time, this attack re-defined the nature of conflict and inter-state relations in international relations by incorporating non-state actors in an attack on the hegemon. The US therefore deemed it imperative to reinforce its hegemony in the global community, starting with the Middle East. At this point it can be argued that US hegemonic power was already being challenged by the emergence of China as an industrial and financial power, as well as the resurgence of Russia as a potential player in the Middle East. The US was determined to stamp its authority; however, sending troops to both Afghanistan and Iraq was logistically impossible. Troops had to be withdrawn from Afghanistan and the

war in Iraq was constructed on the basis of INC propaganda and accusations of WMD existing in Iraq, along with its ties to Al-Qaeda.

The events covered in this chapter provide the context for the examination of the relationship between discourse and power that follows in Chapter Four, which investigates how US discourse framed the global understanding of events in the Middle East as a fundamentally terrorist phenomenon subsequent to 9/11.

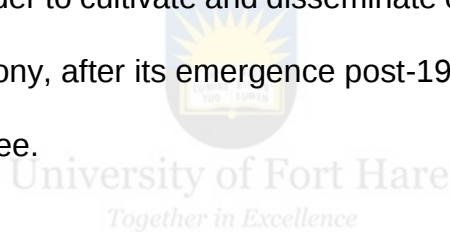


CHAPTER FOUR

TERRORISM CONCEPTUALISED BY HEGEMONY AFTER THE COLD WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

4.1 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to illustrate the relationship between hegemony and discourse by firstly offering examples of the discourse used by the US as part of its campaign to secure global hegemony, following the demise of the Soviet Union in 1990, and, secondly, by providing a linkage between this chapter and Chapter Two. The discussions in Chapter Two explained why hegemonic discourse emanating from the US was essential in order to cultivate and disseminate common values and beliefs that reinforced US hegemony, after its emergence post-1990 as the global hegemon, as detailed in Chapter Three.



This chapter aims to present the discourse that was developed by the hegemon, and, although recognising the attempts by counter-hegemonic movements that are encapsulated in Orientalism, the research does not investigate these in the same depth with which it explores hegemonic discourse.

In order to analyse how the hegemon conceptualised and created the discourse around terrorism, this chapter draws on a Foucauldian framework that emphasises the relation between power and discourse as inter-dependent in their coexistence (Jackson, Gunning, Jarvis & Smyth, 2011), as discussed in Chapter Two. Dominant

discourses can only be created by the hegemon, which is in the unique position of supremacy that allows them to construct discourse (Foucault, 1983).

Conceptions of terrorism have changed over time to accommodate the political discourse of successive eras and the way in which 'terrorism' has proven to be increasingly fluid in the context of ever-shifting relationships of power. Consequently, the events of 9/11 gave the dominant state a new policy of pre-emptive war, first in Afghanistan and then in Iraq (Dunmire, 2009). Arguably, the most significant outcome of the 'war on terror' construction was in giving a rhetorical reason for the invasion of Iraq.



Following the 9/11 events in the form of an attack by Al-Qaeda operatives on various US targets, both civil and military, the 'war on terror' was developed as a hegemonic political discourse by the US (Jackson, 2005). In subsequent years, 'terrorism' constituted a negative ideograph used by the West to label groups that opposed Western interests. 'Terrorism' emerged as a delegitimising concept to the extent that members of anti-US groups in the Middle East were demonised and labelled as the 'axis of evil' (Bush, 2001). Subsequently, generally held views and beliefs on terrorism were disseminated and entrenched in societies, alongside the accepted response creating perceptions on how it should be dealt with, in this case, in the form of war against 'terrorist perpetrators'.

The 9/11 attacks marked a shift in the ontology of international relations after non-state actors launched an attack directly on civilian and military bases within the territory of the global hegemon. “This is a new era... everything changed on that morning, the world changed on that day,” was the observation made by Bush on 14 February 2003 in a state meeting held on improving counterterrorism intelligence (Jamieson & Waldman, 2003). This implied a new approach to international relations that Bush envisaged as being directly reminiscent of US foreign policy. As indicated in Chapter Three, the 9/11 events launched a new discourse based on manipulation and (mis)representation of events and situations in the Middle East, in particular, in Iraq, so as to legitimise the use of violence as an instrument of US foreign policy in that part of the world.



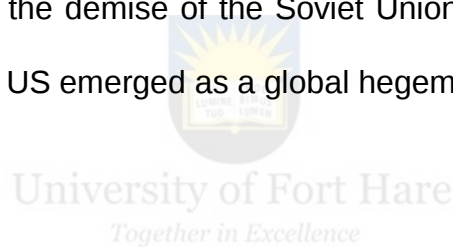
The US government had as early as January 2001 discussed the pre-emptive use of military force to ‘deter’ other countries from challenging US interests. Accordingly, following the 9/11 events, the military action in Afghanistan can be viewed as a demonstration model of what might be faced by other countries that were perceived hostile to the United States (Suskind, 2004). The successful military campaign against Afghanistan inspired the US to broaden its campaign to those other states that were considered as threats to US interests. The US worked to frame Iraq; it maintained that Iraq had acquired weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, and that it was sponsoring terrorist networks such as Al-Qaeda.

Whilst the purpose of the hegemon is to cultivate the acceptability and permissibility of the ‘war on terror’, counter-hegemonic movements aim to discredit the discourse of

the hegemon by providing arguments against the existence of the hegemon and its actions. The hegemon at the same time is bound to discredit counter-hegemonic movements in order to preserve its hegemonic status, as well as the corresponding beliefs and views that are essential to its continued existence.

4.2 The Discourse Constructed Around 'Terrorism'

As indicated in Chapter Three, following the end of WWII, global politics was characterised by a bipolar power rivalry between the US and Soviet Union. Even though both the Soviet Union and the United States reserved their nuclear arsenals, the balance of nuclear threat between them remained potentially in force. The end of the Cold War followed by the demise of the Soviet Union changed the world into a unipolar configuration; the US emerged as a global hegemony.



The rise of the US as a hegemonic power and the absence of an asymmetrical rival power allowed the US to identify a necessary change in international politics. The switch to a war economy became necessary after oil prices increased in the 1970s, accompanied by the transfer of oil ownership from US to the Middle East. This meant that for the US there was a need to sell more arms in order to pay for oil (Thrall & Dorminey, 2018). In this instance it became important to sustain warfare, in order for the arms to have buyers. Consequently, the Middle East was identified as the centre of war for the reason that the various states in the ME had different alliances with one another and with global powers such as the US, Russia, and China; also, they were the biggest buyers of arms in the 1990s. Ultimately they presented the 'ideal' context for war, and Bush needed a justification for war.

