

“Inside the COVID-19 Global Coup d’état”

Geopolitics & Empire with Hrvoje Morić, Part I

By [Emanuel Pastreich](#) and [Hrvoje Morić](#)

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Geopolitics & Empire: Geopolitics & Empire is joined by Emanuel Pastreich, who serves as the president of The Asia Institute and as director general of the Institute for Future Urban Environments. He declared his candidacy for president of the US as an independent in February of 2020. Welcome to Geopolitics & Empire, Mr. Pastreich.

Emanuel Pastreich: It’s an honor to be here.

Geopolitics & Empire: I came across your work recently, your writing and your interviews, and I thought I had to have you on the show because you have many unique insights and you’ve got a fascinating life experience. It is hard to peg who you are because of your interesting background. If you could just briefly maybe tell us, who is Emanuel Pastreich?

Emanuel Pastreich: Right. Well, that’s a tough one and I’m maybe not the most qualified to explain myself. I came from a relatively establishment background in the United States. I’m still wearing a tie, and I was a professor of Asian studies, so I spent a good part of my life in Korea and Japan, and I studied Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. When I was at the University of Illinois back in 2000, 2001, I became quite committed to opposing the totalitarian rule in the United States, which continues to the day. And as a result of my efforts with others, I ended up being basically unable to work in the United States and living in Korea from 2007. Tried to come back to the United States once in 2019, which was not successful.

I’m back in the United States after three years away; just arrived a week ago. I am trying my best to address real issues in the United States and to puncture a hole in the blanket of hypocrisy and fraud that has wrapped around every aspect of American society, and, by extension, around the world. I want to talk about real things.

I had declared in February, 2020, when I saw what was happening with this so-called Biden-Trump election, that I would run as an independent candidate for president and address real issues, not with any particular leftist or rightist perspective. I tried to just scientifically

address what were the problems in the United States. And that caused a lot of problems, but it did give me the chance to get in the habit of giving talks, speeches, which has now become my primary means of expressing myself.

I hope we can return to politics based on intellectual inquiry, on a moral commitment, and on real engagement with citizens, as opposed to a fraudulent “feel good” approach to blanket marketing.

Geopolitics & Empire: I purchased your book “I Shall Fear No Evil.” I think people can download it for free. You touch on most of your points in that book.

I agree with much of what you say. And maybe we can start with what you touched on: what’s wrong with the US?

I’m from Illinois, I’m from Chicago, and 20 years ago I saw a lot wrong. I’m a history major, former teacher, former professor of history, I could just see the cycle of history.

Emanuel Pastreich: Where were you teaching?

Geopolitics & Empire: Well, I taught abroad in Kazakhstan and in Mexico. That’s part of the story. I decided to leave the United States. When you’re born as an American, you never imagine we were an empire. I thought we were just a country, the United States, and then you realize there is stuff we get into like 9/11, and other things. The reality is we’re an empire, and we’re the biggest empire in the history of the world. So we are starting all these wars, killing millions of people.

There’s a lot of good that America has done, but a lot of bad too. We have to be fair. There’s the militarism. And we’re bankrupt financially—you talk about that. I also think that spiritually we’re bankrupt.

Emanuel Pastreich: Intellectually too.

Geopolitics & Empire: We’re at each other’s throats. Then there’s the techno-authoritarianism. I might get you in into trouble. In April, I believe the Department of Homeland Security told PayPal to shut off my account. I’m banned from using PayPal.

Emanuel Pastreich: Well, congratulations.

Geopolitics & Empire: And so if you could tell us basically, what’s wrong with America as you see it?

Emanuel Pastreich: Well, to some degree it’s a cyclical process. If you have any institution, any government or empire and it runs 250 years, you start to have these institutional contradictions and collapse. To some degree it’s because of the institutions that were originally set up no longer correspond with the reality of how decisions are made, or how the economy works. I happen to like the US Constitution and I refer to it. It’s not a perfect document, but it gives some basic principles for governance, which I think are quite unique.

