

Covid-19 and the US Hegemony

The Modern World System and the Hegemonic Power

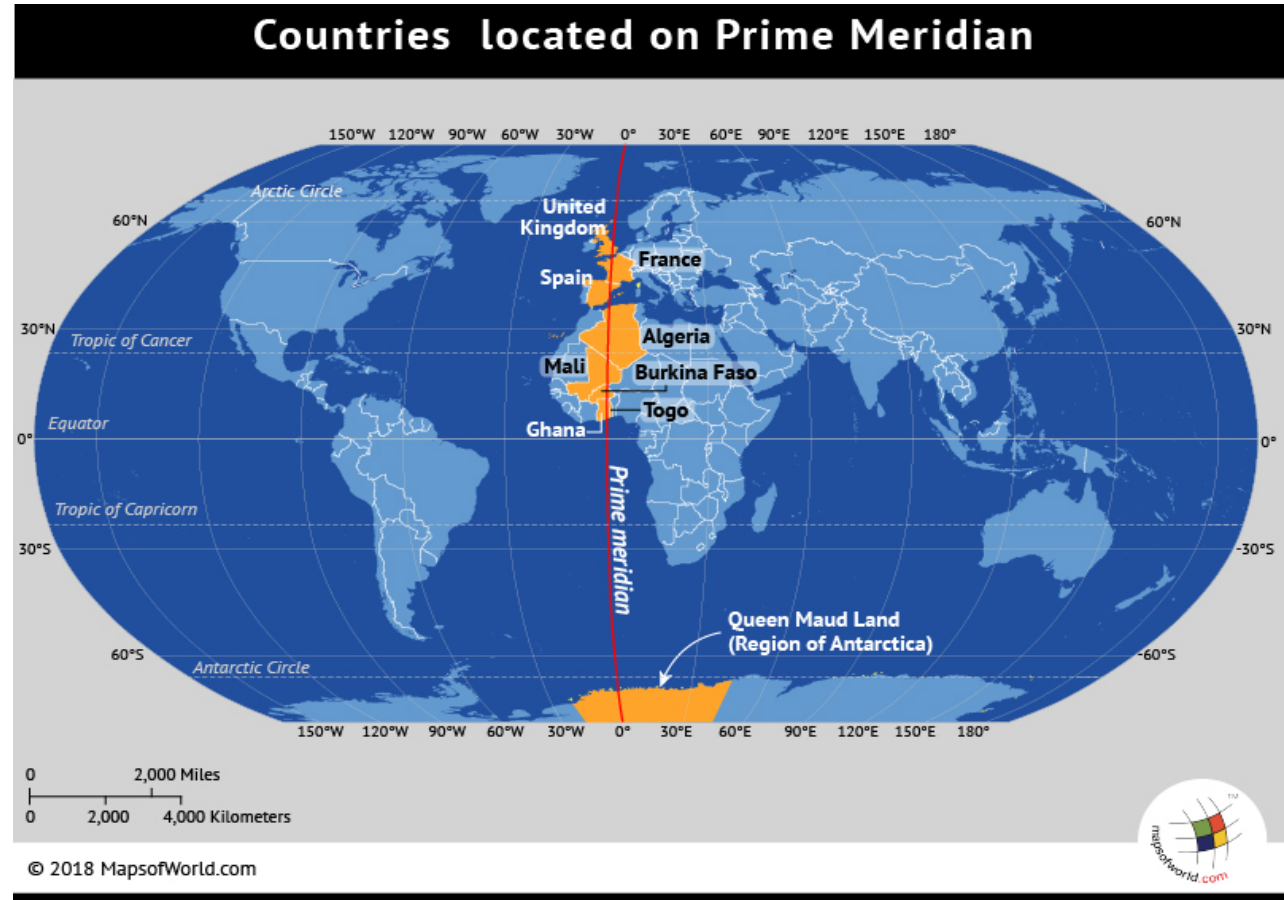


The Modern World System and the Hegemonic Power

- Why do the British stamps have no country of origin printed on them?

The Modern World System and the Hegemonic Power

- Do you know the Prime Meridian?
- It is a line indicating the 0 degree longitude.
- So the east side of this line is the Eastern Hemisphere and the west side is the Western Hemisphere.
- The world agreed to have the Prime Meridian in 1884.
- It is located through Greenwich in London.
- Why London?



The Modern World System and the Hegemonic Power

- Answer: because when the Prime Meridian and stamps were first used, UK was the hegemon.
- But, what is the hegemon?
- What is the hegemonic power?
- What is the modern world system?