Following the 9/11 attacks, the preponderant power of the US was threatened. In response, the US launched its global 'war on terror' discourse, targeting Iraq. As a result, the US invaded Iraq, an act intended to demonstrate to the global audience that US power remained unmatched. Ultimately, the US aggression towards Iraq was designed to have aided the US to proclaim its hegemonic status in the international arena. The 9/11 attacks thus provided the grounds for a change of direction in US foreign policy and the cultivation of a new hegemonic discourse (Dunn, 2003), or, as Mostafa, (2015) explains that the US used the 9/11 events to "tighten" its hegemony globally in terms of the US military power, control of the global economy and the dissemination of western value systems. The launching of the 'war on terror' by President George Bush was not just conceptual; it included strategies, ideologies and a military campaign to justify the US response to the attacks and an expression around which the global community could rally. It permitted the nature and the scope of the US counter 'terrorism' strategy to the 9/11 attacks. The 'war on terror' discourse has shaped the global public opinion as various actors across the globe attempted to justify, respond to and also understand the phenomenon.

'Terrorism' was established using a strong form of discourse that informs society on how to perceive and react to 'terrorism', even going as far as guiding what can and cannot be said about 'terrorism'. In other words, the discourse defines its own conceptual boundaries and does not accommodate discussion outside of these. This is a direct result of social and political construction; therefore, what is constructed about the phenomenon is interpreted across society as the absolute truth. Moreover, the discourse therefore constitutes a grid of intelligibility through which other events, risks and threats are interpreted (Jackson, et al., 2011).

Following the collapse of the Pentagon, Bush characterised the 9/11 events in a way that appeared necessary, legitimate and, unavoidable. In Bush's first speech, the event is defined as definite terrorism, the doubt over the nature of event (an apparent terrorist attack) is unchallenged, and ultimately the event is categorised as 'terrorism' (Erikson, MacKuen & Stimson, 2002).

"Today we've had a national tragedy. Two airplanes have crashed into the World Trade Centre in an apparent terrorist attack on our country. Terrorism against our Nation will not stand." These are the first remarks made by Bush on the very same day of the event on 11 September 2001 during his speech in Sarasota, Florida, on the terrorist attack on New York City's World Trade Centre (Bartolucci & Gallo, 2015).



The above quoted text by President Bush provides that the subsequent repetition of the term 'terrorism' enables the labelling of the event as 'nothing else but terrorism'. In this regard the implicit labelling of the event as 'terrorism' dismisses other alternative terms. The framing becomes legitimised; what happened on that day is recognised as terrorism and 9/11 signifies a shift in international relations (Page, 1996).

In this instance it becomes clear how discourse interprets the phenomenon 'terrorism' associated with a particular meaning and kind of violence. Consequently, those perceived by Western state-centric discourse as terrorist agents have no power or eligibility to say anything about 'terrorism'. They are usually not given the capacity to talk, being the mere objects/receptors of the discourse. Ultimately, it becomes clear that terrorist identities and descriptions are a product of a Western discourse (Hulsse

& Spencer, 2008), for the reason that, from inception, the officials decide who the terrorists are (Silberstein, 2004). The hegemonic discourse is that the 'terrorist' is always the enemy, the dangerous opposition (Jackson, et al., 2011).

Essentially, the duty of discourse therefore is to create what should count as knowledge on 'terrorism' and to define what should be produced, communicated, legalised and resisted (Stump & Priya, 2013). To achieve this goal, the discourse of 'terrorism' thrives on new language, new narratives, and new authorities. Therefore, the 'terrorism' discourse requires the creation of a new uncontested reality in which the application of state violence appears normal and reasonable (Jackson, et al., 2011). Therefore, it appears that conventional concepts of 'terrorism' studies have essentially served to sustain the status quo, reducing politics to the management of social order, without much room for thoughts of emancipation and critical analysis (Gunning & Toros, 2009).

4.3 Post-9/11 Conceptualisations of the Middle East

An attack by a non-state actor on the most powerful state at the time, apart from being a blow to national security of the US, undermined the image of the US as an omnipotent, unassailable state. The discourse on 'terrorism' created by President Bush was developed to counter this by de-legitimising and discrediting the attackers, which was undertaken by categorising the world into 'evil versus good' and 'us [US] against them'. The Orientalist discourse that developed to explain the 'war on

terrorism' represented the Middle East according to a Western perspective that classified the 'Other', the enemy, according to being located either in the 'Occident' or 'Orient' (Said, 1994). Orientalism becomes an institution of hegemony, constituting a Western tool for (mis)representing Arab societies, dominating, restructuring and having authority over them. Muslims and the Islamic faith are presented as an inferior 'Other' whose violence reinforced the supremacy of the West, which represented freedom, liberty and civilisation (Hatem, 2001).

The members of the Bush administration who developed and presented hegemonic discourse were President Bush, Vice-President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and former Secretary of State, Chairperson of the Joint Chief of Staff Colin Powell and Press Secretary Ari Fleischer. These officials represented and spearheaded the discursive campaign against Iraq and contributed to the justification of the occupation of Iraq (Corlett, 2012).

The following extracts from speeches by President Bush and his administration consistently connected Iraq with 9/11. The discourse was conceptualised by senior members of the Bush administration and was so consistent as to present a unity of opinion that points to careful orchestration (Lecamwasam, 2013).

A statement by President Bush on 11 October 2001, during his White House address on the state of war, singles out Iraq as the 'Other' amongst the Middle East states and gives effect to the justification of war in response to the 9/11 attacks:

The world has come together to fight a new and different war, the first, and we hope the only one, of the 21st century; a war against all those who seek to export terror and a war against those governments that support or shelter them. (*Washington Post*, 11 October 2001)

This statement, together with President Bush's inclusion of the Middle Eastern countries of Iran and Iraq as an 'axis of evil', clearly points out Iraq as a host and enemy of the US, just as Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein were both described as the Muslim 'Other' political leaders. The enemy or Muslim 'Other' in this context is compared to the previous axis of power, the Nazis and their allies, who were the greatest US enemy during WWII (Nabers, 2016).



As mentioned above, Bush's binary division of the world into 'evil versus good' in the aftermath of the 9/11 polarised the world into a 'terrorist' and 'anti-terrorist' dichotomy. An example is his statement on 20 September 2001, at the launch of his anti-terrorism campaign: "Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists." This phrase "you're either with us, or [you're against us]" implied that listeners were either 'pro-terrorism' or 'anti-terrorism' and also forced others to either become allies of the hegemonic US or lose its favour. The implied consequence of not joining the team effort was to be deemed an enemy of the hegemonic US and a 'terrorist' supporter (Azpiroz, 2013).

