Combining Hegemony and Governmentality to Explain Global Governance

Jonathan Joseph

ABSTRACT

This article looks at the possibility of a meaningful relationship between the concepts of hegemony and governmentality. It does this by applying the combined concepts to the realm of international relations and to issues of global governance. It interrogates the two concepts by looking at the conditions of possibility and modes of expression. It does this through a critical realist approach to social reality, arguing that hegemony and governmentality operate within a structures and stratified social field where they intersect and overlap. It argues that the two concepts have their own strengths and weaknesses. Hegemony is better at relating governance to underlying social relations and it emphasises the longer-term strategic element in governance projects. Governmentality is better at highlighting the rationalities that underlie forms of governance. Hegemony better helps us to understand such things as institutional context, the role of social and class forces, how particular interests are represented and how political projects are constructed. Governmentality is much better at showing us the specific techniques and technologies of power. While hegemony might provide the better link to the social context, governmentality better shows how this finds its expression in particular forms of governance. These arguments are applied to neoliberal forms of governance and used to analyse the changing role of the state in international politics. The article addresses issues of structure and agency and poses the question of how governance is constructed.

Keywords: Hegemony, Governmentality, Governance, Critical Realism, Marxism, Neoliberalism

Introduction

Hegemony and governmentality are two hugely influential concepts that might be said to have a difficult, albeit under-developed relationship. Writing in 2005 Clive Barnett suggested that a reconciliation of the Marxist approach to hegemony and poststructuralist reflections on governmentality was well underway, but went on to warn of the limitations of this "marriage of convenience".[1] Sometime later, and it is less a case of the marriage having failed, than that the marriage seems not to have happened. While there have been some notable interventions [2] we still await a full scale application. This article is concerned to reactivate the project, while addressing some of the reservations of critics like Barnett and others. It will be done by applying the combined concepts

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[1] Clive Barnett, "The Consolations of "Neoliberalism", *Geoforum* (Vol. 36, No. 1, January 2005), p. 8.
[2] Thomas Lemke, "An Indigestible Meal? Foucault, Governmentality and State Theory", Accessed on 12 January 2012, www.thomaslemkeweb.de/publikationen/IndigestibleMealfi nal5.pdf; Bob Jessop, *State Power: A Strategic-Relational Approach* (Cambridge: Polity, 2007).

to the realm of international relations (IR) and in particular to issues of global governance. The latter seems a reasonable place to focus given that it has been at the centre of a new wave of theorising "global governmentality", while having long been seen by neo-Gramscians in IR as an example of a historical bloc. We will argue here that global governance can be meaningfully understood in relation to both concepts, but that a great deal of theoretical development is required in order to combine them. While this piece does not pretend to have found the solution, it offers the basis of a research project, both to IR scholars and to the wider audience of social theorists.

The way this will be done is more consistent with Gramscian approaches to hegemony than it is with the arguments of Foucault's poststructuralist followers. This is to take an ontological approach and to widen the focus to investigate the conditions of possibility for both hegemony and governmentality. In looking at what makes hegemony and governmentality possible, as well as examining the basis on which they might combine or overlap, the paper develops a realist ontology, a position at odds with Foucauldian (and possibly neo-Gramscian) arguments. For this reason, it would be wrong for this contribution to be read as an elaboration or development of particular schools of thought. The ultimate aim is not to develop a perfect understanding of either concept, but to show how they might contribute to an understanding of the social world as structured and stratified in a certain way and how they might reveal the emergent social features of international relations.

Hegemony, actors and agents

Hegemony is difficult enough to understand even before we get to the way Robert Cox and others have scaled-up the concept to relate it to international relations. It is well known that Gramsci's fragmentary writings on hegemony develop several different understandings of hegemony. At its most straightforward, hegemony can be said to emphasise the importance of gaining consent – something that is used in IR to counter the hard power arguments of realists who only see hegemony in terms of domination. The social definition of hegemony describes the way that social groups achieve dominance through the construction of complex hegemonic projects that bring together various groups and articulate a variety of different interests. While some groups dominate within these alliances, the alliance is necessary if these groups are to gain wider consent. The term hegemony refers to the process by which social leadership is constructed, while the term historical bloc locates this in a particular time and place – for example the idea of the postwar historical bloc explains the complex social and institutional reconfigurations that took place after the Second World War.

