



MASTERARBEIT | MASTER'S THESIS

Titel | Title

Celestial Aspirations, Terrestrial Realities: Global South Agency
in the History of the New International Economic Order and the
United Nations Moon Treaty

verfasst von | submitted by
Franz Paul Kroiß BEd

angestrebter akademischer Grad | in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts (MA)

Wien | Vienna, 2026

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt | Degree
programme code as it appears on the
student record sheet:

UA 066 589

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt | Degree
programme as it appears on the student
record sheet:

Masterstudium Internationale Entwicklung

Betreut von | Supervisor:

Assoz. Prof. Dr. Eva-Maria Muschik B.A. M.A.

Abstract German

Diese Masterarbeit vergleicht die *Neue Weltwirtschaftsordnung* (NWWO) und das *Übereinkommen zur Regelung der Tätigkeiten von Staaten auf dem Mond und anderen Himmelskörpern* (Mondvertrag) als postkoloniale Projekte *internationaler Ordnungsbildung* in den 1970er Jahren. Sie argumentiert, dass der Mondvertrag nicht lediglich als technische oder marginale Episode des Weltraumrechts verstanden werden sollte, sondern als Teil des umfassenderen Nord-Süd-Konflikts über Souveränität, Umverteilung und Kontrolle über Ressourcen.

Unter Verwendung eines neo-gramscianischen theoretischen Rahmens untersucht diese Arbeit, was ein solcher Vergleich über die eingeschränkte Handlungsfähigkeit von Akteuren des Globalen Südens offenbart. Sie analysiert beide Fälle entlang dreier Dimensionen: ihrer Vorgeschichten (*Pre-Histories*), intellektuellen Grundlagen (*Intellectual Histories*) und der Koalitionen, die ihre Verhandlungen prägten. Sowohl im Fall der NWWO als auch des Mondvertrags übten Akteure des Globalen Südens bedeutsame Handlungsfähigkeit aus, indem sie alternative Prinzipien der Governance artikulierten, Koalitionen bildeten und versuchten, gerechtere Formen internationaler Ordnung zu institutionalisieren. Zugleich blieb diese Handlungsfähigkeit eingeschränkt durch den späten Eintritt in rule-making Prozesse, die hegemonialen institutionellen Strukturen, die diskursiven Beschränkungen bezüglich der Artikulation von Alternativen, die Koalitionsfragilität und den Widerstand dominanter hegemonialer Akteure. Die Masterarbeit kommt daher zu dem Schluss, dass der Mondvertrag zur selben umfassenderen postkolonialen Bestrebung gehörte wie die NWWO und dass der Weltraum deshalb als wichtiger Untersuchungsgegenstand für Entwicklungsforschung behandelt werden sollte.

Abstract English

This thesis compares the *New International Economic Order* (NIEO) and the *Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies* (Moon Treaty) as postcolonial projects of international *order-making* in the 1970s. It argues that the Moon Treaty should not be understood merely as a technical or marginal episode in space law, but as part of the wider North-South Conflict over sovereignty, redistribution, and control over resources.

Using a Neo-Gramscian framework, the thesis examines what this comparison reveals about the *constrained agency* of Global South actors. It analyzes both cases across three dimensions: their pre-histories, their intellectual histories, and the coalitions that shaped their negotiations. In both the NIEO and Moon Treaty cases, Global South actors exercised meaningful agency by articulating alternative principles of governance, building coalitions, and attempting to institutionalize more equitable forms of international order. At the same time, this agency remained constrained by late entry into rule-making processes, hegemonic institutional structures, discursive limits on how alternatives could be expressed, coalition fragility, and the resistance of dominant hegemonic powers. The thesis, therefore, concludes that the Moon Treaty belonged to the same broader postcolonial struggle as the NIEO and that outer space should be treated as an important domain of inquiry for development studies.

Acknowledgements

Dieses Studium wäre ohne die Unterstützung vieler wichtiger Menschen in meinem Leben nicht möglich gewesen. Natürlich ist es unmöglich all diesen Personen an dieser Stelle zu danken, aber es folgt trotzdem der Versuch einer Auflistung. Ich widme diese Arbeit den folgenden wunderbaren Menschen:

Meinen Eltern Claudia und Franz, die mir durch ihre harte Arbeit und Erziehung die Chance auf ein Studium ermöglicht haben. Meinem Bruder Daniel, der mich immer ermutigt hat, trotz Unsicherheit und Bedenken meinen eigenen Weg einzuschlagen. Meinen Großeltern, die immer das Beste für mich wollen und mir, durch ihr Vertrauen in mich und meine Fähigkeiten, mein eigenes Selbstvertrauen gegeben haben. Meiner Partnerin Nina, die immer hinter mir steht, meinen Rücken deckt und mich mit ihrer Liebe stützt, wann immer ich strauchle. Meinen guten Freundinnen und Freunden Niki, Gaboa, Diego, Lisa und Feli, die mich durch mein Studium begleitet haben und die diese Zeit so unvergesslich gemacht haben. Und natürlich gilt ein besonderer Dank auch meiner Betreuerin Eva, die mir als Mentorin und in Zusammenarbeit als bestes Beispiel für die Arbeit als Wissenschaftlerin vorangeht.

AI Statement

During the writing process of this thesis, AI Tools *ChatGPT* and *Claude* were used to support phrasing and language clarity. These tools were not used to generate the core ideas of this thesis. All substantive research tied to this thesis, as well as its analysis, and arguments are rooted in my own work. During the editing phase, *Grammarly* was used to check the text for spelling and grammar.

Table of Contents

Abstract German	i
Abstract English.....	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
AI Statement.....	iv
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Research Problem	1
1.2 Historical Background	3
1.2.1. NIEO	3
1.2.2 Moon Treaty	5
1.3 Importance and Research Interests.....	6
1.4 Theoretical Approach and Methods.....	7
1.5 Chapter Overview.....	8
2. Theoretical Framework	10
2.1 Neo-Gramscianism	10
2.2 Application and Operationalization	15
3. Literature Review	18
3.1 Scholarship on the NIEO and North-South Conflict.....	18
3.2 Scholarship on Space Law and its History	21
4. Pre-Histories	26
4.1 Pre-History of the NIEO.....	26
4.1.1 Historical Background	26
4.1.2 Underlying International Structures	28
4.2 Pre-History of the Moon Treaty	29
4.2.1 Historical Background.....	29
4.2.2 Underlying International Structures	31
4.3 Comparison	35
4.3.1 Historic Bloc Formation and Counter-Hegemonic Capacity	35
4.3.2 International Structures and the Reproduction of Hegemony.....	36
5. Intellectual History	38
5.1 NIEO.....	38
5.2 Space Law	41
5.3 UNCLOS	43
5.4 Comparison	45
5.4.1 Contestation of Hegemonic Common Sense.....	45
5.4.2 Counter-Hegemonic Visions.....	46

6. Coalitions	48
6.1 NIEO	48
6.1.1 Supporters	48
6.1.2 Ambivalent Positions	51
6.1.3 Opponents	52
6.2 Moon Treaty	53
6.2.1 Supporters	53
6.2.2 Ambivalent Positions	54
6.2.3 Opponents	55
6.3 Comparison	57
6.3.1 Counter-Hegemonic Blocs and their Fragmentation	57
6.3.2 Dilution of Counter-Hegemony	58
6.3.3 Hegemonic Resistance	59
7. Conclusion	62
7.1 Discussion of Findings	62
7.1.1 Pre-Histories	62
7.1.2 Intellectual Histories	65
7.1.3 Coalitions	66
7.1.4 Concluding Takeaways	69
7.2 Limitations	71
7.3 The Moon Treaty as an Expression of the North-South Conflict	72
7.4 Meaning for Development Studies	73
8. Primary Sources	75
9. Bibliography	76

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Problem

“The moon and its natural resources are the common heritage of mankind.”¹

These nine words declaring ownership of an airless rock 384,400 kilometers away from Earth, on which humanity had barely set foot, became the cause of a diplomatic battlefield in the 1970s. This sentence carried such significance not because lunar resources were likely to become the *gold fever* of the 20th century, in which all states wanted to guarantee their share. It held such importance because of a wider and older struggle, which brought with it the simple fact that in an unequal world, even the governance of a rock in the vast emptiness of space becomes a question of who benefits and who holds control.

The 1970s were an era in which formerly colonized states sought to reshape the international order on multiple fronts. Most importantly, they demanded a *New International Economic Order* (NIEO) to rectify the structural inequalities left behind by colonialism and preserved within the postwar global economy, as they argued.² At the same time, in the seemingly distant and technical arena of outer space law at the United Nations, many of these same states intervened in debates over the governance of the Moon and its resources with similar demands during the negotiations of the *Moon Treaty*.³ At first glance, these appear to be entirely different: one a broad political-economic program, the other a specialized legal negotiation over a technical and abstract domain. Yet both emerged from the same historical conjuncture in the *long 1970s*⁴ and can be read as expressions of a common struggle over who would shape the rules of international order after political decolonization.

This thesis begins from the observation that the *Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies* (commonly known as the *Moon Treaty* or sometimes as the *Moon Agreement*) has rarely been analyzed alongside the NIEO, even though both were shaped by the wider North-South Conflict of the 1970s. The NIEO openly challenged the unequal structures of the international economy and sought to complete political decolonization with economic sovereignty, redistribution, and ensure greater participation of formerly colonized states in global decision-making.⁵ The Moon Treaty, by contrast, addressed the governance of an emerging domain before practices of

¹ G.A. Res. 34/68.

² Engel and Mabefam, “The 50th Anniversary of the New International Economic Order,” 879–82.

³ Hanlon, “The Moon Agreement—A Swan Song,” 148.

⁴ Borrowing from Paul Stubbs’ application of the classic “long”-century periodization for describing the North-South Conflict of the 1970s. This approach was first used by Fernard Baudel and then later popularized in history by Eric Hobsbawm. It describes a period of analysis, which goes beyond the decade or century in question but needs to be viewed as one continuous period to fully grasp the subject of studies. This remedies the arbitrary periodization enforced by calendars, as the events shaping history do so often not neatly correspond to round years. See: Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 14.

⁵ G.A. Res. 3201 (S-VI).

resource extraction and appropriation had fully been made possible.⁶ Through demands such as declaring lunar resources as *common heritage of mankind*, they sought to shape outer space governance according to principles of equity, anti-monopoly, and within international regulatory regimes.⁷

This link is, however, not reflected in the scholarship on the NIEO and North-South Conflict at large. Both the literature on the NIEO and space law are ever-growing fields, but, as the State of the Art of this thesis will show, both domains have mostly been explored separately. Space law is treated as a technical legal field often framed mainly through Cold War superpower politics in historical accounts of space governance.⁸ This thesis aims to change this by bringing these literatures into conversation and, through this, demonstrating that space governance belongs within the broader historiography of the North-South Conflict.

While the connecting of literatures marks one goal of this work, its main contribution is actively using the NIEO and Moon Treaty as case studies for deriving conclusions about *Global South*⁹ agency and its constraints. As space governance has been largely ignored by scholarship related to Development Studies so far, this is expected to bring new insights and represents the thesis's main contribution.

The institutional settings, legal forms, and immediate objectives of both cases were quite different. The NIEO was a broader program articulated through declarations, resolutions, and negotiations in several forums. The Moon Treaty, as is obvious by its name, was a discrete legal instrument negotiated within the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS). However, this thesis argues that these differences should not obscure their comparability. Both can be understood as what I define as *postcolonial projects of international order-making*: attempts by Global South actors to reshape the norms, rules, and governing principles of an unequal international system. This reading is derived from its theoretical framework inspired by Neo-Gramscian approaches to international relations.¹⁰ In this interpretation, the Moon Treaty was not simply a niche episode in space law, but part of the same Global South-led postcolonial movement that produced the NIEO and other struggles over redistribution, sovereignty, and the control of resources.

⁶ Khatwani, "Common Heritage of Mankind for Outer Space," 92.

⁷ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 54–56.

⁸ Most influentially by McDougall, ...*The Heavens and the Earth*.

⁹ While I use the terms "Global North" and "Global South", I want to highlight their limitations. The terms are geographically inaccurate, homogenize diverse regions, and can be seen as perpetuating colonial hierarchies by framing formerly colonized states as dependent. In general, more precise terms should be used when talking about groupings of states, and this thesis does so when applicable (G77, NAM, etc.). However, the terms (in addition to "formerly colonized states") are still used throughout this work because of a lack of alternatives for the context and topic of this thesis – the North-South Conflict. See also: Moneke, "Why It's Time to Retire 'Global North' and 'Global South'."

¹⁰ Cox, "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations."

This thesis, at its core, asks: *What does a comparison of the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (Moon Treaty) and the New International Economic Order (NIEO) as postcolonial projects of international order-making reveal about the constrained agency of Global South actors, as seen through their pre-histories, intellectual foundations, and analysis of coalitions within their respective negotiations?*

To make these two cases comparable, the thesis employs a Neo-Gramscian framework that understands international order not as a neutral arena, but as a historically specific configuration of material power, institutions, and legitimating ideas. From this perspective, both the NIEO and the Moon Treaty can be approached as *counter-hegemonic projects*¹¹ that sought to advance alternative principles of governance under conditions of unequal development. The comparison is structured across three analytical dimensions: first, their *pre-histories*, which reveal the historical conditions and institutional terrains from which they emerged; second, their *intellectual histories*, which show how hegemonic assumptions were challenged and alternative visions articulated; and third, the *coalitions* of supporters, ambivalent states, and opponents, through which the possibilities and limits of Global South agency become visible in practice.

In this thesis, I argue that formerly colonized states were not merely passive recipients of international rules. They acted strategically, built coalitions, articulated alternative principles, and forced new questions onto the multilateral stages of world governance. At the same time, the analysis of both the NIEO and Moon Treaty also reveals that this agency was severely constrained by factors such as timing, hegemonic institutional design, limiting factors on the framing of ideas for change, coalition fragility, and hegemonic power resistance.

By comparing these two seemingly distant initiatives, this thesis maintains that the governance of the Moon was not separate from the struggles of decolonization, development, and global inequality, but an extension of these struggles into a new domain. The question of who would benefit from the Moon was, in an important sense, part of the same question that animated the NIEO: whether a genuine postcolonial world could move beyond the dividing inequalities toward a more equitable international order.

1.2 Historical Background

1.2.1. NIEO

The New International Economic Order (NIEO) is the name given to a set of proposals during the 1970s for restructuring the global political economy in the interest of formerly colonized states.¹² Formally declared by the United Nations General Assembly in May 1974 alongside a *Programme of Action*,¹³ the NIEO sought to correct what the supporting formerly colonized states saw as the deeply unequal economic structures inherited from

¹¹ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 10–14.

¹² Gilman, “The New International Economic Order,” 1.

¹³ G.A. Res. 3202 (S-VI).

colonialism that were maintained within the postwar international order. Its central premise was that political independence had not been matched by genuine economic sovereignty, because global trade, finance, and production continued to favor the industrialized North at the expense of the South.¹⁴

The roots of the NIEO lay in what Vijay Prashad, in his influential histories of the Global South, calls the “Third World project”,¹⁵ which, he argues, emerged out of anti-colonial struggles, Pan-African and Asian solidarity movements (expressed through conferences such as the 1947 Asian Relations Conference and especially the 1955 Bandung Conference), and their calls for redistribution and self-determination. These currents helped shape institutions such as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the Group of 77 (G77), all of which became key platforms for Global South states to articulate demands for a fairer international system.¹⁶

The immediate context for the NIEO were the crises of the 1970s, particularly the early decade’s oil shock, which exposed the instability of the world economy and briefly strengthened the bargaining power of oil-exporting states, many of which were formerly colonized states.¹⁷ With the backing of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the Non-Aligned Movement, through Algeria, officially called for a fundamental reorganization of international economic relations.¹⁸ This culminated in the Sixth Special Session of the UN General Assembly in 1974, where the aforementioned NIEO *Declaration* and *Programme of Action* were adopted.¹⁹ This declaration called for sovereignty over natural resources, commodity price stabilization, technology transfer, reform of the international monetary system, and greater participation for formerly colonized states in global economic decision-making.²⁰ What was proposed were therefore sweeping changes to the fundamental architecture of global capitalism and the role of the Global South in it, which led to resistance by the Global North, spearheaded by the United States, in support of the Status Quo.²¹

While starting strong, divisions within the Global South, especially between oil-exporting and oil-importing states, weakened collective pressure by the late 1970s.²² At the same time, the rise of neoliberal governments in the United Kingdom and the United States further undermined redistributive reform as they ideologically opposed many of the inherent NIEO ideas for development.²³ The collapse of the North-South dialogue with the

¹⁴ Weber and Winanti, “The ‘Bandung Spirit’ and Solidarist Internationalism,” 399.

¹⁵ Prashad, *The Darker Nations*; Prashad, *The Poorer Nations*.

¹⁶ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 56–59.

¹⁷ Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, 244–47.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 244–45.

¹⁹ Garavini, *After Empires*, 177–78.

²⁰ G.A. Res. 3202 (S-VI).

²¹ McFarland, “The New International Economic Order, Interdependence, and Globalization,” 217–19.

²² Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, 248–49.

²³ Engel and Mabefam, “The 50th Anniversary of the New International Economic Order,” 882.

Cancún Summit²⁴ and the 1980s debt crisis subsequently forced many formerly colonized countries into neoliberal structural adjustment and reduced the capacity to pursue a restructuring of the world's political economy, pushing the NIEO out of focus.²⁵

Although the NIEO as a political project declined, its core concerns never disappeared. Contemporary debates over debt, development finance, global inequality, climate justice, and reform of international institutions continue to echo its demands.²⁶ It can therefore be seen as a major moment in development thought whose critiques of the global economy remain highly relevant to this day.

1.2.2 Moon Treaty

The Moon Treaty emerged when lunar resource exploitation in the wake of the 1969 Moon landing became a real political concern, pushing the subject onto the agenda of the *United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space* (COPUOS).²⁷ From 1971 onwards, a treaty was negotiated over the course of eight years in the COPUOS Legal Subcommittee for how the Moon and other celestial bodies in Outer Space should be governed.²⁸

The United States, the Soviet Union, and a broad range of formerly colonized states all approached the negotiations with different priorities. The US generally pushed for a treaty on peaceful cooperation while preserving freedom of action for future Moon missions.²⁹ The Soviet Union opposed formal sovereignty claims on the Moon but also wanted the treaty to be exclusively centered on Moon governance.³⁰ Many Global South states, by contrast, sought to prevent the emergence of a *first-come, first-served* lunar order: They supported defining the Moon and its resources as the *common heritage of mankind*, rejecting ownership claims by states as well as by private actors.³¹ In addition, they pushed for an international regime to govern future exploitation, designed to regulate extraction, and ensure equitable sharing of benefits.³²

These Global South demands of formalizing how outer space governance, and especially how the *common heritage of mankind* resource question should be treated, were the most controversial issue in the negotiations.³³ The United States accepted the general language of *common heritage* only in a very broad sense, but repeatedly rejected proposals that seemed to impose a halt on resource exploitation before such a regime

²⁴ Migani, "The Road to Cancun: The Life and Death of a North–South Summit."

²⁵ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 67–68.

²⁶ Gilman, "The NIEO as Usable Past."

²⁷ Hanlon, "The Moon Agreement—A Swan Song," 147–48.

²⁸ Khatwani, "Common Heritage of Mankind for Outer Space," 91.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 96.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Schmidt, "International Space Law and Developing Countries," 697–700.

³² Cheng, *Studies in International Space Law*, 378.

³³ Freeland and Martin, "The Contribution of the United Nations to the Development of International Space Law," 48.

could be created, as at this point, they were the only country capable of going to the Moon to extract potential resources.³⁴

Negotiations dragged on with repeated working papers and revised texts, but consensus remained elusive for a long time.³⁵ Nonetheless, the treaty was finally completed and adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 1979.³⁶ After much compromise in Global South demands, its final text reaffirmed peaceful use, prohibited sovereignty claims, restricted military activity, protected scientific investigation, and declared lunar resources the *common heritage of mankind*, while postponing an international resource regime to future agreements.³⁷

Yet the drafting success at the UN did not translate into broad ratification. Even though significant compromises were made, critics, especially in the US, portrayed it as hostile to private enterprise and branded it as redistributionist politics.³⁸ In the end, the treaty was not ratified by the United States or the Soviet Union, and with the missing endorsement of the two leading space-faring nations, the treaty became sidelined.³⁹ Nevertheless, its debates anticipated many of the issues that structure present governance debates of the Moon and outer space to this day.

1.3 Importance and Research Interests

This thesis addresses a significant gap in both development studies and history by recovering the lost connection between space governance struggles and the broader North-South Conflict of the 1970s. While scholars have extensively documented the New International Economic Order, the Moon Treaty has remained largely invisible within this historiography, as the literature review will demonstrate. Yet as this thesis shows, lunar governance debates in the 1970s were expressions of the same fundamental contestation over who would control emerging domains of resource extraction. If development studies concerns itself with uneven access to resources, technology, and decision-making power, then outer space cannot be excluded from its field of study. The Moon Treaty negotiations reveal that formerly colonized states recognized this connection decades ago⁴⁰, even when contemporary scholarship has not reflected that.

I personally had the idea for this thesis in the back of my mind for a long time, as the contemporary urgency of such a historical analysis has intensified in recent years. A new space age is underway, characterized by commercial resource extraction plans, lunar base proposals, and competing national frameworks for celestial governance. The Artemis Accords, advanced by the United States outside multilateral UN processes, directly challenge the *common heritage* principles that Global South actors fought to

³⁴ Bueno, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 49.

³⁵ Cheng, *Studies in International Space Law*, 360.

³⁶ Hobe, *Space Law*, 42.

³⁷ G.A. Res. 34/68.

³⁸ Bueno, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 72.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁴⁰ Soucek, "International Law," 357–58.

establish in the Moon Treaty. Without international regulatory frameworks ensuring equitable access and benefit-sharing, space risks becoming another frontier where technological capability translates into permanent advantage. Preventing this from happening should still be the goal of international institutions. The hope is that a dystopian expansion of unchecked capitalism and the inequalities it produces can still be relegated to science fiction literature.

The question of the NIEO seems, however, to remain equally relevant in current times. Slower economic growth rates, economic crises, as well as international political fragmentation have again challenged the architecture of international economic governance. Geopolitical tensions, energy security concerns (with a looming “oil shock” prognosed to be on the horizon during the moments of writing of this thesis), and the volatility of the international financial system occupy similarly central positions in both the 1970s and 2020s, suggesting recurring tensions in the organization of global capitalism. The thesis thus contributes both to historical understanding and to contemporary policy and development debates by being a “part of the search for the reconstruction of a ‘usable past’ that can ground the imagining of a new post-neoliberal global economic system.”⁴¹

1.4 Theoretical Approach and Methods

This thesis employs a Neo-Gramscian framework to analyze the NIEO and Moon Treaty as counter-hegemonic projects of postcolonial *order-making*. This approach conceptualizes international order, in the interpretation of Robert Cox⁴², as a historically specific configuration of material capabilities, institutions, and ideas, treating political struggle as a contest over the terms of that order. Both the NIEO and Moon Treaty are understood in this thesis as being related to Adom Getachew’s⁴³ concept of *worldmaking* and what I have called, on a smaller scale, *order-making*. This *order-making* describes attempts to reshape international norms, rules, and/or governing principles that challenge dominant distributions of authority, resources, and/or opportunity. The NIEO and Moon Treaty fit this because they were *counter-hegemonic*⁴⁴ projects in a Neo-Gramscian sense, which sought to universalize alternative principles such as redistribution, anti-monopoly regulation, resource sovereignty, and equitable access against an international order marked by uneven development and asymmetrical power.

The framework operationalizes analysis through three analytical dimensions. First, pre-history examines the historical conditions that enabled these projects to emerge, focusing on historic bloc formation and counter-hegemonic capacity within hegemony-reproducing structures. Second, intellectual history analyzes the intellectual foundations of each project and their intersection (via UNCLOS III), examining how Global South

⁴¹ Gilman, “The NIEO as Usable Past.”

⁴² Cox, “Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations.”

⁴³ Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire*.

⁴⁴ Cox, “Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations,” 171.

actors contested hegemonic *common sense* and articulated counter-hegemonic visions. Third, the dimension centered on coalitions of supporters, ambivalent states, and opponents – or simply *actors* as it is sometimes referred to in this thesis for brevity's sake – seeks to understand how alliances were built and fragmented, how leadership was exercised, and how hegemony was defended or contested in practice.