As a result of this call by the US to world leaders to join the 'anti-terrorism' campaign, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) took a number of initial support measures, including enhanced intelligence-sharing on terrorism. NATO includes the

following countries: Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. Amongst these states, the UK was the first converter (Wintz, 2010).

On 20 September 2001 during an address to a joint session of Congress and the nation, President Bush made the following statement:

Why do they hate us? They hate a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms – our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other. (*Washington Post*, 10 November 2001).

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Central to the aforementioned statement rests the assumption that ‘we’ are doing the just thing and ‘we’ are bringing them ‘our’ good values of ‘freedom’ and ‘democracy’. In the end the US represents the liberators who will free ‘the Middle East Arabs’ from evil and at the same time ‘punish the perpetrator’ (Lakoff, 2002). Usually the opposite of evil is good. In this instance, the US represents the good; more importantly, Bush’s speech exploits the rationale that ‘justice’ can be achieved only through winning a physical battle (Lakoff, 2001). This ‘Othering’ of those who opposed the US activities in the Middle East will be examined in greater detail later in this chapter, when examining the role of the media in creating and disseminating hegemonic discourse.

Another aspect of this statement is that the events are attributed to hatred, which therefore dismisses the political right of the enemy by excluding political objectives and framing the acts as an act of hatred or evil.

“I think these are coldblooded killers. I mean, they'll kill innocent people, they have not only killed in Spain; they have killed in the United States; they have killed in Turkey; they have killed in Saudi Arabia”. These remarks were made by President Bush on a televised appearance following discussions with Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende of the Netherlands on 16 March 2001 (Bartolucci & Gallo, 2015). In this quote, the allies of the US are identified as being the common enemy of ‘terrorists’, hence signifying the common ground shared in the fight against ‘terrorism’. In this statement it becomes clear that the manipulation of sentiment through discourse ignores certain inconvenient realities. In this instance, the US identifies Saudi Arabia as an ally of US through its shared experience of being targeted by ‘terrorists’, in spite of the fact that fifteen of the nineteen hijackers who participated in the 9/11 events were from Saudi Arabia (Davis, 2016). This speech reveals that the US has exempted Saudi Arabia from association with any form of terrorism, in order to establish common ground for a collaborated effort by various states against the US enemy. In this regard, US waged its ‘war on terror’ on the Muslims exclusively, with the exception of its close ally, Saudi Arabia.

Even though Saudi Arabia remained an important point of origin in the 'war on terror', its possible link was overlooked. Instead, the US sought Iraq as a visible enemy to make an example of to deter others. The statement by former US Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger on CNN on the day of the 9/11 attacks reveals that there was little evidence linking Iraq to the 9/11 events. However, there was an urgency to respond to the 9/11 events and to demonstrate the military might of the US to the international community. In his statement Lawrence Eagleburger said: "There is only one way to deal with people like this, and that is you have to kill some of them, even if they are not immediately directly involved in this thing" (CNN, 11 September 2001).

Consequently, Iraq was a prime target for the 'war on terror' campaign following the victory in Afghanistan (Kellner, 2004). In this instance for the US, the defeat of the Taliban and al-Qaeda in Afghanistan demonstrated that the US was determined to live up to its promise by President Bush's State of the Union Address, "to punish rogue states which were a part of the axis of evil". As discussed in Chapter Three, one of the reasons Iraq was chosen for this demonstration was that Saddam Hussein was recognised internationally as a dictator and, therefore, removing him would demonstrate the US military might against a visible enemy. Moreover, for the US, the combination of this and Iraq's history of use of WMD in the war against Iran and the repeated search of WMD discussed in Chapter Three meant that the 'war on terror' campaign against Iraq would receive more favour than if the US targeted a country without a history of political violence in the Middle East (Katzman, 2011).

As mentioned earlier, Bush declared Iraq, Iran and Korea to be an 'axis of evil' that threatened world peace during the state of the nation address (Dumbrell, 2008). In the aftermath of 9/11, 'terrorists' became the personification of evil. Consequently, Iraq was made the rhetorical centre of the so-called 'axis of evil'. The regime of Saddam Hussein became the embodiment of a moral 'evil'.

In this regard, 9/11 became a powerful rhetorical tool in legitimising military operations in Iraq. President Bush's discourse served an ideological purpose to justify and legitimise war in Iraq. This was built on an idea that US not only needed to act, but also was right to act. The justification therefore was constructed as part of a security discourse, where it was argued that the US needed to act out of self-defence in line with the wider political ideology of interventionism. Even though evidence of a link between Iraq and terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda was difficult to establish, any mention of the two together had a legitimising effect due to the emotional impact of 9/11 (Feith, 2008). The security legitimisation of the Iraq war is repeated in several of the President's speeches, such as during his state of the nation address delivered on 29 January 2002:

Hussein supported terrorism, sought and possessed weapons of mass destruction, killed and tortured his own people, and could not be trusted. Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility towards US and to support terror. The Iraqi regime has planned to develop nuclear weapons for over a decade. This is a regime that has already used poison gas to murder thousands of its own citizens leaving the bodies of mothers huddled over their dead children. This is a regime that agreed to international inspections then chased out the inspectors. This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilised world (Bush: 2005).

The discursive effect of this speech is twofold: firstly, it accentuates the link between Saddam Hussein and the nuclear weapons programme. Bush's persistence in mentioning nuclear weapons and Saddam's brutal regime creates a discursive intention to emphasise the threatening and dangerous implications of delaying to respond to the Saddam threat associated with 9/11. This therefore builds a strong case for war. Ultimately, Bush's rhetoric implies that the failure to deal with the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein will result in similar prospects, such as the 9/11 events (Gordon & Trainor, 2007).

On September 2002 during the fundraising campaign for the Republican Senate candidate, President Bush cited a number of reasons for an urgent need to respond to the Iraqi regime threat to the US, by referring to historical events and introducing a personal reference to sway sentiment in his favour: "After all, this is the guy who tried to kill my dad" (CNN, 27 September 2002).