The Modern World System and the Hegemonic Power

- In the 15th century, the collapse of four elements in the development of Europe created a unique situation.
 - a failure of production led to the collapse of economic elites.
 - A breakdown of order led to a collapse of political elites
 - The collapse of social glue provided by the church was eroding in a collapse of political elites
 - The demise of Mongol power led to a collapse of external threat to Europe
- This was the crisis of feudalism, and there emerged a new form of social organization which we call here “the modern world system”

The Modern World System and the Hegemonic Power

- “the modern world system” => refer to the economic system that integrates the whole world to be parts of production and accumulation processes.
- Geographically, it consists of an entrenched hierarchical division of labor with core and periphery plus semi-periphery in between.
 - The core is where most of capital accumulation ends up
 - Periphery is the zone of cheap labor and resources
 - Semi-periphery mixes these two characteristics
- Sugar production in the Caribbean using slave labor from Africa to meet demand for sweeteners by European consumers is a classic example,

The Modern World System and the Hegemonic Power

- Among the core, there must be a hegemon.
- A hegemon is usually a state that has political, economic, and military powers to set a world order for all countries in the world system. The hegemon usually does things first and show the ways for other.
- The hegemon hence have what we call “the hegemonic power.”
- The hegemonic power comes from consensus just as much as coercion in a mix.

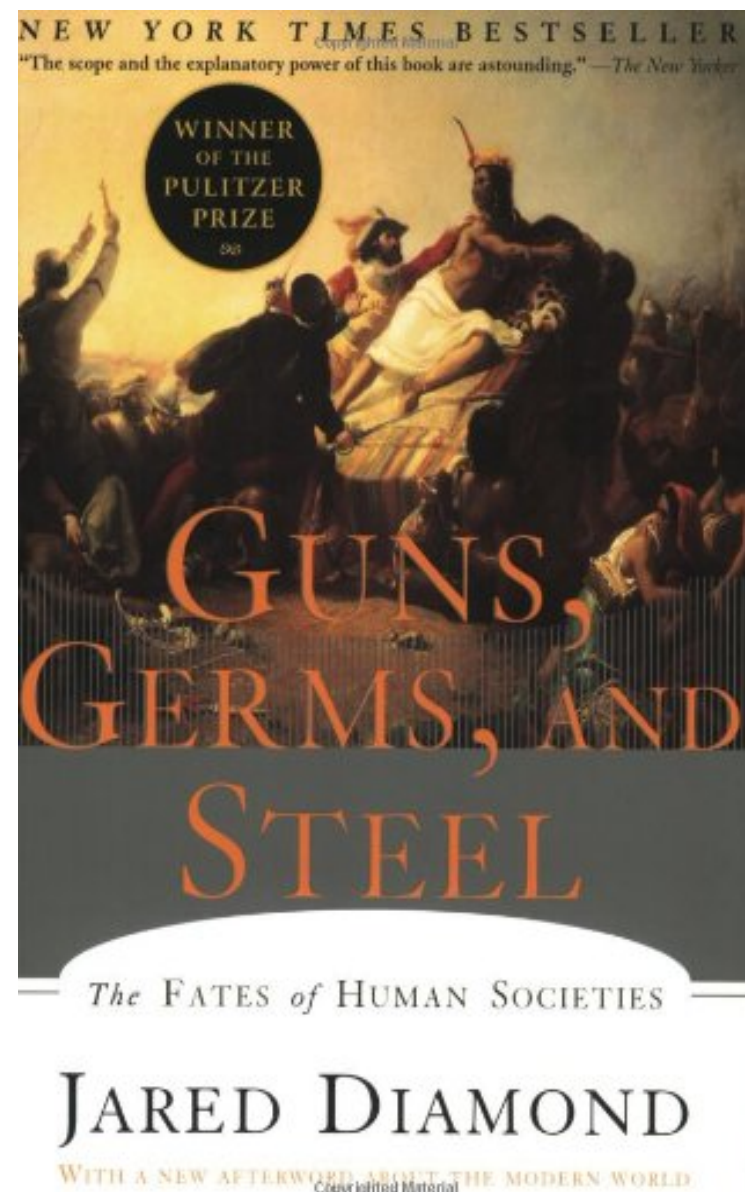
The Modern World System and the Hegemonic Power

- There have been three hegemonic states
 - The Dutch Republic in the 17th century
 - Britain in the 19th century
 - The USA in the 20th century
- When a hegemon comes and goes. It rises to powers and later loses them.
- A pattern of accumulation in the modern world system evolved along a hegemonic cycle.
- Right now, we are under the US hegemony, which is said to be in decline since the 1970s.