While this is straightforward enough – the elaboration of political projects, the construction of alliances and the articulation of interests – how and where this takes place is subject to debate. Is hegemony a project that articulates itself through the state – a state strategy? Or does it belong more to civil society? Is

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the latter the realm of consent while the former a more coercive body? If hegemony belongs to civil society, then how is civil society to be defined? All these issues are brought together in an influential article by Perry Anderson[3] where he points to three conflicting arguments in Gramsci – first that the state is seen in contrast to civil society[4], second that the state encompasses civil society (hegemony is protected by the armour of coercion[5]) and third that ""State" should be understood not only [as] the apparatus of government, but also the "private" apparatus of "hegemony" or civil society".[6]

If such concerns are seen as a problem of locating hegemony within society, they multiply when scaling up the concept to apply it to international relations. If hegemony works within domestic societies through the activities of social groups, does this mean that in the international arena we also find these groups as the main actors? Robert Cox attempts to stay faithful to this definition but often ends up with a view of hegemony as the relations between states. He talks of hegemony developing when a "leading nation's conception of the world becomes universalized".[7] Elsewhere he says that international hegemony "derives from the ways of doing and thinking of the dominant strata of the dominant state or states".[8] The latter is a more stratified understandingof this relationship between groups and states. And elsewhere Cox reveals the complexity of these relations when he says that:

Hegemony at the international level is thus not merely an order among states. It is an order within a world economy with a dominant mode of production which penetrates into all countries and links into other subordinate modes of production. It is also a complex of international social relationships which connect the social classes of the different countries. World hegemony is describable as a social structure, an economic structure, and a political structure; and it cannot be simply one of these things but must be all three.[9]

We will not attempt to address these problems all at once, but raise them here as a starting point of our analysis. Clearly there are complex issues to be dealt with in terms of our understanding of how structures and agents interact and how social, economic and political issues interrelate. Scaled up to the international realm, these problems multiply since the international adds an inter-societal dynamic to an already complex equation.[10]

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[3] Perry Anderson, "The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci", *New Left Review* (No. 100 ,1976), pp. 12-13).
[4]Antonio Gramsci, *The Prison Notebooks* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971), p. 238.
[5]Ibid., p. 263.
[6]Ibid., p. 261.
[7]Robert Cox, *Approaches to World Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 245.
[8]Ibid., p.151.
[9]Ibid., p. 137.
[10] For a discussion of IR as inter-societal see Justin Rosenberg," Why Is There No International Historical Sociology?", *European Journal of International Relations* (Vol. 12, No. 3, 2006), pp. 307 – 40.

However, I will suggest two quick fixes. One relates to the problem of agency. While Gramscian approaches are clear enough in their attribution of agency to social groups, the scaling up of the concept to international relations raises the problem of state actions given that traditionally the state is seen as the main actor in IR. The solution to this issue is to distinguish between actors and agents. From the point of view of the sociology of structure and agency, only people, or groups of people possess the unique characteristics of agency – as capable of conscious, reflexive and intentional actions.[11] Hence states cannot be considered agents in this sense unless one attributes personhood to them.[12] States are more like structures in the sense that they have such properties as anteriority, relative endurability and powers of allocation, enablement and constraint. However, states might be considered actors by virtue of the agents within them. This leads to a complex relationship which brings us to our second argument. That is the need for a differentiated social ontology that recognises that the actions of social agents are stratified across a number of social layers. The theory of hegemony shows us that groups of agents act through the state in order to implement certain policies. However, the state cannot be reduced to the actions of these agents, nor can the actions of agents be confined to the realm of the state. There are a range of complex relationships that will be investigated in more detail further on. However, we can formalize our account of this relationship as one where groups of people exercise agency in specific social and historical contexts and interact across different layers and levels. In other words agency, including the exercise of hegemony, is socially stratified. And among a stratification of different social contexts (structures) we might point to the state as a particularly significant institution. In international relations states are key actors. They act by virtue of the agency possessed by particular social groups. Hence hegemony can be a way of explaining this complex relationship. However, we will go on to argue that state actions are *emergent* social features insofar as they are dependent on underlying agency, but cannot be reduced to the actions themselves. This more structural understanding of the role of states can be used to challenge reductive accounts of state action as might be found in mainstream realism and liberal accounts of IR whose errors are either to attribute rational agency to states themselves, or else to reduce state agency to the calculations of key decision makers.[13]