This statement shows how Bush reinforces the immediate 'threat'. He compares the 'old' world, which is seen as honourable and respectable, the generation that fought against Hitler for peace in World War II of "my father's generation", with the 'new' world. Underlying this juxtaposition is an important symbolisation for the need of a new approach to international relations following 9/11, particularly in the case of Iraq. Essentially a new approach requires action (war) and the need for new politics. In this case, justification for intervention is made through a comparison where the 'old system'

is 'backwards' and 'regressive', whilst Bush's ideas are the 'way forward' and 'progressive' (Charteris-Black, 2005). Also, another aspect of this statement is that Bush becomes a figure of moral accountability and a leading figure in the fight for freedom in a world of 'evil' (Gordon & Trainor, 2007).

As a result of this discourse, support for war in Iraq grew stronger; the connection between Iraq, WMD and 9/11 was made repeatedly. In this instance 'terrorism' was the primary rhetorical frame. The 'us' versus 'them' connotation intensified; Bush's rhetoric included constructs such as: 'they' are 'tyrannical states' that hate 'our' way of life, freedom, and democracy. In these statements the perpetrator is presented as both 'terrorists' and 'brutal' (Gordon & Trainor, 2007). The combination of the frightening aspect of WMD and the association to 9/11 attacks presented a strong justification for war. The following statement made by President Bush during a graduation ceremony at West Point in June 2002 can be considered:

Before the 911 attacks, many in the world believed that Saddam Hussein could be contained. But WMD, lethal viruses and shadowy terrorist networks are not easily contained. Imagine those 19 hijackers with other weapons and other plans this time armed by Saddam Hussein. It would take one vial, one canister, one crate slipped into this country to bring a day of horror like none we have ever known. We will do everything in our power to make sure that that day never comes. (White House, 1 June 2002).

In the above statement, the choice of words such as 'weapons of mass destruction' creates a strong meaning. Prior to the discourse of the 'war on terror' the use of the abbreviation 'WMD' for 'weapons of mass destruction' was non-existent; this term had

become undeniably linked to the rhetoric against the Saddam regime in Iraq in its construction of the justifying context for war and the phrase 'weapons of mass destruction' was integrally woven into US discourse (Richardson, 2007). In addition, the 'us and them' framing was central in its conception; 'WMD', a term which carries negative connotations, became associated with 'them', the enemy, synonymous with Iraq (Lakoff, 2002).

The state discourse of the Iraq war was therefore immensely reliant on finding WMD, but the media played a crucial role in aiding Bush to achieving the legitimisation and justification he needed for going to war by adopting the same stance. Though a minority element of the media offered critical and oppositional views, both the popular press and television channels with mass audiences came on board alongside the state, disseminating views fostering fear and hatred, as well as rationalising the need for war, as will be shown below.

4.4. The Role of Media Discourse and its Target: The Public

Following the 9/11 events, many factors contributed to shaping discourse. The 'war on terror' was absorbed into media discourse; and the news media became active participants in propagating the framing of the 'war on terror', precipitating the creation and dissemination of a discourse which generally contributed to the adverse association between Muslims and terrorism in Western society. This section examines reporting of the 'war on terror' from its launching after 9/11 in the form of newspapers and television channels by main media houses such as The Fox Channel, *The*

Washington Post, The White House Press, CNN news and CBS news, which had a tendency to follow US frames in presenting the 9/11 events and to push through a right-wing agenda: to go to war in Iraq. The discourse disseminated by the conservative US media and that of US allies became dominated by the “binary, polarised logic of Orientalism” and the confrontation between “East and West, anti-terrorism and pro-terrorism” (Kellner & Share, 2007).

According to Yusof, Hassan, Hassan and Osman (2013) the media’s primary function is to shape opinions and present a particular version as ‘reality’, one which, in the wake of the 9/11 attacks and as a result of Western media representations, depicts Islam negatively, by associating it with terrorism.



For example, Jerry Falwell, a conservative right-wing journalist, on the news show “60 Minutes” aired on the Fox Channel, heightened anti-Muslim sentiments. “I think Mohammed was a terrorist. I read enough of the history of his life written by both Muslims and non-Muslims, that he was a violent man, a man of war” (CBS news, 4 October 2002). Such remarks contributed to an increasing anti-Muslim sentiment. Following 9/11 events, anti-Islamic/ Muslim sentiments spread rapidly around the world. Several mosques in Europe and Australia were destroyed by individuals who believed they were supporting the US. For example, in South Shields, Northern England graffiti art drawings on a wall near a mosque read in red paint, “Avenge US: Kill a Muslim now” (Jones, 2001).

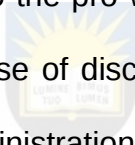
According to Bob Woodward (2008), a journalist at *The Washington Post*, Bush asserted during an interview on 20 December 2001 that the US objective was to eliminate “terror, wherever it may exist” (Bush, 2001) and it did not matter how long it would take.

Contrary to the predominantly anti-Iraqi stance adopted by the majority of the US media, some newspapers, such as *The New York Times*, presented critical arguments of Bush’s decision to invade Iraq in its headlines, such as “War in the ruins of diplomacy”. This newspaper spoke of war being waged “without the compulsion of necessity” which risked squandering “not America’s power, but an essential part of its glory” (*The New York Times*, 18 March 2003), implying that the war was avoidable and suggesting that the US world position as a hegemon and its credibility might be compromised as a result of its offensive against Iraq (Kellner, 2004).

The New York Times critiqued Bush’s construction of the war in Iraq and accused his administration of having hidden agendas disguised under the veil of diplomacy. However, it was a rare dissenting voice. The overwhelming majority of mass media in the US and in its closest ally, the UK, continued to lambast the Saddam regime.

Despite the fact that Press Secretary Ari Fleischer confirmed that Iraq was not responsible for 9/11, he nonetheless claimed that “the 9/11 events had to be a reminder to everyone about how vulnerable the US was, and that’s why it was necessary to win in Iraq” (Baker, 2007: 417). The Bush administration’s goal was to

successfully convince the global community that a link existed between Saddam Hussein, 'terrorism', and Al Qaeda. Framing the war on Iraq in this way connected it with 9/11, leading to justification for the war in Iraq.