Covid-19 and the US Hegemony

- What is an issue here?
- The failure of global leadership in response to the COVID-19 pandemic illustrates the much larger challenges in global governance that the world confronts today.
- At the same time, the pandemic also laid bare the scope and scale of China's ambition to reshape the geostrategic landscape and reform international institutions to reflect its preferred norms, values, and policies.
- Will the Covid-19 pandemic remove the USA from the hegemonic position?
- We will try to answer this question later.
- But for now we are going to focus on the past to see the impact of epidemics on the modern world system.
- In particular, germs played a very important role during the European expansion to the west.

Guns, Germs, and Steel

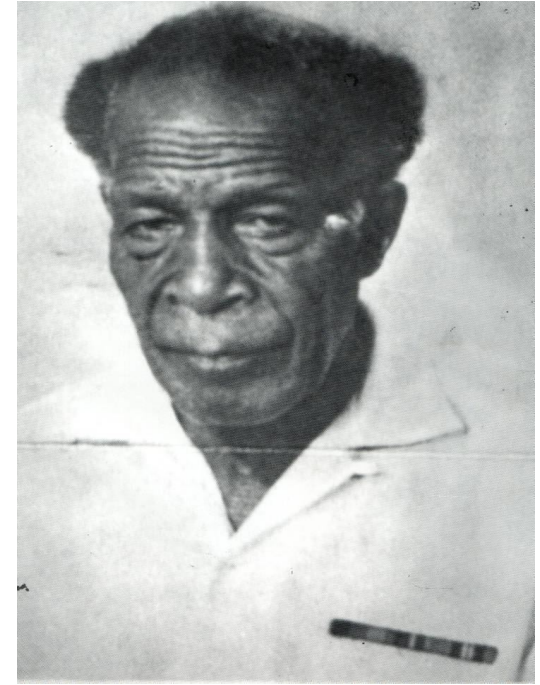


- Have you read this book?
- This book is very famous. It won the Pulitzer prize for general nonfiction in 1998



Guns, Germs, and Steel

- In the Introduction of the book, Yali's question is something that Diamond tries to answer. The question is
 - "Why is it that you white people developed so much cargo and brought it to New Guinea, but we black people had little cargo of our own?"
 - In other words, "Why did wealth and power become distributed as they now are, rather than in some other way?"
- What's your answer?



Yali (1912-1975). He was a politician in Papua New Guinea.



Guns, Germs, and Steel

- Diamond's answer
 - “some peoples developed guns, germs, steel, and other factors conferring political and economic power before others did; and some peoples never developed these power factors at all.”
- But, why were Europeans, rather than Africans or Native Americans, the ones to end up with guns, the nastiest germs, and steel?
- In the book, Diamond tries to answer this question by looking at history and prehistory of human beings.
- The important scene for the geographical expansion started when the Europeans arrived the West Indies.

The Europeans in America

- The early European settlements in the Americas, beginning with the one founded by Columbus in 1492, were on Hispaniola – the island that is now divided between Haiti and Dominican Republic.



The Europeans in America

- “Columbian Exchange”
- The aboriginal inhabitants of the island were Indian tribe known as the Arawak peoples who were over one million. They kindly welcomed their guests.
- However, the Spaniards were interested in wealth and political powers. They dispossessed the Arawaks of their lands and enslaved them.
- In the process, gunpowder and smallpox played a crucial role.



The Europeans in America

- Around 1508 the first colony was founded on the American mainland, at the Isthmus of Panama.
- Conquest of the two large mainland empires, those of the Aztecs and Incas, followed in 1519-1520 and 1532-1533, respectively.
- In both conquests European-transmitted epidemics (probably smallpox) made major contributions, by killing the emperors themselves, as well as a large fraction of the population.

Collision at Cajamarca

- Atahualpa, the Inca emperor, was absolute monarch of the largest and most advanced state in the New World.
- He was in the middle of his own empire of millions of subjects and immediately surrounded by his army of 80,000 soldiers, recently victorious in a war with other Indians.
- In November 1532, he and his soldiers lost to the Spaniards.



Collision at Cajamarca

- Francisco Pizarro represented the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (also known as King Charles I of Spain), monarch of the most powerful state in Europe.
- He, leading a group of 168 Spanish soldiers, was in unfamiliar terrain, ignorant of the local inhabitants, completely out of touch with the nearest Spaniards (1,000 miles to the north in Panama) and far beyond the reach of timely reinforcements.