A structural understanding of actors also helps deal with issues of consciousness and intent. Rather than reducing these to rational intent (neorealism) or intersubjective agreement (Cox, Habermas) we can say that conscious actions take place within a set of already existing social conditions. These conditions shape the way the action takes place. But they also shape the

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[11]Bob Carter and Caroline New,*Making Realism Work* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), p.5.
[12] Alexander Wendt, "The State as Person in International Theory", *Review of International Studies* Vol. 30 , No. 2, 2004), pp. 269 – 80.
[13]Such errors are embedded in the DNA of mainstream positions. Even more sophisticated attempts to bring in more complexity, for example neoclassical realism, remain wedded to a view of agents as decision makers.

agents' understanding of the actions and their situation. And because our situation is in fact complexly stratified, a full understanding of our position usually eludes us. Social situatedness means that conscious actions often have unintended consequences. At this point it makes sense to bring in Foucault's arguments in order to extend this argument through discourse. For just as wage-labourers under capitalism unconsciously reproduce capitalist economic relations, so the writers and artists of the Middle Ages unconsciously reproduced a classical episteme. In other words, rationalities or mentalities pre-exist and condition the conceptions of particular agents in a similar way to other social relations. While we could develop this across a wide range of discursive domains, we will concentrate on this in relation to processes of governance and move to Foucault's concept of governmentality.

Defining governmentality and its relationship to hegemony

One argument for bringing in governmentality is that it is better at explaining discursive power and provides an account of the rationalities of governance that is missing from Gramscian approaches. In suggesting that these rationalities of governance are distinct from and thus shape the actual views and beliefs of agents, it can counteract the tendency in neo-Gramscian accounts to see social activity as a manifestation of intersubjective world views or to attribute conscious intent to every outcome. Even hegemonic projects themselves cannot claim to be purely a product of conscious agency. To claim otherwise would be to embrace the kind of instrumental logic that Gramsci's approach sets out to avoid.

More specifically, the concept of governmentality highlights the rationalities that underlie forms of governance. It combines this aspect with a focus on the actual practices of governance that shape the conduct of conduct. In other words, the concept lies at the intersection of discourses and practices of governance. This is a very broad definition and, as Walters notes[14], Foucault himself traces this relationship through the governance of and by states. Walters and others would want to emphasise that there is nothing special about the state and that governmentality, as a set of practices and techniques that make the state meaningful could equally be applied to other, non-state forms of governance. This is certainly legitimate and I do not wish to claim that such an approach is wrong. But as Walters goes on to say, not only does Foucault largely focus on practices of the state, but he does so through a focus on specifically liberal practices which first emerge in the eighteenth century.[15] Walters and some IR theorists argue that just because Foucault focuses more on state forms of governance, and particularly liberal ones, this does not mean we should ignore the broader field of governance beyond the activities of the state.[16] My argument is that because we are doing IR this is precisely where we should focus given that

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[14]William Walters, *Governmentality: Critical Encounters* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), p. 12.
[15]Ibid., p.12.
[16]Ibid., p.13.

states are the main actors and the dominant form of international hegemony is a liberal one.

Most of Foucault's work on governmentality emphasises the liberal element of rule. Liberal governance is distinguished from other forms of power by its emphasis on free conduct, self-awareness and self-limitation. In contrast to more coercive disciplinary power, liberal governmentality works from a distance by seeking to create free and active subjects. The rationality of liberal governance is to respect the freedom of the governed and to allow things to take their natural course. Government comes to be understood as respecting the freedom of social and economic processes through the deliberate self-limiting of government – an intrinsic part of governmental rationality.[17]*Laissez-faire* governance, based on the liberal principles of political economy, finds its expression in civil society and is legitimated through the liberal concern that one must not "govern too much".[18] However, this freedom and liberty is a social construction that is reinforced through a particular set of social practices that reinforce rational, normalised conduct. Liberalism, Foucault tells us, "works not through the imperative of freedom", but through the social production of freedom and the "management and organization of the conditions in which one can be free".[19]