Christensen (2006) argues that news programmes are usually perceived as 'serious' and 'truthful' for the reason that journalism to the general public is characterised by objectivity and fairness. Even though the Bush administration was the most frequently aired source in the news, the voices of anti-war groups were also considered. Opposition from the press across the globe who preferred diplomatic solutions rather than war was regularly reported on the news, even though anti-war perspectives were given less credibility in comparison to the pro-war views (Hayes & Guardino, 2010). Largely as a result of the effective use of discourse, the 2003 war in Iraq received public support because the Bush administration successfully framed the conflict as an extension of the 'war on terror'.  University of Fort Hare
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4.4.1 The image of a 'terrorist' as Muslim

Visual imagery as a component of discourse played a significant role in the conceptualisation of the enemy that the 'war on terror' targeted. Bush attributed the attacks to a "faceless enemy" that "hides in shadows and has no regard for human life" (Bush, 2001). In his speeches, 'terrorists' are wicked Islamists, religious fundamentalists and fanatics, who commit mass murder and attack innocent civilians (Ivie & Giner, 2007). US mass media produced stereotypical news stories, showing a mosque, a minaret, or a veiled woman, particularly when the story was about terrorism.

'The stereotypical images by US media coverage created a negative construction and immediately associated Muslim people with 'terrorism' (Christensen, 2006).

Muslim identities became associated with terrorism, particularly Muslim women. The 9/11 events transformed the meaning of the Muslim headscarf from the previous Orientalist discourse of the veil representing a form of female oppression to representing the suspicious, inherently violent, 'Terrorist Other'. In the post-9/11 era, several women in the US had their headscarves ripped off and were subjected to acts of violence (Erin; Kearns et al., 2017).

Mosques were no longer perceived as merely houses of worship. Instead, they represented habitats of extremism; therefore, in the context of the above extract, mosques became targets for law enforcement infiltration or public attacks. Ultimately, the media "played a significant role in influencing the whole world to morally support the US in protesting against terrorism" (Yusof, Hassan, Hassan & Osman, 2013: 105), a result that proves the power of media in shaping discourse. Essentially the Muslim 'Other' was construed as the enemy responsible for 9/11, and thus 9/11 became a justification for war against all who could be labelled as the Muslim 'Other'.

4.4.2. Weapons of mass destruction in media discourse

Accusations against Iraq needed to be justified, and the grounds for these was the alleged existence of WMD. Accordingly, allegations were made by Bush and his administration that Iraq was in the possession of 'weapons of mass destruction'. For example, in a memo dated 20 September 2001, Secretary of Defence Rumsfeld

emphasised to the US President that Iraq should be a major consideration in the new 'war on terror'. The reason was the link between Iraq's alleged sponsoring of 'terrorism' and its development ambitions in relation to the use of nuclear-based 'WMD. These statements provided the necessary basis for attacking Iraq (Cohn, 2008).

In most cases the media offered a motion of war unfolding (Lule, 2004). The key framework employed by mass media coverage during this period was certainly the debate about and search for Iraqi WMD. Although there were exceptions, very few questioned the actual existence of the WMD in the first place. US media coverage included texts supporting the toppling of a statue of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein provided by media houses such as the Fox Channel, and the *Washington Post*. On the other hand, a few British newspapers provided a more critical approach to this event, for example, *The Guardian* and *The Daily Mirror* chose to run critical editorials of the statue toppling (Fahmy, 2007).

Providing the pro-war and the counterpoint stances presented by newspapers and TV channels reveals the actual extent of the debate within the media concerning the 'war on terror' waged against Iraq and to compare the publicly declared and underlying reasons and purposes used to advance or reject the war. However, the US went ahead with the decision to invade Iraq.

Ann Coulter, widely recognised as a far-right journalist, wrote:

This is no time to be precious about locating the exact individuals directly involved in this particular terrorist attack. We should invade their countries, kill their leaders and convert them to Christianity. We weren't punctilious about locating and punishing only Hitler and his top officers. We carpet-bombed German cities; we killed civilians. That's war. And this is war. (Coulter, in Kellner, 2004: 61).

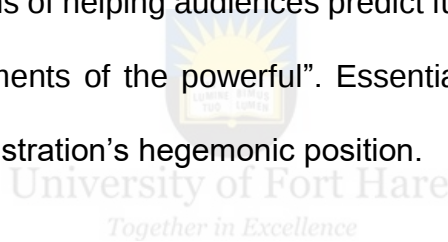
Coulter (Kellner, 2004) admitted that the link between Iraq and the terrorist group, Al Qaeda, was "loose"; however, the objective was to stir the spirit of revenge.

Mass media structured news and information concerning 'terrorism' in a way that created favourable conditions for military action in Iraq. The 'war on terror' discourse was given renewed currency through the media (Baker, 2007) and journalists intensified this discourse, making it acceptable to a Western audience (Lewis & Reese, 2009).

The overwhelming majority of media corporations framed discussion in such a way that it embraced the US-led war in Iraq as honourable. Individual newspapers such as the UK *Guardian* and the *Daily Mirror* motivated the alternative to war by promoting further diplomatic efforts, such as the leader article proposing that there was still "a chance for peace" and "still time to avert war" (*Daily Mirror*, 16 March 2003). On the same day, *The Guardian* urged for a solution through dialogue using the acceptable international platform of the United Nations, contending that "UN unity can still be achieved" (*The Guardian*, 16 March 2003). On the following day, the *Guardian* published an article which pointed out that "For all the warmongering predictions, the

emergency US-British-Spanish summit held in the Azores yesterday provided a necessary opportunity to cool rapidly overheating hearts and heads” (The Guardian, 17 March 2003). These isolated anti-war stances were nonetheless outweighed by the more prevalent pro-war discourse promulgated by the pro-Western media, with little accommodation of counter-discourse.

Ultimately, the 9/11 events provide an illustration of how various media outlets contributed to shaping public opinion, mainly in support of the invasion of Iraq. This pattern resonates with the tendency of reporters to “follow the trail of power” (Bennett, Lawrence & Livingston, 2007). According to Page (1994: 93 - 94), “this may result from a definition of news in terms of helping audiences predict future events by focusing on actions, plans, and statements of the powerful”. Essentially, media news coverage privileged the Bush administration’s hegemonic position.



Counter-hegemony is an alternative ethical view of society that poses a challenge to the dominant view (Cohn, 2004). Although it has been seen that there was little evidence of counter-hegemonic discourse within the entire range of Western media, it is important to nonetheless engage with alternative views to the US-led discourse on the war in Iraq. This is undertaken in the following section.

4.5 Counter-conceptualisations

Contrary to the conventional conceptions of ‘terrorism’, counter-conceptualisations rest on the notion that ‘terrorism’ can be seen primarily as a rhetorical tool, which is

deployed by actors as means of de-legitimising opponents. This gap is exacerbated by conventional concepts which have used the term selectively and in a propagandistic manner to focus almost solely on opponents of Western foreign policy (Raphael, 2009).