It was a unique, successful experiment in history. It doesn’t mean the United States was successful, it just means that concept of constitutional government where they took some of the essence of what was discussed in Greece and Rome and tried to take the empire out of it. That was the concept behind the United States. It was a noble experiment that offers

much for us.

However, it was flawed from the beginning. Obviously slavery, the destruction of the native peoples, also the idea of real estate and how it was imported here and enclosure, all that part of the project was obviously flawed. But we did have some good aspects to the United States, which sometimes were positive for the world.

But over the last 50 years, we saw the militarization of the economy and then this move towards a radical expansion of financialization and privatization. And in that process, I think, we also have to take note of the end of the Cold War, which has been celebrated in what we're force fed in media and in academics. But the end of the Cold War was essentially the end of an opposing perspective in the world. Basically during the Cold War (I'm not saying Soviet Union or the People's Republic of China got it all right) socialist nations at least offered a different perspective, were able to suggest that things like class struggle, the concentration of capital, and ideology were topics to talk about. These were things that were important in their newspapers and universities. And when the Soviet Union and China basically went over to a modified neo-capitalism, with a little bit of socialist characteristics mixed in the drink, then we lost that other perspective in the world.

And as a result from the 1990s on increasingly these ridiculous ideas about economics spread. In the United States, or in Japan, or in Germany in the 1970s—through the 80s even, there were professors of economics who took Marxist economics as a major part of their approach to economic theory. There are zero people like that now, except for bloggers.

We've lost this potential for other perspectives. It's not saying that Marxism is perfect. I'm not a Marxist by the way, but I'm sympathetic to Marxist analysis. I think that addressing class issues and finance and ideology is critical. And so we now are in this position in which consumption, growth, exports are assumed by basically everybody to be essential for the wellbeing of people, or that the stock market has a relationship (other than parasitic) to the lives of ordinary citizens.

These things are accepted as truths, right? They're talking about a rise in the stock market as good for you.

And we have in the United States now these cardboard messiahs, whether it's Bernie Sanders, or AOL, or Donald Trump who come up with these quirky ideas about what economics is, or how we can be more progressive, concerned with working people.

But essentially they buy into the entire economic money system and they're not interested in saying, "Why don't we make people independent from money?" They're not trying to say, we can support ourselves.

We don't have to spend money. People in the 19th century, most of them didn't use money. They used it only when they went to market once a month to buy things they needed. Some metal products or certain items like clocks. But basically in their daily lives, they were able to support themselves and their communities were able to support them. That is real economics; that's positive.

Actually that's the real meaning of market economy. It has become a horrible term that's been so distorted. Market economy means you go to the market in your community and you sell carrots, or the chairs you made, and you exchange them with your neighbor who is

selling butter, or fabrics or whatever. And you have this mutual support system.

Now market economy means Google and Facebook and all these techno tyrants, which print up their own money by devaluing our money, and they control the entire system. They set up these IT systems (like the technology we are using now) in which we are forced to communicate with each other, to exchange, to buy things through them. They control the means of production, means of distribution, means of sales, and the means of communication, and increasingly the ideological structure itself. They produce these false conservatives and these false progressives whom we are supposed to buy.

Geopolitics & Empire: That was my next question. We've got an oligarchy in the US and I think it's just as bad as the Russian oligarchies and these foreign dictatorships. I think the issue for us is that because Americans are more prosperous, we care less—as long as we can buy our nice cars, iPhones, and other stuff. We don't really care about our oligarchy, but they're just as bad, if not worse.

You mention sham elections. I agree with you; just to read a quote from your book, you say, "I say that if we do not have an election in which someone like me can be a candidate, can have a chance to be covered in the media, that we are not holding elections but rather holding an impressive sham. We have no intention of recognizing any such sham elections. In fact, until there is an election in which someone like me can get proper attention and the chance to be on the ballot, we will not recognize any of these elections."

Just a quick thought on the elections. As you say, on our left, our right, we've got fake conservatives and a fake left. No one is anti-war anymore on the left.

Emanuel Pastreich: That's true.

Geopolitics & Empire: There's a handful on the right, but they all stay within a certain bounds. None of them have ever crossed the red line.