Neoliberalism might be said to be an intensification of the liberal dynamic that introduces the norms and values of the market into other areas of social life through the promotion of competition, initiative and risk-taking. Foucault talks of "society regulated by reference to the market … a society subject to the dynamic of competition… an enterprise society".[20]Instead of direct governance, the state steps back and encourages people to become more enterprising. They are appealed to as citizens or consumers who are 'free' to take responsibility for their own life choices but who are expected to follow competitive rules of conduct with the logic of enterprise applied to individual acts. Rather than seeing neoliberalism purely as a doctrine of the free market, it is, according to Dean, a cultural form of governance based on ethical orientations, self- responsibility and the moral obligations invoked by notions of freedom and the exercising of agency.[21]

This is of importance to those looking at how society works through practices of regulation, normalisation and legitimation. So clearly there is some overlap with hegemony. Indeed we might compare Foucault's analysis of neoliberalism to Gramsci's analysis of Americanism and Fordism. Both theorists show that the ideas which might at first be seen as relating to the market or production process are spread across society and their influence ranges for forms of state regulation and intervention right down to popular culture and forms of everyday life. Having said this, the governmentality approach has shown itself to

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[17] Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2008), p.10.
[18]Ibid., p. 319.
[19]Ibid., p. 63- 64.
[20]Ibid., p. 147.
[21] Mitchell Dean, *Governing Societies: Political Perspectives on Domestic and International Rule* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2007), p. 73.

be far better at providing the fine detail in comparison to hegemony's broader overview. Indeed the greatest contribution governmentaly makes is to highlight the micro practices by which conduct is shaped. Taking population as its target and political economy as its means of intervention, liberal governmentality uses a range of technologies, techniques and methods of calculation; methods such as auditing, examination, standardisation, benchmarking and peer review applied across a diversity of areas from education and welfare to town planning and community resilience to international aid and development programmes.

While the strength of a governmentality approach is its attention to fine detail, the focus on the micro level should not be turned into a virtue. Foucault's concern to redress the balance by focusing on micro practices is not the same thing as giving these practices ontological primacy. For Foucault the micro level is important because power always emerges at a given place and time as an ill developed cluster of relations.[22] The great strategies of power as exercised at the macro level "depend for their conditions of exercise on the level of the micro-relations of power".[23] But there are also movements in the opposite direction as these powers seek to "produce new effects and advance into hitherto unaffected domains". [24] This two way relationship between macro and micro powers of governance can be applied to something like the development of neoliberalism. This saw the emergence of a number of open-ended micro-practices that lacked an overall logic, but which were gradually colonised at the macro level and given the coherence of a neoliberal rationality.[25] This logic then was applied from above – i.e. by government policy – to an increasing number of domains like health, welfare and security, previously considered inappropriate areas for free market logic. In order to analyse this, according to Foucault:

we should make an ascending analysis of power… begin with its infinitesimal mechanisms, which have their own history, their own trajectory, their own techniques and tactics, and then look at how these mechanisms of power… have been and are invested, colonized, used, inflected, transformed, displaced, extended and so on by increasingly general mechanisms and forms of overall domination.[26]

This argument can be applied to macro institutions like the state. It can also be brought into IR to look at the role of international organisations like the World Bank and IMF. But in seeing how macro powers may colonise already existing micro practices in order to shape them into some kind of project, we can

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[22] Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge: Selected Writings and Other Interviews 1972-1977 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), p. 199.
[23]Ibid., p. 199.
[24]Ibid., p.200.
[25]Nikolas Rose,*Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought* (Cambridge: CambridgeUniversity Press, 1999), p.27.
[25] Michel Foucault, *Must Be Defended* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin,2004), p. 30.

equally apply this to the development of hegemonic projects. And working this both ways, we might claim that a Gramscian approach can help bring to our understanding of the process of colonisation an appreciation of the necessary strategies and tactics by which groups build their power. This returns to our understanding of agency insofar as strategy and tactics require conscious intent, yet they operate in conditions not of the actors' own choosing, making what they can of the resources that are available. Groups do not create hegemony afresh, they take up already existing micro practices, discourses and established patterns of conduct – things that might pre-exist a particular project, but which Foucault shows can be colonised and brought together by deploying a macro-level strategy.