Non-state actors involved in 'terrorism' employ terror as a tactic to realise their strategic objectives, which include resisting invasions of their sovereignty by foreign armies (even when their own governments permit this), creating an independent nation-state (such as that of the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant, in the case of Al-Qaeda), and demolishing Western capitalism. Consequently, conceptualisations of 'terrorism' and 'terrorist attacks' are contextually shaped by the conventional conceptions adopted. For example, the distinction between 'terrorists' and freedom fighters is repeatedly distorted across political regimes (Stohl, 2006; Cohen-Almagor, 2005). Although terror tactics employed by certain groups of interest may be undesirable in one society, these same strategies and procedures may be acceptable in several others. Conceptions associated with these strategies therefore influence how these acts are perceived by society.

In this instance, 'terrorism' acquires an ontological status as a rhetorical term or discursive construct. Even though any form of violence is brutal by nature it becomes socially constructed due to the descriptive meaning given to it as 'war', 'crime', 'evil' or 'terrorism'. The counterpoint to these terms would be 'heroic', 'brave', 'noble' or 'courageous' when depicting the use of violence in the context of justifying its necessity and assigning it a moral value that redeems it. Ultimately, the context and presentation

is decided by socially negotiated agreement involving the authorities, political heads, the media, academics, political parties. Therefore, 'terrorism' does not exist as an objective, but classifications of different forms of political violence do (Sluka, 2008). The nature of terrorism is not inherent in the violent act itself. The actors involved decide on how to label the act of violence, depending on intention and circumstance (Schmid & Jongman, 1988). In other words, we cannot know 'terrorism' itself, only the way in which it is discursively constructed through dialogue and social practices (Zulaika & Douglass, 1996).

The assumption that states have a legitimate right to use violence, while non-state actors do not, is also problematic, because although states have the legitimate right to use violence, this right is restricted and does not include the right to use violence against its own citizens or the citizens of other states. Moreover, there is the principle that non-state actors may legitimately use violence in pursuit of both survival and political values like freedom and justice. In practice, Western states and international organisations have a long history of recognising and supporting violent non-state groups, some of whom have engaged in acts of terrorism, such as the Taliban group, which was later labelled as 'terrorist' following 9/11 (Shanahan, 2010).

Osama bin Laden (1996, in Garrison, 2007) argues that the justification for terror is provoked by injustice and oppression, suggesting that 'terrorists' are in reality defenders of the people against tyrants:

It should not be hidden from you that the people of Islam had suffered from aggression, iniquity and injustice imposed on them by the Zionist-

Crusaders alliance and their collaborators; to the extent that the Muslim's blood became the cheapest and their wealth as loot in the hands of the enemies. Their blood was spilled in Palestine and Iraq. (Sheikh Abdullah Yusuf Azzam in Garrison, 2007: 262).

The above statement was made by Sheikh Abdullah Yusuf Azzam, a scholar, theologian and founding member of al-Qaeda, killed by a car bomb in 1989., It can be concluded that from his perspective, representing the jihadists opposing US interference and occupation in the Middle East, it is the unjust acts of the oppressor that justify the use of terror.

Arab scholars of the counter-hegemonic (anti-Western) school of thought, such as Michel Nehme (2003), provide that Arab communities have for a long-time endured interference by Western powers. Meanwhile Western ideologies have failed to promote the development of Arab societies. Instead, Western cultures consequently penetrated and eroded Islamic values, beliefs and practices in most Arabic states. The new political system, where Western universalism is dominant, has threatened the safety of Arabs. It is for this reason that the Arab have taken it upon themselves to defend their beliefs, values, and practices, social and ethnic integrity.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has drawn from the Foucauldian (1977) concept of hegemonic discourse, which links the relationship between meaning and power to social practice. Foucault explains that in order to create meaning, the subject needs to possess power, both

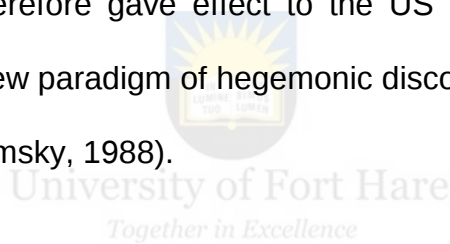
structuring and structured by the social positions available within the arena of social practice. In the case of the US as hegemonic power, because of the vast power vested in the state, any meaning created became accepted as the 'truth'. Even though this was not the case in reality, it was a *truth effect*, a truth that seeks to re-constitute and re-establish power through meaning.

This chapter has illustrated the discursive power of the hegemon through providing examples of discourse and narrative developed by the state and the media in relation to the context from which it was derived. The starting point for understanding the invasion of Iraq was the grand strategy of the US under Bush to undertake a coercive assertion of global hegemony in the wake of the 9/11 attacks on the US. As noted in the previous chapter, all previous US presidents sustained the containment policy until George W. Bush deviated from this practice, invading Iraq as an alternative to balancing the Iran/Iraqi threat, also perceived as key to coercive hegemony in the Middle East. The aim of the 'terrorism' discourse was to justify this strategy to the world (Woodward, 2008).

Central to this chapter's analysis lies the correlated relationship between hegemony and discourse, with both the state – through politicians – and the media playing powerful roles in shaping discourse "as an instrument and an effect of power" (Mills, 2003). Essentially this illustrates that those in positions of authority are seen to be 'experts' and are considered as speaking the 'truth', thereby creating a particular discursive reality. Those who make statements and are not in positions of power are not considered as speaking the 'truth' (Mills, 2003). Ultimately, the association of

Muslims as 'terrorists' was accepted by many because "those in positions of authority said so" (Mills, 2003).

This chapter also illustrates how hegemonic discourse initiates a conceptualisation but suppresses debate to limit opposing views in order to reinforce the status quo. Nonetheless, counter-hegemonic perspectives always exist as alternative views to the dominant one, though dismissed by the hegemon. In Gramsci's depiction of hegemony, he observes that counter-hegemonic perspectives receive less attention from the general public simply because they are rejected by the hegemon and are so different that the majority of the public are likely to reject them as unreasonable (Gramsci, 1971). This therefore gave effect to the US hegemonic position which enables it to establish a new paradigm of hegemonic discourses, such as the 'war on terrorism' (Herman & Chomsky, 1988).



The US used its hegemonic position to legitimise and gain global support in its discourse on the 'war on terror' aimed towards invading Iraq in 2003 by framing the motive as the urgent need to disarm Iraq of WMD. It became apparent that political discourse forged the Western public understanding of events and phenomena, the target of discourse in the form of alleged perpetrators of violence and the moral significance of the context. This therefore enabled the hegemon to describe which actions should be taken to resolve the situation. In this instance, the US identified as the 'axis of evil' states such as Iran, Iraq and Korea, who were presented as a threat to US civilisation, freedom and democracy. Iraq, specifically, was constructed as an

immediate threat due to its alleged amassing of WMD. Consequently, Iraq was justified as the immediately necessary target of the fight against 'terror'.