Emanuel Pastreich: Right. Well I think the decision to run as independent candidate for president was a serious one. I take it quite seriously and I put a lot of work into the speeches. The preference to my book is out in 40 languages. I don't have Croatian, but I have many other languages—many from Central Europe for that matter. It was a campaign both in the United States and also globally meant to say, let's have an alternative view.

And we've been basically blocked out. I think that American elections were always flawed. I wouldn't say there was a perfect time, but there's been a catastrophic collapse of the political system over the last 20 years. And the result is these sham elections, as I was suggesting in my recent post.

Now politics is determined not by elections, but by false flag operations, like 9/11 or COVID-19 or these mass shootings, whatever, these are how politics are determined, not by voting at the ballot.

In order to move beyond, to go back to some logical, scientific, rational process, I think we have to look back to the founding of the United States, or other countries, and recognize that the basis for the United States in the beginning, and the ways in which it was successful, were based on revolutionary thought, recognized that the United States is a revolutionary country.

That's the core where we start. And we have to say that the Declaration of Independence notes very clearly,

"When a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security."

Our two founding documents are the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. You not only are entitled to, but you have a moral obligation to oppose this system, to overthrow it, and to create a system which is democratic, transparent and accountable.

That is my position when I am running as a candidate. I would love it if people vote for me, if they put me on TV, and if I got attention like Donald Trump, or these bedridden people like Joe Biden.

But that's not my purpose. My purpose is to be revolutionary. And so I believe the best way that I can affect politics, that we can affect politics, is to take a stand and to say, "This is the truth. This is what needs to be done." I'm not interested in whether the New York Times or CNN will cover me, because they're so corrupt and so useless and dangerous, that as far as I'm concerned, we should lock them all up too. I have no interest in pandering to them.

And I would also say that that was the major mistake made by so many people in the United States over the last decade (as we fell into late imperial decay): they thought, I have this good idea, what might be a good idea, and in order to realize that idea, I'm going to compromise. I'm going to downplay it, going to soften it up a little bit, modify it in such a way that, one, the New York Times will mention me, and two, some wealthy donor will give me money.

And my position is to say, I'm not going to do that. And that this is the only way to achieve real change in the United States, and globally, to draw a line in the sand.

It may seem pointless. You might see me as someone who is a failure. I was not able to work in the United States from 2007. I have been unemployed for long periods of time, which was not all that pleasant. But I think that my actions were more politically meaningful than if I had compromised on 9/11 and other issues and tried to play the game here in Washington D.C.

Geopolitics & Empire: Just one real quick question on 9/11, not to go in depth, just get your big picture take. One of my subscribers recently tuned to the email list told me they're signing off because I believe 9/11 was a false flag operation. And I'm like...

Emanuel Pastreich: It's so obvious

Geopolitics & Empire: For me you're not a serious person if you can't take on the false flag operations. My response to him was that in graduate school in Geneva, Switzerland I was taught about this type of thing. It is a basic historical fact. The Roman Empire did it. Nazi Germany did it.

Emanuel Pastreich: I would even say it is an ancient tradition.

Geopolitics & Empire: Russia has done it. It's a basic military strategy. NATO has done it. Japan has done it, Israel has done it, Turkey has done it. Tell me a country which has not run

the false flag operation.

But just real quick, you mentioned previously, but also in one of your writings, you've written the false flag "serves as critical tool in American politics by creating mass trauma in the population that inhibits the formation of organized resistance or the possibility of rational intellectual discourse." And so just your quick take on 9/11.

Emanuel Pastreich: Well I think that in that respect, 9/11 was extremely successful. Basically it shut down the American mind.

We need to use Hermann Broch's term "the sleepwalkers" to describe our ruling class. We see people who are intellectuals, who are extremely well educated. They read books. They are lawyers, doctors, businessmen, but they're incapable of conceiving of what is happening. They're basically sleepwalking through history, unable to conceive of these higher-level traumatic shifts in governance.

And so 9/11, is most representative in that respect. If you've taken one semester of physics in high school, you can figure out that this event was impossible. It cannot possibly be true. I watched it. I was in the US, at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign at the time. I saw it. I was not a physics major. I thought, this is not possible. Something else is going on here.