As already stated, the central subject of this thesis is not the success of these projects but instead a focus on exploring if Global South actors exercised meaningful agency in constructing coalitions, articulating alternative principles, and attempting their institutionalization. In this regard, both projects are, despite their differences, comparable in this theoretical framework.

To facilitate this comparison within these dimensions, I have chosen to mainly compare existing scholarly works rather than conducting extensive primary archival research. The main benefit of this literature-based approach is that it allows to build systematically upon decades of accumulated scholarly work – particularly the rich historiography on the NIEO – while managing the scope of a comparative project across two complex cases and multiple analytical dimensions. It further enables the identification of patterns, contradictions, and gaps across different scholarly perspectives and demonstrates how bringing these scholarly literatures into conversation yields new insights about Global South agency. However, this approach, of course, carries significant drawbacks as it necessarily limits the analysis to what existing literature has already documented, which is particularly problematic for the Moon Treaty, where secondary literature remains sparse compared to NIEO studies. Nevertheless, the scope of this thesis made this approach of bringing different fields of scholarship into conversation with each other a worthwhile approach, as, through its unique theoretical framework for its subject matter, this thesis still delivered meaningful results in its comparison and the interpretation thereof.

1.5 Chapter Overview

Following this introduction, Chapter 2 develops the theoretical framework of this thesis. It outlines the Neo-Gramscian approach used to analyze the NIEO and the Moon Treaty as postcolonial projects of international *order-making*. Drawing on Gramsci, Robert Cox, and more recent scholarship on decolonial worldmaking, the chapter establishes the core concepts of hegemony, counter-hegemony, historic blocs, and interregnum. It then explains how these concepts are adapted for the purposes of this thesis and translated into an analytical framework centered on three dimensions: pre-histories, intellectual histories, and coalitions.

Chapter 3 reviews the relevant literature. This State of the Art has the complicated task of bringing together two bodies of scholarship that have largely developed in parallel: historiography on the North-South Conflict and the NIEO and scholarship on the history of international space law. The chapter shows that while the NIEO has been widely studied as part of postcolonial struggles, the Moon Treaty has mostly remained confined

to legal or Cold War-centered accounts. By placing these literatures into conversation, the State of the Art identifies the analytical gap this thesis addresses and how it connects to both.

The main analysis is divided into three chapters, each first addressing issues related to the NIEO, followed by the same for the Moon Treaty. The chapters are then concluded by a subsequent comparison summarizing findings and already framing them within the theory in preparation for the concluding discussion later.

Chapter 4, the first analysis chapter, examines the pre-histories of the NIEO and the Moon Treaty. It reconstructs the historical conditions from which they emerged, as well as explaining the creation of the underlying international structures in which they were proposed. In the case of the NIEO, this includes an account of its long tradition of anti-colonial organizing and an explanation of the United Nations system. In the Moon Treaty case, it examines the emergence of space law and the institutional development of COPUOS. These chapters are then compared and their findings are divided into aspects relating to historic bloc formation and counter-hegemonic capacity as well as on how international structures contribute to the reproduction of hegemony.

Chapter 5 turns to the intellectual history of both projects. It analyzes the ideas, concepts, and legal principles that informed the NIEO and the Moon Treaty and explores where they overlapped. For the NIEO, the chapter focuses on structuralist economics, theories of neocolonialism, and decolonial critiques of international law. For the Moon Treaty, it examines the intellectual history of space law and especially the history of the *common heritage of mankind* principle. This is then supported by a short excursus on the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III), as this is crucial for understanding the link between both intellectual histories. The comparison centers on the topics of contestation of hegemonic *common sense* and the counter-hegemonic visions present in their intellectual histories.

Chapter 6 analyzes the negotiation dynamics of both cases centered on the actors involved, the coalitions they built, and the opposition they encountered. It examines who supported the NIEO and the Moon Treaty, which actors occupied more ambivalent positions, and how resistance operated in each case. Through the subsequent comparison, the chapter highlights counter-hegemonic blocs and their fragmentation, dilution of counter-hegemony, and the dimensions of hegemonic resistance.

Finally, Chapter 7 concludes the thesis by bringing together the findings of the comparative analysis in a discussion and answering the main research question. The conclusion also reflects on this thesis's limitations, the future research possibilities, the Moon Treaty as an expression of the wider North-South Conflict and closes by considering the implications of this history for development studies.

2. Theoretical Framework

This thesis employs a Neo-Gramscian approach to analyze the NIEO and the Moon Treaty as counter-hegemonic projects and to provide a framework in which these different initiatives are comparable. This chapter establishes the theoretical foundation by explaining Gramsci's core concepts, their adaptation to an intrastate level through Robert Cox, their application by Paul Stubbs in the case of the NIEO, their application to analyzing postcolonial *order-making*, and the integration of this framework into this thesis before ending with an explanation of its research questions.

2.1 Neo-Gramscianism

The Marxist politician and philosopher Antonio Gramsci developed his political theory while imprisoned by Mussolini's fascist regime during the 1930s.⁴⁵ Gramsci's Prison Notebooks attempted to break from orthodox Marxism's economic determinism by theorizing how capitalist societies maintain stability and bourgeois rulership despite deep social conflict.⁴⁶ Orthodox Marxism had often treated culture, politics, and ideas as mere reflections of the economic base determined by material conditions. Gramsci rejected this by arguing that the ruling classes maintain power not primarily through force, but by organizing consent through cultural and political institutions.⁴⁷

Hegemony is Gramsci's most influential concept. In its essence, it describes how a dominant class establishes and maintains structures and rules by winning the active consent of subordinated groups.⁴⁸ To keep hegemony intact, Gramsci argues that coercion (i.e., domination, force, repression) is less important than intellectual and moral leadership (i.e., political and cultural direction).⁴⁹ Hegemonic forces can combine both methods, but durable rule depends especially on organizing consent. This consent is produced through institutions of civil society (schools, churches, media, unions, etc.) which shape values, beliefs, and everyday habits.⁵⁰ A ruling class therefore, becomes hegemonic when it successfully presents its particular interests as beneficial to society as a whole or as the way things are supposed to be.

Gramsci understands ideology as the practical worldviews embedded in and structuring everyday life.⁵¹ Ideology is effective when it becomes *common sense* and turns into the taken-for-granted assumptions, habits, and ways of understanding that people use to navigate the world in their everyday lives.⁵² In Gramsci's understanding, this can be

⁴⁵ Hoare and Sperber, *Introduction to Antonio Gramsci*, 7–8.

⁴⁶ Green, "Introduction," 2.

⁴⁷ Langemeyer, "Antonio Gramsci," 74–75.

⁴⁸ Femia, *Gramsci's Political Thought*, 24.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Hoare and Sperber, *Introduction to Antonio Gramsci*, 103.

⁵¹ Wolff, "Gramsci, Marxism, and Philosophy," 182.

⁵² Hoare and Sperber, *Introduction to Antonio Gramsci*, 73–74.

feudalism, capitalism, or – in contemporary application by modern scholars – neoliberalism.⁵³

A hegemonic order works by making its arrangements seem obvious and natural, which means that counter-hegemony must break this illusion through transforming what is considered *common sense* via a clash of ideologies.⁵⁴ The existence of counter-hegemonic forces (though only titled as such by subsequent literature and not in Gramsci's work itself⁵⁵) is crucial to the theory of hegemony, as it shows that the hegemonic order is never total or permanent. Hegemony must be continuously reproduced, negotiated, and defended, which makes it vulnerable to challenge from counter-hegemonic movements, which are efforts by civil society to build alternative worldviews, institutions, and alliances that contest the dominant order.⁵⁶

If a hegemony is not reproduced successfully, a phase called *interregnum* takes place.⁵⁷ Gramsci uses the term *interregnum* to describe a period of crisis in which the authority of the hegemony is faltering, but a new order has not yet emerged.⁵⁸ An *interregnum* is marked by instability, uncertainty, and intensified struggle: The ruling forces lose their capacity to organize consent, but no counter-hegemonic force has yet consolidated an alternative.⁵⁹ This creates space for competing projects – progressive and regressive alike – to contest the shape of what order comes next.⁶⁰

British Cultural Studies, particularly the work of Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall, took up Gramsci precisely because his framework allowed culture to be treated as a terrain of struggle rather than a passive reflection of economic relations.⁶¹ This birthed a movement of resurgence for Gramscian thought and led to Robert Cox making the decisive move of adapting Gramsci's concepts (originally developed for analyzing conditions within nations) to international relations.⁶² Cox's central claim in it is that international relations should not be understood only as relations between formally sovereign states, but as part of a wider historical structure made up of social forces, political authority, and prevailing ideas.⁶³

Drawing on Gramsci, he explains that hegemony involves a fit between material capabilities, ethical-political ideas, and institutional forms, such that a particular order comes to appear legitimate and natural to subordinate groups as well as dominant ones.⁶⁴ An international form of hegemony, which he proposes over the course of this essay,

⁵³ Morton, "Social Forces in the Struggle over Hegemony," 155.

⁵⁴ Femia, *Gramsci's Political Thought*, 43–44.

⁵⁵ Patel, "Counter-Hegemony and Polycrisis I," 232.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 232–33.

⁵⁷ Hoare and Sperber, *Introduction to Antonio Gramsci*, 203–4.

⁵⁸ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 11.

⁵⁹ Babic, "Let's Talk about the Interregnum," 771–73.

⁶⁰ Hoare and Sperber, *Introduction to Antonio Gramsci*, 203–4.

⁶¹ Langemeyer, "Antonio Gramsci," 72–73.

⁶² Cox, "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations."

⁶³ *Ibid.*,

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 163–64.

therefore also cannot be reduced to coercion (e.g., an empire suppressing its subjects) alone. Domination through force might be a factor, but just like on the intrastate level, the more durable basis of rule lies in creating consent, which is secured when subordinate groups come to accept the leading position of dominant forces as compatible with their own interests or as *common sense*.⁶⁵

Cox stresses that this broader understanding of hegemony depends on Gramsci's expanded conception of the state.⁶⁶ For Gramsci, the state is not merely the governmental apparatus of administration, coercion, and law; it also includes the institutions and practices of civil society through which social leadership is organized, and consent is produced.⁶⁷ Cox takes from this that a hegemonic order persists not simply because it can repress opposition, but because it is embedded in everyday institutions, cultural expectations, and accepted conceptions of the common good, which is important for his translation of the concept to international relations.⁶⁸

A further key concept in Cox's reading of Gramsci is the distinction between *war of movement* and *war of position*.⁶⁹ He explains that revolutionary strategy depends on the relationship between state and civil society in a given historical setting.⁷⁰ In contexts where civil society is weak, and the coercive apparatus of the state dominates, rapid frontal assault may be possible in upending a hegemony.⁷¹ In contexts where civil society is dense and institutions are deeply rooted, however, durable transformation requires a long struggle to build support, reshape ideas, and construct alternative forms of leadership within society itself.⁷²

Cox uses this distinction to show that stable orders are not overturned simply through direct confrontation with state power.⁷³ Where hegemony is deeply entrenched, change requires a prolonged *war of position* in which subordinate forces build the social and ideological basis for a different order.⁷⁴ This idea is especially important for understanding reform efforts within multilateral institutions, where contestation often takes the form of normative struggle rather than immediate rupture.⁷⁵

Closely related to this is Cox's use of Gramsci's historic bloc concept.⁷⁶ He understands it as the historically specific unity of groups, institutions, and ideas that together stabilize a particular order. A historic bloc becomes durable when a hegemonic social force can

⁶⁵ Ibid., 164.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 171-72.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 164.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid., 164-65.

⁷² Ibid., 165.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 172.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 167.

organize this relationship in such a way that its leadership appears legitimate and broadly beneficial rather than self-interested.⁷⁷

For Cox, this is crucial for understanding international relations. A new world order does not emerge simply because one state becomes stronger than another, but because new social forces are able to construct an alternative historic bloc.⁷⁸ That process requires not only material power, but also institutions, alliances, and intellectual work capable of turning a particular project into a broader conception of the common good. This is why Cox argues that counter-hegemonic change begins within societies themselves: world order changes most fundamentally when new historic blocs are built at the national level and then projected outward internationally.⁷⁹

On this basis, Cox extends Gramsci's ideas and hegemony from the national to the international level. But, Cox's is careful to highlight that his concept of *world hegemony* is much broader than the idea of dominance of one powerful state over others.⁸⁰ A great power can be in a leading position compared to other states (such as Great Britain during the reign of Queen Victoria) and Cox describes individual states as the primary sources and creators of world hegemony, but world hegemony is "not an order in which one state directly exploits others but an order which most other states (or at least those within reach of the hegemony) could find compatible with their interest"⁸¹. World hegemony is organizing both interstate relations and domestic structures in ways that reproduce the dominance of leading forces.⁸² The state remains important, but it increasingly reflects and mediates forces that operate across borders. Cox, therefore, treats world order as an extension of social relations that are first consolidated at the national level and then projected outward internationally.⁸³

This leads Cox to distinguish between different historical forms of world order. He argues that periods of hegemony are marked by a relatively coherent fit between a leading state, the dominant mode of production, and institutions that generalize and stabilize the order internationally.⁸⁴ By contrast, non-hegemonic periods, interregna, are marked by rivalry, fragmentation, and weaker normative integration.⁸⁵ For such a phase of weakening hegemony, he specifically mentions the "1960s through the early 1970s"⁸⁶, during which "three possibilities of structural transformation of world order opened up: a reconstruction of hegemony with a broadening of political management on the lines envisaged by the Trilateral Commission; increased fragmentation of the world economy

⁷⁷ Ibid., 167-68.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 170-71.

⁷⁹ Ibid. 171.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 170.

⁸¹ Ibid., 171.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid., 170-71.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 170.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 171.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

around big-power-centred economic spheres; and the possible assertion of a Third-World-based counterhegemony with the concerted demand for the New International Economic Order as a forerunner.”⁸⁷

Cox also assigns a major role to international organizations in the reproduction of hegemony.⁸⁸ He argues that “(1) they embody the rules which facilitate the expansion of hegemonic world orders; (2) they are themselves the product of hegemonic world order; (3) they ideologically legitimate the norms of the world order; (4) they co-opt the elites from peripheral countries and (5) they absorb counter-hegemonic ideas.”⁸⁹ This argument is highly relevant for the present thesis because it shows how multilateral institutions can operate simultaneously as arenas of contestation and as mechanisms for stabilizing unequal structures.

At the same time, Cox does not treat hegemonic orders as permanent. He insists that counter-hegemony is possible, but only where alternative social forces are able to build a new historic bloc rather than merely protest within the ideological terms of the old one.⁹⁰ Here, he argues that changes through international organizations themselves (as they are so entrenched as parts of the old order) are hard to achieve, and that effective historic bloc formation must come from national societies within states and through states to lastingly change hegemonies.⁹¹ The creation of a new order requires more than diplomatic opposition; it depends on the slow construction of new political bases, alliances, institutions, and conceptions of legitimacy.⁹² His framework is therefore especially useful for analyzing projects that seek structural transformation through international institutions, because it keeps both possibilities in view: the real significance of contestation and the severe constraints imposed by existing hegemonic arrangements.

Taken together, Cox’s essay provides the conceptual basis for a Neo-Gramscian analysis of international order, which has also been applied to the North-South Conflict most prominently by Adam David Morton⁹³. Paul Stubbs⁹⁴ work on the NIEO represents a direct application of this Neo-Gramscian tradition to the specific historical moment of the 1970s. Stubbs expands on the idea of the NIEO as a counter-hegemonic project of decolonial worldmaking: an attempt by decolonized states to challenge the dominant world order, aiming for the construction of alternative rules governing resources, development, and international authority.⁹⁵ For his analysis of the NIEO, he uses Neo-Gramscian language of hegemony, crisis, and interregnum.⁹⁶

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 172.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 173-74.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Morton, *Unravelling Gramsci*.

⁹⁴ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 10-14.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

In his work, he also emphasizes *conjuncture*: the NIEO emerged not from abstract idealism but from a specific historical moment in which multiple crises (decolonization, the oil shocks, relative US decline, and détente between the superpowers) created unprecedented openings for transformative politics.⁹⁷ Stubbs frames this conjuncture of the 1970s as an interregnum and therefore a period in which the post-war liberal order was destabilized but no new configuration had yet consolidated, leaving space for contestation over the shape of what might come next.⁹⁸

In his book, Stubbs insists that the NIEO must be understood as more than a set of policy demands; it was an attempt to restructure the ideological, institutional, and material foundations of world order.⁹⁹ As such, it was an effort at counter-hegemony in the fullest sense. Stubbs' reading of the NIEO provides an important precedent for this thesis, not only because it interprets the NIEO as a counter-hegemonic project, but because it demonstrates how a Neo-Gramscian framework can be directly applied to the 1970s. This thesis adopts this logic by building and adapting its own theoretical framework modelled on Robert Cox's Neo-Gramscianism for a comparison of the NIEO and Moon Treaty.

2.2 Application and Operationalization

The research questions of this thesis are derived directly from Robert Cox's Neo-Gramscian framework. The central question – what a comparison of the Moon Treaty and the NIEO reveals about the *constrained agency* of Global South actors in postcolonial projects of *order-making* – requires a framework capable of analyzing both transformative ambition and structural limitation. A Neo-Gramscian approach is particularly suitable because it conceptualizes international order as a historically specific configuration of material capabilities, institutions, and ideas, while also treating political struggle as a contest over the terms of that order.

Within this thesis, the NIEO and the Moon Treaty are understood as part of the long struggle for decolonization and are therefore part of the Global South-led project of *worldmaking*, characterized as such by Adom Getachew¹⁰⁰. Both the NIEO and Moon Treaty try to shape the international order in a way that would ensure “non-domination” by empires now or old.¹⁰¹ In this sense, this thesis characterized the NIEO and Moon Treaty as processes of *order-making*, which I use to refer to attempts of reshaping the norms, rules, and governing principles of international order in ways that challenge the dominant distribution of authority, resources, and opportunity. In a Neo-Gramscian perspective, these projects of *order-making* are approached as counter-hegemonic insofar as they sought to universalize alternative principles of governance (such as redistribution, anti-

⁹⁷ Ibid., 11.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 7.

¹⁰⁰ Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire*.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 2.

monopoly regulation, resource sovereignty, and equitable access) against an international order marked by uneven development and asymmetrical power.

A Neo-Gramscian approach begins from a specific understanding of hegemony. As outlined above, hegemony is not simply domination through coercion. Rather, it refers to a historically specific configuration in which material power, institutional arrangements, and legitimating ideas become mutually reinforcing and come to appear natural or universal. Cox's adaptation of Gramsci to international relations was explicitly intended to shift analysis from interstate relations in the narrow sense to the broader historical organization of world order. This perspective is especially relevant for the international political economic order in the 1970s, as demonstrated by Robert Cox, Adam David Morton, and Paul Stubbs. Space governance at large might appear removed from the economic and political crises of this decade and the contestation around the NIEO, yet the treaty emerged from the same fundamental questions over how international order should be organized and was linked to the NIEO by supporters and opponents.¹⁰² The Moon Treaty, therefore, represents the extension of these counter-hegemonic struggles into an emerging domain of governance.

It is crucial for this thesis to understand the negotiation timeframe of the NIEO and Moon Treaty both as interregna. Paul Stubbs has already done so in the NIEO case, marking the Bretton Woods system preceding it and the advent of neoliberalism after it as hegemonies with the crisis-ridden 1970s as an interregnum.¹⁰³ In the Moon Treaty case, the Moon landing kicked off its own interregnum: With the possibility of outer space exploration and exploitation becoming more likely, the old framework of outer space governance established in prior space law was no longer sufficient for anticipated space activity.¹⁰⁴ This is an interregnum at its core.

To answer the main research question, the thesis operationalizes it through three analytical dimensions and their corresponding chapters of analysis. The first dimension is pre-history, which examines the historical context and conditions – the creation of the UN system, decolonization, and the corresponding expansions of UN membership – from which the NIEO and the Moon Treaty emerged as counter-hegemonic projects against international inequalities in wealth, technology, and control over resources. This dimension identifies the historical background and underlying international structures that made these projects possible. Through this, this thesis explains the Historic bloc formation and its counter-hegemonic capacity within international structures that are expressions of hegemony and reproduce them.

The second dimension centers on the intellectual history of the NIEO and Moon Treaty by analyzing the intellectual basis each individually built upon and further exploring their intersection via the UNCLOS III negotiations. This is examined through a close reading and

¹⁰² Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 54–56.

¹⁰³ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 14–15.

¹⁰⁴ Hanlon, "The Moon Agreement—A Swan Song," 147–48.

analysis of the intellectual streams and ideas expressed by influential people in and around these projects. From this, the discussion of the intellectual history arrives at conclusions about the contestation of hegemonic *common sense* and the articulation of counter-hegemonic visions by Global South actors challenging dominant assumptions and attempting to advance alternative principles of postcolonial *order-making*.

The third dimension is centered on the contestation of the NIEO and Moon Treaty, examined through the actors, both offering support, opposition, or ambivalence in negotiations. This corresponds to the Neo-Gramscian emphasis on social forces, political struggle, bloc formation, and constraint. Gramsci's theory is not just about ideas; it is about how alliances are built, how leadership is exercised, and how hegemony is defended or contested. This dimension shows how Global South agency was exercised in practice, how alliances were constructed and fragmented, and what influence this had on the counter-hegemonic projects. The discussion of this analysis provides crucial insights into counter-hegemonic blocs and their fragmentation, the dilution of counter-hegemony, and hegemonic resistance against postcolonial *order-making*.

Taken together, these three dimensions make it possible to move from description to explanation. The pre-history chapter identifies the conditions under which Global South agency against hegemony emerged; the intellectual history chapter reconstructs the alternative order imagined; and the chapter on actors, coalitions, and opposition analyzes the political dynamics through which Global South agency was advanced and constrained. In this way, the research questions are not external to the theoretical framework but are structured by it. They allow the thesis to assess not only whether Global South actors participated in reshaping international order, but also how far such participation is translated into durable transformation under hegemonic conditions.

The argument of this thesis is not that the Moon Treaty and the NIEO were identical projects, nor that Global South agency meant that these actors were able to transform international order on their own terms. Rather, the comparison is used to show that actors from the Global South exercised meaningful agency in articulating alternative principles, constructing coalitions, and attempting to institutionalize them, but that this agency was limited by constraints this thesis seeks to define.

3. Literature Review

This chapter mainly examines two bodies of scholarship essential to understanding the Moon Treaty as a connected project to the NIEO: historiography of the North-South Conflict and the New International Economic Order, and scholarship on international space law and its history. While these literatures have developed largely in isolation from one another, this thesis brings them into conversation to analyze the NIEO and Moon Treaty as postcolonial projects of international *order-making* and to gain insights into the *constrained agency* of Global South actors. The review identifies key contributions, historiographical debates, and analytical gaps that this thesis tries to address.

3.1 Scholarship on the NIEO and North-South Conflict

The North-South Conflict of the 1970s, comprising the campaign for the NIEO and the height of Global South ambitions in reshaping the global political economy, has found attention from many scholars focused on international history.¹⁰⁵

Historians have examined specific institutional venues of the North-South Conflict in detail, which include Steffen Fiebrig's¹⁰⁶ work on UNCTAD and Margarita Fajardo's¹⁰⁷ contributions on the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC). Recent work has also emphasized the 1970s as a *window of opportunity* for change in economic governance following the 1973-74 oil shock, which includes works of Christopher Dietrich¹⁰⁸, Giuliano Garavini¹⁰⁹, and in particular Jonas Kreienbaum's¹¹⁰ study of oil and the NIEO, which analyzed how commodity power seemed to shift leverage toward resource-exporting nations such as the member states of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). These works explore how energy politics intersected with broader demands for economic justice, while also revealing tensions between oil-exporting states and other Global South nations who suffered from price increases.¹¹¹

The historiography has increasingly attended to how Global North states responded to NIEO demands and ultimately rolled back the gains that Global South states achieved. Michael Franczak's investigation on neoconservative opposition to the NIEO¹¹² and on global inequality and American foreign policy in the 1970s¹¹³ examined how US

¹⁰⁵ See additionally to the works discussed directly: Toye and Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy*; McFarland, "The New International Economic Order, Interdependence, and Globalization"; Garavini, *After Empires*; Graf, "Der Konflikt, der nicht stattfand"; Christian, "Der Nord-Süd-Konflikt und die „neue Internationale Arbeitsteilung“ in den 1970er Jahren."

¹⁰⁶ Fiebrig, "Unequal Exchange?"

¹⁰⁷ Fajardo, *The World That Latin America Created*.