Because the popular understanding of political issues is strongly influenced by mass media, during this period media institutions became influential purveyors of hegemonic discourse. In most cases this tended to favour US political leaders and right-wing journalists, even though alternative views were presented (Bennett, Lawrence & Livingston, 2007).

The last two data chapters have provided, firstly, a background to the rise of the US as hegemon and the events in the Middle East that prompted hegemonic overreach in the form of the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 (Chapter Three); and secondly, an illustration of the discourse created and disseminated by the hegemon in relation to the context preceding the US invasion of Iraq (Chapter Four).

The following chapter provides a consolidated summary of the study by presenting findings in relation to the role of hegemonic discourse by US since its emergence as a superpower in the period after the Cold War. This will be done by addressing the two research questions posed at the beginning of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will present the findings of the study according to the questions asked, the conclusion, and thereafter the recommendations for possible future research. This study analysed the material grounds that enabled the rise of the US as hegemon and its subsequent construction of hegemonic discourse around 'terrorism', when its hegemony was threatened by events in the Middle East and US. The study rests on the contention that knowledge is always produced with a particular intention and in the case of 'terrorism', the discourse that the hegemon disseminated had an intrinsic goal of maintaining a specific status quo in the international system. In this light it empowered those who created it, protected them from opposition, critiqued and disciplined society under a powerful set of norms and ideas.

The literature review and theoretical discussion in Chapter Two dealt with the concept of hegemony and related aspects, specifically the ability of the hegemon to create and disseminate the dominant discourse with the intention of it becoming globally accepted, along with its entrenched norms, values, beliefs and prejudices. The case of the neoliberal global system that the US established after World War II, through the process of establishing its economic and ideological hegemony, was discussed in Chapter Three, which illustrated the rise of the US as hegemon. This enabled it to create new discourses in the realm of international relations, such as the particular

instance of the discourse around 'war on terror' that was used as the justification for its invasion of Iraq, which was analysed in Chapter Four.

This study illustrates how knowledge of the phenomenon of 'terrorism' is created through a particular process that reifies certain relations of power. Therefore, it works "as a kind of disciplinary and hegemonic truth system created to intensify existing structures of power and dominance" (Jackson et al., 2009: 80). The issue that this study highlights is how knowledge about 'terrorism', constructed through hegemonic discourse, is considered as the 'truth', with the purpose of rendering it indisputable and accepted internationally. In this way, the hegemon's discourse is self-serving, in that it legitimises its own actions, at the same time reinforcing beliefs and values that enable it carry out its hegemonic project.



To analyse the discourse of the 'war on terror', this study borrows from the Foucauldian framework of power and control over knowledge and the production of the hegemonic discourse. However, in analysing the relationship between the hegemon and dominant ideology, this study also draws from the Gramscian concept of hegemony, which complements the Foucauldian perspective. For Gramsci, power operates at the level of mutual interactions of culture, economy and politics within the realm of a 'hegemonic' discourse (Jones, 2006).

In undertaking the research, two research questions were asked:

- How did the rise and decline of the US as global hegemon culminate in its invasion of Iraq in 2003?
- How was 'terrorism' conceptualised by the hegemon in the period after the end of the Cold War, in relation to events in the Middle East, and what was the material basis for this conceptualisation?

5.2 Summary of Findings

The section will present the findings of the two research questions asked in the conduct of this study.

5.2.1 First research question

In answering the first research question, Chapter Three provided an overview of the rise of the US as hegemon and drew on Gramsci's conceptualisation of hegemony in the form of commanding material and ideational forces, with the former as a prerequisite for the latter. Subsequent to its emergence as global hegemon in the aftermath of World War II, the oil crisis in the 1970s had threatened US industrial domination, ultimately leading the US to transfer its focus from the production of consumer goods to military goods, necessitating constant war and ultimately causing military aggression that required discursive justification.

Chapter Three illustrated the events that threatened the material base for hegemony – as perceived by the US – and led to hegemonic overreach, whereby it had recourse to force, rather than being reliant on its ideological and persuasive capacity, which had

weakened as its material presence in the Middle East was undermined through lack of control over oil supplies and the price of oil.

5.2.1.1 US hegemony in global politics

The emergence of the United States as a global hegemony can be traced back to WWII. In the aftermath of WWII, the United States emerged as the dominant economic, political and technological power. During this period, the US led and helped to establish international multilateral institutions such as the United Nations, International Monetary Fund previously known as the Bretton Woods Accord, and the World Bank. Because of its role in establishing and financing these institutions, the US approached these institutions as instruments of convenience for economic and security issues. Even though the US rhetoric since the end of World War II stressed the importance of multilateralism, the US practice continued to reflect a process of trial and error and a habit of prioritising its own interests. Successive US presidencies have proved to be flexible in altering, expanding, and even disregarding those institutions whose initial purpose is no longer recognised. The US was, therefore, a global hegemon in every aspect (Walt, 2005).

In the aftermath of WWII, the US's only rival was the Soviet Union. However, the Soviet Union had the power to resist US hegemony, but not to displace it. As a result, when the Soviet Union finally collapsed in 1990, US hegemony was complete. The US emerged as unchallenged hegemon in the entire international system (ibid).

The 9/11 attacks marked the emergence of a new threat to the US, in response to which the US launched the 'global war on terror'. The objective of this campaign was to disarm Al-Qaeda and to prevent future 'terrorist attacks'. Initially, the US suspected that the Taliban regime in Afghanistan was responsible for the attacks and as a result occupied Afghanistan in 2001, overthrowing the Taliban regime (Okafor, 2005).

Subsequently, in 2003, the US proposed to launch an invasion against Iraq. The alleged objective of the invasion was to stop the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction allegedly produced by Iraq. The UN, however, did not sanction this invasion. As a result, the US formed a coalition with other states to lead the attack against Iraq (Klare, 2004).



The following section reviews the second research question, focusing on the discourses that were developed around the notion of 'terrorism'.