Collision at Cajamarca

- After the battle had begun, Pizarro captured Atahualpa within a few minutes after the two leaders first met. Thanks to military technology based on guns, steel weapons, and horses, (although guns did not play a big role because they were difficult to use at the time.)
- Pizarro proceeded to hold his prisoner for eight months, while extracting history's largest ransom in return for a promise to free him. After the ransom—enough gold to fill a room 22 feet long by 17 feet wide to a height of over 8 feet—was delivered, Pizarro reneged on his promise and executed Atahualpa

Collision at Cajamarca

- How did germs play a role in this battle?
- This is what Diamond argues:
 - *How did Atahualpa come to be at Cajamarca?* Atahualpa and his army came to be at Cajamarca because they had just won decisive battles in a civil war that left the Incas divided and vulnerable.
 - In 1526, smallpox epidemics took place. It killed much of the Inca population, including both the emperor Huayna Capac and his designated successor, Ninan Cuyuchi. Those deaths precipitated a contest for the throne between Atahualpa and his half brother Huascar. The civil war divided the empire. If it had not been for the epidemic, the Spaniards would have faced a united empire.
 - Pizarro quickly appreciated those divisions and exploited them.

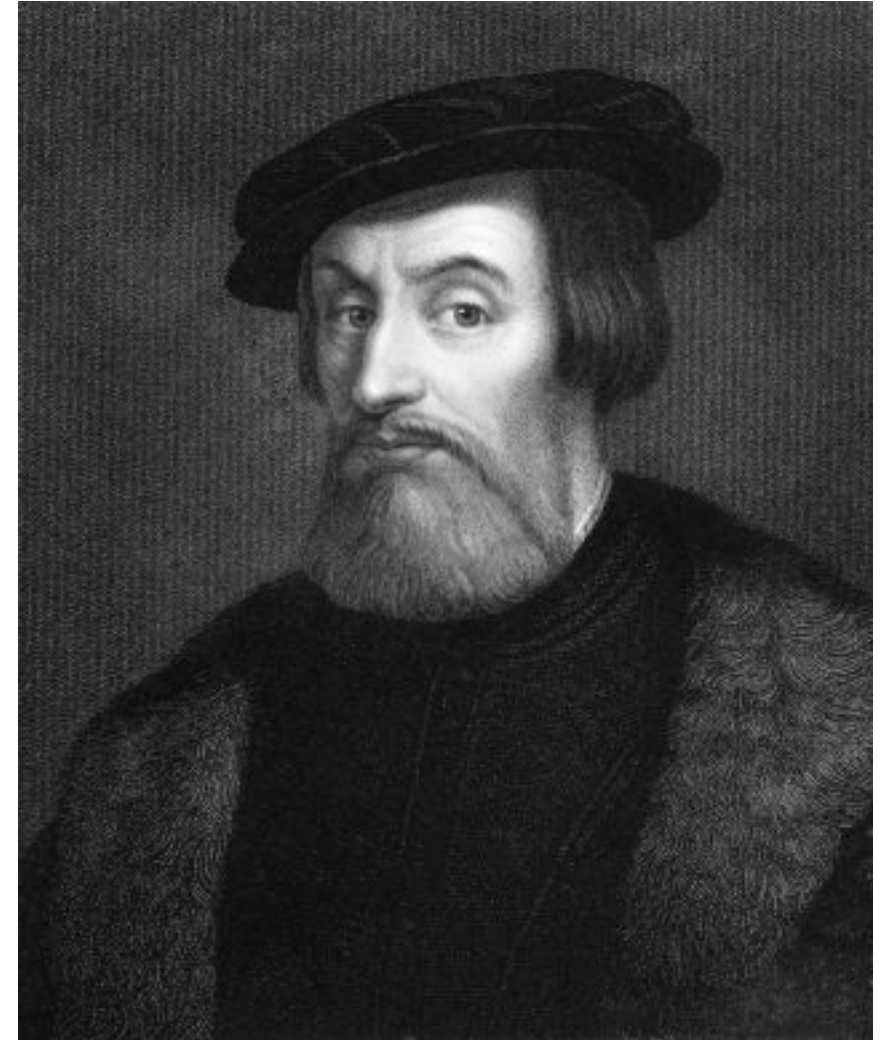
Afterwards

- Thereafter, there were several attempts to fight back by the Incas
- Even their leader Manco Inca Yupanqui retreated to the mountains and formed the small Inca-state.
- However, smallpox as well as other diseases kept ravaging the Incas until the Empire came to an end.



Hernan Cortes and the Aztecs Empire

- In 1518, Diego Velazquez, the governor of Hispaniola was about to send Hernan Cortes to inland of Mexico, but he changed his mind.
- Cortes, disappointed with that, insisted to explore Mexico under the name of the Spanish Crown.
- Cortes reached Mexican coast in 1519 with 600 other Spaniards. Mexico was discovered by Spain just a year prior.
- He landed first on Yucatan before moving westward to the Aztecs empire.
- On the way, he allied with the natives and his army grew larger.