¹⁰⁸ Dietrich, *Oil Revolution*.

¹⁰⁹ Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*.

¹¹⁰ Kreienbaum, "Between Panic and Feelings of Empowerment."

¹¹¹ See also: Sargent, "The Cold War and the International Political Economy in the 1970s."

¹¹² Franczak, "Losing the Battle, Winning the War."

¹¹³ Franczak, *Global Inequality and American Foreign Policy in the 1970s*.

policymakers responded to demands by the Global South. Nicholas Ferns' work ¹¹⁴ on the 1964 UNCTAD conference and Australian responses illustrates, on the other hand, how even nations outside traditional Cold War alignments had to reckon with Global South demands for restructuring trade relations.

Most recently, Giuliana Chamedes¹¹⁵ has examined the role of socialist internationalism and Jamaica's attempt to advance NIEO demands, arguing that (democratic) socialist actors could become meaningful partners in Global South projects for economic restructuring, while also exposing the tensions and unfulfilled promises in these relationships with Western social democracies. The perspectives of other states sympathetic with Global South demands are further illustrated by works such as Oliver Rathkolb's¹¹⁶ exploration of Canada and Austria's role in the lead-up to the Cancún summit, as these countries aimed to facilitate a dialogue between North and South. Linked to the latter topic is Giua Migani's work *Road to Cancún*¹¹⁷ on how the Cancún Summit represented one of the most significant moments in the momentum shift towards the global dominance of neoliberalism.

Scholarship has also started to explore the roles of socialist states in the North-South Conflict. Jeremy Friedman's¹¹⁸ work, for instance, situates the socialist world as being comprised of important actors in the North-South Conflict during the time of the Cold War, showing how the Soviet Union and other socialist states sought influence through development assistance, industrial projects, and revolutionary solidarity, even as their commitments were shaped by their own strategic priorities. Max Trecker¹¹⁹ further demonstrates that East-South economic relations formed a significant part of the wider international political economy, revealing how credits, trade, and technical cooperation from socialist states offered alternatives to Western-dominated financial structures while remaining constrained by asymmetries of power and the limits of socialist economies themselves. Together, this literature helps move beyond a strictly bipolar reading of the North-South Conflict by showing that socialist states were neither fully external to the NIEO nor simple allies of the Global South.

The organizational structures that enabled Global South collective action have also been thoroughly documented. Jürgen Dinkel's comprehensive study of the Non-Aligned Movement examines how this platform provided a crucial chance for coordination among newly independent states, while also revealing the challenges of maintaining unity among nations with diverse interests and political systems.¹²⁰ For the G77, Marc Williams work¹²¹

¹¹⁴ Ferns, "The Middle Zone: The 1964 UN Conference on Trade and Development and the Australian Response."

¹¹⁵ Chamedes, "Unpaid Debts."

¹¹⁶ Rathkolb, "The Trudeau-Kreisky Connection: Austria and Canada on the Road to Cancún."

¹¹⁷ Migani, "The Road to Cancun: The Life and Death of a North-South Summit."

¹¹⁸ Friedman, *Ripe for Revolution*.

¹¹⁹ Trecker, *Red Money for the Global South*.

¹²⁰ Dinkel, *The Non-Aligned Movement*.

¹²¹ Williams, *Third World Cooperation*.

already explored the G77's role in UNCTAD from an international relations perspective in 1991. Nowadays, John Toye¹²² provides a historiographical take on the legacy of the Group, while Nicholas Lees¹²³ analyzed its voting patterns.

Vijay Prashad's *The Darker Nations*¹²⁴ and *The Poorer Nations*¹²⁵ offer sweeping and comprehensive accounts of what he terms the *Third World project*: "a demand for the redistribution of the world's resources, a more dignified rate of return for the labor power of their people, and a shared acknowledgment of the heritage of science, technology, and culture."¹²⁶ These works aim to trace both the Third World project's intellectual foundations in anti-colonial struggle and its gradual erosion through the 1980s and 1990s. Therefore, they emphasize continuities between anti-colonial movements and NIEO demands, positioning economic restructuring as a continuation of decolonization rather than a separate project.

Linked to this, Paul Stubbs' work¹²⁷ should be noted not just for its thorough examination of the NIEO but also for introducing a concept of "alter lives". This concept identifies areas such as environmental governance, social rights, and gender relations to which NIEO ideas were connected and can thus be seen as part of a broader *Third World project*, but which were left out of the direct NIEO agenda.

Adom Getachew's influential *Worldmaking after Empire*¹²⁸ analyzes how leaders of formerly colonized states attempted to create new international institutions that would embed principles of self-determination and economic justice, while also examining why these projects encountered structural obstacles. These last three authors – Prashad, Stubbs & Getachew – demonstrate that understanding the NIEO requires attention not only to its formal proposals but to its history and the broader intellectual and institutional architectures Global South actors sought to construct as a consequence of their experiences with colonialism.

Taken together, this scholarship has significantly deepened our understanding of the NIEO and the wider North-South Conflict by showing that they were not simply rhetorical challenges to an existing international order, but ambitious projects of postcolonial worldmaking grounded in collective experiences of colonialism, unequal exchange, and political marginalization. The literature has illuminated the institutional arenas in which these struggles unfolded, the internal tensions within Global South coalitions, the strategies of resistance mounted by Global North actors, and the broader intellectual and organizational frameworks that sustained demands for reform. It has also increasingly

¹²² Toye, "Assessing the G77."

¹²³ Lees, "The Endurance of the G77 in International Relations."

¹²⁴ Prashad, *The Darker Nations*.

¹²⁵ Prashad, *The Poorer Nations*.

¹²⁶ Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, xvi–xvii.

¹²⁷ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*.

¹²⁸ Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire*.

complicated older Cold War-centered narratives by incorporating the roles of non-US allies and socialist actors alike.

At the same time, this body of work remains focused primarily on struggles over the international political economy and on institutions conventionally associated with development, trade, and finance. As a result, it has only rarely been brought into conversation with other arenas in which Global South actors sought to extend claims for equality and justice, with the exception of Paul Stubbs¹²⁹ work on NIEO alter-lives. This creates an important analytical opening for the present thesis. By placing the historiography of the NIEO alongside the history of international space law, and specifically the Moon Treaty, this study argues that the political imagination and coalition practices associated with the North-South Conflict cannot be fully understood if they are confined to economic governance on Earth alone. A comparative approach makes it possible to trace how similar postcolonial ambitions and intellectual frameworks shaped Global South interventions across different domains of international *order-making*. In doing so, this thesis builds on existing NIEO scholarship while extending it into a field where these connections have so far remained largely unexplored.

3.2 Scholarship on Space Law and its History

The scholarship on the history of space law is expectedly dominated by law scholarship, with works of historians making up only a small fraction. This chapter aims to provide an overview of both and to showcase the current state of integration of the North-South Conflicts' role into narratives of space law.

On the side of law scholarship, Stephan Hobe's¹³⁰ comprehensive treatment recounts the history of space law by establishing an overview of the legal architecture of the five outer space treaties. Similarly, Francis Lyall and Paul Larsen's¹³¹ work examines the institutional mechanisms through which these agreements were negotiated. Walter Brünner and Alexander Soucek's¹³² influential edited volume provides a comprehensive overview of Outer Space and its relationship with society and law, by bundling many works on the history of space law and beyond. Bin Cheng's¹³³ work focuses on the Moon Treaty, which includes a detailed retrospective on its drafting phase, as part of his comprehensive monograph on international space law.

All these authors, when commenting on the history of space law, traditionally emphasize Cold War competition between the United States and the Soviet Union as the primary driver of treaty development, with other states appearing as peripheral actors.¹³⁴ Further, they document COPUOS's expansion, noting the increasing presence of newly

¹²⁹ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*.

¹³⁰ Hobe, *Space Law*.

¹³¹ Lyall and Larsen, *Space Law*.

¹³² Brünner and Soucek, *Outer Space in Society, Politics and Law*.

¹³³ Cheng, *Studies in International Space Law*.

¹³⁴ See also for a clear example of this: Neger and Walter, "Space Law - an Independent Branch of the Legal System," 234.

independent states and especially highlighting that COPUOS was the first permanent United Nations body to formally bind itself to consensus decision-making, which these works generally paint as a milestone in inclusivity for international law-making.¹³⁵

Cris van Eijk's¹³⁶ recent work on the history of international space law provides a necessary corrective to these celebratory narratives of inclusivity in space law. Basing his work on archival research, he documents the structural barriers that limited Global South participation in COPUOS negotiations despite the committee's consensus-based procedures up to and during the negotiations of the Outer Space Treaty.

Drawing on a wide archival base and engaging with critical legal scholarship¹³⁷ as well as with debates influenced by *Third World Approaches to International Law* (TWAIL), van Eijk divides his analysis into four dimensions: "membership (the formal ability to participate), attendance (the ability to effectively participate), decision-making (the ability to influence the lawmaking process), and drafting (the capacity to influence the results of that lawmaking process)"¹³⁸, the analysis of which demonstrates that formal inclusion in COPUOS did not necessarily amount to meaningful participation. He argues that exclusion was fundamental rather than incidental to the making of early space law, and that the supposedly universal and consensual character of the Outer Space Treaty was shaped by structural inequalities that limited the ability of formerly colonized states to influence negotiations.¹³⁹ In his account, these inequalities operated not only through the committee's controlled and slow membership expansion¹⁴⁰, but also through practical barriers to attendance¹⁴¹ and unequal access to legal expertise and the material resources needed for Global South diplomats to participate effectively¹⁴², as well as experiences of segregation in the United States when COPUOS was based in New York¹⁴³.

By shifting attention from the mere presence of non-Western states to the actual conditions under which they could speak and shape outcomes, van Eijk offers a powerful stand against historical narratives that equate consensus with equality and also highlights that "[e]xclusion from space lawmaking is not just historic – the causes may have changed, but the effects continue on"¹⁴⁴. Through this, van Eijk's article pushes the history of space law beyond both traditional Cold War accounts and more celebratory narratives of UN inclusiveness by placing exclusion, raciality, and colonial inequality at the center of its story.

¹³⁵ An obvious example is: Jankowitsch, "The Background and History of Space Law," 12.

¹³⁶ van Eijk, "The Exclusive Making of Space Law."

¹³⁷ Especially of note: Ranganathan, "Ocean Floor Grab"; Ranganathan, "What If Arvid Pardo Had Not Made His Famous Speech?"; Storr, "Space Is the Only Way to Go."

¹³⁸ van Eijk, "The Exclusive Making of Space Law," 87.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 85.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 94-96.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 97-99.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 97-100.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 100-3.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 112.

Van Eijk's argument can be used for the case that the making of space law should be understood as part of the wider history of inequality in international structures, even after political decolonization. This makes his work particularly valuable for this thesis, since it opens a way to connect the history of space law to the broader historiography of the North-South Conflict: rather than treating outer space as an exceptional legal field insulated from struggles over global order, van Eijk shows that space governance too was shaped by contests over representation and distributive justice.

Stepping away from the law side of scholarship, the historiography of space governance was largely shaped by Walter McDougall's¹⁴⁵ Pulitzer Prize for History winning account ...*The Heavens and the Earth: A Political History of the Space Age*, which applied a Cold War framework, interpreting space exploration and technological governance as an extension of superpower rivalry. While McDougall's work offers crucial insights into US-Soviet dynamics, its framework can prove constraining for scholars seeking to understand the broader international politics of space governance.

Recent historiographical interventions have begun challenging this narrative by revealing the substantive contributions of Global South actors to space governance frameworks: Stephen Buono¹⁴⁶ reframes the 1967 Outer Space Treaty by demonstrating how Global South aspirations influenced its content, particularly the principles that space exploration should benefit all countries and that celestial bodies could not be subject to national appropriation.

Buono's monograph¹⁴⁷ on the history of Moon governance significantly deepens this revisionist historiography by moving beyond his earlier article's intervention on the Outer Space Treaty and offering the first comprehensive historical study of the Moon Treaty as a political, legal, and intellectual project in its own right. Rather than treating the treaty simply as a failed legal instrument or as an afterthought to the more successful space treaties of the 1960s, Buono reconstructs its longer genealogy in the scholarly debates of the late 1950s and 1960s and in the work of jurists from all over the globe, with above all the Argentine space lawyer Aldo Armando Cocca.¹⁴⁸ In doing so, he shows that ideas later associated with the Moon Treaty did not arise only from superpower diplomacy or from the final crisis-ridden negotiations of the 1970s, but also from a transnational legal imagination concerned with how humanity might govern celestial bodies. His particular emphasis on Cocca is important here, since it recovers a Latin American legal thinker who is often absent from space law accounts and presents him not as a marginal contributor¹⁴⁹ but as perhaps the treaty's single most important author. Buono therefore strengthens the argument that international space law was shaped not only by

¹⁴⁵ McDougall, ...*The Heavens and the Earth*.

¹⁴⁶ Buono, "Merely a 'Scrap of Paper'?"

¹⁴⁷ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 7-22.

¹⁴⁹ An example for such a mention in passing can be found in: Kopal, "Origins of Space Law and the Role of the United Nations," 222.

Washington and Moscow, but also by actors operating from spaces marginal to direct Cold War rivalry, including jurists and delegates from Latin America and the wider Global South.

At the same time, Buono's monograph is particularly valuable for this thesis because it already situates the Moon Treaty firmly within the international political economy debates of the 1970s and therefore recovers this connection. The treaty's fate cannot be understood apart from Global South demands for a more equitable international order, as the politics of lunar resource exploitation and the principle of the *common heritage of mankind* were already viewed as linked by its supporters and especially by its opponents at that time.¹⁵⁰ In Buono's account, delegations from the Global South played a central role in pressing for safeguards against appropriation of lunar resources and in linking the Moon Treaty debates to wider struggles such as the negotiations over the law of the sea and the NIEO.¹⁵¹ Buono thus helps bridge the historiography of space law and the historiography of North-South Conflict by showing that disputes over the Moon were never only technical or futuristic, but were also arguments about sovereignty, redistribution, and the global ownership of resources in the age of decolonization. At the same time, he also shows that the treaty's eventual marginalization owed much to the way its critics (especially in the United States) recast it as an extension of NIEO-style redistributionism and portrayed the common heritage principle as a threat to private enterprise and Western strategic interests.¹⁵²

All of this makes Buono's monograph *Governing the Moon* especially useful for a comparative project such as this one. It further already demonstrates that lunar governance debates were embedded in the same ideological and institutional struggles that shaped the wider North-South Conflict. This is especially valuable because, apart from some minor sections in law works such as in Cheng Bin's 1997 study of space law¹⁵³ and Michelle Hanlon's¹⁵⁴ recent contribution on the Moon Treaty, Buono is one of the few contemporary authors focusing on the treaty's drafting and the only historian at that.

Taken together, the literature on the North-South Conflict and on international space law provides essential foundations for this thesis, but they have only rarely been read in relation to one another. While scholarship on the NIEO has shown how Global South actors sought to transform international order through demands for sovereign equality, redistribution, and control over resources, the historiography of space law has only recently begun to recognize that similar struggles also shaped the governance of outer space. By bringing these bodies of scholarship into conversation through its comparative Neo-Gramscian approach, this thesis addresses an important analytical gap and argues that the Moon Treaty should be understood not as an isolated or merely unsuccessful

¹⁵⁰ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 3, 56–59.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 58.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 69–72.

¹⁵³ Cheng, *Studies in International Space Law*.

¹⁵⁴ Hanlon, "The Moon Agreement—A Swan Song."

legal instrument, but as part of the broader Global South effort to reshape international governance in the 1970s. In doing so, it seeks to contribute to both historiographies by situating lunar governance within the wider history of anti-colonial worldmaking¹⁵⁵ and by showing that the ambitions, strategies, and constraints of the NIEO also extended into struggles over the international order beyond Earth.

¹⁵⁵ Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire*, 143–44.

4. Pre-Histories

4.1 Pre-History of the NIEO

4.1.1 Historical Background

750 million people lived under colonial rule when the United Nations was founded in 1945.¹⁵⁶ The dissolution of European colonial empires after World War II proceeded in more or less distinct waves¹⁵⁷ which fundamentally transformed the international system by integrating them into the United Nations as member states. With most of the world being free from European rule in a political sense in the 1970s, it would nevertheless be faulty to assume that colonization and the damage done by it were suddenly gone.¹⁵⁸ This chronology of political independence, however transformative and important, cannot be seen as a finished process of *decolonization*, as is argued by scholars since the 1950s and 1960s.¹⁵⁹ Viewing decolonization in such a manner of political independence as its only goal masks a fundamental problem that became increasingly clear to leaders of newly independent states and other formerly colonized countries during this period: formal sovereignty did not automatically translate into economic autonomy, self-determination (especially in the case of natural resources) or development capacity, which was most famously articulated by Ghana's first prime minister Kwame Nkrumah.¹⁶⁰

The NIEO, as a joint project to expand the rights of formerly colonized states, was no sudden occurrence but was built on the precedent of international cooperation throughout the 20th century before and after political decolonization began. These foundations extended deep into the history of anti-colonial movements, emerging from decades of organizing by colonized peoples who recognized a need to cooperate to achieve their goals of decolonization.¹⁶¹

The Pan-African Congresses represented a crucial early articulation of these themes. The London Congress of 1900 marked an initial gathering, but subsequent meetings demonstrated evolving sophistication in both analysis and demands.¹⁶² The 1919 Paris Congress, convened during the Versailles Peace Conference, sought to place African concerns on the international agenda but mostly focused on issues of the African diaspora and furthering activists' domestic political struggle inside America and Europe.¹⁶³ The 1945 Manchester Congress marked a decisive shift toward more assertive demands and broader African participation.¹⁶⁴ This latter congress was also attended by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, who, as leaders of their

¹⁵⁶ Muschik, *Building States*, 4.

¹⁵⁷ While the terminology of "waves" can be controversial as it carries imaginaries of "disaster", this terminology is widely used: see e.g., Kennedy, *Decolonization*.

¹⁵⁸ After all, this is one of the main foci of Development Studies as a field.

¹⁵⁹ Betts, "Decolonization: A Brief History of the Word," 27–29.

¹⁶⁰ Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism*.

¹⁶¹ Engel and Mabefam, "The 50th Anniversary of the New International Economic Order," 880.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Dunstan, "Conflicts of Interest," 146.

¹⁶⁴ Varela, "Africa Finds Its Voice in the Halls of Manchester," 62.

respective countries, would later join with Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt and Haile Selassie of Ethiopia to establish the Organization of African Unity, institutionalizing Pan-African cooperation.¹⁶⁵

Parallel developments in Asia and cross-continental organizing further developed anti-colonial thinking. The League Against Imperialism conference held in Brussels in 1927 brought together diverse participants from communist, socialist, and nationalist movements around the globe, united by clear demands for independence from colonial rule.¹⁶⁶ This gathering laid the groundwork for the 1947 Asian Relations Conference in India, where Jawaharlal Nehru articulated visions of Asian solidarity and autonomous development.¹⁶⁷ The Conferences in 1947 and their second iteration in 1949 marked important milestones in inter-Asian unity and struggle against imperialism.¹⁶⁸

All of these built toward the pivotal 1955 Bandung Conference in the Indonesian city of the same name, where colonized peoples from Asia and Africa united in their struggle against colonialism and the damage it caused.¹⁶⁹ Led by Indonesia's Sukarno, the Bandung Conference produced declarations that would directly inform NIEO principles, critiquing the development agenda imposed on the Global South through the Global North.¹⁷⁰

This *Bandung spirit*¹⁷¹ catalyzed institutional developments through the 1960s: The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) formed in 1961 “as a secretariat of the Third World Project”¹⁷², providing a political bloc for countries seeking to chart independent paths between Cold War alignments. The 1962 Cairo Conference on Problems of Developing Countries, which included Latin American states and featured Raúl Prebisch (whose importance for the NIEO will be discussed in the chapter on intellectual history) representing the UN Economic Commission for Latin America, further expanded these networks between countries.¹⁷³ Subsequently, in 1964, the United Nations established the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) with the goal of promoting the interests of Global South countries.¹⁷⁴ This also led to the establishment of the Group of 77 (G77) to further the NAM's goals on its behalf inside UNCTAD and the United Nations more generally.¹⁷⁵

These conferences and organizations did more than simply demand political independence. They articulated a comprehensive critique of how colonial economic structures persisted after formal decolonization, how international trade rules

¹⁶⁵ Varela, “Africa Finds Its Voice in the Halls of Manchester,” 75–76.

¹⁶⁶ Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, 20–21; Louro, *The League Against Imperialism*, 17–18.

¹⁶⁷ Engel and Mabefam, “The 50th Anniversary of the New International Economic Order,” 880.

¹⁶⁸ Ewing, “The Third World before Afro-Asia,” 40–41.

¹⁶⁹ Lee, “Introduction,” 9–10.

¹⁷⁰ Weber and Winanti, “The ‘Bandung Spirit’ and Solidarist Internationalism,” 399–400.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Prashad, *The Poorer Nations*, 12.

¹⁷³ Engel and Mabefam, “The 50th Anniversary of the New International Economic Order,” 880.

¹⁷⁴ Fiebrig, “Unequal Exchange?,” 136.

¹⁷⁵ Prashad, *The Poorer Nations*, 12.

perpetuated dependency, and how existing international institutions served primarily the interests of former colonial powers. The intellectual work performed at these gatherings (in the form of analyzing mechanisms of exploitation, formulating alternative principles for international economic relations, and building coalitions across continental boundaries) provided essential foundations for the NIEO's later articulation. When Global South states advanced their reform ideas as the NIEO in the 1970s, they drew upon these prior decades of organizing that had made them crucially aware of the structural obstacles to genuine independence and the potential of alternative arrangements.¹⁷⁶

4.1.2 Underlying International Structures

The United Nations (UN) emerged in 1945 as a successor to the League of Nations as the Allies recognized a need for an international organization in that vein.¹⁷⁷ Just like its predecessor, the UN was a “product of empire” with many European colonial powers anticipating that this new international organization would similarly reinforce the legitimacy of their imperial rule.¹⁷⁸ Yet, the organization took an opposite direction, becoming a tool, for what Vijay Prashad would call the “Third World-project” of decolonization: the Global South-led push for political independence.¹⁷⁹

The UN was divided into six bodies in the UN Charter: The General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat.¹⁸⁰ This structure was built upon its predecessor, the League of Nations, but added the ECOSOC and Trusteeship Council.¹⁸¹ This change in structure already showed the necessity of economic, social, and decolonization competences this new international organization had to possess to adequately engage with the international questions of its time.

The UN's institutional architecture reflected the power realities of the post-war period, with its primary purpose to maintain worldwide peace and security after the devastation of WWII.¹⁸² The Security Council, with its five permanent members possessing veto power (the United States, Soviet Union, United Kingdom, France, and China), embodied great power dominance through its authority over matters of international peace and security.¹⁸³

The General Assembly, by contrast, operated on different principles that would prove crucial for Global South organizing. Article 18 of the UN Charter established that each member state possessed one vote in the General Assembly, regardless of population, economic size, or military power.¹⁸⁴ This *one state, one vote* principle created formal

¹⁷⁶ Engel and Mabefam, “The 50th Anniversary of the New International Economic Order,” 880.

¹⁷⁷ Sayward, *The United Nations in International History*, 19.

¹⁷⁸ Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace*, 17.

¹⁷⁹ Prashad, *The Darker Nations*.

¹⁸⁰ United Nations. “Charter of the United Nations.”

¹⁸¹ Kille and Lyon, *The United Nations*, 13.

¹⁸² Weiss et al., *The United Nations and Changing World Politics*, 5.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ United Nations. “Charter of the United Nations.”

equality among vastly unequal states. The Assembly's authority to "discuss any questions or any matters within the scope of the present Charter"¹⁸⁵ and to "make recommendations to the Members of the United Nations"¹⁸⁶ granted broad agenda-setting capacity without enforcement power, as its resolutions had no enforcement mechanism. The General Assembly thus became a forum for articulating alternative visions of international order and a demonstration of the limits of formal equality in a hierarchical international system.