5.2.2 Second research question

In answering the second research question, the defining element of the content of Chapter Four drew from the discussion of the Foucauldian conceptualisation of the relationship between power and discourse that was presented in Chapter Two. As a starting point, Chapter Four answered the second research question by examining the rhetoric of speeches made by various US politicians; in particular George W. Bush, as well as opinions offered by US media sources, relating to the prelude to and aftermath of the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq. The political and media discourse constructed by

the US automatically linked the 9/11 attacks with 'terrorism'. Subsequently in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks the US declared a 'war on terror'. The effective framing of the meaning of the 9/11 attacks in terms of the 'war on terror' determined the political debate, and this discourse became dominant. The Bush administration exploited the already existing brutal image of Saddam Hussein to link Iraq to the 'war on terror', thereby legitimising the Iraqi war (Kreb & Lobasz, 2007).

The rhetoric used created a suitable climate and prepared the groundwork for necessary military action (Collins & Glover, 2002), through dramatic phrases that created a sense of urgency, eliciting support from its target audience to support the US-led 'war on terror' waged against Afghanistan and later Iraq.



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5.2.2.1 The discourse of terrorism

Immediately after the 9/11 attacks outlined in Chapter Two, the US discursively constructed the events that transpired on that day as 'terrorist' attacks on freedom that necessitated defence of the said freedom. In this way, the Bush administration successfully initiated a narrow conception of freedom, as the word 'freedom' is so powerful in international politics that acts like a key that elites can use to open the door to the masses to justify almost anything – even war (Harvey, 2005).

Even though the US administration had the opportunity to categorise the 9/11 events as an act to be persecuted through the justice system, the US instead decided to interpret the attacks as an act of war against it, which therefore eliminated alternative

response strategies, leaving war as the only reasonable option (Megret, 2002). Because 'terrorism' is a tactic that is not bound in any particular territory, the war could happen anywhere for any reason the US government deemed fit. The construction of the political geography of 'terrorism' had been projected and extended far beyond its initial focus of Afghanistan and expanded to Iraq.

The construction of a 'good versus evil' dichotomy, categorising the United States and its allies as free and benevolent, whilst all those who opposed them were constructed as the embodiment of evil, was the foundation of the US strategy to alienate Iraq. Rhetoric such as the 'axis of evil' categorised enemies of the US, which included Iraq, Iran and Korea. This discourse was embodied in President Bush's famous line, "You are either with us or against us", compelling the global community to endorse his campaign against 'terror', suggesting that any country that opposed the campaign was necessarily a 'pro-terrorism' state and a suspect in the 9/11 attacks (Chouliaraki, 2007).

The label of 'terrorist' therefore became an identity mobilised for political purpose based on constructed 'threats'. Through political discourse, the US presented the 9/11 attacks in such a manner as to make the discourse effectively facilitate its invasion of Iraq in 2003.

In analysing discourse, this study drew from Foucault's theory which relies on the analysis of the relationship between power and knowledge (Li, 2007; Ziai, 2016). For

Foucault, power and knowledge are mutually constitutive. Foucault discusses power-knowledge in the context of exercise of power in an effort to shape social interactions through calculated means (Li, 2007). Foucault asserts that power enables hegemonies to build a system of relations between individuals so that the political system works. In explaining his assertion Foucault examines how discourse functions, as a type of self-regulation encouraged by political systems in the form of institutions, and how it then becomes the norm in societies and acts as an instrument to change reality.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the international institutions and regimes established under US leadership post-World War II included the Bretton Woods institutions, whilst the United Nations and later the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation reinforced the continuance of its leadership role. The ideological power vested in these international institutions and systems constituted a direct effort to preserve the US position “at the top of the international hierarchy” as a “strategy of preserving primacy” or “a preponderance of power” (Leffler, 1988). This power confers the ability to decide how things shall be done and how to shape discourse, within which states relate to each other or relate to people (Strange, 1987).

As discussed in Chapter Four, discourse is a political process, as it is a system through which power and knowledge are concentrated. Therefore, it is, in part through the connection of control over knowledge production that the US successfully launched the ‘war on terror’ discourse using liberal narratives (Kobayashi, 2009). As a result, the ‘war on terror’ was ideologically supported by narratives of liberation. The narratives relied heavily on ‘Orientalism’ through which the United States was able

define Afghanistan and Iraq as evil, barbaric, and supporting 'terrorist' extremists, equating the two countries with international security threats such as 'terrorism'. However, this ideology had an underpinning element of hypocrisy, as the role played by the US in the Middle East was opportunist and based on perceived material advantages to be gained, under the guise of dubious principles of liberal democracy that were frequently overlooked.

In an ironic relation to liberal principles, the US presented itself as an innocent victim of the 9/11 attacks and more importantly as the beacon of democracy and freedom, and liberator of 'terrorism' and as an example of how governance should be aspired to all over the world. In this instance, the US was able to justify going to war with these countries (Gregory, 2004).



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By using the successful framing of the 9/11 attacks as 'terrorism' and the urgent need to disarm Iraq of WMD, the US was able to organise a coalition of 36 countries, including the strong support of the UK, because of the ideational power it had acquired over the post-World War II decades.

5.3 Conclusion

This study focuses on analysing the creation of knowledge on 'terrorism' as a function of hegemonic discourse. Only the hegemonic state with a commanding global position in relation to power and decision-making can influence the production of the commonly accepted values-based 'knowledge' that is the product of hegemonic discourse. The

effects of power exercise in hegemony are even stronger, as the Western and Northern communities in global politics by and large not only accepted the leading role of the US, but also accepted the US-dominated discourse on contemporary security threats; terrorism being the main concern among them (Beyer, 2009).

This study therefore rests on the contention that the discourse that defines ‘terrorism’ has an objective of maintaining a specific status quo in the international system. In this sense, it works “as a kind of disciplinary and hegemonic truth regime designed to reify existing structures of power and dominance” (Jackson, et al., 2009: 172).

As a global hegemon in the international system, the US used its predominant power to form discourses that brought the world together under common ideas and assumptions about ‘terrorism’, and the manner in which such threats should be countered.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

The combination of the Foucauldian and neo-Gramscian framework was particularly relevant for this study, as it offered a foundation for critical analysis of hegemony and the exercise of power according to a conceptualisation of hegemony that rests on material, ideational and institutional forces, as well as allowing for an illustration of the mechanisms of domination.

The comprehensiveness of this theoretical framework enables it to explain other contemporary phenomena besides 'terrorism' successfully and convincingly. On the other hand, this framework also provides a critical analysis of the relations of power and how those with power over discourse have relational power over understandings of reality. Reality itself is then constructed accordingly.

A continued application of this framework to analysing international relations would add value to the field in providing critical analysis, knowledge and better understanding of the increasingly complexity of power and international relations of states.



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