Cortes

Hernan Cortes and the Aztecs Empire

- He arrived Tenochtitlán, the capital of the Aztecs empire (which is now Mexico City).
- The arrival of Cortes was matched with the Aztecs prophecy that their god would return to the earth. Montezuma – the emperor of the empire - welcomed Cortes and his troops warmly.
- Cortes captured Montezuma, sacked the city, and ruled the city through him.



Hernan Cortes and the Aztecs Empire

- While Cortes held Tenochtitlan through Montezuma, a Spanish force from Cuba landed on the coast of Mexico. They had been sent by Velasquez to unseat Cortés.
- When having heard of this, he and some of his troops left the city and defeated the Spanish force.
- The Aztecs then set for rebellion. The Spanish troops captured Montezuma as a hostage in negotiation for security.
- On July 1520, Montezuma was killed, believing that he was stoned to death by his people.



Death and cremation
of Montezuma

Hernan Cortes and the Aztecs Empire

- Speedily returning to Tenochtitlan, Cortes lost to the rebellion and fled the city.
- However, it was so unfortunate for the Aztecs, but so fortunate for the Spaniards. One of Cortés' men contracted smallpox from a member of the force from Cuba.
- That soldier died during the Aztec rebellion.
- When his body was looted, an Aztec caught the disease, which spread like wildfire because the Aztec people had no immunity to it.
- More than 3 millions of the Aztecs died from Smallpox. This allowed Cortes to regain the power.
- Cortes began building Mexico City, King Charles I of Spain appointed Cortés as governor of New Spain, and hence this was the end of the Aztecs Empire.

Another notable case in America

- In 1760s, Sir Jeffrey Amherst and Col. Henry Bouquet deliberately gave blankets infected with smallpox in order to “reduce” them.
- This was clearly a “genocide.”
- <https://www.history.com/news/colonists-native-americans-smallpox-blankets>



An illustration of Ottawa Chief, Pontiac confronting Colonel Henry Bouquet who authorized his officers to spread smallpox amongst native Americans by deliberately infecting blankets after peace talks

Smallpox

- Variola virus => this group is composed of Variola Major and Variola Minor. It was the former that threatened the world in the past.
- The disease is very contagious. There are three ways of transmission
 - Droplets
 - Vertical transmission: An infected woman can transmit it to her unborn child who is then born with “congenital smallpox
 - The virus can be alive on an object. This is why the infected blanket could transmit the disease to the native Americans.



Smallpox: Symptoms

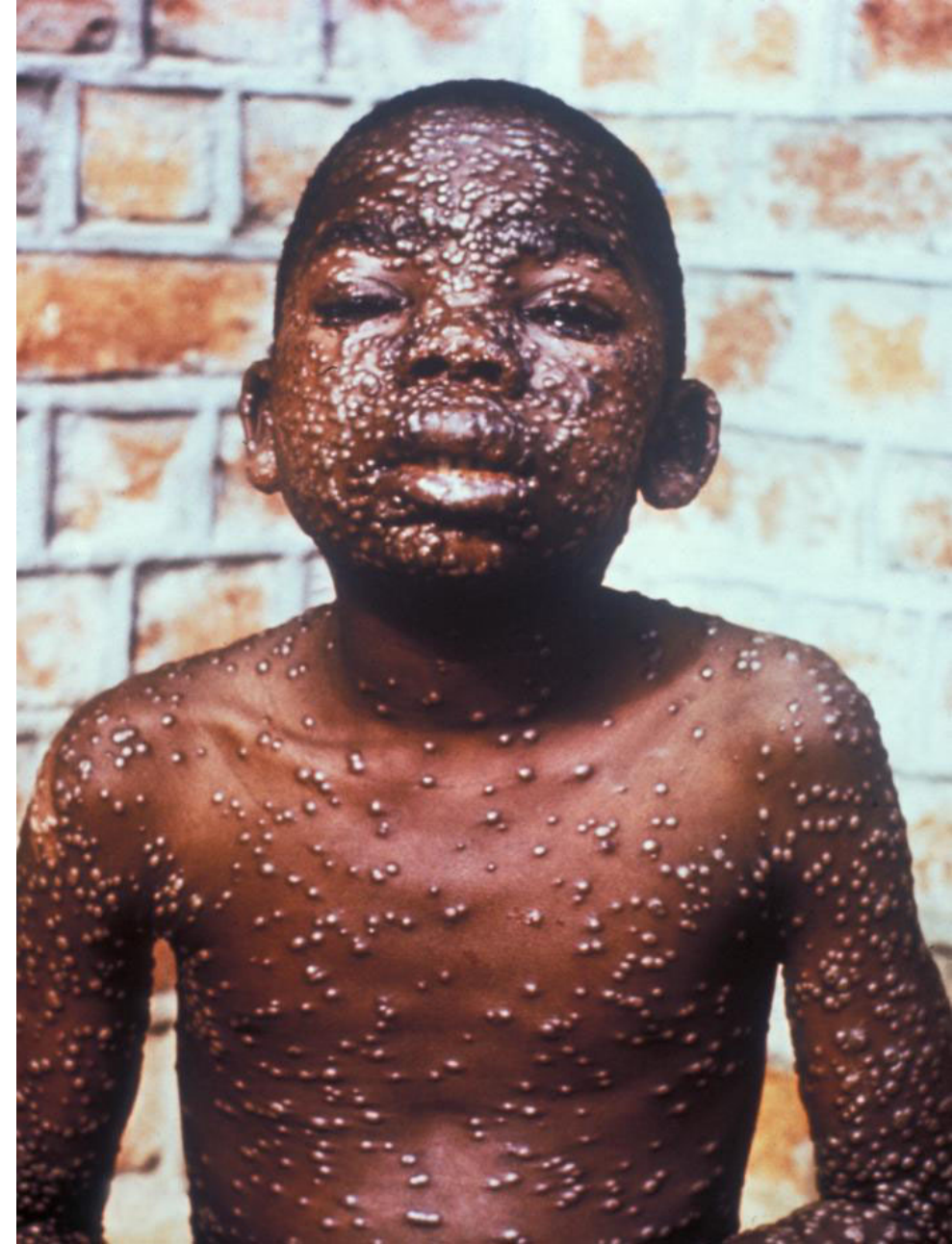
- The dread of smallpox was the gruesomeness of its course in the body and the lifelong scarring and disfigurement that resulted.
- The incubation period lasted for around 12 days. This is very long, and this facilitated the spread of infection.
- Early symptoms included high fever, nausea, severe backache, and headache.
- Some patients died at this early stage.