If governmentality provides a detailed account of the techniques, then hegemony provides a better account of their strategic deployment. Indeed, unless we want to revert to very general claims about epistemes and discursive frameworks, then something like hegemony is necessary to explain why it is that certain forms of governmentality rise to prominence at particular moments. While already-existing micro conditions might be said to provide the resources for hegemonic projects, hegemonic projects provide a better causal explanation of why certain technologies and techniques come to the fore. Governmentality does not rise spontaneously from these micro conditions, but is inextricably tied to the processes of colonisation, articulation and deployment. This requires the kind of account provided by Gramscian analysis, but it also requires a deeper understanding of the social as might be found in scientific realist accounts of the social world.

Developing a structural approach

Combining governmentality with hegemony allows for a much clearer focus on social, historical and institutional context. This helps us take us beyond how governmentality works to why it works in the way it does. Hence neoliberal governmentality comes to prominence due to a specific set of micro practices being used as part of a particular macro strategy that has been shaped by social and historical context. This requires an investigation of processes of "de-statification" that are associated with the reorganisation of the postwar historical bloc and involve the associated policies of privatisation, devolution of state powers, attacks on organised labour and the reorganisation of institutional architecture.

Indeed, this broader historical picture is necessary if we are to make sense of variations in governmentality and why it is that certain forms of governmentality are dominant. Indeed, a study of global politics shows that the dominance of neoliberalism today is not universal; it does not always enjoy success. It has different outcomes in different contexts, meets different forms of resistance, comes up against different social systems and does not enjoy the same underlying support form one society to the next. A study of international institutions like the World Bank, IMF and United Nations shows them to be heavily influenced by Anglo Saxon neoliberal ideas. This will come as no surprise to neo-

Gramscian IR theorists who see such organisations as part of the hegemonic (post-) Washington consensus. But as we shall see, a study of actual practices finds that they are not always successful in achieving their aims. Whether we choose to call this Western hegemony or neoliberal governmentality, the reality is that such strategies, even if driven by a particular logic, come up against the reality of differentiated social relations at the point where they are deployed. This is not a matter of suggesting that less developed countries cannot be governmentalised. We need only at governmentality across EU member states to see its uneven application and outcomes. Or we could examine the French political system to see why it is that Anglo Saxon techniques of governmentality are far less enthusiastically embraced in a society with an interventionist state, a centralised top-down institutional structure and strong civic and solidarist discourses. A study of the conditions of possibility for governmentality means a study of the social relations present in each case.

To understand why the discourse and practices of neoliberal governmentality find more resonance in, say, the UK, than in France, we need to go beyond the governmentality approach. A theory of hegemony is better at providing an account of things like the wider institutional context, the role of class forces, how particular interests are represented, how projects are constructed and how deeper structural issues are responded to. While most of these issues can be dealt with through more agential approaches to hegemony, the final issue requires a structural reading of hegemony that is often missing in the neo-Gramscian accounts in IR. [27] This is despite a clear structural element being present in Gramsci's work and despite Cox's claim to be integrating an analysis of world order with an understanding of processes of production.

Gramsci's work, while pulled in different directions by diverse influences, nevertheless contains some clear references to the deeper structural conditions that make hegemony possible. Most explicit is his comment that: "Structures and superstructures form an "historical bloc". That is to say the complex, contradictory and discordant *ensemble* of the superstructures is the reflection of the *ensemble* of the social relations of production".[28]The historical bloc is therefore not merely a relation between groups, or "the ways of doing and thinking of the dominant strata of the dominant state or states". [29]The relations between these groups are set within a structural context and represent a particular intervention by groups into the nexus of social structures and in particular, the social relations of production. Hegemony, Gramsci writes, "must necessarily be based on the decisive function exercised by the leading group in the decisive nucleus of economic activity".[30]For a group to become hegemonic it must have behind it the

[27] Jonathan Joseph, "On the Limits of Neo-Gramscian International Relations: A Scientific Realist Critique of Hegemony", in Alison Ayers (ed.), *Gramsci, Political Economy, and International Relations Theory: Modern Princes and Naked Emperors* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2008)
[28]Gramsci, *op.cit*. in note 4, p. 366.
[29]Cox, op.cit. in note 7, p. 151.
[30]Gramsci, op.cit. in note 4, p. 161

economic, political and cultural conditions that allow it to put itself forward as leading.

