

GLOBAL LEVIATHAN RISING:

The Emergence of a Transnational Demoi's Corporeal Form

By Dr. Jean-Paul Gagnon

This argument is based on two specific works. The first is a review essay of Noam Chomsky's monograph entitled *Hopes and Prospects* (2010, Chicago: Haymarket). Therein I began trying to explain a new Leviathan which is growing in this world – one that is meant to establish the hegemony of democracy in global governance (i.e. the much greater influence of citizenries in the running of the world). The realization that this body exists, or is coming into existence, was sparked by wondering how the demoi in this world could bring international rogues and bandits to heel. These rogues can include, for example, certain administrations or individuals from or working on behalf of the USA, Israel, Syria, Zimbabwe or Australia among many others. In short, it was an attempt to describe a paradigm that is fighting or starting to fight against the abuses of states, corporations, and criminal powers – many of which Chomsky impressively catalogued, described, and normatively

argued against. The second work which completes the foundation of this piece is an interview with Noam Chomsky, recorded May 8, 2012, and appearing in the *Journal of Democratic Theory's* 2nd volume, 2012. Therein, over approximately twenty precious minutes, Chomsky and I discussed the global Leviathan. He did not deny the existence of this sacred being – the Leviathan is rising. But, as Chomsky argued, she has clay feet. This Leviathan, bringing the hegemony of democracy well into global governance, is fragile. She is only recently born and still very much in development.

The aim of this article is to try to explain the origins of the global Leviathan. It will also try to analyse how she is rising and finally will offer certain points that must be remembered by the citizens of this world should this global Leviathan expect to come into maturity. That is a lot of ground to cover in a short piece which is why I will have to resist plunging into depths – that I shall try to reserve for the



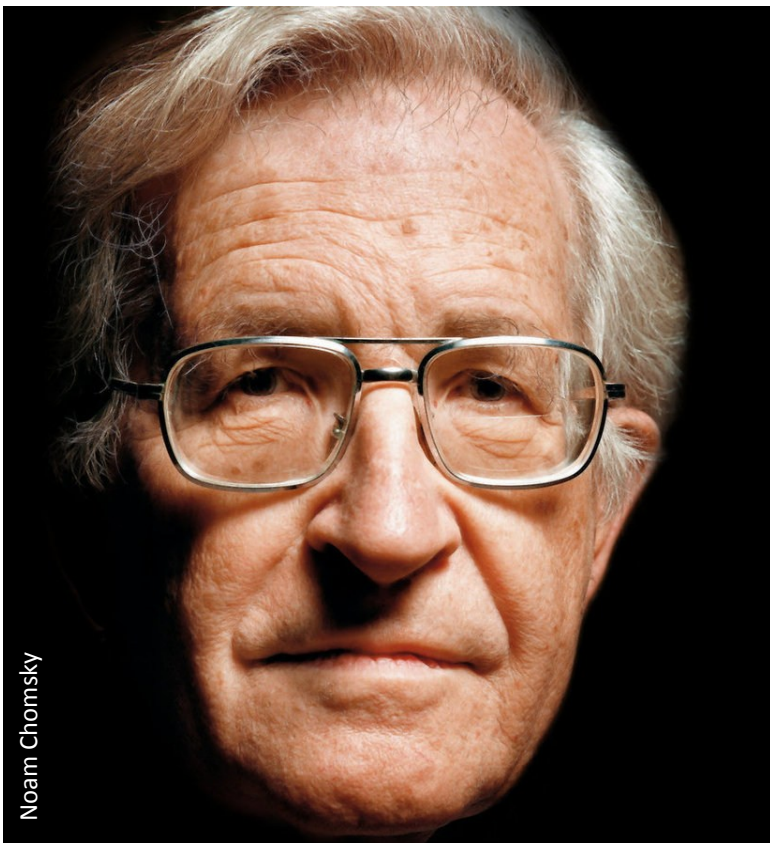
research monograph on this very subject.

Through my own rationalisations, it has taken the age of communicative abundance (proliferation of information, media, and inter-personal communication exchanges for example) to produce the necessary conditions that would allow for a global Leviathan to be born. Given that there are already many Leviathans in different states of strength which exist at both the union-state and sub-state levels – at times composed of one or more demos – it is not a stretch of the imagination to understand the inevitability of these smaller Leviathans and their composing demoi uniting to form a global giant. Like atoms, the demoi of this globe and their own Leviathans come together to form a greater power. The technologisation of communication has, via the internet for example, permitted a demos to be aware

of many other demoi, states, corporations, and of course global issues which has driven a specific type of reflexive modernisation within that demos. Individual citizens are now concerned not only with local, local-regional, territorial-provincial-state (sub-national), and union-state politics, but also transnational-region (e.g. the European Union, African Union, and ASEAN), continental and intercontinental as well as global politics. That has created the late 20th century phenomenon of particularistic protests at or against global summits. These protests are very often comparable in wants, demands and behaviours wheresoever they have occurred internationally.