But there's no way that if two (if it's what happened) airliners crash, it'll cause three buildings that made of concrete reinforced with steel to collapse. It cannot possibly be true.

But I think looking back on it now, that that was the whole point; the point was, just like with COVID-19, to force-feed the population a story which was not credible from the beginning. And the purpose of that was to degrade the ability of citizens to think for themselves scientifically and co-opt an entire class of intellectuals.

I've written about this topic using the ideas from Julien Benda's classic book "The Treason of the Intellectuals" from 1927.

That was a large part of 9/11, and of COVID-19. This large class of privileged intellectuals, people like myself, decided -and I saw this at the University of Illinois and elsewhere- that they would go on with this incredibly stupid, unbelievable, argument on physics and on geopolitics to explain this trauma.

They went along with it. They took the money. There are always going to be some intellectuals like that, but the fact that there were so many for both 9/11 and COVID-19 who were willing to buy the story indicates something deeply wrong.

I have a classmate who's a teaching at MIT and I talked to her, and talked to her about COVID-19 at the very start. She was just following the rules. I know that she's smart enough to know that it just doesn't make any sense scientifically.

As I put it in one of my articles, technology buried science in a shallow grave. We have a system in which technology is mistaken for science. We moved towards this "sciencism," as opposed to science. In sciencism the truth is determined by experts at Harvard or Stanford, or wherever, as opposed to by a rigorous investigation of phenomena.

That started before 9/11. You can trace it back. In some ways it started with Oklahoma, which was the precursor to 9/11. I think if we hadn't had the trauma of the Oklahoma

bombings, that 9/11 would've been harder to pull off. And finally, I would conclude by saying that many of these things they're planned out. DARPA (defense advanced research projects agency) and RAND and other agencies—now there's a proliferation of these think tanks or consulting firms—planned these traumas. From the 1960s on they carried out a whole series of studies in psychology, mass trauma, et cetera, in which they essentially came up with these classified plans, some of which have been declassified, most of which have not. The plans describe how to transition a population from one state to another over time through the use of mass trauma.

And that's what 9/11 was about. Oklahoma was the first point of mass trauma, then 9/11, then COVID-19—and there were a few others in between.

On the one hand the operations had very specific agendas, what they were trying to do in the short term. But there is a larger agenda, which is to create a totalitarian state, on in which people are not aware, as you mentioned, that the system is totalitarian.

There's a radical alienation between the reality on the ground and the manner in which ruling class intellectuals, who set the tone and the message, perceive the world. We live in a fantasy world in which we are told this is how the United States works. And then there's the reality of how it really works. Basically they've become two unrelated realms.

Geopolitics & Empire: Just to comment on the academic aspect, I worked in education, in academia here in Mexico, and just as you described it, I find it sad. Most academics, all they care about is their money, their salary, their wages, and their career. I want the truth. I had my classes taken away from me when I taught at a high school and at a university. And the trick was that it's harder to get fired from the high school than it is the university.

Emanuel Pastreich: Interesting.

Geopolitics & Empire: After one or two semesters they took away my courses at the university on international relations because I was talking like you are. Eventually there was a new person who took charge and he didn't know my way of thinking. And so I got my courses back. It's just really sad. It just goes back to the fact that the people want the money, they don't care about the truth.

Emanuel Pastreich: Well, I've seen that. Certainly many academics now, and I see this in my colleagues, people who I used to be quite close to in another lifetime. Consider the priority to be getting grants. And so grants are the goal, certainly not scientific method, right? They must go along with what grantors want. And that process no longer involves any sense of public good, or of government or institutions that are run for the public good.

We have the Drew Faust, the previous president of Harvard. When she retired, she was appointed to the board of directors of Goldman Sachs. Unprecedented in American history. But it's telling. So the priority for these research institutes and their administrators is their ability to suck up to global capital.

