



**Aftermath – President Obama’s
Election Victory and the Future of Empire**

Winter/Spring 2009

Our main goal this quarter will be to investigate the extent to which the imploding global economy has and will affect the planet’s geopolitical landscape. A few things can be said for sure; first, America’s economic foundation – which its monstrous military rests on – is no longer so dynamic. Second, America’s ideology of free markets, human rights, and democracy has been largely discredited by Bush’s unilateral use of naked force. Physical coercion is more than a means of action; for it is also a form of communication, whose effectiveness depends upon other factors. Third, we certainly know how Barack Obama’s gifted rhetoric is – as Aristotle stated – an important foundation of power, especially when combined with the capacity to reward and punish.

Yet, how persuasive can he be internationally in an environment in which every national economy is busy trying to save itself, and how will he be able to change anything domestically in the face of overwhelming institutional pressures? Finally, will these domestic and international pressures foster or impede America’s ongoing imperial project in an Obama administration?