The above is naturally not confined to one specific demos, but is a growing observable reality across a large number of demoi throughout this world – namely those that can communicate with or be communicated at by other transnational information creators, providers and analysers. This, I argue, is primarily how global political issues have come to be issues for the attention of most demoi. Nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear power, terrorism, the Israel/Palestine debacle, regulating financial markets and environmental concerns are a few examples. That commonality of political concern forms a type of platform that is influencing global governance. And it is that particular influence, namely how it gradually began to form, which can be directly translated into the metaphor of a fertilized embryo that matured and was born into the complicated world of democratically governing global politics.

As mentioned above, Chomsky, I think rightly, argued that this Leviathan has clay feet (i.e. she is fragile and thus weak – she has both observable and hidden



Noam Chomsky

weaknesses). My view is that this Leviathan is a child. She is developing into the powerful woman, a champion, that I and hopefully many others want her to be. Given that this child is composed of the demoi of this world (she would not otherwise exist without us), she requires the constant attention and support of her makers. This is comparable to parenting. In essence, she must be raised. And as raising any child – this requires constant attention, care, affection, and unconditional love. This child, the youth of a powerful global Leviathan, is I argue something sacred. She has the potential to grow into a powerful champion of democracy and can ensure that the hegemony of this world's demoi will be established in global governance.

The hegemony of citizens through democracy in global governance is essential as it not only increases the ethics of global politics but also brings the positives associated with normative democracies into action. There would be less scope for human fallibility, there would be greater scope for better decision-making, the participation of the world's population in said decision-making would ensure stronger outcomes for public policies, and most importantly there would be far less scope for violence to be sanctioned.

And I see this process as already in action. The United Nations, the multifarious network of international non-governmental organizations, the increasingly toothy international criminal courts system and all of its brilliant associates (such as Interpol), and naturally the growing existence of a transnational civil society form both the body and movements of the global Leviathan. We see for example her weak presence in the decisions of how

to handle the internal strife of Syria, we saw her confused over how intervention should have occurred in Libya, and we saw her weep over the violent fates of Yugoslavia, Rwanda and East Timor among others.

What is of paramount importance then is to try to empower this child so that she may reach a state of maturity. This is too where both my review essay of *Hopes and Prospects* and the interview with Noam Chomsky ended – what can be done to ensure not just the continued existence but more importantly the growth of this global Leviathan? Chomsky offered that it must take the constant pressure by those that can apply it on the citizenries of this world. Individuals must be willing to engage the governance of global politics. They must try to uncover and understand what the powers of this world are doing in order to keep them to account. There must be constant demands for transparency, anti-corruption, the greater inclusion and participation of the citizenry, a far more ethical transnational media, and of course support for and interest in social



A part of Frontispiece of "Leviathan" by Abraham



science education. Without this fire in the belly of the citizen we invite the rapists of politics to continue violating our individual and collective sovereignty. We invite the shamans and sophists to keep us in the mists of their making so that they may have their way with us.

Individual citizens must use their frustration with the limitations of politics, with the idiocy of many decisions made in global governance, and with the lack of access to governance to demand for more *cleverness*. Politics, as I have argued elsewhere, must be pushed into evolution with cleverness, innovation, ethics, stress-tested functionality and intelligence being central to this drive.

As pressure of this nature is applied and increased, this will drive both the further empowerment of the world's *demoi* and by effect the increased maturity of the global Leviathan. But without this pressure, without unrelenting calls for better politics (however that is defined), for more democracy, for clever and more ethical governance, we risk the possibility of losing this child or of keeping her in such a state of weakness as to render her easy to avoid or manage by international rogues and bandits (state, corporation, military, criminal or otherwise). All of this, which Chomsky powerfully concluded, rests on the will to democracy – a condition that is called for by many democratic theorists and social as well as political philosophers. To me, there is too much useless cynicism, avoidance, apathy and sadly ignorance: a vast majority of citizens have their heads buried in the ubiquitous sands of ineptitude and frustration. In short, citizens themselves are not meeting the expectations of normative democratic theory. We are all aware of the shortcomings in both government and

governance – we all know the irritations that politics at whatever level can produce – but without a change of energy in this world's *demoi* the atoms will not vibrate and our child will not move or grow.

To end, I reason that we need to place much greater value – if not humble pride – in being a political person. We should not avoid the topic of politics at the dinner table or among new people at a party; we should not scoff at the social sciences; we should not turn our backs on politics because our avenues of entry are so limited; we should make time in our day or week to try to participate and offer our 'two-cents' or fifty-cents about one or more decisions that are going to be made or that have been made at whatever level of politics; we must cry foul; we must demand for far better politics, government and governance than what is available to us today; we must evolve as citizens; and we must recognize the global Leviathan and nurture her so that she may wield such power as to protect us all from the villains and brigands and rapists of global politics. It is she, the global Leviathan as paradigm, that is quite possibly one of the most important mechanisms in human existence thus far. She is leading us, and will continue to do so but only with our constant support, into an advanced condition of democratic politics, human progress, and peace that has not yet been experienced in the history of the human animal.

Note:

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