That is what it's about. And so obviously if we're talking about Goldman Sachs, BlackRock, or other Blackstone, or other private equity, these guys are sophisticated. They hire consulting firms and tell them how to modify teaching and academic research at Harvard over time so that it serves their purpose, essentially they help to cover your tracks for you. You do not modify intellectual discourse in too explicit a way. You throw in a little bit of

multiculturalism here, a little bit of gender theory there; you talk about how unfair it is that poor people are not doing so well, but you don't identify the process of how we got here.

It's become, I think it's a major, major industry, this whole distortion of reality in advertising, public relations, consulting, and then on beyond that in research, academics, journalism, and the basic principles of discourse now. It's a form of prostitution.

I like to talk this trauma in terms of incest, rape, and prostitution, the three fundamental traumas in human relations, in sexual relations—sexual relations have profound symbolic power in our society.

And all of them, incest, rape and prostitution, have their equivalents in our political world and in our intellectual world. And that's what we're witnessing. Increasingly we're talking about all of those. Incest is the false flag, the internal compromise in which the compromise is so profound for the victim that it can't even be addressed. Rape is similar in that it brings the person into this relationship which was unwanted, but in a way which is so embarrassing (and sometimes involves some mutual attraction), that it becomes so horrific that the individual cannot even conceive of what happened.

And so in many cases of rape in the real world, people never report it because they think it is so demeaning to the self and they can't even confront it in themselves.

In the case of prostitution, that which should be expression of concern, or affection, or love, or commitment to family, becomes a means of making money, a service. And we see such a distortion all across our society, especially in education. Rather than teachers being concerned with society or with students, or with family, it becomes just a means to produce money. Maybe you are not selling your body but you are selling your soul.

Geopolitics & Empire: I wanted to have you unpack COVID-1984, as I call it, and basically the same thesis I've held from the very beginning, January, 2020, you put into words, I never viewed that there was a pandemic at all. My theory is that it was planned, this whole event. It was either some low key bio weapon or it was entirely manufactured from whole cloth. Either way, there was no pandemic. We just could have just gone on with our lives normally.

You wrote recently on your Substack, and I recommend people read this article, the links will be in the description. You say, "Operation COVID-19 was a global coup d'état disguise as a pandemic that was launched against China and the world in December, 2019. And that continues onto the present."

You say that, the reality is that a tiny group of key players representing the super-rich in the US and in China coordinate closely to promote COVID lockdowns in China. And you say that everywhere they were applying this digital dictatorship. This is my interpretation. All the nations did it. I was living in Kazakhstan, I fled through the US to Mexico. I observed the creation of the "algorithm ghetto" social credit system, the "electronic concentration camp" passports, QR codes, and mandatory injections. And in some places you couldn't even buy food without it. It's like the Book of Revelation. You can't buy or sell without the mark.

Emanuel Pastreich: That's true.

Geopolitics & Empire: I some places they say you can't even go to the public park without vaccine certificates. I can see that it's a global elite that has no allegiance to nationality. It's the US elite, it's the Chinese elite. And they use, as you said, these private tech IT

companies that are already embedded within all of our countries. We're basically being run by big tech. Could you tell us more about how you see COVID?

Emanuel Pastreich: Well, I think you've described it quite accurately there. I maybe just add a few words to say how it works. I think one of the key aspects of this takeover has to do with the concept of government. So we're being fed this narrative by the controlled opposition that says government is bad, inherently bad, and all the bad things happen because of evil politicians or bad government. Now, obviously, government is bad these days, but if you say that government cannot possibly serve a purpose, meet the needs of the people, that this is a nihilistic and depressing perspective. I think that view is being force-fed to us by those power elites in order to discourage us from trying to organize ourselves and to create government. That is the first thing I would say.

The second part is the takeover of local government, and central governments, around the world by these IT companies. So, whether it's in Sichuan province or it's in Oklahoma, local governments are lobbied and then intimidated, bribed and threatened, in order to get these IT companies to run government for them. So whereas you previously had government officials, good and bad, who basically made the decisions based upon various pressures from around them in the community, now you have just one or two government officials, the president or the governor, or whatever. And their job is to outsource the budget to these IT companies who run everything for them. This happened to universities; it happened elsewhere.