Smallpox: Symptoms

- However, most patients entered the eruptive stage which exhibited the classic symptoms of smallpox.
- A rash appeared with small round or oval lesions known as “macules” that were rose-colored and up to one-quarter inch in diameter.
- Then the centers of the macules became hard and they gradually rose into structures called “papules.”
- The lesions grew in size, and they were now called “vesicles.”

Smallpox: Symptoms

- Patients experienced ever-increasing difficulty swallowing and talking because there were vesicles in throat and mouth.
- The vesicles were filled with yellow pus. Fever spiked, and the eyelids, lips, nose, and tongue became swollen.
- From ten to fourteen days after the first appearance of the rash, scabs began to appear. Large area of skin began to peel off. These areas were painful. Death often occurred at this stage.



Vaccination

- Edward Jenner –the English physician - was the person who invented smallpox inoculation.
- He observed that milkmaids who had got cowpox before never got smallpox. So he used pus from a milkmaid who now fell ill from cowpox and inoculated it in a boy's arms.
- The boy got fever, but no full infection.
- After that Jenner injected smallpox virus into the boy.
- No smallpox symptoms showed.
- He called this process “vaccination” after the Latin word *vaccinus*, meaning “*from cow.*”



- Now, smallpox has been eradicated.

Why did the native Americans get diseases from the Europeans?

- Let's get back to the America
- Why did the native Americans get diseases from the Europeans? And, why wasn't it the other way around?
- Diamond's answers are as follows:
 - Microbes and humans both evolve to survive. Even genes evolve through natural selection.
 - When humans were close to animals. They would exchange germs, and they both evolved to live.
 - In order for an epidemic to occur, there needs to have a number of people.
 - "Crowd diseases" could not sustain themselves in small bands of hunter-gatherers and slash-and-burn farmers.
 - Therefore, the Europeans' development to farm and live close to others brought them some diseases, and, hence, some immunities.

Why did the native Americans get diseases from the Europeans?

- Diamond continued
 - And because the Europeans, long before developing farming, lived close to animals which could spread them some germs.
 - The Europeans again had another chance to develop their immunities.

TABLE II.1 Deadly Gifts from Our Animal Friends

<i>Human Disease</i>	<i>Animal with Most Closely Related Pathogen</i>
Measles	cattle (rinderpest)
Tuberculosis	cattle
Smallpox	cattle (cowpox) or other livestock with related pox viruses
Flu	pigs and ducks
Pertussis	pigs, dogs
Falciparum malaria	birds (chickens and ducks?)

Why did the native Americans get diseases from the Europeans?

- Diamond continued
 - But, prior to the arrival of the Europeans, few foreigners ever came to visit America.
 - Compared to those in Europe, communities in America were less crowded. Many people still behaved gathering and hunting during the arrival of the Europeans.
 - Lastly, there were not many animals that could be domesticated in America.
 - The native Americans had not experienced many diseases and hence did not have many opportunities to develop immunities.