The UN's membership expanded dramatically during the decolonization wave. From fifty-one founding members in 1945, it grew to 117 in the following two decades, with a majority of formerly colonized nations and therefore fundamentally altering the organization's political composition.¹⁸⁷ By the early 1960s, African and Asian states constituted a majority of UN members, transforming what had been a European-dominated institution into one where formerly colonized peoples could coordinate collective action. This demographic transformation of the General Assembly created the institutional preconditions for the NIEO.¹⁸⁸ Newly independent states recognized that while they lacked the economic and military power of industrialized nations, they possessed potential leverage through their ability to shape UN discourse and establish international norms through Assembly resolutions, which they used to put development issues such as sovereignty and control over natural resources on the negotiation table from the 1950s onward.¹⁸⁹

4.2 Pre-History of the Moon Treaty

4.2.1 Historical Background

The 20th century witnessed a technological revolution that fundamentally altered humanity's relationship with its environment through the advent of spaceflight technology. While this technological leap could provide enough of a challenge, space technology and its development were also central to the Cold War, which fundamentally influenced it.¹⁹⁰ Both the United States and Soviet Union battled each other in a scientific *Space Race*, creating a sort of *duopoly* with these two states being effectively the ones capable of reaching space and dominating early space activities in the 1960s and 1970s. This concentration of spacefaring capability meant that space law negotiations would necessarily revolve around superpower competition.

The United Nations emerged as the natural forum for space law negotiations, providing a venue where states of varying capabilities could participate in establishing ground rules aligning with the UN's founding principles of sovereign equality of states, peaceful

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Muschik, *Building States*, 2.

¹⁸⁸ Anghie, "Legal Aspects of the New International Economic Order," 148.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ McDougall, ...*The Heavens and the Earth*.

resolution of disputes, and international cooperation.¹⁹¹ The military implications of space technology generated particular urgency as satellites started to be able to monitor adversaries' territory, and the possibility of (nuclear) weapons stationed in orbit raised the specter of a new dimension of warfare.¹⁹² Institutionalizing space law, therefore, became vital to international security.

Space law operates as a specialized branch of international law, developing and providing legal frameworks to govern activities beyond Earth's atmosphere.¹⁹³ In the wake of the first satellite launch (Sputnik I), what had been abstract ideas and concepts were suddenly elevated to crucial questions of governance.¹⁹⁴ Since then, internationally negotiated conventions have become the principal source of space law.¹⁹⁵ The five major space treaties negotiated between 1967 and 1979 at the United Nations established comprehensive frameworks for governing space activities, addressing fundamental questions of sovereignty, resource control, liability, and the peaceful use of space, and therefore creating binding obligations for states parties that extend to both governmental and non-governmental space activities.¹⁹⁶

The Outer Space Treaty¹⁹⁷ of 1967 (formally the *Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies*), established foundational principles influential to this day, which led to it being titled the "Magna Carta" of space law.¹⁹⁸ The treaty's seventeen articles addressed fundamental questions about sovereignty, militarization, and the purposes of space exploration.¹⁹⁹

Article I established freedom of exploration and use of outer space, declaring that space "shall be free for exploration and use by all States without discrimination of any kind, on a basis of equality and in accordance with international law, and there shall be free access to all areas of celestial bodies."²⁰⁰ This provision rejected claims that space belonged exclusively to spacefaring nations, instead articulating a vision of space as accessible to all states. Article I further stated that exploration and use of outer space "shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, and shall be province of all mankind"²⁰¹, introducing language about universal benefit that would become central to later debates about resource distribution in the wake of the Moon Treaty.²⁰²

¹⁹¹ Kopal, "Origins of Space Law and the Role of the United Nations," 224.

¹⁹² Balogh, "Institutional Aspects," 198.

¹⁹³ Masson-Zwaan and Hofmann, *Introduction to Space Law*, 4.

¹⁹⁴ Doyle, "A Concise History of Space Law: 1910-2009," 1.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

¹⁹⁷ G.A. Res. 2222 (XXI).

¹⁹⁸ Soucek, "International Law," 298.

¹⁹⁹ G.A. Res. 2222 (XXI).

²⁰⁰ G.A. Res. 2222 (XXI).

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

²⁰² Khatwani, "Common Heritage of Mankind for Outer Space," 90.

Linked to this, Article II contained the non-appropriation principle, stating that "[o]uter space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, is not subject to national appropriation by claim of sovereignty, by means of use or occupation, or by any other means."²⁰³ This provision prevents states from claiming territory in space in the same vein as territory on Earth, prohibiting sovereignty assertions over celestial bodies regardless of use, occupation, or first arrival.

To this day, the Outer Space Treaty is considered *hard law* in regard to issues of space governance.²⁰⁴ After this foundational agreement exploring broad governance aspects, COPUOS continued to produce treaties avoiding grand questions of sovereignty and instead started expanding on technical questions emerging from space travel in the form of the Rescue Agreement (1968), the Liability Convention (1972), and the Registration Convention (1975).²⁰⁵

The treaty-based approach reflected both the novelty of space activities and states' desire to prevent the extension of terrestrial conflicts into space.²⁰⁶ However, as the treaty-making process slowed after 1979, space law increasingly relied on customary law development, general principles, and non-binding instruments such as UN General Assembly resolutions.²⁰⁷ This shift toward softer forms of law-making reflected growing substantial disagreements among states about how to govern space activities.²⁰⁸ Such disagreements were already evident in the last treaty, which is the main focus of this thesis: *the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies*, commonly known as the Moon Treaty.

4.2.2 Underlying International Structures

The establishment of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) in 1958 represented the international community's first institutional response to the space age.²⁰⁹ This body would become the primary forum for negotiating international space law between the 1960s and 1980s, developing the treaty frameworks that govern space activities to this day.²¹⁰

The committee's creation followed directly from Sputnik's launch and the widespread recognition that the dual-use nature of space technologies (meaning their potential for both military and commercial applications) required international coordination to prevent the looming Cold War from extending its arms race beyond Earth.²¹¹ In December 1958,

²⁰³ G.A. Res. 2222 (XXI).

²⁰⁴ Schmidt, "International Space Law and Developing Countries," 692.

²⁰⁵ Jankowitsch, "The Background and History of Space Law," 6–8.

²⁰⁶ Lyall and Larsen, *Space Law*, 3.

²⁰⁷ Masson-Zwaan and Hofmann, *Introduction to Space Law*, 3; Jankowitsch, "The Background and History of Space Law," 8.

²⁰⁸ Kopal, "Origins of Space Law and the Role of the United Nations," 229.

²⁰⁹ Hobe, *Space Law*, 41.

²¹⁰ Von Der Dunk, "International Organizations in Space Law," 273.

²¹¹ Marchisio, "History, the Treaties, the Resolutions," 5.

the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 1348 (XIII)²¹², establishing an ad hoc Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space with eighteen members. In December 1959, the General Assembly followed this by adopting Resolution 1472 (XIV)²¹³, making COPUOS a permanent committee using consensus-based decision-making processes and expanding its membership to twenty-four states.²¹⁴ The addition of consensus-rules was decided upon to appease the Soviet Union, which was opposed to the Western states' proposed simple majority decision-making process.²¹⁵ The expansion to a twenty-four-member committee subsidiary to the UNGA also aimed to create more balanced representation between the two sides of the *Iron Curtain* (another issue the Soviet Union raised) while beginning to incorporate Global South states.²¹⁶ The permanent committee's establishment, therefore, marked a crucial step toward institutionalizing space governance within the UN system, creating a stable forum for ongoing negotiations rather than relying on ad hoc arrangements.

COPUOS's structure reflects the complexity of space governance issues. In its second session in 1962, the committee established two subcommittees to address distinct dimensions of space activities: The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee (STSC) and the Legal Subcommittee (LSC).²¹⁷ The STSC addresses the titular aspects of space usage, providing technical expertise that informs legal deliberations, helping diplomats understand the practical implications of proposed rules.²¹⁸ The LSC, meanwhile, focuses on developing international legal frameworks for space activities. This body would draft the language of space treaties by negotiating the complex legal questions of space.²¹⁹ It is therefore this subcommittee in which the discussions around the Moon Treaty's content were primarily held.

The committee's membership expanded steadily over subsequent decades after its establishment. By 1977, COPUOS had grown to forty-seven members.²²⁰ The expansion fundamentally altered COPUOS's dynamics, transforming it from a body dominated by Cold War alignments into a more complex forum where Global South states could exercise their voices.²²¹ After 1977, over half of COPUOS members were nations that would at one point in time be part of the G77.²²² This contingent included states from Latin America such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Uruguay, and Venezuela; African nations including Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Sudan; and Asian states such as India, Indonesia,

²¹² G.A. Res. 1348 (XIII).

²¹³ G.A. Res. 1472 (XIV).

²¹⁴ Masson-Zwaan and Hofmann, *Introduction to Space Law*, 10.

²¹⁵ Jankowitsch, "The Background and History of Space Law," 11.

²¹⁶ Schmidt, "International Space Law and Developing Countries," 690.

²¹⁷ Marchisio, "History, the Treaties, the Resolutions," 6.

²¹⁸ Friedl, *The COPUOS Briefing Book*, 14–15.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 14–15.

²²⁰ G.A. Res. 32/198[B].

²²¹ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 2–3.

²²² World Population Review, "G-77 Countries 2026."

Pakistan, and the Philippines.²²³ This Global South presence would prove crucial during Moon Treaty negotiations, as these states brought perspectives shaped by experiences with colonialism, economic dependency, and struggles for resource sovereignty.²²⁴

While formerly colonized states had a numerical majority by this time, these numbers did not necessarily translate into voting power, as COPUOS operated through a consensus-based decision-making process (being the first UN standing body to function under these principles²²⁵) rather than majority voting procedures.²²⁶ This approach meant that any member state could theoretically block consensus by objecting to a proposal, effectively granting each member a veto over committee decisions. This led to treaty texts being crafted through lengthy debates with different perspectives clashing against each other till a compromise could be reached.²²⁷

The legislative process that produced space treaties thus involved multiple stages. Issues first received consideration in the appropriate COPUOS subcommittee, where technical or legal specialists examined details and drafted preliminary text.²²⁸ Proposals then moved to the full committee, where negotiations continued until consensus emerged or negotiations stalled.²²⁹ Once the subcommittees and then the main body of COPUOS reach consensus, the recommendation proceeds to the General Assembly for formal adoption of a proposed text as a resolution, statement, or, in the most important cases, a treaty.²³⁰ The General Assembly could adopt treaties through simple majority vote, though in practice, the treaties emerging from COPUOS typically already received overwhelming agreement and support given the consensus process that produced them.²³¹ Of course, it needs to be noted that General Assembly adoption does not bind states to treaties itself.²³² They required separate ratification by each state according to domestic procedures, which is, for instance, the reason for the Moon Treaty's lessened importance for Space Law today due to its low ratification rate, even though it was adopted by the General Assembly.²³³

On first glance, the consensus-based approach seems to be an inclusive form of law-making and would give the formerly colonized member-states of COPUOS the possibility to introduce their own concerns into space legislation. However, as Cris van Eijk shows, the Global South input should not be overstated as COPUOS participation by formerly colonized states in the early phase of space lawmaking was often more nominal than

²²³ UNOOSA, "COPUOS Membership Evolution."

²²⁴ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 54–56.

²²⁵ Jankowitsch, "The Background and History of Space Law," 12.

²²⁶ Kopal, "Origins of Space Law and the Role of the United Nations," 224–25.

²²⁷ Lyall and Larsen, *Space Law*, 36.

²²⁸ Hobe, *Space Law*, 41–42.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*

²³⁰ *Ibid.*

²³¹ Jankowitsch, "The Background and History of Space Law," 12.

²³² Soucek, "International Law," 297.

²³³ Din, "The Artemis Accords," 140–42.

substantial.²³⁴ The United States and the Soviet Union largely controlled the process, especially in the formative years of the Outer Space Treaty, which was already evident in the composition of COPUOS at that time.²³⁵ Cris van Eijk demonstrates that early membership was largely determined through superpower bargaining, while many states from Asia, Africa, and the wider formerly colonized world were only gradually and selectively admitted.²³⁶ By the time broader representation in membership began to emerge, many of the foundational principles of space law had already been established.²³⁷ Formal inclusion of a plurality of formerly colonized states, therefore, came only after much of the legal framework had already been shaped.

Moreover, even where Global South states were formally present, their ability to participate effectively remained limited. Consensus decision-making, often celebrated as equal and inclusive, did not remove any inequalities, and the structure of negotiations all favored the major powers.²³⁸ On the contrary, it frequently masked inequalities, creating the appearance of universal agreement while real influence remained concentrated in a few hands.²³⁹ The US and USSR used their veto powers liberally, but van Eijk explains that the same technique was not applied by the few formerly colonized states in COPUOS.²⁴⁰ Consensus was effectively achieved through remaining silent in debates. Therefore, to “threaten to ‘use the veto’ was to demand a vote and totally stop the Committee’s progress. The Third World had the most to lose from delaying the rule of law in space, were the most vulnerable to the Cold War crossfire, and they could hardly risk foreign trade and/or aid for the sake of space.”²⁴¹ Consensus-rules in these early years of space law-making thus guaranteed that the US and the Soviet Union could have their way by granting them access to a veto, but making other states fear the usage of this same power they nominally had at their disposal.

Global South participation should, however, become significant during the Moon Treaty negotiations, as formerly colonized states fought to remedy what was put in place during the times when only a few of them were admitted into COPUOS. The timing disadvantage, nevertheless, meant that their input in space law necessarily took a reactive rather than proactive form from the outset. Global South states found themselves responding to existing space law rather than shaping it from inception, fundamentally limiting the transformative potential in this domain.²⁴²

²³⁴ van Eijk, “The Exclusive Making of Space Law.”

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 93.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 91-96.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, 96.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 103-4.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁴¹ van Eijk, “The Exclusive Making of Space Law,” 104.

²⁴² Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 2.

4.3 Comparison

4.3.1 Historic Bloc Formation and Counter-Hegemonic Capacity

Perhaps the most significant comparison from the pre-histories concerns the different formation of counter-hegemonic historic blocs. The NIEO emerged from decades of organizing that constructed a coherent political project with institutional infrastructures. This process began with early twentieth-century gatherings like the Pan-African Congresses and proceeded through key moments including the 1927 League Against Imperialism conference, the 1947 and 1949 Asian Relations Conferences, and the pivotal 1955 Bandung Conference.²⁴³ The NIEO stands in the tradition of a long project of decolonization, with each gathering advancing the intellectual and organizational work necessary for sustained collective action. By the 1960s, this coalition-building had produced formal institutions in the form of the NAM and the G77 that could coordinate positions across diverse nation-states with varying economic structures and political systems.²⁴⁴ These organizations provided stable platforms for advancing shared principles about sovereign equality, resource sovereignty, and development justice. When Global South states articulated the *NIEO Programme* in 1974²⁴⁵, they drew upon this organizational capacity and decades of work identifying mechanisms of exploitation and theorizing alternatives.

This represents historic bloc formation in Cox's sense: a unity of social forces, institutions, and ideas capable of mounting comprehensive challenges to dominant arrangements.²⁴⁶ The NIEO coalition possessed a shared analysis of colonial exploitation's persistence through economic structures, alternative principles for organizing international relations, and institutional vehicles for advancing these principles within UN forums. This preparatory work proved crucial when the crises of the 1970s created openings for transformative politics as an interregnum.²⁴⁷

By contrast, no equivalent historic bloc formation preceded Global South participation in space governance. There was no *Bandung for space*, no sustained organizing among non-spacefaring nations to develop shared principles before the space age began. This absence reflects both timing and the highly technical character of space activities, which seemed distant from immediate development concerns. The linkage between space governance and broader struggles over resources and technology transfer only emerged in the 1970s with the Moon Treaty, after foundational space law principles had been established.²⁴⁸ This means Global South actors entered space law negotiations without the decades of preparatory organizing that underpinned NIEO demands.

²⁴³ Prashad, *The Darker Nations*.

²⁴⁴ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 55.

²⁴⁵ G.A. Res. 3201 (S-VI).

²⁴⁶ Cox, "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations," 167–68.

²⁴⁷ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 10–14.

²⁴⁸ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 2–3.

While this fact does not show constraints in international *order-making* per se, it highlights how the absence of such organizing weakened their capacity to challenge foundational frameworks once those principles were already embedded in treaty law. By the time Global South states could unite around *common heritage* principles in the 1970s, foundational space law had already been established through the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, which was negotiated when Global South representation in COPUOS remained minimal and when Cold War superpowers dominated the institutional agenda.²⁴⁹ The timing disadvantage meant that counter-hegemonic articulations of space law necessarily took a reactive rather than proactive form. When Global South states finally found themselves in a position to effectively respond to existing space law during the Moon Treaty process, the transformative potential in this domain was already limited by existing principles.²⁵⁰

4.3.2 International Structures and the Reproduction of Hegemony

The pre-history uncovers how international institutions simultaneously provided platforms for Global South voices while embedding structural constraints that limited counter-hegemonic possibilities. In both cases, institutional architectures reflected power asymmetries from their founding moments, though these operated through different mechanisms.

The United Nations emerged from the wreckage of World War II, carrying forward structures from the League of Nations while incorporating new bodies ostensibly designed to address economic and social questions.²⁵¹ The Security Council's veto-wielding permanent members ensured that great power dominance remained a built-in feature of the system.²⁵² Yet the General Assembly's *one state, one vote* principle created an arena where demographic transformation through decolonization could translate into formal equality. By the 1970s, formerly colonized states constituted a clear majority, enabling them to pass resolutions articulating alternative principles for international order.²⁵³ This voting power provided real leverage, particularly through agenda-setting capacity that forced economic justice onto the international agenda. The NIEO gained its attention precisely because Global South states could mobilize their numerical advantage at the United Nations General Assembly and in other United Nations fora.

However, this leverage operated within clear boundaries. General Assembly resolutions lacked binding force, meaning powerful states could acknowledge Global South demands without implementing structural changes.²⁵⁴ The non-binding character of Assembly resolutions represents a fundamental constraint embedded in the UN's institutional design. Global South states thus possessed a voice without enforcement

²⁴⁹ van Eijk, "The Exclusive Making of Space Law," 103–4.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 96.

²⁵¹ Kille and Lyon, *The United Nations*, 13.

²⁵² Weiss et al., *The United Nations and Changing World Politics*, 5.

²⁵³ Muschik, *Building States*, 2.

²⁵⁴ Soucek, "International Law," 297.

capacity at the United Nations, even though other forms of leverage (as, for instance, pressure through OPEC that could give their demands more weight)²⁵⁵ existed.

The specific institutional architecture of COPUOS created even stronger barriers to Global South influence. The consensus-based decision-making procedures theoretically granted each member equal standing, as any state could block agreement. Cris van Eijk's findings demonstrate, however, that this formal equality masked profound inequalities in actual influence.²⁵⁶ Membership expansion proceeded slowly and selectively, with the superpowers controlling who gained entry during space law's formative period.²⁵⁷ The consensus requirement meant that no treaty could emerge without superpower agreement, effectively granting the United States and Soviet Union veto power over outcomes.²⁵⁸ The institutional structure thus reproduced hegemonic arrangements through procedural mechanisms that appeared neutral while favoring actors with greater material and technical capacities.

This comparison illuminates how international organizations can simultaneously serve as arenas for contestation and mechanisms for stabilizing hegemonic structures, as Robert Cox argues.²⁵⁹ The General Assembly's voting procedures allowed Global South majorities to articulate counter-hegemonic visions while channeling opposition into institutional forms that powerful states could contain. COPUOS's consensus procedures created an appearance of inclusive deliberation while ensuring that transformative proposals required accommodation with powers capable of blocking outcomes. In both cases, institutional access did not automatically translate into structural transformation. This institutional analysis reveals that Global South *constrained agency* in the 1970s was not a matter of mere exclusion but of inclusion on terms that preserved hegemonic arrangements.

²⁵⁵ Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, 247–49.

²⁵⁶ van Eijk, "The Exclusive Making of Space Law."

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 91–96.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 103–4.

²⁵⁹ Cox, "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations," 172.

5. Intellectual History

5.1 NIEO

One of the most prominent intellectual foundations for the NIEO is the so-called Prebisch-Singer thesis, developed independently by Raúl Prebisch (the head of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA)) and Hans Singer (working at the United Nations Department of Economic Affairs (DEA)) during the end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s.²⁶⁰

Their work demonstrated that the terms of trade systematically disadvantaged countries exporting primary commodities while favoring exporters of manufactured goods. As productivity increased in both sectors, the benefits – contrary to mainstream economic theory at that time – were overwhelmingly enjoyed by industrialized nations and their companies and consumers, while commodity exporters saw prices for their exports decline relative to their imports.²⁶¹ This structural feature of the international economy meant that even without formal colonial rule, wealth continued to flow from South to North – from periphery to center.²⁶² This finding represented what Prebisch called “unequal exchange”.²⁶³ Prebisch’s analysis did not argue, however, that international trade was inherently negative for the periphery, but instead that its fruits were distributed unequally and systematically favoring the center.²⁶⁴

Prebisch’s policy recommendations emphasized the need for formerly colonized countries to fundamentally alter development strategies centered around an export focus, to become more ‘inward-oriented’ by industrializing behind protective barriers (trade protectionism, subsidies, and infrastructure build-up in support of industries).²⁶⁵ Breaking out of their *peripheral* status, which formerly colonized countries found themselves in, therefore required conscious state intervention to promote industrialization and negotiating better terms for commodity exports. These ideas directly informed the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development’s (UNCTAD) institutional mission (as Prebisch was also the secretary-general of this body) and provided technical justification for many NIEO demands.²⁶⁶

This structuralist view of the economy provided an influential critique of mainstream economic assumptions of development, free trade, and liberalization policies.²⁶⁷ Structuralists like Prebisch and Singer argued that without deliberate intervention to change economic structures, the world’s economic growth could increase inequality by

²⁶⁰ Toye and Toye, “The Origins and Interpretation of the Prebisch-Singer Thesis,” 439.

²⁶¹ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 40.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 41.

²⁶³ Dosman, *The Life and Times of Raúl Prebisch*, 244.

²⁶⁴ Kay, “Development Theory: The Latin American Pivot,” 41.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.* 41-42.

²⁶⁶ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 42.

²⁶⁷ Bibi, “Prebisch and the Terms of Trade,” pt. 104813, pp. 2–4.

concentrating benefits among elites already integrated into international markets.²⁶⁸ This analysis supported the later NIEO's emphasis on transforming structures of economic relations.

During the 1960s, political leaders involved in the struggle to gain formal independence for their states soon (similar to Prebisch and Singer's analysis) realized that the achieved formal sovereignty was not the same as economic autonomy. This form of political independence *with strings attached* was coined *neocolonialism* by Ghana's first prime minister, Kwame Nkrumah. In his 1965 book *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*,²⁶⁹ he describes how former colonial powers maintained economic control over nominally independent states and argues that "the essence of neo-colonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality, its economic system and thus its political policy are directed from outside."²⁷⁰

The theory of neocolonialism extended beyond economic mechanisms to encompass political, cultural, and military dimensions, which foster dependency.²⁷¹ Nkrumah also identified multinational corporations as the agents of neocolonial exploitation, operating across borders to extract resources and profits while evading national regulation.²⁷² These corporations could manipulate transfer pricing to shift profits to low-tax jurisdictions, threaten disinvestment to prevent nationalization or regulation, and use their financial power to influence political processes.²⁷³ Foreign capital, rather than serving development, extracted surplus and perpetuated dependency on imported manufactured goods, technology, and outsider expertise.²⁷⁴ While Nkrumah's writings share similarities with the Structuralist economic approaches by Singer and Prebisch, these criticisms of multinational corporations are more based on Nkrumah's Marxist roots.²⁷⁵ Nkrumah followed Lenin's beliefs that imperialism was not just beneficial for but the inherent consequence of capitalism.²⁷⁶

Nkrumah's proposed solutions also emphasized Pan-African unity and South-South cooperation as necessary countermeasures to neocolonial fragmentation.²⁷⁷ He argued that former colonial powers had deliberately created weak states unable to resist external pressure or achieve economic viability independently.²⁷⁸ Only through continental or regional unity could African states pool resources, coordinate policies, and negotiate

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism*.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., ix.

²⁷¹ Gerits, "When the Bull Elephants Fight," 955.

²⁷² Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 44–45.

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Boateng, *The Political Legacy of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana*, 28.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 48.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

from positions of strength with developed countries and multinational corporations.²⁷⁹ A necessary solution to rid Africa and the Global South from “underdevelopment” was, in Nkrumah’s view, a rapid industrialization through a planned economy guided by an all-African planning body.²⁸⁰

Kwame Nkrumah’s concept of neocolonialism provided a political economy framework that complemented structuralist economics by analyzing mechanisms through which economic subordination was maintained after formal political independence. Overcoming this unequal integration of formerly colonized states into the international order and achieving a truly “postimperial” world became a defining challenge for newly independent states.²⁸¹ The NIEO subsequently emerged as the most ambitious and comprehensive attempt to realize this vision.