While structural approaches tend to undermine the idea of agency – for example neorealism in IR, or structural Marxism – the idea of hegemony works to problematise social structure. It suggests that while there may be deeper structural tendencies, these do not automatically reproduce themselves, but need to be socially secured. Hegemony is a concept that suggests that social cohesion can only be achieved through active intervention. In contrast to constructivist approaches that see institutional analysis as an end in itself, a structural approach to hegemony allows us to seeing institutions as fixes between deeper structures and the balance of social groups at particular moments in time. It allows us to ask the questions that constructivists might ask of the relationship between institutions, norms and social practices, but also the relationship between institutions and the underlying social structures that provide their conditions of possibility. The idea of the historical bloc is precisely such an idea. For a historical bloc to endure it must not only secure unity between social actors, but must also relate to the deeper underlying trends in the social and economic spheres. The postwar bloc was able to do this by drawing on underlying changes in the production process (Fordism) and by facilitating a period of sustained economic growth through interventionist state policies that could provide the foundations for welfare and social prosperity. Once this model started to break down in the 1970s, a new strategy of neoliberal (de)regulation began to emerge.

This lack of accounting for structural situatedness is where some of the governance literature goes wrong. While practices are conscious in intent, their wider structural context means that they cannot be reduced to conscious activities. The structural context is necessary to explain why certain actions have unconscious or unintended consequences and why actors are often only partially aware of the processes in which they are engaged. It also explains why some agents, thanks to their structural positioning, are able to act in a more influential way, while will act with less awareness and less ability to change their situation. This goes for hegemonic projects as much as for any other social practice. We distinguish, therefore, between the deeply embedded nature of hegemony and hegemonic projects as carried out by social groups. The projects that are acted out always have an underlying basis.

In many ways, the governmentality approach actually adds to this sense of wider structural conditions for the reasons given earlier. It provides an account of the background rationalities that elude the full consciousness of the agents who act. It does not provide the full picture, however. And those poststructuralists who are content to rely on a theory of governmentality to explain global politics miss out on a range of other structural conditions as well as reducing the matter to questions of mentality and governance. Not surprisingly, this is reflected in the ontological stance taken by many governmentality theorists – Larner and Walters

openly claim to be "bracketing" the world of underlying causes.[31]Walters argues the case "for shifting our attention away from questions of deep structures and institutional processes, and toward an understanding… at the level of mentalities and rationalities of government".[32] This is honestly stated and shows awareness that these things may be out there. But my question would be whether it is ever possible to remain at the level of mentalities and rationalities without looking at their conditions of possibility. How do we explain variations in these at different times and in different places? I will briefly address this by looking at global governance.

The state and global governance

Global governance is a problematic notion that raises more questions than answers. In IR literature it is often reduced to the neoliberal idea of regimes and a minimal basis of agreement by which states advance their interests. Or otherwise it is overstated to the point where global governance is said to be undermining state power and shifting it to regional or transnational levels. The good thing about a governmentality approach is that it can explain how global governance works without buying into the ontological assumptions of many of the global governance theorists. This is not quite the same as following Walters' advice to concentrate on the mentalities and rationalities. But it allows for a study of such things while recognising the exaggerated nature of some of the claims about new forms of global governance.

In particular these writers fall into the trap of thinking that power is passing from states to international organisations and transnational institutions when in fact what is occurring is the governmentalisation of the state from within. International organisations reflect the dominant processes taking place within the dominant states. While theorists of global governance like James Rosenau argue that power is passing to transnational and supranational organisations above the state, NGOs and social movements alongside it, and subnational groups downwards[33], the reality is that states are willingly ceding or devolving power in order to govern from a distance. The concepts of governmentality and hegemony can play important roles in providing an alternative account of global governance. Governmentality, as mentioned can show that what is mistaken for global governance is actually a process of neoliberal governmentalitalisation of the state and social relations, while hegemony can explain that this is taking place due to the break-up of the postwar historical bloc and that what we see globally is being

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[31] Wendy Larner and William Walters, "Global Governmentality: Governing International Spaces", in Wendy Larner and William Walters (eds.), *Global Governmentality: Governing International Spaces* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 16.
[32]William Walters, "Political Rationality of European Integration", in W. Larner and W. Walters (eds.) *Global Governmentality: Governing International Spaces* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), p.157.
[33] James N. Rosenau , *The Study of World Politics, vol. II: Globalization and Governance* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 116.

driven by the dominant groups in the dominant states. Rather than disappearing from the scene, the state is at the centre of both explanations.