The Rise and Fall of the US Hegemony

- Prior to World War II, it was widely accepted that the USA would replace the UK as a new hegemon.
- The country was ready to surge at the time. She had a lot of economic resources (land, people, technology, etc.). She had a major role in world politics.
- The significant reshuffle took place during World War II and the victory of the Allies was greatly due to the great US military power.
- All of these factors handed the USA the hegemonic power after World War II.



The Rise and Fall of the US Hegemony

- The USA then led the world in putting up democratic liberalism as a world order. Several beliefs compatible with this ideology were practically implemented such as free trade, supports of democracy, consumerism, anti-communism, etc.
- Fighting against communism justified the US military actions in many countries around the world.
- The Bretton Woods system and the dollar hegemony allowing the USA to control the world economy.
- Such international organizations as the World Bank, UN, IMF had influences in conducting economic policies of individual countries.

The Rise and Fall of the US Hegemony

- However, some experts believed that the US hegemony was in a decline since the second half of the 1970s
 - Oil Shocks in 1973 and 1979
 - The Fall of the Bretton Woods System
 - Stagflation and economic stumble in the USA
 - The US loss in Vietnam War
 - The rise of Japanese and West German economies
 - And many more

The Rise and Fall of the US Hegemony

- “predictions of American decline and a shift in international order are far from new – they have been consistently wrong.... But this time really is different.” “US global leadership is not in retreat; it is unraveling. And the decline is not cyclical but permanent.” (Cooley and Nexon 2020)
 - The unipolar moment: after Cold War – that is the collapse of Soviet Union and the Marxism-Leninism, the USA was the only leader.
 - There existed only one dominant framework for international norms and rules => the liberal international system of alliances and institutions anchored in Washington.
 - The USA and its allies enjoyed a de facto patronage monopoly providing source of security, economic goods, political support and legitimacy.
 - Other countries saw no alternative.

The Rise and Fall of the US Hegemony

- Today, new regional organizations and illiberal transnational networks contested the US influence. The rise of China is the main reason.
- China and Russia now contest liberal aspects of the international order from within the order's institutions
 - They cooperated in the UN to promote new norms.
- At the same time, they are building an alternative order through new institutions that they have greater influences.
 - They (together with India, Brazil, and South Africa) have built the BRICS. There are also Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) (backed by China) and Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) (backed by Russia)



The Rise and Fall of the US Hegemony

- China has expanded its power over economic development of other countries
 - Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) are obviously an attempt of China to build connections between countries in the region. This plan obviously affects the Russia-influenced areas such as central Asia, but Russia agrees so because she also gets support from China in return.
 - After 2008 crisis, China was an important source of loans and emergency funding for countries that could not access Western financial institutions.
 - In countries emerging from wars, such as Nepal, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and South Sudan, aid from China flowed to victorious governments insulating them from international pressure to accommodate their domestic foes.
 - These money allow the borrowing countries to have more options for loans.

The Rise and Fall of the US Hegemony

- Of course, the recent fall of the US hegemony could be due to the USA herself.
 - The slow US economy has created doubts on the power of market mechanism.
 - Her conservative policies have created doubts on the workability of liberalism as an ideology.
 - Some no-points military missions have created doubts on the strength of the US military power
 - The deteriorating relations between state personnel's and citizens have created doubts on how the government would handle many domestic problems such as racial or gender discrimination
 - US consumerism has created doubts on environmental issues.
 - And many more

The US Hegemony after Covid

- The US struggle to keep the hegemonic power is obvious



The United States will be powerfully supporting those industries, like Airlines and others, that are particularly affected by the Chinese Virus. We will be stronger than ever before!

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上午6:51 · 2020年3月17日 · Twitter for iPhone

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Coronavirus: Trump stands by China lab origin theory for virus

1 May

Coronavirus pandemic



Trump implied that China made the virus

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-52496098>

The US Hegemony after Covid

- The USA tried to get the vaccine before anyone

Trump says COVID-19 vaccine is coming 'within weeks.' Experts say that's not possible

BY KATIE CAMERO

OCTOBER 23, 2020 11:07 AM, UPDATED OCTOBER 23, 2020 06:17 PM



<https://www.miamiherald.com/news/coronavirus/article246661043.html>

U.S. Offered 'Large Sum' to German Company for Access to Coronavirus Vaccine Research, German Officials Say

The United States says it will share any vaccine breakthroughs with the world, but German officials appeared rattled by its reported overture to a biotech firm.