Linked to these critiques, the field of international law would also find important contributions via Mohammed Bedjaoui, an Algerian jurist who served on the International Court of Justice both as judge and president, and who previously developed a decolonial critique of international law.²⁸² Bedjaoui participated in the liberation of Algeria from French colonial rule by serving first as a legal advisor to the *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN) and continuing after independence in shaping Algeria as ambassador to France and the United Nations, Minister of Justice (1964-1970), and Minister of Foreign Affairs (2005-2007).²⁸³ His work, especially his book *Towards a New International Economic Order*, became foundational to the reform project of the same name by being the most influential and circulated legal manifesto on the topic.²⁸⁴

His work argued that international law had been created by and for colonial powers, encoding colonial relations into supposedly universal legal principles.²⁸⁵ Classical international law, Bedjaoui demonstrated, evolved when European powers dominated the international system and constructed legal doctrines that legitimized colonial conquest, protected foreign investment under unequal treaties, and treated non-European peoples as objects rather than subjects of law.²⁸⁶ Even after decolonization, international law retained structures and doctrines developed during this colonial period.²⁸⁷

Bedjaoui’s critique extended to fundamental questions about legal continuity and obligation. He rejected the premise that postcolonial and postrevolutionary states bore automatic obligations to honor treaties and contracts agreed upon by previous regimes, particularly when those agreements had been imposed through coercion or negotiated

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

²⁸⁰ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 45.

²⁸¹ Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire*, 2.

²⁸² Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 46–47.

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Özsü, “In the Interests of Mankind as a Whole,” 131.

²⁸⁵ Lorenzini, *Global Development*, 155.

²⁸⁶ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 47.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

under conditions of fundamental inequality.²⁸⁸ This position drew directly from Algeria's own post-independence stance toward its former colonial overlord, France. Following its independence in 1962, Algeria refused to recognize certain agreements concluded during the colonial period as binding, and subsequently moved forward with the nationalization of French oil.²⁸⁹ Bedjaoui presented Algeria's legal positions as a model for what an alternative global and transnational legal order might resemble: one that prioritized equity over formal continuity with an exploitative past.²⁹⁰

The power dynamics embedded within international law's structure, Bedjaoui argued, necessitated not merely the interpretation of existing legal principles but their fundamental transformation.²⁹¹ Formerly colonized states, constituting the majority of UN members in the 1970s, possessed both the right and responsibility to reshape international law to reflect principles of sovereign equality, self-determination, and equitable economic relations rather than perpetuate frameworks designed to serve imperial interests.²⁹² Resolutions, even if not legally binding, would therefore possess legitimacy as expressions of the international community's evolved understanding of justice, rights, and obligations.

This decolonial legal approach demanded self-determination, the right to development, and permanent sovereignty over natural resources.²⁹³ Nevertheless, the proponents of using the UN to reform international law in favor of Global South-led goals (such as the NIEO demands) realized that international law needed the support of the Global North to be widely accepted.²⁹⁴ As this domain of law functions on a basis of voluntary participation, each country had the right to ignore General Assembly resolutions.²⁹⁵ Successful resolutions and treaties had to be written in a way that would make industrialized nations not simply ignore them. The idea of these legal scholars (so-called *historical jurists*, who heavily drew upon extensive knowledge of international legal history²⁹⁶) was to argue their ideas (such as the principles of economic law they aimed to implement) as elaborations of existing principles in prior declarations and treaties.²⁹⁷ This was the exact path the G77 and NAM chose for pursuing their goals.²⁹⁸

5.2 Space Law

The intellectual architecture of international space law emerged from decades of theoretical work by legal scholars and diplomats who sought to establish governance

²⁸⁸ Gilman, "The New International Economic Order," 5.

²⁸⁹ Larabi, "La Nationalisation Du Marché Algérien Des Produits Pétroliers."

²⁹⁰ Gilman, "The New International Economic Order," 5.

²⁹¹ Özsu, "In the Interests of Mankind as a Whole," 131.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 49.

²⁹⁴ Anghie, "Legal Aspects of the New International Economic Order," 149.

²⁹⁵ Soucek, "International Law," 297.

²⁹⁶ Özsu, "Determining New Selves," 354.

²⁹⁷ Özsu, "Determining New Selves," 354.

²⁹⁸ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 48.

principles even before spacefaring capabilities made regulations urgent. These early writings anticipated fundamental questions about sovereignty, resource control, and benefit-sharing that would become central to Space Law and the Moon Treaty negotiations.

Vladimir Mandl's pioneering 1932 work *Das Weltraum-Recht: Ein Problem der Raumfahrt* (*Space Law: A Problem of Space Flight*) represented the first systematic attempt to theorize legal frameworks for activities beyond Earth's atmosphere.²⁹⁹ Writing more than two decades before Sputnik, Czech lawyer Vladimir Mandl argued that outer space constituted a fundamentally different domain and therefore required distinct legal treatment.³⁰⁰ His analysis established that state sovereignty could not extend indefinitely upward but should be limited to atmospheric airspace, beyond which space would remain free for all nations to access and use.³⁰¹ Mandl's foundational work also already places great expectations in the benefits of exploiting resources in space, but he does not elaborate on ideas for the legality of extraction and use of said resources.³⁰²

As spaceflight transitioned from a theoretical possibility to a technological reality, many more lawyers started to work on this domain.³⁰³ In the Socialist world, Soviet jurist Eugène Korovin's influential writings emphasized the necessity of international cooperation in space law, arguing that the emerging domain required multilateral governance frameworks.³⁰⁴ In the West, aviation lawyers like Eugène Pépin, Andrew Haley, John Cobb Cooper, and Myres S. McDougal turned their attention to space law during the 1950s and brought expertise in regulating a previously novel domain of human activity.³⁰⁵ Such cross-pollination between aviation and space law provided crucial precedents for how to establish rules for activities that transcended national boundaries.

Among the cohort of space law pioneers, Argentine jurist Aldo Armando Cocca would prove particularly influential for the intellectual development leading to the Moon Treaty.³⁰⁶ Cocca's legal philosophy regarding celestial bodies centered around several core propositions. He argued that the Moon and other celestial bodies should not be treated as territory subject to sovereignty claims by individual states.³⁰⁷ Instead, Cocca proposed that the Moon should remain free for use by all states while subjecting resource exploitation to international regulation and ensuring rights of passage for interplanetary travel – a *common heritage of mankind*.³⁰⁸ These early formulations constituted what

²⁹⁹ Neger and Walter, "Space Law - an Independent Branch of the Legal System," 235.

³⁰⁰ Hobe, *Pioneers of Space Law*, 62.

³⁰¹ Doyle, "A Concise History of Space Law: 1910-2009," 4.

³⁰² Hobe, "Vladimir Mandl, Alex Meyer, Welf-Heinrich Prince of Hanover Friedrich Wilhelm von Rauchhaup," 33.

³⁰³ Jankowitsch, "The Background and History of Space Law," 2.

³⁰⁴ Hobe, *Space Law*, 40.

³⁰⁵ Kopal, "Origins of Space Law and the Role of the United Nations," 222.

³⁰⁶ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 7.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

Stephen Buono has termed the “germ” of the Moon Treaty’s governance framework, establishing intellectual architecture that would shape subsequent negotiations.³⁰⁹

Cocca’s ideas first achieved partial institutional expression through the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, which stated that exploration and use of outer space “shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries.”³¹⁰ The expansion of this phrase, seemingly innocuous in its generality, would become a crucial site of contestation as states debated whether it imposed enforceable obligations for benefit-sharing or merely expressed aspirational values and how the subsequent Moon Treaty should further elaborate on it.³¹¹

It should be noted however, that Cocca personally remained uninterested in connecting his *common heritage of mankind*-idea and the Moon Treaty proposals to contemporary debates over demilitarization or the NIEO agenda.³¹² Instead, he maintained an unwavering commitment to space law as a progressive and humanistic discipline capable of transcending political divisions.³¹³ Cocca’s vision for lunar governance therefore emerged not from ambitions to restructure international economic relations, but from his conviction about space exploration’s unifying potential and its capacity to transform both international law and inter-human relations more broadly.³¹⁴

By the late 1960s, legal scholars and diplomats increasingly recognized that the Outer Space Treaty’s general principles required supplementation with more specific regulations for resource exploitation.³¹⁵ At the COPUOS Legal Subcommittee’s ninth session in June and July 1970, Cocca presented a concise five-article draft treaty addressing lunar resources that distilled his years of theoretical development into a concrete legal proposal.³¹⁶ Cocca’s draft treaty established five articles governing space resources, introducing the term “common heritage of mankind” rather than the Outer Space Treaty’s “province of all mankind.”³¹⁷ The framework also covered resources in place on celestial bodies and materials brought to Earth, requiring that benefits be shared equitably among all peoples, with its 5th article specifically prioritizing the needs of “developing countries” while protecting the rights of entities conducting extraction operations.³¹⁸ Cocca’s influence on the Moon Treaty was not only in providing a theoretical basis, but also as an active participant in its creation and contestation.

5.3 UNCLOS

Drawing inspiration from the concept of *freedom of the seas*, Vladimir Mandl already proposed in his early writings that outer space, like the high seas, should be governed by

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ G.A. Res. 2222 (XXI).

³¹¹ Masson-Zwaan and Hofmann, *Introduction to Space Law*, 100.

³¹² Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 78.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Khatwani, “Common Heritage of Mankind for Outer Space,” 92.

³¹⁶ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 20–21.

³¹⁷ Ibid., 20–21.

³¹⁸ Ibid., 21.

principles of common access rather than territorial appropriation.³¹⁹ This analogy between ocean and space governance would prove remarkably durable, influencing both the Outer Space Treaty and later debates about lunar resources.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) negotiations, which began in 1973 and continued through 1982, represented an effort to establish governance frameworks in maritime law. Especially the Third UN Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III) provided both intellectual resources and diplomatic precedents that grappled with remarkably similar questions as those addressed by NIEO and Moon Treaty: access to (seabed) resources, including their usage and commodification, financial arrangements in resource extraction, technology transfer between nations, and the organizational structure of a proposed international authority on seabed issues.³²⁰

The UNCLOS negotiations focused particularly on the legal status of the deep seabed and its mineral resources, with the G77 being active participants during UNCLOS III in 1979.³²¹ In this context, UNCLOS III provided both intellectual resources and diplomatic precedents for NIEO-era struggles. The controversies over the deep seabed were part of the wider North–South conflict in which formerly colonized states viewed the law of the sea negotiations not merely as a matter of ocean governance, but as an opportunity to advance broader principles of equity and structural reform in international economic relations.³²² Formerly colonized states, organized through the G77, successfully advocated for these areas to be designated “common heritage of mankind” subject to an international regime that would ensure equitable benefit-sharing.³²³

This concept of the *common heritage of mankind*, which has been cross-developed by space law scholars like Aldo Armando Cocca since the 1960s³²⁴, achieved its most elaborate institutional expression in UNCLOS, via its provision for the establishment of an International Seabed Authority to regulate deep seabed mining and distribute benefits to all states parties with particular regard for formerly colonized states’ interests.³²⁵ This was not without controversy though, as Industrialized states generally preferred a system that remained closer to the traditional freedom of the high seas doctrine.³²⁶ In this, the seabed would remain open to exploitation by states and companies, while the international authority would play only a limited administrative role (registering claims, issuing licenses, and redistributing some fee revenue).³²⁷ Global South states, by contrast, argued that such a model would reproduce existing inequalities by allowing

³¹⁹ Hobe, *Space Law*, 40.

³²⁰ Juda, “UNCLOS III and the New International Economic Order,” 221–22.

³²¹ Boyle and Chinkin, “UNCLOS III and the Process of International Law-Making,” 377.

³²² Juda, “UNCLOS III and the New International Economic Order,” 227–29.

³²³ *Ibid.*

³²⁴ Khatwani, “Common Heritage of Mankind for Outer Space,” 89.

³²⁵ Ranganathan, “The Common Heritage of Mankind,” 43–44.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 42.

technologically advanced countries to dominate access to seabed resources.³²⁸ They therefore pushed for a much stronger International Sea-Bed Authority, whose operating arm would conduct mining and distribute the benefits internationally, with special focus on developing countries, and eventually could implement a majority of these demands.³²⁹ In that sense, the debate over institutional design was also a debate over whether the *common heritage of mankind* would mean little more than regulated access. Nevertheless, the UNCLOS framework demonstrated that *common heritage* principles could be translated into concrete legal mechanisms including licensing requirements, environmental protections, technology transfer obligations, and benefit-sharing arrangements.

In its opposition, UNCLOS also revealed the structural obstacles such frameworks faced: major industrialized nations, particularly the United States under Ronald Reagan, refused to ratify the convention specifically because of Part XI's provisions, arguing that the international regime imposed excessive restrictions on commercial activities and inadequately protected investment.³³⁰ This, of course, was the same fate the NIEO and the Moon Treaty shared, which will be further explored in the upcoming chapter.

5.4 Comparison

5.4.1 Contestation of Hegemonic Common Sense

The NIEO's critique was explicitly postcolonial and addressed the political economy of the postwar period. The Prebisch-Singer thesis demonstrated that the global economy structurally disadvantaged commodity exporters, shifting the explanation for lagging behind in economic development from domestic weakness to the historical organization of world order.³³¹ Nkrumah showed how economic dependence, foreign capital, and inherited colonial structures preserved subordination after formal independence.³³² Bedjaoui argued that international law itself retained colonial hierarchies under the guise of universality.³³³ Together, these thinkers challenged the ideological legitimacy of the postwar order itself.

The Moon Treaty's critique was less directly anti-colonial but still contested dominant assumptions. Early space lawyers like Cocca rejected the idea that outer space should become an extension of terrestrial sovereignty and appropriation, even if this was out of a belief in the humanist nature of space law instead of post-colonial distributive ambitions.³³⁴ By the 1970s, these legal ideas nevertheless increasingly overlapped with Global South concerns that space might reproduce terrestrial inequalities.³³⁵ The Moon

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Boyle and Chinkin, "UNCLOS III and the Process of International Law-Making," 379.

³³¹ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 40–41.

³³² Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism*, ix.

³³³ Lorenzini, *Global Development*, 155.

³³⁴ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 78.

³³⁵ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 54–56.

Treaty sought to prevent a frontier logic (where technological capability confers legal entitlement) from becoming normalized.

Comparatively, the NIEO attacked an already existing order as structurally unjust; the Moon Treaty sought to prevent an emerging domain from being organized according to the same unequal logic. Both represent intellectual challenges to hegemony in different discursive registers: the NIEO openly political and redistributive, the Moon Treaty more often expressed through technical legal language. Both projects challenged hegemonic *common sense* (dominant assumptions presented as natural or universal) and questioned whether international arrangements were truly neutral, insisting that what appeared inevitable was the product of contestable historical choices.

5.4.2 Counter-Hegemonic Visions

The NIEO offered a broad normative project for restructuring the international political economy. Prebisch called for deliberate intervention to overcome unequal exchange.³³⁶ Nkrumah emphasized collective self-reliance and South-South solidarity.³³⁷ Bedjaoui translated these into legal claims about equality, permanent sovereignty over resources, and the right to development.³³⁸ Together, these formed a coherent counter-hegemonic vision seeking to complete formal sovereignty with substantive economic and legal transformation.

The Moon Treaty expressed a narrower but significant alternative vision: celestial bodies should not become objects of unilateral appropriation but be governed to benefit all humanity. Cocco's proposals moved beyond abstract universalism toward regulated use, equitable benefit-sharing, and explicit attention to developing countries.³³⁹ The treaty offered an alternative principle: not freedom for the technologically capable to exploit first, but international regulation preventing monopolization.³⁴⁰

UNCLOS represents the clearest convergence point. The *common heritage of mankind* principle bridged anti-colonial distributive demands and legal governance of areas beyond national jurisdiction, demonstrating that international law could prevent technologically advanced states from monopolizing common spaces.³⁴¹ The International Seabed Authority translated this into concrete mechanisms. That major industrialized nations refused ratification specifically because of these provisions reveals how counter-hegemonic such arrangements were perceived.³⁴²

In the NIEO case, the underlying critique was aimed at fundamental structures, but its articulation often had to be framed in a reformist way. Bedjaoui and others understood

³³⁶ Kay, "Development Theory: The Latin American Pivot," 41–42.

³³⁷ Boateng, *The Political Legacy of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana*, 48.

³³⁸ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 49.

³³⁹ Ranganathan, "The Common Heritage of Mankind," 43–44.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁴¹ Khatwani, "Common Heritage of Mankind for Outer Space," 89.

³⁴² Boyle and Chinkin, "UNCLOS III and the Process of International Law-Making," 379.

that change through the UN required arguing for transformation through building upon principles already recognized in foundational documents.³⁴³ This increased legitimacy but moderated the language of rupture.³⁴⁴ The NIEO shows both the strength and limits of intellectual agency: Global South actors produced powerful critiques but had to express them through forms shaped by the order they challenged (via the United Nations system).

The intellectual history reveals that the NIEO and the Moon Treaty were linked because both challenged the normative basis of the unequal international order and articulated alternative principles of governance. In both cases, Global South intellectuals exercised real agency by challenging hegemonic *common sense* and constructing counter-hegemonic visions. However, that agency remained constrained by hegemonic structures within which those principles had to be formulated and defended.

³⁴³ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 48.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

6. Coalitions

6.1 NIEO

6.1.1 Supporters

The Global South's pursuit of economic transformation amidst the crises of the 1970s did not emerge from the initiative of a single state but rather from an interconnected coalition of organizations that provided complementary capacities: the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) supplied political vision and moral authority, and the Group of 77 furnished negotiating power within the UN General Assembly.³⁴⁵

The groundwork for the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was laid by the Bandung Conference of 1955, where twenty-nine Asian and African nations gathered in Indonesia to articulate a vision of international relations independent from Cold War bloc politics.³⁴⁶ Though Bandung itself predated the NAM's formal founding, it established the principles and relationships that would structure Third World solidarity for decades.³⁴⁷ The conference brought together recently independent nations and those still struggling for independence, creating a forum where leaders like Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser, India's Jawaharlal Nehru, Indonesia's Sukarno, Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah could meet and coordinate.³⁴⁸

The NAM's formal establishment came at the Belgrade Conference in 1961, which codified the principle of non-alignment: refusing to subordinate national interests to either the United States-led capitalist bloc or the Soviet-led socialist bloc.³⁴⁹ During its early years, the NAM functioned primarily as a political and diplomatic forum focused on the Cold War, but issues of sovereignty, self-determination, and the struggles against colonialism and racism gained prominence rapidly in the 1970s.³⁵⁰ The 1973 Algiers Conference marked a decisive shift in this regard: Hosted by Algeria's President Houari Boumédiène, who had emerged as a leading voice for economic transformation, the Algiers Summit explicitly linked real independence to economic sovereignty.³⁵¹ The conference adopted an *Economic Declaration and Action Programme* that articulated many demands that would subsequently form the core of the NIEO agenda.³⁵²

The Group of 77 (G77) emerged directly from the first UNCTAD conference as a negotiating coalition within the UN system when seventy-seven formerly colonized states signed the *Joint Declaration of the Seventy-Seven Countries* at the conclusion of UNCTAD I in 1964, articulating shared concerns about the international economic system and the need for

³⁴⁵ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 55.

³⁴⁶ Weber and Winanti, "The 'Bandung Spirit' and Solidarist Internationalism," 392–93.

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

³⁴⁸ Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, 48.

³⁴⁹ Miskovic et al., *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War*, 101–3.

³⁵⁰ Engel and Mabefam, "The 50th Anniversary of the New International Economic Order," 881.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 57.

collective action.³⁵³ Functionally, the two organizations served complementary purposes. NAM summits provided high-level political forums where leaders could develop shared visions and coordinate overall strategies, and the G77 translated these political visions into concrete negotiating positions within UN institutions: When Boumédiène used the 1973 NAM Algiers Summit to call for a new economic order, it was the G77 that subsequently negotiated the specific resolutions and declarations in the UN General Assembly that gave institutional form to these demands.³⁵⁴ In a sense, the NAM articulated the *what* and *why* of Global South demands, while the G77 focused on the *how* of achieving them through multilateral negotiations.

While many member states of the G77 were also part of the NAM, its institutional form differed significantly. The NAM operated through periodic summit conferences of heads of state and ministerial meetings, while the G77 served primarily as a coordination mechanism for Global South countries within UN fora.³⁵⁵ The G77 therefore enabled member states to negotiate unified positions before engaging with Global North states, transforming what might have been individual weak bargaining positions into collective strength through unity.³⁵⁶ The G77 was able to solidify across multiple UN venues (not just UNCTAD but also the General Assembly, various specialized agencies, and ad hoc conferences), which helped its members to pursue coordinated strategies across different institutional contexts.³⁵⁷

Within both groups, a core group of states provided consistent leadership and pushed for the most comprehensive transformation of the international economic order. Algeria under Boumédiène emerged as perhaps the most prominent advocate, using its position in 1973 as the NAM chair and its concurrent presidency of OPEC to champion NIEO demands.³⁵⁸ Algeria's 1971 nationalization of French oil interests demonstrated willingness to confront Northern economic power directly, lending credibility to its rhetorical commitments.³⁵⁹ Boumédiène's government also invested significant resources in building Third World solidarity via hosting conferences and working as a bridge builder between OPEC-internal rivals such as Iraq and Iran.³⁶⁰

Yugoslavia occupied a distinctive place within the coalition that advanced the NIEO because it was both a founding center of the Non-Aligned Movement and, at the same time, somewhat ambivalent toward the North-South distributive questions the movement took in the early 1970s.³⁶¹ From the outset, Yugoslavia helped shape the NAM's insistence that political non-alignment had to be linked to economic transformation, with the

³⁵³ Toye, "Assessing the G77," 1762.

³⁵⁴ Weber and Winanti, "The 'Bandung Spirit' and Solidarist Internationalism," 399.

³⁵⁵ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 58.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁸ Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, 248–49.

³⁵⁹ Larabi, "La Nationalisation Du Marché Algérien Des Produits Pétroliers," 140.

³⁶⁰ Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, 249–51.

³⁶¹ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 57.

Belgrade summit already calling for the removal of economic imbalances inherited from colonialism and imperialism.³⁶² Yet by the time Algeria pushed the NIEO to the forefront after the 1973 Algiers summit, Yugoslavia had become more cautious: Stubbs describes Yugoslavia's attitude as "rather lukewarm" toward the NIEO, partly because Yugoslav leaders felt Algeria had not adequately consulted other NAM members and was "privatizing the movement."³⁶³ Yugoslavia therefore illustrates both the centrality of the NAM to the NIEO's origins and the internal tensions within the movement over leadership, strategy, and the pace of economic confrontation with the global North.

Tanzania under Julius Nyerere represented another variant of NIEO leadership, combining its early advocacy for changes to the international economic order with attempts to implement alternative development models domestically.³⁶⁴ Nyerere's form of socialism titled *ujamaa* (fraternity), and his emphasis on self-reliance resonated with NIEO principles of autonomous development.³⁶⁵ Tanzania's leadership role in the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77, despite its limited economic resources, demonstrated that influence derived not solely from material capacity but also from moral authority and diplomatic skill.

This core group shared several characteristics: relatively recent independence or revolutionary transformation, leaders personally committed to Third World solidarity, and sufficient resources or strategic position to resist Northern pressure. They provided intellectual leadership, coordinated multilateral strategy, and demonstrated through example that asserting economic sovereignty was politically possible for the other G77 and NAM states.

Crucially though, the supporters of the NIEO were not a unified coalition throughout, and its failure can largely be attributed to fragmentation in its coalition.³⁶⁶ Because of the wide net the G77 cast over diverse formerly colonized states, it always contained a significant variety that the common opposition to Northern dominance had papered over.³⁶⁷ As the 1970s progressed and economic conditions changed, these fissures widened. The early 1970s oil shock that empowered OPEC members simultaneously created balance of payments crises for oil-importing countries in the Global South, many of which borrowed heavily to finance oil imports and thus contributed to the subsequent debt crisis.³⁶⁸ Attempts by oil exporters to channel petrodollars to G77 countries through concessional financing or development funds were often discussed but never achieved widespread adoption in a significant way.³⁶⁹

³⁶² Miskovic et al., *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War*, 100–101.

³⁶³ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 57.

³⁶⁴ Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire*, 168.

³⁶⁵ Lal, "African Socialism and the Limits of Global Familyhood," 21–22.

³⁶⁶ Toye, "Assessing the G77," 1767.

³⁶⁷ Nicholls, "Non-Aligned Common Front," 892–94.