This is a profound transformation. So essentially when you see a message that says, the government does this, or this is the government, or this QR code is scanned by the government, in fact, there's no government behind it. It's not government in any sense of the word. It's a totalitarian dictatorship run by these global IT companies.

And they have some tricks to hide their tracks, but it's not that hard to figure out. Basically Amazon, Google, Alibaba, there are 10 or so big players are taking over the world. And then there are smaller customized players. For example, as I mentioned, in Israel we have Black Cube and other customized private intelligence firms that facilitate the transformation. I think they were very much involved in what's happened in China. I was criticized for this for not giving the evidence for this transformation in China, but just take my word for it.

I'd be happy to give you the evidence at some future date. But they also were very much involved in it.

And so we need to combine the evidence from these precedents. On the one hand, we have the research from DARPA and from RAND from the 1960s and 70s, how to modify people's behavior and also how to take over basically the government through this privatization drive. Then we have the research from Guantanamo Bay and the so-called torture programs after 2001 in which experiments were carried out (Naomi Klein describes this in some detail) on how to modify behavior through isolation, i.e social distancing, masks, and other forms of repeated ritual behavior.

These rituals associated with COVID-19 are meant to be meaningless and fraudulent, and most importantly, the person involved at some level knows that the rituals (like wearing a mask) are fraudulent—but he still does them. And that action of participation in one's own destruction degrades the ability to resist. So you can create very passive environments through those policies.

Those two strategies were combined with some understanding of AI and how it could be used to induce a passive, narcissistic, self-indulgent and decadent culture among people, especially in the mid-level ruling class. I discussed this in my article, “the terrarium economy.” We see in America this fake ruling class, people who went to Harvard and they become lawyers and doctors. They own three million, five million, \$10 million in assets and a house by the beach or in France or in Italy.

They think they’re the ruling class, but it’s a fraud. The ruling class are these people who control basically the means of production and they control the nature of money. Those people are worth hundreds of billions. We don’t even know how much they’re worth because they make it up for themselves.

But for those people, the billionaires, the difference between a lawyer who has \$10 million in assets and a homeless person is the difference between a roly poly and a spider. We are all bugs from their perspective. They know, based upon the reports they receive from their private intelligence and strategy teams, that by creating this false terrarium economy wherein there’s an imagined ruling class headed by someone like Biden, and it also contains a lot of poor people in it so as to create a visible little conflicts among us, that you can blind people to the fact that the whole system is all enclosed and controlled by this elite group.

And finally, much of the analysis that could be helpful for understanding economics is prohibited.

I hate to stress Marxist analysis because I’m not really a Marxist, but I’m also practical. Whatever approach works I will use—as I told Josh Jadwin the other day.

Marxist economics can be extremely helpful. I don’t think we should dismiss it just because we have some bias fed to us by the controlled opposition. We’re trapped in this system wherein the ideology is controlled by these people, as is the means of production, the means of distribution, the means of communication, and money itself is controlled by them.

And they’re dumbing us down. I think we have supercomputers doing this. They’ve calculated how fast or how slow to move towards the totalitarian system, how to create false conflicts like how Trump is excluded from Twitter, or whatever—all irrelevant. But it works because people’s thinking has been so degraded by technology. In fact, technology like Facebook or Twitter is designed to degrade your ability to think.

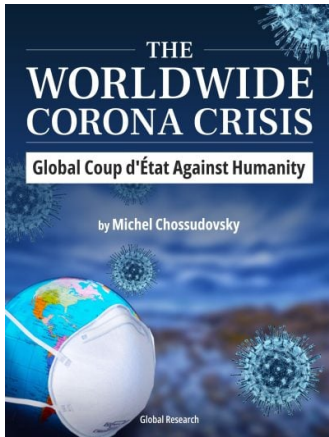
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Emanuel Pastreich served as the president of the Asia Institute, a think tank with offices in Washington DC, Seoul, Tokyo and Hanoi. Pastreich also serves as director general of the Institute for Future Urban Environments. Pastreich declared his candidacy for president of the United States as an independent in February, 2020.

He is a regular contributor to Global Research.



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by Michel Chossudovsky

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