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Public Opinion Research in Political Science

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Abstract

Since the late nineteenth century, the tension generated by the lumping of subjective and personal *opinion* with objective and common *public* as a single concept is matter that urged scholars to provide a comprehensive definition of public opinion. This article is intended to trace the history of the modern study of public opinion in political science. It begins with a description of the early theoretical works and their attempts to investigate the mass public through systematic and normative analyses, and then focuses on the individual and psychological dimension examined by contemporary empirical works. The article draws some conclusions on both the main achievements and the most manifested limitations that this branch of political analysis must overcome in order to better understand the relationship between public opinion and democratic governance.

Keywords: Public Opinion – Mass Belief – Responsiveness – Empirical Research – Opinion Surveys

The concept of ‘public opinion’ is intrinsically controversial. Literally, it is composed of the juxtaposition of two terms that seem to be in open contradiction. On the one hand, the element of publicity implies an aggregate phenomenon, that is, the existence of a collective entity which is something different from the mere sum of single units. On the other hand, the term ‘opinion’ is strictly related to the individual subjectivity. Indeed, an opinion is a judgement of evaluation that may be rational as well as instinctive, stable or volatile, expressed or unspoken. Because of these intrinsic and ambiguous features, it seems to concern the private dimension of an individual rather than the majority belief of a group.

Since the late nineteenth century, the tension generated by the lumping of subjective and personal ‘opinion’ with objective and common ‘public’ as a single concept urged scholars to provide a comprehensive definition of public opinion. This requirement became even more relevant with the emergence of the empirical approach in social sciences. As Lazarsfeld (1957) reminds us, in a thoughtful and informative paper, after the First World War, an interesting confrontation emerged between the so-called empiricists and the exponents of the classical tradition (e.g., Lindsay Rogers and Herbert Blumer), with the latter group essentially accusing the former of using the expression *public opinion* without offering a sound definition of the term. Nonetheless, the event that more than any other put a strong emphasis on the study of mass opinion was the rise of the democratic state. Since democratic regimes were supposed to represent and be held accountable to their people, not only historians and sociologists, but also political scientists started investigating the mass public as a crucial force for the consolidation and stability of a modern democracy. Political commentators and, suddenly, political researchers began to describe the specific features of public opinion within a democracy: the nature of mass beliefs, values and attitudes and the way these are formed

and distributed, as well as the relationship between the public and political leaders. Independently from their specific goals, all of these works were aimed at discovering the characteristics of public opinion and defining its effective role in politics.

This article intends to trace the history of the modern study of public opinion in political science. It is divided into four main parts. The first part presents the early theoretical works and their attempts to investigate the mass public through a systematic and normative perspective. The second part introduces the development of the empirical approach and shows how the scope of research has gradually expanded to address not only the nature of the mass belief system but also the relationship between public opinion and the political process. The third part focuses on contemporary empirical works and their attention to the individual and psychological (rather than the social) dimension of public opinion. The fourth and final part is devoted to the internationalization of public opinion research and the spread of this discipline from the United States to the rest of contemporary democracies. Finally, the article draws some conclusions both on the main achievements and the most manifested limitations that this branch of political analysis must inevitably overcome in order to better understand the relationship between public opinion and democratic governance.

EARLY THEORETICAL WORKS IN PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH (FROM BRYCE TO DEWEY)

Although the concept of 'public opinion' has a fairly long and rich history¹, the first study that comprehensively treats this collective entity as a crucial force of the democratic system is James Bryce's *The American Commonwealth* (1888). As Michael Korzi's study of the roots of American public opinion research highlights, this seminal work "anticipated [...] debates and problems that would [have] inform[ed] later studies" (Korzi 2000, 51). In general, Bryce focused on three major facets of public opinion, the same that subsequent scholars considered in debating the meaning of public opinion in politics. These facets are, respectively: the competence of the public, the constitution of public opinion, and the relationship of public opinion with opinion leaders (i.e., the role of public opinion in the democratic political process).

Bryce's major finding was that the mass public lacked any general interest in politics. Nonetheless, despite the uninterested and incompetent character of public opinion in relation to political issues, the author argued that a distinction had to be made between 'sentiment' and 'thought'. While the public was rich with the former, it seemed to lack the latter. Since sentiment was more important than thought for political judgement, and given that common people were generally of sound 'sentiment', he concluded that mass participation in the political process was nothing which should generate either alarm or preoccupation. On the contrary, it was what the concept of democracy prescribed for a correct management of political power. Indeed, according to Bryce, mass public dominated American politics and this predominantly happened through political parties.

Although the idea of an influential public was shared by other authors, it did not always lead them to the same conclusion. In the early decades of the twentieth century, A. Lawrence Lowell and Walter Lippmann respectively published *Public opinion and Popular*

¹ Some scholars claim that public opinion research originated with the *cahiers* of the French Revolution when the opinion of the public was opposed to the power of a small elite. Others, instead, point either to the first known example of opinion poll, conducted by two newspapers (i.e., the Harrisburg Pennsylvanian and the Raleigh Star) in 1824, or to the first courses in marketing.