³⁶⁸ Engel and Mabefam, "The 50th Anniversary of the New International Economic Order," 882.

³⁶⁹ Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, 248–49.

The NIEO's failure, however, was not merely structural but also ideological. During the same period during which the cohesion among formerly colonized states eroded, a countermovement was developing in the Global North that would ultimately provide the intellectual framework for rejecting the NIEO demands, as will be discussed in the section on opponents.

6.1.2 Ambivalent Positions

Several groups of countries supported NIEO goals in principle, but with important qualifications or ambivalence about implementation. The so-called *Like-Minded Group* of Nordic countries (Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland), Austria, the Netherlands, Ireland (and partly affiliated the United Kingdom and Commonwealth member Canada) represented developed countries sympathetic to North-South restructuring.³⁷⁰ These countries supported increased development assistance, debt relief, technology transfer, and some commodity agreements.³⁷¹ Of those, especially Sweden under Olaf Palme supported the principle idea of the NIEO on the basis of progressing multilateralism.³⁷²

Yet these countries' support had limits. Their vision emphasized partnership and mutual interest in arriving at a better functioning world-economy rather than redistribution and historical redress.³⁷³ This approach, while more sympathetic than outright opposition, often diluted demands, especially through their support of the Brandt Report, which acknowledged the calls for change from the Global South but did not provide clear support for the NIEO.³⁷⁴

Commonwealth countries presented a complicated picture, with former British colonies supporting NIEO demands but mostly taking on a mediating role.³⁷⁵ Commonwealth forums sometimes provided spaces for North-South dialogue, but they also highlighted divisions, with wealthier members resisting demands that would require significant resource transfers or regulatory changes affecting their corporations and not providing clear support for the NIEO.³⁷⁶

Socialist countries occupied a particularly ambivalent position. The Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries rhetorically supported anti-imperialism and the formerly colonized states' struggles against Western economic domination.³⁷⁷ Soviet representatives regularly voted for NIEO resolutions and offered verbal solidarity with Global South demands, but only when they were aimed at the West.³⁷⁸ The Soviets were opposed to being placed alongside Western capitalist states when called out for being

³⁷⁰ Dolman, "The Like-Minded Countries and the New International Order."

³⁷¹ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 60.

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ O'Sullivan, "Between Internationalism and Empire," 1094.

³⁷⁴ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 62.

³⁷⁵ Onslow, "The Commonwealth and the Cold War, Neutralism, and Non-Alignment," 1075.

³⁷⁶ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 60–61.

³⁷⁷ Trecker, *Red Money for the Global South*, 2.

³⁷⁸ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 62.

complicit in sustaining the economic order the NAM and G77 sought to change.³⁷⁹ They also emphasized that their own aid came without political strings, unlike Western assistance, but the volume of socialist aid remained modest relative to their economies.³⁸⁰ More fundamentally, the Soviet Union was wary of the demands for restructuring the international economic order as they saw it as a restructuring of capitalism that would sustain it instead of toppling it.³⁸¹ This position meant that socialist bloc support rarely translated into concrete assistance for NIEO implementation.

These ambivalent supporters often served as mediators between NIEO advocates and Western opposing states, proposing compromises and diluted versions of demands. While this pragmatism sometimes enabled incremental progress, it also contributed to the erosion of the NIEO's transformative vision into more modest reforms that left fundamental structures intact.

6.1.3 Opponents

The United States emerged as the most consequential opponent of the NIEO, though its approach evolved across different administrations. The Nixon and Ford administrations initially adopted a strategy of tactical accommodation, recognizing that outright rejection risked alienating formerly colonized states and driving them toward the Soviet Union.³⁸² As a consequence, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's 1975 speech to the Seventh Special Session offered concessions on debt relief, commodity agreements, and development assistance while resisting demands for structural transformation of decision-making in international institutions or binding codes for multinational corporations.³⁸³

This tactical accommodation reflected Cold War calculations more than a genuine embrace of NIEO principles. The United States sought to prevent the Non-Aligned Movement from tilting toward the Soviet Union and to maintain access to formerly colonized countries' markets and resources.³⁸⁴ Offering limited concessions while resisting fundamental change served these strategic interests.³⁸⁵ The United States also worked to divide the G77 coalition by offering selective benefits to oil-importing countries hurt by OPEC price increases, emphasizing conflicts of interest between different Global South-led groups.³⁸⁶ The Reagan administration made a decisive shift to outright reject NIEO principles.³⁸⁷ Reagan's ideological commitment to free market economics translated into policies that actively dismantled the already limited progress toward

³⁷⁹ Garavini, *After Empires*, 139.

³⁸⁰ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 62.

³⁸¹ Lorenzini, *Global Development*, 122.

³⁸² Sargent, "North/South," 2.

³⁸³ Franczak, "Losing the Battle, Winning the War," 880.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁶ Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, 251–52.

³⁸⁷ Franczak, "Losing the Battle, Winning the War," 887–88.

North-South accommodation.³⁸⁸ The 1981 Cancún Summit marked the symbolic death of the NIEO³⁸⁹ as the Reagan administration definitively rejected comprehensive negotiations for a new economic order.³⁹⁰

The United Kingdom under Margaret Thatcher aligned closely with Reagan's opposition, though the British position before this was more nuanced. Throughout the early negotiations, British governments already opposed NIEO demands that would constrain Britain but agreed to generally support the demands.³⁹¹ Thatcher's free market fundamentalism and belief in deregulation and privatization, however, provided ideological justification for full opposition.³⁹² These views, completely contrary to NIEO demands, characterized the NIEO as economically misguided.³⁹³ This ideological counter-offensive, positioning market liberalization as the path to development, which would gain increasing influence through the 1980s in the form of neoliberalism.³⁹⁴

6.2 Moon Treaty

6.2.1 Supporters

Unlike the NIEO, which generated support across nearly all regions of the Global South, the Moon Treaty's strongest advocates came disproportionately from Latin America and a select group of Asian and African states with particular investment in international law and multilateral institution-building.

Argentina occupied the central intellectual and diplomatic position within the Moon Treaty coalition. The Argentine delegation's role cannot be separated from Aldo Armando Cocca, whose vision of the *common heritage of mankind* principle had shaped lunar governance debates since the 1960s, and who then became the country's chief representative in the COPUOS Legal Subcommittee.³⁹⁵ It is therefore no surprise that it was Cocca for Argentina that brought the first draft for an agreement into the LSC regarding natural resources as the *common heritage of mankind* as early as 1970.³⁹⁶

Throughout the negotiation process of the Moon Treaty, Argentina defended *common heritage* principles as non-negotiable and consistently linked the Moon regime to preventing the reproduction of colonial patterns in which they were joined by "Egypt, India, and 'the Latin Americans'[, which] remained unbending in their loyalty to common heritage".³⁹⁷ Crucially though, Cocca's notion of the *common heritage of mankind* principle did not ground itself in redistributive principles or the wider NIEO agenda as its

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

³⁸⁹ Migani, "The Road to Cancun: The Life and Death of a North-South Summit," 290.

³⁹⁰ Gilman, "The New International Economic Order," 8.

³⁹¹ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 65.

³⁹² Ibid., 67.

³⁹³ Ibid.

³⁹⁴ Stråth, *The Brandt Commission and the Multinationals*, 284.

³⁹⁵ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 18.

³⁹⁶ Hanlon, "The Moon Agreement—A Swan Song," 148.

³⁹⁷ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 56.

original idea stemmed from support for space law as a progressive and humanistic discipline.³⁹⁸

Other supporters, however, clearly linked the Moon Treaty to their contemporary NIEO demands, such as Mexico, India, Egypt, and Nigeria. Mexico can be considered to have provided equally crucial leadership as Argentina through its delegation's persistent defense of redistributive and internationalist approaches to lunar resources.³⁹⁹ Mexico, therefore, emerged as one of the strongest voices for *common heritage* throughout negotiations, consistently defending an Egypt-India-Nigeria-sponsored proposal for vesting mineral samples and substances in international authority even when both Soviet and Western delegations objected.⁴⁰⁰

India's delegation insisted that the resource question had to be settled within the Moon Treaty itself, rather than being postponed to a later agreement,⁴⁰¹ resisted American attempts to dilute any *common heritage* language, and defended the Italian compromise text that kept the *common heritage of mankind* principle in play at a point when it likely could have been dropped.⁴⁰²

Egypt similarly belonged to the core supporter group, which was demonstrated in 1972 when they, together with India, submitted a draft which included a provision to make the materials gathered through resource exploitation available to all countries.⁴⁰³ Egypt also joined India and Nigeria in the aforementioned proposal, asserting that mineral samples and substances extracted from the Moon be vested in the United Nations.⁴⁰⁴

6.2.2 Ambivalent Positions

Beyond the core negotiating coalition, practical support emerged from states that signed or ratified the treaty after adoption, although many of these had changing positions during the negotiation process. These states supported some form of lunar governance while resisting the most far-reaching proposals for international control over resources.

France, Bulgaria, Romania, and Mongolia formed one cluster of ambivalent states by favoring a later, separate agreement to address natural resources rather than settling the issue within the Moon Treaty itself.⁴⁰⁵ This position accepted the principle of international regulation but sought to defer specific mechanisms, ostensibly on grounds that resource exploitation remained too distant to merit immediate detailed provisions.⁴⁰⁶ Yet this deferral strategy also served to avoid committing to strong international controls before

³⁹⁸ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 78.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.* 54-56.

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, 48.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁴⁰⁴ Cheng, *Studies in International Space Law*, 378.

⁴⁰⁵ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 41.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

the technical and economic implications became clear.⁴⁰⁷ French ambivalence about timing, for instance, signaled that even those states possessing a space program and sympathetic to international cooperation harbored reservations about binding commitments regarding resources.⁴⁰⁸ Nevertheless, it needs to be highlighted that France was one of the treaty's first-day signatories and was the only one with space access capabilities.⁴⁰⁹

Other ambivalent states, especially Brazil and Austria, occupied a distinctive role as brokers and compromise-builders. Brazil's diplomats appeared more invested in achieving agreement than in defending any particular doctrinal position, although they contributed a working paper that brought a breakthrough in negotiations by convincing the Soviet Union to exempt the *common heritage of mankind* language in the final treaty.⁴¹⁰ The Austrian delegation chaired many informal consultations that helped bring about compromise readiness, and they also contributed working texts that provided bases for negotiating breakthroughs.⁴¹¹ A draft text by Helmut Tuerk in 1977, fused old proposals giving the US and Soviet Union "brackets" around the applicability of the treaty to all celestial bodies, but, to also satisfy formerly colonized states, it included a provision for the creation of an international regime to govern resources.⁴¹² Austria's eventual signature and ratification demonstrated a genuine commitment to establishing some form of lunar governance,⁴¹³ but its bridging function also contributed to the erosion of the treaty's transformative potential.

These positions between support and opposition of Global South demands collectively shaped the treaty's final form by establishing the boundaries of politically feasible compromise. States in this category accepted that some form of international regulation was appropriate but resisted provisions that would significantly constrain national discretion or create strong redistributive mechanisms. Their support proved necessary for achieving consensus adoption, yet their insistence on limiting the treaty's scope also ensured that the final text fell short of what core supporters had advocated for.

6.2.3 Opponents

Opposition to the Moon Treaty came primarily from spacefaring powers concerned that *common heritage* principles and international resource regulation would constrain their future activities and require redistribution of benefits to states that had not contributed to developing space capabilities. Yet opposition manifested differently and evolved over time.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ Mukherjee, "Recalibrating the Moon Treaty to the Domain of Development," 225.

⁴¹⁰ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 65.

⁴¹¹ Cheng, *Studies in International Space Law*, 360.

⁴¹² Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 63.

⁴¹³ Ibid., 41.

The United States emerged as the treaty's most consequential opponent, though American opposition crystallized gradually rather than appearing immediately. During negotiations, the United States did not oppose the treaty in principle at every stage: American delegates initially supported addressing the resource issue within the treaty itself, and even included the *common heritage of mankind* language in their proposed draft idea.⁴¹⁴ Yet as negotiations progressed, the United States consistently fought to limit defining what this language entails, resisting anything that resembled a moratorium on exploitation, compulsory redistribution, or an expansive reading of the *common heritage of mankind* principle.⁴¹⁵

The most decisive opposition, however, started during ratification after the treaty's conclusion. Critics in the United States, particularly in conservative and industry circles, attacked the treaty as a threat to free enterprise, explicitly linking it to NIEO demands, which they also villainized.⁴¹⁶ The Carter administration, facing domestic political opposition and concerned about setting precedents for the related UNCLOS negotiations, subsequently buried the treaty in legislative review.⁴¹⁷ The Senate never ratified it, and later administrations showed no interest in reconsidering this position.⁴¹⁸ American rejection proved fatal to the treaty's effectiveness, since any lunar resource exploitation would require American participation, given US technological capabilities and the dominance of American private space companies.⁴¹⁹

The Soviet Union's opposition was neither absolute nor consistent. Moscow had launched its own Moon treaty draft earlier in the 1970s and was not opposed to having a treaty in principle.⁴²⁰ Yet Soviet delegates resisted Global South states' demands for a *common heritage of mankind* principle for the Moon and other celestial bodies. This last aspect of the Moon Treaty applying to other celestial bodies was especially important to the Soviet Union, and they tried to limit the agreement only to the Moon.⁴²¹

On key economic provisions, Soviet delegates opposed Global South states' demands throughout much of the negotiating process. Soviet representatives considered the resource issue premature and rejected many Moon Treaty drafts with provisions on this issue.⁴²² They only accepted the *common heritage* language very late in negotiations, once the final text was ambiguous enough not to bind future exploitation too tightly.⁴²³ This pattern suggests that Soviet concerns centered not on international regulation as such

⁴¹⁴ Khatwani, "Common Heritage of Mankind for Outer Space," 96.

⁴¹⁵ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 49.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁴²⁰ Hanlon, "The Moon Agreement—A Swan Song," 148.

⁴²¹ Khatwani, "Common Heritage of Mankind for Outer Space," 96.

⁴²² Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 41.

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, 65.

but on avoiding provisions that would establish precedents for strong international authority over resources.

Other Eastern Bloc states that considered resource regulation more than just premature for the immediate future included Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland.⁴²⁴ They can be clearly divided from the states with a more ambiguous role in the negotiations (which preferred a separate agreement on resource issues) because these socialist states were opponents of a treaty on resource issues entirely.⁴²⁵ Their positions reflected Soviet concerns while also suggesting that socialist states generally favored deferring contentious distributional questions.

6.3 Comparison

6.3.1 Counter-Hegemonic Blocs and their Fragmentation

The NIEO rested on a broad coalition institutionalized in the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77. The NAM provided political vision, anti-colonial legitimacy, and high-level leadership through summit conferences and declarations, while the G77 could potentially translate this vision into a concrete negotiating strategy within UN forums, enabling coordinated positions across multiple institutional venues.⁴²⁶ This alignment provided a counter-hegemonic force and the creation of a new historic bloc: a historically specific unity of ideas, institutions, and social forces organized around a common project of transformation.⁴²⁷

Leadership by states such as Algeria, Tanzania, and, to a lesser degree, Yugoslavia helped sustain this project over more than a decade. Algeria under Boumédiène emerged as a consequential advocate, effectively using its position as NAM chair and its oil wealth to champion comprehensive restructuring.⁴²⁸ Tanzania under Nyerere represented another variant of leadership, combining advocacy for international reform with attempts to implement alternative development models domestically.⁴²⁹ These states provided diplomatic initiative, ideological framing, and symbolic leadership for Third World solidarity. The NIEO, therefore, represented an expression of Global South collective agency, with organizational infrastructure capable of coordinating strategy across diverse national interests.

Yet this organizational capacity could not fully overcome the internal contradictions within the NIEO bloc. The NAM's and G77's broad membership, spanning diverse economic and political structures, contained tensions that common opposition to Northern dominance initially obscured but could not permanently resolve.⁴³⁰ The 1973-74

⁴²⁴ Ibid., 41.

⁴²⁵ Ibid., 41.

⁴²⁶ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 59.

⁴²⁷ Cox, "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations," 168.

⁴²⁸ Engel and Mabefam, "The 50th Anniversary of the New International Economic Order," 881.

⁴²⁹ Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire*, 168.

⁴³⁰ Nicholls, "Non-Aligned Common Front," 892-94.

oil shock and its consequences revealed these fissures most dramatically.⁴³¹ While empowering OPEC members to challenge Western economic dominance, it simultaneously imposed severe balance of payments crises on oil-importing, formerly colonized states.⁴³² Many of these states borrowed heavily to finance oil imports, accelerating the debt accumulation that would later undermine their negotiating position.⁴³³ These material divisions progressively eroded coalition cohesion, demonstrating a central limitation of effective counter-hegemonic bloc formation: shared opposition to an existing order does not automatically generate shared interests in constructing an alternative, especially when uneven development produces divergent vulnerabilities and opportunities within the subordinated coalition itself.

The Moon Treaty, by contrast, lacked an equally broad or institutionalized bloc in the first place. Its strongest support came from a narrower coalition concentrated especially in Latin America, with selected Asian and African states playing important supporting roles throughout most of its drafting process. Argentina occupied the central intellectual and diplomatic position, with Aldo Armando Cocca's vision of *common heritage* shaping negotiations.⁴³⁴ Mexico, India, and Egypt similarly emerged as crucial defenders of strong *common heritage* language and redistributive principles.⁴³⁵ This coalition was politically thinner and less globally consolidated than the NIEO coalition. It lacked the same organizational infrastructure that the NAM and the G77 provided for coordinating positions on economic governance. The Moon Treaty, therefore, shows counter-hegemonic agency without a fully developed historic bloc behind it.

6.3.2 Dilution of Counter-Hegemony

In both cases, limited forms of support extended beyond the core coalition, but what can be called a broader backing came with important qualifiers. The NIEO attracted sympathetic or partial support from Nordic states, Austria, the Netherlands, Ireland, Canada, and some Commonwealth actors.⁴³⁶ These states accepted parts of the reform agenda, especially increased aid, dialogue on trade, and moderated redistribution.⁴³⁷ Yet they often reframed NIEO demands in the language of partnership and mutual interest, with their approach emphasizing technical reform within existing frameworks rather than fundamental restructuring of decision-making power or resource control.⁴³⁸ This was further illustrated through their support for the Independent Commission on International Development Issues instead of fully standing with direct Global South demands.⁴³⁹

⁴³¹ Engel and Mabefam, "The 50th Anniversary of the New International Economic Order," 882.

⁴³² Garavini, *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*, 248–49.

⁴³³ Engel and Mabefam, "The 50th Anniversary of the New International Economic Order," 882.

⁴³⁴ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 18.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, 46–

⁴³⁶ O'Sullivan, "Between Internationalism and Empire," 1083–86.

⁴³⁷ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 60–62.

⁴³⁸ O'Sullivan, "Between Internationalism and Empire," 1094.

⁴³⁹ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 60–62.

In the NIEO case, Socialist states presented a particularly revealing form of ambivalent support. The Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries offered rhetorical backing for anti-imperialist critique when directed at Western capitalism, but resisted being implicated in the structures under attack.⁴⁴⁰ Soviet representatives supported NIEO resolutions verbally while maintaining that socialist countries bore no responsibility for colonial legacies or current inequalities.⁴⁴¹ This selective solidarity meant that socialist bloc support rarely translated into concrete assistance or willingness to restructure their own economic relationships with the formerly colonized world.

A similar but narrower pattern of mediation appeared in Moon Treaty negotiations. Austria emerged as an important broker, contributing working texts that bridged opposing positions and chairing informal consultations that built compromise readiness.⁴⁴² Brazil occupied a similar role as compromise-builder with Brazilian working papers convincing the Soviet Union of concessions on the *common heritage* principle.⁴⁴³ This pragmatic approach facilitated consensus but at the cost of weakening specific redistributive mechanisms. France, Bulgaria, Romania, and Mongolia formed another cluster of ambivalent states by favoring a later, separate agreement to address natural resources rather than settling the issue within the Moon Treaty itself.⁴⁴⁴

These *on-the-fence* states widened both coalitions numerically and provided legitimacy through their participation, but they also diluted the transformative edge of each project. While important differences emerge in how mediation functioned in both cases, the functional effect was similar: mediating actors made consensus adoption possible, but only by narrowing the scope of what could be agreed and introducing ambiguity into key provisions.

This reveals a central Neo-Gramscian tension in counter-hegemonic coalition-building: transformative projects require broad alliances to achieve legitimacy and institutional weight, yet broad alliances often demand compromises that soften the most transformative demands. The broadening of support came at the cost of dilution, demonstrating how hegemonic structures can be defended not only through direct opposition but through the absorption and moderation of alternative proposals.

6.3.3 Hegemonic Resistance

In both cases, dominant powers mounted resistance that prevented counter-hegemonic projects from achieving their transformative aims. The United States emerged as the most ardent opponent in both the NIEO and Moon Treaty cases, though their strategies evolved differently in each context.

⁴⁴⁰ Garavini, *After Empires*, 139.

⁴⁴¹ Trecker, *Red Money for the Global South*, 2.

⁴⁴² Cheng, *Studies in International Space Law*, 360.

⁴⁴³ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 65.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 41.

In the NIEO negotiations, the Nixon and Ford administrations initially adopted tactical accommodation, offering limited concessions on debt relief and commodity agreements while blocking structural reforms to the decision-making process in international institutions or binding codes for multinational corporations.⁴⁴⁵ This approach reflected Cold War calculations about maintaining influence in the Global South rather than genuine acceptance of NIEO principles. Under Reagan, this tactical approach shifted into outright ideological rejection, with the administration recasting market liberalization as the only path forward.⁴⁴⁶ This neoliberal resistance operated not only materially by blocking reforms, but ideologically by delegitimizing redistribution as economically irrational.⁴⁴⁷

In the Moon Treaty case, US opposition most strongly emerged during ratification rather than negotiation.⁴⁴⁸ While American diplomats initially supported addressing resource issues within the treaty, they consistently fought to limit implications and resist strong interpretations of the *common heritage of mankind* language.⁴⁴⁹ Domestic critics then linked the treaty explicitly to NIEO-style redistribution and portrayed it as a threat to free enterprise and American strategic interests.⁴⁵⁰ The subsequent non-ratification by the US Senate proved fatal to the treaty's effectiveness, since any future lunar resource exploitation would require participation from the leading spacefaring power.⁴⁵¹

The Soviet Union and other socialist states also revealed the limits of counter-hegemonic solidarity in both cases. As established, they were not full allies of Global South transformation despite rhetorical support for anti-imperialism in the NIEO case, but can still hardly be considered outright opponents. In the Moon Treaty negotiations, however, the Soviet Union took a more antagonistic role. They opposed strong redistributive provisions and treated resource questions as premature.⁴⁵² Soviet delegates only accepted *common heritage* language late in negotiations, once the final text was sufficiently ambiguous not to bind future exploitation too tightly.⁴⁵³ This pattern demonstrates that even actors outside the Western capitalist core were often unwilling to support transformative redistribution when it constrained their own future freedom of action.

Hegemonic resistance, therefore, worked through multiple mechanisms: direct opposition, tactical compromise that diluted transformative demands, selective co-optation of moderate elements, and ideological delegitimization of redistribution itself. Opposition was not only Western but also included more ambivalent resistance from

⁴⁴⁵ Sargent, "North/South," 2; Franczak, "Losing the Battle, Winning the War," 880.

⁴⁴⁶ Franczak, "Losing the Battle, Winning the War," 887–88.

⁴⁴⁷ Stubbs, *The New International Economic Order*, 67.

⁴⁴⁸ Buono, *Governing the Moon: A History*, 72.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, 41.

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*, 65.

socialist states. In Neo-Gramscian terms, this demonstrates how hegemony is defended not simply by blocking alternatives but by containing, diluting, and absorbing them into modified forms that preserve fundamental structures.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Discussion of Findings

This thesis set out to ask what a comparison of the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (Moon Treaty) and the New International Economic Order (NIEO) as postcolonial projects of international *order-making* reveals about the *constrained agency* of Global South actors, as seen through their pre-histories, intellectual foundations, and coalition politics. This section will discuss the comparisons in the prior analysis chapters to arrive at an answer for the underlying research questions within its Neo-Gramscian framework.