<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/15/world/europe/coronavirus-vaccine-us-germany.html>

The US Hegemony after Covid

- The United States continues to lead the global effort to respond to and end the COVID-19 pandemic.
- <https://dk.usembassy.gov/factsheet-united-states-contributions-to-the-global-response-to-covid-19/>



The US Hegemony after Covid

- However, the poor performance in handling the situation in the USA really jeopardizes creditability of the, US government and the US hegemony.
- Francis Fukuyama said that “The gobal distribution of power will continue to shift eastward, since East Asia has done better at managing the situation than Europe or the United States”
- In his opinion, the main problem was Donald Trump. “The currently highly polarized society and incompetent leader blocked the state from functioning effectively.”

The US Hegemony after Covid

- Donald Trump stoked division rather than promoting unity, politicized the distribution of aid, pushed responsibility onto governors for making key decisions while encouraging protests against them for protecting public health.
- He attacked international institutions rather than galvanizing them.
- These blocked the USA from functioning effectively and hence pushed the hegemonic power away from the USA.

However, has China benefited from Covid-19?

- However, China and Moscow portrayed themselves as providers of emergency foods and medical supplies in several countries including the USA.
 - By March 31, the [Chinese government had provided](#) 120 countries and four international organizations with surgical masks, N95 respirators, protective suits, nucleic acid test kits, ventilators, and other assistance, including [loans](#).
 - <https://asiafoundation.org/2020/04/29/covid-19-and-chinas-soft-power-ambitions/>
- China's ability to handle the situation really gave an edge to China as a country that will lead the world out of the Covid crisis.

However, has China benefited from Covid-19?

- Still, the story about China covering up the news regarding Covid at the beginning of the pandemic has given her a bad impression.
- China tried to take advantage while other governments focus on public health

CHINA JUNE 5, 2020 / 4:42 PM / UPDATED 5 MONTHS AGO

U.S. military commander says China pushing territorial claims under cover of coronavirus

By Tim Kelly

2 MIN READ



<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-usa-china-commander-idUSKBN23C180>

However, has China benefited from Covid-19?

JULY 30, 2020



Americans Fault China for Its Role in the Spread of COVID-19

Unfavorable views of China reach new historic high, and a majority supports taking a tougher stand on human rights

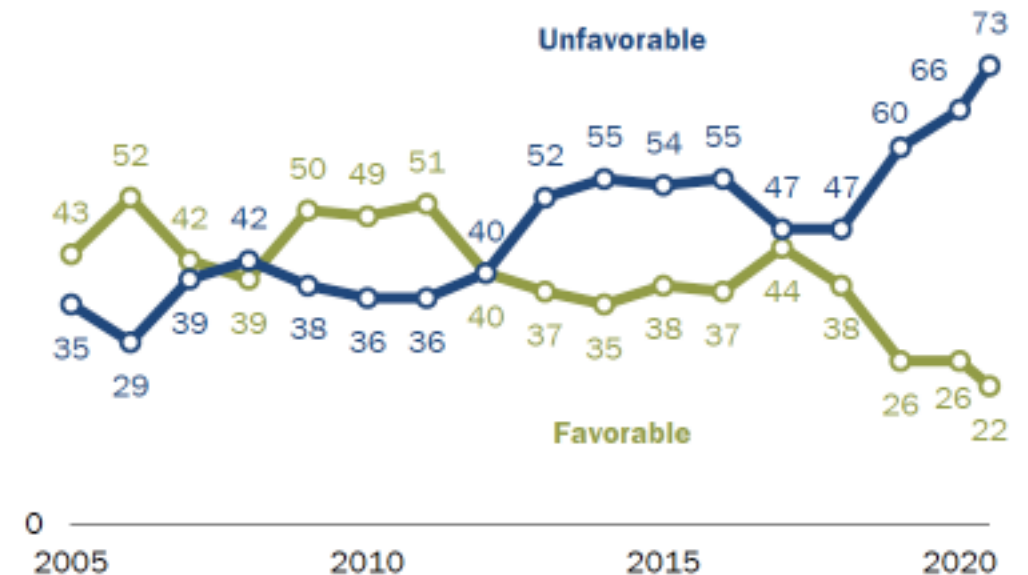
BY LAURA SILVER, KAT DEVLIN AND CHRISTINE HUANG

- <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2020/07/30/americans-fault-china-for-its-role-in-the-spread-of-covid-19/>

Unfavorable views of China reach new highs in U.S.

% who say they have a(n) ___ opinion of China

100 %



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 16-July 14, 2020. Q8b.
"Americans Fault China for Its Role in the Spread of COVID-19"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

So, USA or China or others else?

- It seems that the USA is in decline for sure
- Is China ready to lead the world? Or, is the world ready to fully follow China?
- Which one is a more appropriate question?
- The certain thing is that under the current condition, according to the analysis of the Modern World System, the world economy will continue struggling.