According to Rosenau, new forms of global governance reflect a disaggregated, decentred world with new spheres of authority, no single organising principle, and greater flexibility, innovation and experimentation in use of control mechanisms.[34] The second part of this claim is certainly correct and is highlighted by the governmentality approach. This makes the world seem disaggregated and decentred. But this disaggregation and decentring is, paradoxically, the result of strategies carried out by the dominant states. The rest of this section argues that what is mistaken for global governance is a neoliberal form of governmentality pushed *by* states, pushed *on* states and pushed *through* states.

This represents a new phase of hegemony, one that is marked by the processes of reshaping historical blocs and shifting strategies of governance. Historical blocs are being reshaped both locally and globally. Domestically we saw in places like the US and UK new forms of state strategy and regulation based on rolling back state provision and promoting the free market while encouraging more individualistic forms of social responsibility. The governmentality approach shows how these became institutionalised through various practices of governance. Rather than being marginalized, the state acts as the main site for the codification of power relations through new governmental projects and modes of calculation. [35] In a two way dialogue, the state shapes new forms of governmentality and governmentality re-shapes the state.

This is the same rationality driving new forms of global governance. If we look at the most influential international organisations, they are shaped by the same neoliberal understanding of social and economic relations. Within the IMF, World Bank, UN and EU we find similar discourses that emphasise the free market, good governance, responsible action and accountability. Likewise across a range of areas from poverty reduction to state-building to EU projects, we find the same ideas of devolved powers, local ownership, partnership, stakeholding, networked forms of governance and active citizenship. It is no accident that these discourses are so similar. They are shaped by the same dominant rationality.

While governmentality explains what this rationality is and how it works, hegemony explains how and why this rationality is dominant. Having come to the fore in the United States and Anglo Saxon counties, this rationality is reflected in international organisations due to the fact that these organisations are not global, but reflect the dominant power relations in the international system. Just as the US was able to shape a postwar hegemonic order through a new set of international institutions and regimes, so now, transformations with the US domestic economy and society are shaping a new international order. The fact

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[34]Ibid., p. 124.
[35]Jessop, op.cit. in note 2, p. 150.

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that this order promotes the free market and devolution of state powers reflects the imbalance of global power relations and the heavy influence of particular state strategies within this order. Those who claim this represents a new form of global governance are unwittingly reinforcing this particular expression of power.

Having given the bigger picture, we can briefly describe how this hegemony is expressed through particular strategies and techniques. Here the governmentality approach helps us to understand the interventions of international organisations in certain areas. For example, in the post-structural adjustment era local states are told that they can have "ownership" of the policy agenda in partnership with international and local (civil society) stakeholders. But to get development assistance a government must present a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) to the executive boards of the IMF and World Bank. These are assessed for whether their strategy constitutes a sound basis for assistance. To help make such decisions, the 2005 Paris Declaration establishes a wide variety of indicators for monitoring performance, accountability and government credibility. This monitoring from a distance while presenting the process as a free and fair partnership based on local ownership clearly represents a form of governmentality.

The post-Washington consensus approach entails "building institutions for markets". [36] Getting countries to develop their own PRSPs is not about development, it is about getting countries to open up to global capital, reform their institutions accordingly and implement market friendly policies. This is achieved through a more subtle array of governmentalising techniques that appear to be operating from a distance while encouraging local participation and responsibility. While the global governance theorists are announcing the decline in the powers of the state, organisations like the World Bank recognise that it is actually only through the state that this will be achieved. This targeting of state policy by state dominated international organisations is aninternational governmentality of states, or what Michael Merlingen calls "the international conduct of the conduct of countries".[37]

Whether we look at poverty reduction, or other areas of international politics such as peacekeeping, conflict resolution or state-building, we find the same discourse and practices. All use techniques of governmentality to monitor and regulate the behaviour of states. While promoting civil society, NGOs and other non-state actors, they have states as their main target because they recognise that it is only through the state that such micro practices can be successfully codified. Whether or not they are successful in practice is another matter that I have discussed elsewhere.[38] But to understand how the dominant

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[36]World Bank, *World Bank Development Report 2002: Building Institutions for Markets* (New York: Oxford University Press and the World Bank).