7.1.1 Pre-Histories

The pre-history analysis demonstrates that treaty drafting, voting procedures, or formal negotiations are only a part of the story behind *order-making* processes. These visible moments of institutional activity represent only the culmination of deeper processes through which political possibilities are constructed or foreclosed. *Order-making* begins earlier, in the struggle to define agendas, construct alliances, and establish the intellectual frameworks within which alternatives can be articulated. This insight is central to understanding the different trajectories of the NIEO and Moon Treaty as counter-hegemonic projects. This analysis further reveals two fundamental Neo-Gramscian conclusions for Global South agency in postcolonial *order-making*: the different formation of counter-hegemonic historic blocs and the dual character of international institutions as both platforms for contestation and mechanisms reproducing hegemony.

During the comparison of both projects' pre-histories, a fundamental asymmetry in historic bloc formation became clear. The NIEO emerged from decades of organizational work culminating in institutionalized coordination through the NAM and G77. This represents historic bloc formation in Cox's sense⁴⁵⁴ as Global South states united in institutions and around ideas capable of mounting comprehensive challenges to dominant international structures. By contrast, no equivalent organizing preceded Global South participation in space governance. There was no *Bandung for space*. This absence weakened the capacity of formerly colonized states to change foundational space law frameworks once they were already embedded in treaty law, demonstrating how the timing and preparatory organizing significantly shaped counter-hegemonic potential.

In Neo-Gramscian terms, the comparison in the pre-history chapter shows a *war of position* – the prolonged struggle to build social bases, reshape *common sense*, and construct organizational capacity before direct confrontation with established power becomes possible.⁴⁵⁵ The NIEO demonstrates how sustained preparatory organizing can generate the intellectual and institutional preconditions for mounting a coherent

⁴⁵⁴ Cox, "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations," 167–68.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid., 164–65.

challenge to hegemonic arrangements. Decades of Pan-African congresses, Asian solidarity conferences, and ultimately the institutionalization of the Non-Aligned Movement and Group of 77 produced not merely rhetorical unity but shared analytical frameworks, coordinated negotiating strategies, and organizational infrastructure capable of advancing counter-hegemonic demands across multiple institutional venues simultaneously.

The Moon Treaty illustrates the consequences when this preparatory *war of position* remains weak or absent. Global South participation in space law negotiations occurred without equivalent decades of organizing around space governance principles. No sustained process had constructed shared frameworks for understanding space as a domain of North-South contestation before foundational space law treaties were negotiated. When *common heritage* principles were introduced in the 1960s and 1970s, they represented intellectual innovation by key individuals and states but lacked the broader organizational and ideological infrastructure that sustained the NIEO challenge.

This asymmetry pushed Global South actors into a more defensive position in space law. Rather than shaping foundational principles from the outset, they contested legal terrain whose basic frameworks had already been established when space law was primarily the domain of the superpowers. The Outer Space Treaty's principle of freedom of exploration and use, negotiated when few postcolonial states participated in COPUOS, set parameters that subsequent Global South efforts struggled to fundamentally alter. The Moon Treaty's attempt to introduce *common heritage* represented a significant intervention, but one that had to work against rather than with established trajectories in space governance.

This comparison reveals that the timing of counter-hegemonic organization relative to institutional development fundamentally shapes transformative possibilities. Where subordinate actors can wage a *war of position* before dominant arrangements are made *common sense*, they possess a greater capacity to influence foundational frameworks. Where they arrive after basic principles have been established (as in the case of the Moon Treaty), their agency becomes more constrained to contest within parameters they did not set. The pre-history analysis thus demonstrates that *constrained agency* is partly due to *when* counter-hegemonic forces enter struggles over *order-making*, not only of material capabilities or institutional architecture.

The pre-history comparison yields a second crucial insight: inclusion in international institutions is not only compatible with the reproduction of hegemony, but can serve as a mechanism through which unequal structures are stabilized and legitimized. Both the UN General Assembly and COPUOS allowed meaningful Global South participation, yet this participation occurred within institutional frameworks that embedded power asymmetries favoring dominant states. This pattern corresponds to Cox's argument that

international organizations function simultaneously as sites of contestation and as instruments of hegemonic reproduction.⁴⁵⁶

The General Assembly exemplifies this dual character most clearly. Its one-state-one-vote principle granted numerical advantage to the expanding membership of formerly colonized states, enabling them to pass resolutions articulating alternative principles of economic governance and resource sovereignty. This equality in procedures was real and consequential – it allowed Global South actors to place issues on the international agenda that powerful states would have preferred to exclude, and it conferred legitimacy on counter-hegemonic demands by demonstrating their support from the majority of UN members.

Yet this institutional access operated within clear boundaries that limited its transformative potential. General Assembly resolutions lack binding force in international law, meaning that powerful states could acknowledge Global South demands without implementing structural changes to decision-making in international financial institutions, trade governance, or technology transfer. Global South states thus possessed voices without corresponding enforcement capabilities. This is a form of inclusion that channeled contestation into forums where it could be acknowledged without necessitating transformation.

COPUOS demonstrates a different mechanism through which inclusion can reproduce hegemony. Its consensus-based procedures appeared formally egalitarian by granting each member state equal opportunity to block agreement. Yet this formal equality masks profound inequalities in actual influence. Membership expansion proceeded slowly during space law's formative period, with the superpowers controlling who gained entry. By the time Global South states achieved numerical majority in COPUOS, foundational principles had been established in the Outer Space Treaty. The consensus requirement meant no treaty could emerge without superpower agreement, effectively granting the United States and Soviet Union veto power while appearing to respect the formal equality of all members. Procedural neutrality thus masked substantive inequality.

This institutional architecture explains why Global South actors could participate meaningfully in Moon Treaty negotiations while struggling to institutionalize their demands. Their inclusion gave them a voice in shaping treaty language and prevented outcomes completely contrary to their interests. Yet the consensus requirement meant that transformative proposals required accommodation with powers whose interests lay in preserving freedom to exploit space resources without strong international regulation. The result was treaty language that recognized *common heritage* principles while remaining sufficiently ambiguous.

The broader implication here is that Global South inclusion into multilateralism should not be confused with a postcolonial transformation of world order. Inclusion expanded

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid., 172.

Global South visibility, legitimacy, and capacity to contest dominant arrangements. These gains were real and hard-won. However, inclusion alone did not remove the deeper asymmetries in material capabilities, technological control, or decision-making authority within international institutions. Hegemonic structures proved capable of accommodating opposition by providing platforms for its expression while channeling contestation into institutional fora that preserved fundamental structures of hegemonic order.

This demonstrates how hegemony operates not primarily through exclusion or overt coercion, but through organizing consent and structuring the terrain of contestation. By granting real but limited voice to subordinate actors, international institutions could claim legitimacy derived from inclusive participation while maintaining architectures that favored dominant forces. Global South actors were included in processes of international *order-making*, but on terms shaped by existing distributions of power. Their agency in *order-making* remained constrained partly through the specific forms their participation took.

7.1.2 Intellectual Histories

The intellectual history analysis shows how the NIEO and Moon Treaty represented distinct attempts to challenge hegemonic *common sense* and articulate counter-hegemonic visions, with their different modes of expression reflecting both strategic choices and structural constraints on Global South intellectual agency.

Both projects fundamentally contested the naturalization of unequal international arrangements and how their dynamics were considered *common sense*. The NIEO mounted an explicitly postcolonial critique. Thinkers like Prebisch, Singer, Nkrumah, and Bedjaoui directly challenged the political economy of the postwar order, shifting explanations for the economic conditions of the Global South from domestic reasons to the historical organization of world order itself. The Moon Treaty's critique was less overtly anti-colonial, emerging initially from humanist space law principles articulated by figures like Cocca. However, by the 1970s, these legal ideas increasingly converged with broader Global South concerns about reproducing terrestrial inequalities in space. Where the NIEO attacked an existing order as structurally unjust, the Moon Treaty sought to prevent an emerging domain from being organized according to the same unequal logic. In this, both projects challenged what was considered *common sense*.

One major implication of this intellectual history is that Global South actors were not merely petitioners within an already established order but also theorists of an alternative order. In Neo-Gramscian terms, they engaged in the production of counter-hegemonic ideas capable of contesting dominant *common sense*. The broader conclusion in this is that Global South agency operated not only diplomatically or institutionally, but ideologically. Their intellectual agency shaped international debates, influenced contests over legitimacy, and forced dominant powers to justify rather than simply assert their preferred arrangements. Yet this intellectual agency remained constrained. It was

mediated by the structures, institutions, and discursive forms through which alternatives had to be proposed and defended.

The comparison, therefore, further reveals this crucial pattern: both projects had to articulate transformative visions within discursive frameworks shaped by the hegemonic order they challenged. The NIEO demonstrates how postcolonial critique could be universalized while retaining critical force, yet even its demands were often framed in a reformist way. The Moon Treaty shows this constraint acutely as its redistributive and anti-appropriative concerns were expressed through technical legal language and universalist rhetoric rather than explicit North-South terminology. This technocratic presentation gave the treaty formal legitimacy within space law but obscured its connection to broader Global South *order-making*, explaining why scholars of the North-South Conflict have often overlooked this link even as contemporaneous critics explicitly attacked the treaty for its NIEO-style redistributionism.

This pattern points to the fundamental theoretical insight that counter-hegemonic visions are inevitably shaped by the discursive terrain of hegemony itself. Because hegemony works partly by naturalizing certain concepts as universal and legitimate, counter-hegemonic actors often must speak through those same categories to gain institutional recognition. The NIEO's explicitly postcolonial critique had to be translated so as to argue its position as an expansion of already existing legal principles. The Moon Treaty, in addition to attempts of expanding on the *province of mankind* language in the Outer Space Treaty, embedded its anti-monopolistic and redistributive principles within specialized legal discourse emphasizing universal benefit rather than explicitly referencing a North-South conflict.

The broader implication is that *constrained agency* operates at the level of ideas as much as material conditions. Alternatives must be voiced in forms partially shaped by the hegemonic order itself, creating a double constraint: Global South actors must challenge dominant arrangements while working within conceptual frameworks that reflect those arrangements. This discursive mediation explains why both projects' transformative potential could be simultaneously visible to critics who recognized their redistributive implications, yet obscured through universalist framing. The intellectual history analysis thus confirms that Global South actors exercised meaningful agency in challenging hegemonic assumptions and constructing counter-hegemonic visions, but this agency remained constrained by the conceptual framework through which alternatives had to be articulated and in which they had to be defended.

7.1.3 Coalitions

When analyzing the actual contestation of the NIEO or Moon Treaty and the different roles the negotiating states play in it, three interconnected patterns appear: the varying counter-hegemonic bloc strength and fragmentation, the diluting effects of mediation by sympathetic but largely ambivalent actors, and the mechanisms through which hegemonic powers resisted transformation.

As already established through their pre-histories, the NIEO and Moon Treaty boasted a fundamental asymmetry in counter-hegemonic organization. The NIEO rested on a historic bloc institutionalized through the NAM and the G77, providing organizational infrastructure capable of coordinating strategy across diverse national interests and sustained leadership from states like Algeria and Tanzania. This represented counter-hegemonic bloc formation via a historically specific unity of ideas, institutions, and social forces organized around a common transformative project.

Yet this organizational capacity could not overcome internal contradictions, particularly those revealed by the early 1970s oil shock, when OPEC's gains simultaneously imposed severe crises on oil-importing, formerly colonized states. The Moon Treaty, by contrast, lacked similar broad institutional backing, relying instead on a narrower coalition centered on Latin America (especially Argentina and Mexico) with selected Asian and African support. This thinner coalition demonstrated counter-hegemonic agency without a fully developed historic bloc, showing both the possibilities and limits of advancing transformative principles without a strong organizational infrastructure.

This asymmetry reveals the crucial dynamic that transformative agency depends not only on the strength of a coalition but critically on its durability. Both projects articulated compelling critiques and alternative principles, yet their capacity to translate these into institutional transformation diverged sharply according to organizational depth. In Neo-Gramscian terms, counter-hegemony requires more than critique; it requires a historic bloc formation capable of sustaining collective action over time.

The NIEO's dual institutional structure through the NAM and the G77 enabled sustained pressure across multiple UN venues simultaneously, maintaining strategic coherence despite diverse national interests. Yet even this robust base proved insufficient to overcome internal contradictions exposed by the division of the starting debt crisis. The Moon Treaty coalition, centered on Argentina, Mexico, India, and Egypt, exercised significant diplomatic agency but lacked institutionalized infrastructure to coordinate beyond COPUOS itself. Without deeper organizational backing, maintaining cohesion depended on individual initiatives rather than stable structures, leaving the coalition more vulnerable to fragmentation and dilution through compromise.

The comparison demonstrates that postcolonial agencies in international *order-making* proved strongest where counter-hegemonic principles were embedded within durable organizational structures, and weakest where this durability was lacking. This explains their divergent trajectories: the NIEO, despite its failure to achieve comprehensive restructuring, fundamentally reshaped international debates and forced dominant powers to justify their arrangements. The Moon Treaty was nearly never completed and only came to be after long debates and watered-down legal principles and compromise, which still could not prevent its complete irrelevance for space law through widespread non-ratification. Counter-hegemonic transformation and therefore Global South agency

within *order-making* requires not only articulating alternatives but building the organizational capacity to advance them durably against sustained opposition.

In addition to the main supporters, both projects worked with other sympathetic states, which provided partial support but demanded compromises that softened transformative demands. In the NIEO case, Nordic states and other Western actors offered partial support while reframing structural demands as technical partnerships rather than historical redress, and socialist states provided rhetorical backing while resisting responsibility or restructuring their own economic relationships. In the Moon Treaty negotiations, mediating actors such as Austria and Brazil facilitated consensus adoption but only by introducing ambiguity into key provisions and narrowing redistributive mechanisms. These *on-the-fence states* made institutional recognition possible while weakening transformative content, demonstrating how hegemonic structures can be defended not only through direct opposition but through diluting and absorbing them into modified forms that preserve fundamental structures.

This illuminates how hegemonic reproduction operates through moderation, selective absorption, and procedural dilution rather than outright refusal. In Neo-Gramscian terms, hegemony defends itself by partially incorporating challenges in weakened form. Counter-hegemonic demands gain formal recognition, yet this recognition occurs on terms that preserve fundamental structures by stripping demands of binding force or introducing interpretive ambiguity. International organizations thus function simultaneously as sites of contestation but also as instruments of hegemonic reproduction.

The broader implication is that success in multilateral *order-making* often comes with a paradox: narrow coalitions maintain transformative coherence but lack institutional weight; broad coalitions provide legitimacy yet require moderating demands to accommodate diverse interests. This reveals *constrained agency* in its most subtle form; not exclusion from *order-making* but inclusion on terms that preserve fundamental arrangements by absorbing challenges only in weakened form.

The resistance of hegemonic powers operated through multiple mechanisms in both cases. The United States emerged as the most consequential opponent, employing tactical accommodation in early NIEO negotiations before shifting to outright ideological rejection under Reagan. Similarly, they first resisted strong *common heritage* interpretations in Moon Treaty negotiations before ultimately refusing ratification entirely. The Soviet Union similarly revealed limits of counter-hegemonic solidarity, offering selective support in the NIEO case while actively opposing strong redistributive provisions in Moon Treaty negotiations.

The broader pattern shows dominant forces deploying graduated resistance by procedural delay, interpretive reframing, selective compromise on non-threatening elements, splitting coalitions through differential treatment, and, when necessary, outright refusal. This adaptive flexibility matters profoundly because it reveals that the

resistance by hegemonic forces operates not primarily through coercion alone. Cox's Neo-Gramscian framework treats hegemony as an active process of organizing consent and managing opposition, which the comparison demonstrates in practice. This reveals *constrained agency's* fundamentally relational character. Global South actors faced constraints not only from organizational weaknesses or coalition fragmentation but from hegemonic powers' strategic capacity to adapt resistance according to the intensity of counter-hegemonic pressure. When coalitions maintained strength, dominant powers offered tactical compromises; when they fragmented, hegemonic actors aimed for outright rejection. Hegemonic powers possessed not only greater material resources but strategic flexibility to modulate resistance, preserving core interests while accommodating peripheral demands. This explains why Global South actors achieved substantial gains in some dimensions (agenda-setting, normative recognition, institutional presence) while struggling to translate these into structural transformation.

The coalition comparison, therefore, confirms that Global South agency in negotiations was shaping international debates and institutions, yet remained sharply constrained through the adaptive resistance it faced. The NIEO demonstrates the greatest extent of Global South collective mobilization in the 1970s while also revealing the immense difficulty of sustaining broad counter-hegemonic blocs against coordinated opposition and internal fragmentation. The Moon Treaty shows that similar principles could be advanced in new domains with diplomatic skill, and even though they were based on weaker coalitions and greater dependence on compromise. Both cases illustrate that Global South actors exercised meaningful power to contest dominant arrangements but struggled to translate counter-hegemonic projects into lasting structural transformation against coalition fragmentation, mediating dilution, and determined hegemonic resistance rooted in the material, institutional, and ideological conditions of the prevailing order.

7.1.4 Concluding Takeaways

Over the course of this thesis, it was demonstrated that Global South actors exercised real, strategic, and historically significant agency in contesting the hegemonic organization of international order during the 1970s in both the NIEO and Moon Treaty. However, this agency in *order-making* is constrained in five crucial ways, as made visible through the analysis and comparison of these specific case studies.

The first constraint concerns the timing of when challenges to the pre-existing order can be mounted. Most Global South actors entered space negotiations after foundational space law principles had already been established with superpowers' interests in mind. This timing disadvantage forced them into contesting an already structured field rather than shaping foundational frameworks from inception, demonstrating how the absence of sustained preparatory organizing weakened counter-hegemonic capacity even where transformative principles were later articulated.

The second constraint is centered on the international institutions themselves, which simultaneously enabled Global South agency while reproducing hegemony. UN-based forums provided real platforms for coordination and legitimization of alternative principles in both cases. Yet these same institutions (the General Assembly and COPUOS) embedded structural limitations. Large-scale inclusion and even numerical majority in those international fora did not translate into substantive power over decision-making, revealing how institutions could channel contestation into forms that still preserved fundamental arrangements even while acknowledging opposition through their expression.

The third constraint emerged on the ideological level. Global South actors exercised meaningful intellectual agency, developing counter-hegemonic ideas through the NIEO's decolonial and structuralist basis and the Moon Treaty's *common heritage* legal tradition. However, these ideological alternatives had to be expressed in the United Nations setting as language shaped by the hegemonic order itself after undergoing a process of negotiation and compromise. This discursive mediation diluted or obscured transformative intent, demonstrating how counter-hegemonic visions remained constrained by the conceptual frameworks within which they could be articulated and gain institutional recognition.

The fourth constraint concerned coalition durability. The NIEO's broader, and over the decades cultivated, coalition allowed it to push for its agenda as a historic bloc, even though it fell apart eventually. The Moon Treaty's narrower and less institutionalized coalition made it even more vulnerable to dilution through compromise, as not many countries joined in a united push for the demands of *common heritage* principles. The comparison suggests that strong durability is essential for sustaining counter-hegemonic pressure against opposition from hegemonic powers.

The fifth constraint is tied to the resistance of those profiting from hegemonic structures. This resistance functioned not primarily through outright rejection but through management, dilution, and absorption of demands. Dominant powers deployed flexible strategies, including delay, reframing, and selective compromise, in addition to outright refusal when opposition was weakened enough. Sympathetic mediating actors similarly contributed to this by giving support only after demands that would affect them were softened. This fundamental constraint on Global South agency was therefore not simple exclusion but incorporation on terms that preserved the existing order, revealing hegemony's capacity to defend itself by partially accommodating challenges to *order-making* in a weakened form.

These five constraints operated simultaneously and reinforced one another, demonstrating that Global South agency in postcolonial *order-making* was meaningful yet structurally constrained. Formerly colonized states built coalitions, generated counter-hegemonic ideas, influenced international debates, and achieved formal recognition of alternative principles. It is not out of question that when they achieve all of this, they could

also create successful counter-hegemonies. However, their capacity to translate these achievements into lasting structural transformation remained limited in these specific cases by an interplay of late entry into rule-making, institutional frameworks designed to keep dominant powers in charge, discursive constraints requiring expression through hegemonic frameworks, internal coalition fragmentation, and the adaptive resistance of powerful states capable of absorbing opposition without fundamental restructuring occurring. *Constrained agency*, therefore, describes a condition in which meaningful *order-making* was possible, but its transformative potential remained bound by the very hegemony it sought to change.

7.2 Limitations

This thesis necessarily operates within specific methodological and analytical boundaries that shape both its findings and their interpretation. The most fundamental limitation concerns case selection: only two cases were examined, and the comparison is intentionally asymmetric.

The NIEO represents a broad constellation of initiatives advanced across multiple forums and issue areas over more than a decade, while the Moon Treaty constitutes a narrower legal negotiation within a specialized institutional setting. This thesis does not claim these projects were identical but rather that they are comparable as distinct expressions of postcolonial *order-making* within its theoretical framework. This approach enabled analysis of how similar counter-hegemonic principles operated across different domains and institutional contexts. However, it also means the findings are not based on systematically equivalent cases, which limits the extent to which patterns identified here can be generalized to other cases that could be described as postcolonial *order-making* without careful consideration of domain-specific factors.

The methodological approach adopted here centered on synthesizing existing scholarships rather than conducting extensive primary source research. This choice was made primarily to manage the scope of analysis and to build upon the substantial work already undertaken by other scholars. However, this literature-based approach carries important limitations. Especially in the case of the Moon Treaty, where existing scholarship remains limited compared to the extensive literature on the NIEO, deeper engagement with primary sources such as diplomatic records, working papers, and negotiation transcripts would likely have yielded more nuanced insights into the evolution of positions, informal diplomacy, and the role of smaller actors who left lighter archival traces than those already explored in literature.

The available scholarship relies heavily on official documents, formal statements, and legal texts, which means less is recoverable about informal coalitional dynamics, internal disagreements within delegations, and the domestic political pressures shaping state positions. The history reconstructed here is therefore strongest at the level of formal international diplomatic contestation and weakest at the level of domestic social forces and informal processes. This represents a significant limitation for a Neo-Gramscian

analysis, which treats domestic social forces and their projection into international politics as central to understanding hegemonic and counter-hegemonic processes. The state-centered focus also imposed by available sources somewhat constrains the thesis's ability to trace how social forces within societies shaped their governments' positions or how intellectual production outside official channels influenced negotiations.

The Neo-Gramscian theoretical framework itself, while enabling the comparison and providing powerful analytical foundations for questions on Global South agency constraints, carries its own limitations. The framework proves powerful for analyzing why counter-hegemonic projects fail to achieve structural transformation, but it tends to treat failure (even success through dilution) primarily as a negative outcome. In the cases examined here, both the NIEO and Moon Treaty failed to achieve their transformative aims, yet this thesis focuses primarily on explaining that failure through constraints rather than analyzing what these struggles produced beyond these institutional outcomes. A fuller account would examine how NIEO organizing shaped subsequent Global South coalitions, how the *common heritage* principle continues to circulate in contemporary space governance debates despite the Moon Treaty's failed ratification, or how these struggles transformed the political consciousness of participants and observers. The Neo-Gramscian emphasis risks making the analysis appear deterministic and as if counter-hegemony was bound to fail given structural conditions, rather than recognizing the struggle itself as politically and historically significant regardless of immediate institutional outcomes.

These limitations point toward the necessity of future research rather than invalidating the argument advanced here. More extensive primary source research, particularly on Moon Treaty negotiations and especially focused on individual Global South states as case studies, would strengthen historical understanding of how coalitions formed, fragmented, and adapted their strategies. Comparative analysis incorporating additional cases of postcolonial *order-making*, such as the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, technology transfer negotiations, or contemporary struggles, would also test whether the patterns identified here hold across different domains and historical moments. This thesis has established that the Moon Treaty and NIEO are meaningfully comparable as counter-hegemonic projects and that their comparison informs important dynamics of *constrained agency* in postcolonial *order-making*. Future scholarship can build upon this foundation by deepening historical reconstruction, expanding comparative scope, and refining theoretical frameworks to capture both structural constraints and the political processes through which Global South actors navigated them.

7.3 The Moon Treaty as an Expression of the North-South Conflict

The comparison undertaken in this thesis demonstrates that the Moon Treaty should not be read exclusively as a niche episode in space law's history. Rather, it must be understood as part of the same global conjuncture that produced the New International

Economic Order, the *common heritage* debates within UNCLOS III, and other demands for restructuring parts of the international order during the 1970s. The Moon Treaty was an expression of the North-South Conflict in an emerging domain of governance, one where the terms of access, exploitation, and benefit distribution are still an open question to this day.

The Moon Treaty's distributive and anti-monopolistic elements were recognized as such by both supporters and critics at the time. Latin American and Asian delegations explicitly framed *common heritage* language as preventing the reproduction of terrestrial inequalities in space. American opponents attacked the treaty in precisely these terms, characterizing it as NIEO-style redistribution and a threat to free enterprise. These connections were not retrospective scholarly constructions but recognized linkages within the negotiations themselves.

The historiography of space governance has largely applied Cold War frameworks, interpreting space exploration and technological governance as an extension of superpower rivalry, with only recent work beginning to disrupt this narrative. The same can be said for the crucial domain of nuclear governance history, which only recently started to focus away from Cold War history and started addressing the role of Global South states.⁴⁵⁷ This separation reproduces a conceptual division between political economy and *futuristic* technology governance that the actors in negotiations themselves did not maintain. Global South states invested diplomatic resources in Moon Treaty negotiations precisely because they understood that governance frameworks established before exploitation commenced would shape future distributions of benefits.

This thesis, therefore, suggests that historiography of the North-South Conflict should widen its analytical lens to incorporate legal and technological frontiers such as space governance, seabed mining, telecommunications domains, and nuclear governance, where similar distributional struggles unfolded. These were not marginal theaters but integral expressions of the fundamental contestation over whether decolonization would extend beyond formal sovereignty to substantive restructuring of the rules governing access to resources and technology.

7.4 Meaning for Development Studies

If the field of development studies concerns itself with global inequality, uneven access to resources and technology, and the institutional arrangements that structure opportunities for formerly colonized societies, then outer space cannot be treated as external to it. The questions negotiated in the Moon Treaty were fundamentally development questions, even if expressed through legal and technical language. Would only states with advanced technological capabilities determine how space resources were exploited, or would international mechanisms ensure broader participation? Would

⁴⁵⁷ Roehrich, "The Cold War, the Developing World, and the Creation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), 1953–1957."

celestial bodies become objects of appropriation on a *first-come, first-served* basis, or would they be governed as *common heritage* requiring benefit-sharing? These are precisely the questions development studies address.

Contemporary events underscore this relevance of space governance further. Commercial space activities are accelerating with lunar resource extraction and asteroid mining plans advancing under national frameworks rather than inclusive multilateral governance – precisely the regulatory vacuum Global South actors sought to prevent. This confirms their anticipation that without proactive international regulation, technological capability translates into exclusive access and control.

Outer space might be outside the Earth's atmosphere, but it does not transcend global inequality. It is another terrain on which said inequality may be reproduced, and where the same fundamental questions about resource access, technological control, benefit distribution, and institutional power defining development struggles are being contested.

8. Primary Sources

United Nations. "Charter of the United Nations." *United Nations Treaty Series*, vol. 1, 1946.

UN General Assembly, Resolution 1348 (XIII), *Question of the peaceful use of outer space*, A/RES/1348(XIII) (December 13, 1958),
<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/206866?ln=en&v=pdf>.

UN General Assembly, Resolution 1472 (XIV), *International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space*, A/RES/1472(XIV) (December 12, 1959),
<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/206356?ln=en&v=pdf>.

UN General Assembly, Resolution 2222 (XXI), *Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies*, A/RES/2222(XXI) (December 19, 1966),
<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/203169?ln=en&v=pdf>.

UN General Assembly, Resolution 3201 (S-VI), *Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order*, A/RES/3201(S-VI) (May 1, 1974),
<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/218450?ln=en&v=pdf>.

UN General Assembly, Resolution 3202 (S-VI), *Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order*, A/RES/3202(S-VI) (May 1, 1974), <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/218451?v=pdf>.

UN General Assembly, Resolution 32/198[B], *International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space*, A/RES/32/196[B] (December 20, 1977),
<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/624289?ln=en&v=pdf>.

UN General Assembly, Resolution 34/68, *Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies*, A/RES/34/68 (December 5, 1979),
<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/9003?ln=en&v=pdf>.

9. Bibliography

- Anghie, Antony. "Legal Aspects of the New International Economic Order." *Humanity* 6, no. 1 (2015): 145-158.
- Babic, Milan. "Let's Talk about the Interregnum: Gramsci and the Crisis of the Liberal World Order." *International Affairs* 96, no. 3 (2020): 767–86. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiz254>.
- Balogh, Werner. "Institutional Aspects." In *Outer Space in Society, Politics and Law*, edited by Christian Brünner and Alexander Soucek. Studies in Space Policy 8. Springer, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-7091-0664-8>.
- Betts, Raymond F. "Decolonization: A Brief History of the Word." In *Beyond Empire and Nation*, edited by Els Bogaerts and Remco Raben. The Decolonization of African and Asian Societies, 1930s-1970s. Brill, 2012. JSTOR. <http://www-jstor-org.uaccess.univie.ac.at/stable/10.1163/j.ctt1w8h2zm.5>.
- Bibi, Samuele. "Prebisch and the Terms of Trade." Pt. 104813. *Resources Policy* 90 (March 2024): 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resourpol.2024.104813>.
- Boateng, Charles Adom. *The Political Legacy of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana*. African Studies, volume 66. The Edwin Mellen Press, 2003.
- Boyle, Alan, and Christine Chinkin. "UNCLOS III and the Process of International Law-Making." In *Law of the Sea, Environmental Law and Settlement of Disputes*, edited by Tafsir Malick Ndiaye and Rüdiger Wolfrum. Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2007. <https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004161566.i-0.120>.
- Brünner, Christian, and Alexander Soucek. *Outer Space in Society, Politics and Law*. Studies in Space Policy 8. Springer, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-7091-0664-8>.
- Buono, Stephen. "Merely a 'Scrap of Paper'? The Outer Space Treaty in Historical Perspective." *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 31, no. 2 (2020): 350–72. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592296.2020.1760038>.
- Buono, Stephen. *Governing the Moon: A History*. Monographs in Aerospace History 59. National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 2025.
- Chamedes, Giuliana. "Unpaid Debts: Socialist Internationalism and Jamaica's Bid for a New International Economic Order." *The American Historical Review* 130, no. 3 (2025): 1039–69. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/rhaf393>.
- Cheng, Bin. *Studies in International Space Law*. Oxford University Press, 1997. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198257301.001.0001>.
- Christian, Michel. "Der Nord-Süd-Konflikt und die „neue Internationale Arbeitsteilung“ in den 1970er Jahren: UNIDO, UNCTAD und die Vorgeschichte unserer „Globalisierung“." In *Nord/Süd*, edited by Steffen Fiebrig, Jürgen Dinkel, and Frank Reichherzer. De Gruyter, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110682625-008>.

- Cox, Robert W. "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations : An Essay in Method." *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 12, no. 2 (1983): 162–75. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298830120020701>.
- Dietrich, Christopher R. W. *Oil Revolution: Anti-Colonial Elites, Sovereign Rights, and the Economic Culture of Decolonization*. Cambridge University Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316717493>.
- Din, Athar Ud. "The Artemis Accords: The End of Multilateralism in the Management of Outer Space?" *Astropolitics* 20, nos. 2–3 (2022): 135–50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14777622.2022.2144241>.
- Dinkel, Jürgen. *The Non-Aligned Movement: Genesis, Organization and Politics (1927-1992)*. New Perspectives on the Cold War, volume 5. Brill, 2019.
- Dolman, Antony J. "The Like-Minded Countries and the New International Order: Past, Present and Future Prospects." *Cooperation and Conflict* 14, no. 2/3 (1979): 57–85.
- Dosman, Edgar J. *The Life and Times of Raúl Prebisch: 1901-1986*. McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008.
- Doyle, Stephen E. "A Concise History of Space Law: 1910-2009." In *New Perspectives on Space Law. Proceedings of the 53rd IISL Colloquium on the Law of Outer Space, Young Scholars Sessions*, edited by Mark J. Sundahl and V. Gopalakrishnan. Paris International Institute of Space Law, 2011.
- Dunstan, Sarah Claire. "Conflicts of Interest: The 1919 Pan-African Congress and the Wilsonian Moment." *Callaloo* 39, no. 1 (2016): 133–50. <https://doi.org/10.1353/cal.2016.0017>.
- Eijk, Cris van. "The Exclusive Making of Space Law." *Leiden Journal of International Law* 38, no. 2 (2025): 84–112. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0922156524000554>.
- Engel, Susan, and Matthew Mabefam. "The 50th Anniversary of the New International Economic Order: Introduction to the Special Issue." *Development in Practice* 35, no. 6 (2025): 879–90. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2025.2534149>.
- Ewing, Cindy. "The Third World before Afro-Asia." In *Inventing the Third World: In Search of Freedom for the Postwar Global South*, edited by Gyan Prakash and Jeremy Adelman. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350277380>.
- Fajardo, Margarita. *The World That Latin America Created: The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America in the Development Era*. Harvard University Press, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv26gx7f6>.
- Femia, Joseph V. *Gramsci's Political Thought*. Oxford University Press, 1987. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198275435.001.0001>.

- Ferns, Nicholas. "The Middle Zone: The 1964 UN Conference on Trade and Development and the Australian Response." *Journal of World History* (Honolulu) 32, no. 3 (2021): 465–89. 2680353498.
- Fiebrig, Steffen. "Unequal Exchange? Post-Koloniale Wirtschaftsordnung, Handelsliberalisierung und die UNCTAD." In *Nord/Süd*, edited by Steffen Fiebrig, Jürgen Dinkel, and Frank Reichherzer. De Gruyter, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110682625-007>.
- Franczak, Michael. *Global Inequality and American Foreign Policy in the 1970s*. Cornell University Press, 2022.
- Franczak, Michael. "Losing the Battle, Winning the War: Neoconservatives versus the New International Economic Order, 1974–82." *Diplomatic History* 43, no. 5 (2019): 867–89. <https://doi.org/10.1093/dh/dhz043>.
- Freeland, Steven, and Anne-Sophie Martin. "The Contribution of the United Nations to the Development of International Space Law." In *International Space Law in the New Space Era*, edited by Sandeepa Bhat B., Dilip Ukey, and Adithya Variath. Oxford University Press, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1093/9780198909415.003.0003>.
- Friedl, Michael. *The COPUOS Briefing Book*. Edited by Christopher D. Johnson, 2nd ed, Secure World Foundation, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1287/5f4e34c9-55a8-4667-b696-4d50c9931b3e>.
- Friedman, Jeremy. *Ripe for Revolution: Building Socialism in the Third World*. Harvard University Press, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674269743>.
- Garavini, Giuliano. *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957-1986*. Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Garavini, Giuliano. *The Rise and Fall of OPEC in the Twentieth Century*. Oxford University Press, 2019.
- Gerits, Frank. "'When the Bull Elephants Fight': Kwame Nkrumah, Non-Alignment, and Pan-Africanism as an Interventionist Ideology in the Global Cold War (1957–66)." *The International History Review* 37, no. 5 (2015): 951–69. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2015.1064465>.
- Getachew, Adom. *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination*. Princeton University Press, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780691184340>.
- Gilman, Nils. "The New International Economic Order: A Reintroduction." *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development* 6, no. 1 (2015): 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1353/hum.2015.0008>.
- Gilman, Nils. "The NIEO as Usable Past." Progressive International, January 4, 2023. <https://progressive.international/blueprint/e7bc30e1-d565-47de-a19f-80ad1bce9969-gilman-the-nieo-as-usable-past/en/>.

- Graf, Rüdiger. "Der Konflikt, der nicht stattfand: Ressourcen, Interdependenz, Sicherheit und die Erwartung des Nord-Süd-Konflikts in den 1970er Jahren." In *Nord/Süd*, edited by Steffen Fiebrig, Jürgen Dinkel, and Frank Reichherzer. De Gruyter, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110682625-018>.
- Green, Marcus E. "Introduction." In *Rethinking Gramsci*, edited by Marcus E. Green. Routledge Innovations in Political Theory. Routledge, 2011.
- Hanlon, Michelle Ld. "The Moon Agreement—A Swan Song." In *International Space Law in the New Space Era*, edited by Sandeepa Bhat B., Dilip Ukey, and Adithya Variath. Oxford University Press, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1093/9780198909415.003.0008>.
- Hoare, George, and Nathan Sperber. *Introduction to Antonio Gramsci: His Life, Thought and Legacy*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350423206>.
- Hobe, Stephan. *Pioneers of Space Law*. Koninklijke Brill NV, 2013. <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004240285>.
- Hobe, Stephan. *Space Law*. Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.5771/9783845266343>.
- Hobe, Stephan. "Vladimir Mandl, Alex Meyer, Welf-Heinrich Prince of Hanover Friedrich Wilhelm von Rauchhaupt – Early Writings in German on the Young Discipline of Space Law." In *New Perspectives on Space Law. Proceedings of the 53rd IISL Colloquium on the Law of Outer Space, Young Scholars Sessions*, edited by Mark J. Sundahl and V. Gopalakrishnan. Paris International Institute of Space Law, 2011.
- Jankowitsch, Peter. "The Background and History of Space Law." In *Handbook of Space Law*, edited by Frans Von Der Dunk. Edward Elgar Publishing, 2015. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781781000366.00010>.
- Juda, Lawrence. "UNCLOS III and the New International Economic Order." *Ocean Development & International Law* 7, nos. 3–4 (1979): 221–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00908327909545638>.
- Kay, Cristóbal. "Development Theory: The Latin American Pivot." In *The Essential Guide to Critical Development Studies: Second Edition*, edited by Henry Veltmeyer and Paul Bowles. Routledge, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003037187>.
- Kennedy, Dane. *Decolonization: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2016. <https://doi.org/10.1093/actrade/9780199340491.001.0001>.
- Khatwani, Naman. "Common Heritage of Mankind for Outer Space." *Astropolitics* 17, no. 2 (2019): 89–103. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14777622.2019.1638679>.

- Kille, Kent J., and Alynna J. Lyon. *The United Nations: 75 Years of Promoting Peace, Human Rights, and Development*. ABC-CLIO, 2020.
<https://doi.org/10.5040/9798216030355>.
- Kopal, Vladimir. "Origins of Space Law and the Role of the United Nations." In *Outer Space in Society, Politics and Law*, edited by Christian Brünner and Alexander Soucek. Studies in Space Policy 8. Springer, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-7091-0664-8>.
- Kreienbaum, Jonas. "Between Panic and Feelings of Empowerment: Emotional Reactions to the First Oil Crisis and the Debate about a New International Economic Order." *New Global Studies* 17, no. 2 (2023): 193–218.
<https://doi.org/10.1515/ngs-2022-0055>.
- Lal, Priya. "African Socialism and the Limits of Global Familyhood: Tanzania and the New International Economic Order in Sub-Saharan Africa." *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development* 6, no. 1 (2015): 17–31. <https://doi.org/10.1353/hum.2015.0011>.
- Langemeyer, Ines. "Antonio Gramsci: Hegemonie, Politik des Kulturellen, geschichtlicher Block." In *Schlüsselwerke der Cultural Studies*, edited by Andreas Hepp, Friedrich Krotz, and Tanja Thomas. VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2009. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-531-91839-6_6.
- Larabi, Amira. "La Nationalisation Du Marché Algérien Des Produits Pétroliers : Un Exemple de Pratique de Négociation Nord-Sud." *Histoire, Europe et Relations Internationales* 6, no. 1 (2025): 139–54. <https://doi.org/10.3917/heri.006.0139>.
- Lee, Christopher J., ed. "Introduction." In *Making a World after Empire: The Bandung Moment and Its Political Afterlives*, edited by Christopher J. Lee, 2nd ed, Ohio University Press, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv224txjd>.
- Lees, Nicholas. "The Endurance of the G77 in International Relations: South–South Ideology and Voting at the United Nations 1970–2015." *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 24, no. 3 (2023): 310–30.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1468109923000105>.
- Lorenzini, Sara. *Global Development: A Cold War History*. Princeton University Press, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780691185569>.
- Louro, Michele L., ed. *The League Against Imperialism: Lives and Afterlives*. Leiden University Press, 2020.
- Lyall, Francis, and Paul B. Larsen. *Space Law: A Treatise*. 3rd ed, Routledge, 2024.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003496502>.
- Marchisio, Sergio. "History, the Treaties, the Resolutions." In *Space Law: Legal Framework for Space Activities*, edited by Thomas Leclerc. Wiley, 2023.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781394264698>.

- Masson-Zwaan, Tanja L., and Mahulena Hofmann. *Introduction to Space Law*. Wolters Kluwer, 2024.
- Mazower, Mark M. *No Enchanted Palace : The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations*. Lawrence Stone Lectures. Princeton University Press, 2009. 329681. <https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=a114af00-d9b6-30c3-bbb2-37ef36c5dff6>.
- McDougall, Walter A. ...*The Heavens and the Earth: A Political History of the Space Age*. Basic Books, 1985.
- McFarland, Victor. "The New International Economic Order, Interdependence, and Globalization." *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development* 6, no. 1 (2015): 217–33. <https://doi.org/10.1353/hum.2015.0012>.
- Migani, Guia. "The Road to Cancun: The Life and Death of a North–South Summit." In *International Summitry and Global Governance*, edited by Emmanuel Mourlon-Druol and Federico Romero. Routledge, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315850771>.
- Miskovic, Natasa, Harald Fischer-Tiné, and Nada Boskovska, eds. *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War*. Routledge, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315814452>.
- Moneke, Martina. "Why It's Time to Retire 'Global North' and 'Global South'." Centre Tricontinental, October 14, 2025. <https://www.cetri.be/Why-It-s-Time-to-Retire-Global>.
- Morton, Adam David. "Social Forces in the Struggle over Hegemony: Neo-Gramscian Perspectives in International Political Economy." In *Rethinking Gramsci*, by Marcus E. Green. Routledge Innovations in Political Theory. Routledge, 2011.
- Morton, Adam David. *Unravelling Gramsci: Hegemony and Passive Revolution in the Global Political Economy*. Reading Gramsci. Pluto Press, 2010.
- Mukherjee, Utsav. "Recalibrating the Moon Treaty to the Domain of Development." In *New Perspectives on Space Law. Proceedings of the 53rd IISL Colloquium on the Law of Outer Space, Young Scholars Sessions*, edited by Mark J. Sundahl and V. Gopalakrishnan. Paris International Institute of Space Law, 2011.
- Muschik, Eva-Maria. *Building States: The United Nations, Development, and Decolonization, 1945–1965*. Columbia University Press, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.7312/musc20024>.
- Neger, Thomas, and Edith Walter. "Space Law - an Independent Branch of the Legal System." In *Outer Space in Society, Politics and Law*, edited by Christian Brünner and Alexander Soucek. Studies in Space Policy 8. Springer, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-7091-0664-8>.

- Nicholls, Sam. "Non-Aligned Common Front: Strategic Imaginaries of the New International Economic Order (NIEO)." *Development in Practice* 35, no. 6 (2025): 891–901. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2024.2400160>.
- Nkrumah, Kwame. *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*. International Publ, 1965.
- Onslow, Sue. "The Commonwealth and the Cold War, Neutralism, and Non-Alignment." *The International History Review* 37, no. 5 (2015): 1059–82. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2015.1053965>.
- O’Sullivan, Kevin. "Between Internationalism and Empire: Ireland, the ‘Like-Minded’ Group, and the Search for a New International Order, 1974–82." *The International History Review* 37, no. 5 (2015): 1083–101. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2015.1070893>.
- Özsu, Umut. "Determining New Selves: Mohammed Bedjaoui on Algeria, Western Sahara, and Post-Classical International Law." In *The Battle for International Law*, edited by Jochen Von Bernstorff and Philipp Dann. Oxford University Press, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198849636.003.0016>.
- Özsu, Umut. "'In the Interests of Mankind as a Whole': Mohammed Bedjaoui’s New International Economic Order." *Humanity* (Philadelphia, United Kingdom) 6, no. 1 (2015): 129–43.
- Patel, Raj. "Counter-Hegemony and Polycrisis I: How to Eat and How to Think." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 53, no. 2 (2026): 227–58. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2025.2499271>.
- Prashad, Vijay. *The Darker Nations: A People’s History of the Third World*. 15th anniversary edition. A New Press People’s History. The New Press, 2022. 3150892. <https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=1f7beff4-4387-359d-a2d7-66822f97d29e>.
- Prashad, Vijay. *The Poorer Nations: A Possible History of the Global South*. Verso, 2014.
- Ranganathan, Surabhi. "Ocean Floor Grab: International Law and the Making of an Extractive Imaginary." *European Journal of International Law* 30, no. 2 (2019): 573–600. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ejil/chz027>.
- Ranganathan, Surabhi. "The Common Heritage of Mankind: Annotations on a Battle." In *The Battle for International Law*, edited by Jochen von Bernstorff and Philipp Dann. Oxford University Press, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198849636.003.0002>.
- Ranganathan, Surabhi. "What if Arvid Pardo had not Made his Famous Speech?: (False) Contingency in the Making of the Law of the Sea." In *Contingency in International Law*, edited by Ingo Venzke and Kevin Jon Heller. Oxford University Press, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780192898036.003.0014>.

- Rathkolb, Oliver. "The Trudeau-Kreisky Connection: Austria and Canada on the Road to Cancún." In *Austrian Immigration to Canada: Selected Essays*, edited by Frank Szabo. MQUP, 2014.
- Roehrlich, Elisabeth. "The Cold War, the Developing World, and the Creation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), 1953–1957." *Cold War History* 16, no. 2 (2016): 195–212. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14682745.2015.1129607>.
- Sargent, Daniel. "The Cold War and the International Political Economy in the 1970s." *Cold War History* 13, no. 3 (2013): 393–425. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14682745.2013.789693>.
- Sargent, Daniel J. "North/South: The United States Responds to the New International Economic Order." *Humanity* 6, no. 1 (2015): 201–216.
- Sayward, Amy L. *The United Nations in International History*. New Approaches to International History. Bloomsbury Academic, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781474295772>.
- Schmidt, Yvonne. "International Space Law and Developing Countries." In *Outer Space in Society, Politics and Law*, edited by Christian Brünner and Alexander Soucek. Studies in Space Policy 8. Springer, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-7091-0664-8>.
- Soucek, Alexander. "International Law." In *Outer Space in Society, Politics and Law*, edited by Christian Brünner and Alexander Soucek. Studies in Space Policy 8. Springer, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-7091-0664-8>.
- Storr, Cait. "Space Is the Only Way to Go." In *Routledge Handbook of International Law and the Humanities*, edited by Shane Chalmers and Sundhya Pahuja. Routledge, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003170914-27>.
- Stråth, Bo. *The Brandt Commission and the Multinationals: Planetary Perspectives*. Routledge, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003318804>.
- Stubbs, Paul. *The New International Economic Order: Lives and Afterlives*. Routledge, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003480020>.
- Toye, John. "Assessing the G77: 50 Years after UNCTAD and 40 Years after the NIEO." *Third World Quarterly* 35, no. 10 (2014): 1759–74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2014.971589>.
- Toye, John, and Richard Toye, eds. *The UN and Global Political Economy: Trade, Finance, and Development*. United Nations Intellectual History Project. Indiana University Press, 2004.
- Toye, John, and Richard Toye. "The Origins and Interpretation of the Prebisch-Singer Thesis." *History of Political Economy* 35, no. 3 (2003): 437–67. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00182702-35-3-437>.

- Trecker, Max. *Red Money for the Global South: East-South Economic Relations in the Cold War*. Routledge Studies in Modern History. Routledge, 2020.
- UNOOSA. "COPUOS Membership Evolution." November 13, 2025.
<https://www.unoosa.org/oosa/de/ourwork/copuos/members/evolution.html>.
- Varela, Chris. "Africa Finds Its Voice in the Halls of Manchester." *History in the Making* 10 (2017): 55–88.
- Von Der Dunk, Frans. "International Organizations in Space Law." In *Handbook of Space Law*, edited by Frans Von Der Dunk. Edward Elgar Publishing, 2015.
<https://doi.org/10.4337/9781781000366.00014>.
- Weber, Heloise, and Poppy Winanti. "The 'Bandung Spirit' and Solidarist Internationalism." *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 70, no. 4 (2016): 391–406. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2016.1167834>.
- Weiss, Thomas G., David P. Forsythe, Roger A. Coate, and Kelly-Kate Pease. *The United Nations and Changing World Politics*. 8th ed, Routledge, 2019.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/b22600>.
- Williams, Marc. *Third World Cooperation: The Group of 77 in UNCTAD*. Pinter, 1991.
- Wolff, Richard D. "Gramsci, Marxism, and Philosophy." In *Rethinking Gramsci*, by Marcus E. Green. Routledge Innovations in Political Theory. Routledge, 2011.
- World Population Review. "G-77 Countries 2026." April 17, 2026.
<https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/group-of-77>.