[37] Michael Merlingen, "Governmentality: Towards a Foucauldian Framework for the Study of NGOs", *Cooperation and Conflict* (Vol. 38, No. 4, 2003) p. 367.

[38] Jonathan Joseph, *The Social in the Global: Social Theory, Governmentality and Global Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)

strata in the dominant states work through international organisations in order to get less powerful states to implement market friendly, neoliberal policies, requires not only a concept like governmentality, but also a theory like hegemony that can explain the balance of power relations that lies behind the strategies and techniques of governance.

A theory of hegemony also allows room for resistance. It points not just to the driving rationality behind global governance, nor just the practices that are implemented, but also the gaps, limits and failings. It is better at showing how power operates on a global scale. The neoliberal policies of states and international organisations cannot just be understood as a rationality. They are implemented by social groups as part of their projects. These projects take place through states, and are often imposed on other states. Hegemony shows the inequality of global power relations. By concentrating on mentalities and techniques governmentality does not tell us much about why these strategies may find resonance in some countries but not in others, or why and how governance strategies are resisted. Hegemony can do this because it points to both structural weaknesses and agential possibilities. It is counter-hegemony, not counter-governmentality that ultimately decides the fate of these practices.

Conclusion

The concept of hegemony helps us to understand such things as institutional context, the role of social and class forces, how particular interests are represented and how political projects are constructed. The concept of governmentality is much better at showing us the specific techniques and technologies of power. We have seen, for example, how it highlights a range of practices that monitor, benchmark and peer review and a range of rationalities that responsibilise actors, give "ownership", justify "partnership" and operate from a distance through the construction of rational and "free" conduct. Governmentality renders visible the space over which governance will occur, constructing a world of networked actors behaving rationally in a globalised context. It promotes the idea that global forces are beyond our control hence justifying the micro-practices that encourage individual self-government.

While hegemony might provide the better link to the social context, governmentality better shows how this finds its expression in particular forms of governance. It highlights the specific use that can be made of mechanisms of individualisation and normalisation. This helps us to understand something like neoliberalism as not only about promoting free market ideas, but as a form of social regulation and normalised conduct that uses the idea of freedom to promote the individualisation and responsibilisation of social actors. But how do such practices become hegemonic? Even if we accept Foucault's argument that power starts from below and then gets exercised through various institutional sites, how are we going to explain this process of increasing institutionalisation

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without a theory like hegemony? Does governmentality have its own logic separate from the projects and practices that promote it?

In part, however, it does. Foucault helps us to understand how rationalities pre-exist the conscious acts of agents and maybe even particular hegemonic projects. Micro practices provide the resources that hegemonic projects might "colonise". This helps determine the type of hegemony that is possible. Hegemony is not formed out of nothing but is shaped by already existing practices. In this sense governmentality shapes hegemony. But it is also clear that it is the nature of hegemonic projects that determines how governmentality develops and why, for example, a particular neoliberal form of governmentality started to be institutionalised in the 1980s. The easiest solution to the conundrum of what comes first is to suggest that there is no clear hierarchical or causal chain, but rather a set of overlapping and co-determining social processes. Rather than being foundational, forms of hegemony and governmentality are emergent and overlapping aspects of the social whole. A realist social ontology argues that they are dependent on underlying conditions of possibility like relations of production, but are not reducible to the lower levels and have their own emergent properties and characteristics.

The back and forth between hegemony and governmentality can be likened to the back and forth between micro and macro, or structure and agency, or perhaps most appropriately, between condition and outcome. Governmentality is both a pre-existing condition and an emergent outcome of various projects and strategies. It provides hegemony with an element of tangibility, showing the ways by which it is enacted, reproduced and transformed. Hegemony provides an important agential element, relating governmentality to the actual projects of particular social groups. In doing so it provides governmentality with a degree of challengeability, showing governmentality to be vulnerable in two senses. First, vulnerable to defects in the underlying structural sense – the social terrain on which it operates exposing gaps, fissures and over-stretch; second, to the activities of agents who are organised and strategically oriented. In doing this, some of the mystique of governmentality is removed. And perhaps this is the first step in making the challenge.

Jonathan Joseph is Professor in the Department of Politics at the University of Sheffield