Government (1913) and *Public Opinion* (1922). The former study, which can be considered as the first systematic attempt to investigate the relationship between public opinion and the national government, described a not so different public from that depicted by Bryce, concluding that the role of people in public affairs should be delimited only when necessary. Conversely, the latter argued that because of the incapability of the mass public to manage daily political information and because of the public's negative impact on the decision-making process, public opinion's role in politics had to be severely constrained. This initiative would have avoided incoherent and erratic initiatives that, according to the author, were unequivocally caused by the strong influence played by the mass public on the political process. Since the common citizen did not possess the necessary instruments – if not the use of simplification, generalization and stereotypes – to deal with the myriad of stimuli produced by a modern society, he/she was unable to deal with the complexity of political issues.

Lippmann's pessimism was partially mitigated by John Dewey's *The Public and Its Problems* (1927). Here, the public was considered to be capable of making judgement and, therefore, there were no reasons to exclude this force from the political process. What people needed, instead, was to be provided with the necessary resources for becoming more competent, informed, and active than they seemed to be at that time. Although Dewey – as well as Lippmann and Lowell – described public opinion as a collection of aggregated individual opinions, he nonetheless emphasised the interactive aspects of the concept. In a few words, Dewey pointed out that social relations had a strong impact in shaping individuals. Public opinion, therefore, was the result of the interactive behaviour of individuals and groups who were rooted in traditions, cultures, and institutions. This statement led the author to depict the general public as a composite of smaller and diverse publics and to conclude that it was misleading to speak of this entity as a mere aggregation of individual opinions.

Dewey's holistic interpretation of the notion of public opinion will also be present in what can be considered as the first attempts to provide an empiricist solution to the study of public opinion. Indeed, while the early theoretical works manifested a normative and speculative approach, the subsequent studies focused on the individual and his socio-psychological attributes. The adoption of this new approach was possible thanks to many innovations in research methods, first and foremost, the development of the scientific opinion poll.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EMPIRICAL APPROACH

Shortly before the beginning of the Second World War, stimulated by commercial communication research² and the introduction of a new tool for measuring public attitudes, that is, the modern opinion poll, many researchers involved in the study of democratic politics became interested in the theory and method of opinion measurement. Most of these studies may be dated back to the mid-1930s when the first issue of the *Public Opinion Quarterly* was published and the American Institute of Public Opinion (AIPO), just founded

² Commercial communication research, which remained almost entirely quantitative, developed in the United States between 1910 and 1920 and was mainly interested in measuring the size and the characteristics of radio audience and newspaper readers (see Crossley 1957 for a descriptive analysis of the role of the mass media in the development of public opinion research).

by George Gallup, demonstrated that the views of the public could be scientifically determined through the use of a system of interviewing based on accurate samples³.

As soon as the polling technique was refined through the consolidation of sampling and interviewing techniques, both the methodological criteria and the issues that public opinion research had previously adopted and investigated changed drastically. Gradually, normative theoretical concerns were substituted by methodological problems as well as systemic-holistic analyses by studies conducted at the individual level. This process was undoubtedly influenced by the idea that social scientists could finally have at their own disposal an advanced research tool, like their naturalist colleagues. Although the adoption of the experimental method was still far from being achieved, the fact that individual attitudes could be quantitatively measured brought many researchers to embrace this new discipline.

By the 1940s, public opinion research considerably broadened both in method and in scope and a proliferating literature emerged in this field. Considering the extraordinary number of articles, papers, essays, and books that have been published since then, a thorough review of all these works is impossible to do. Nonetheless, I will try to summarise the main tendencies and interests in the discipline by presenting the most important and representative works.

As mentioned before, many of the studies published between the 1940s and the 1960s focused on the psychological and social characteristics of the individual to explain aggregate social patterns. Opinions were described as "reactions of individuals [which could not] be allocated to publics without becoming ambiguous and unintelligible for research" (Allport 1937, 8-9). The conception of a public opinion as monolithic force or 'great voice' was abandoned. On the contrary, the dynamics of the public opinion process were seen as lying within a more complex framework of collective systems of events where the interaction of different individuals, with their roles and capacities, contributed to defining the structure of the collective action (Allport 1940, 251). In this sense, Childs (1939) defined public opinion as "any collection of individual opinions, regardless of the degree of agreement or uniformity. The degree of uniformity [was] a matter to be investigated, [rather than] something to be arbitrarily set up as a condition for the existence of public opinion" (1939, 332).

Besides these operational concerns, efforts were made to improve survey research techniques. Statisticians, psychometricians (e.g., Harold Gulliksen, Rensis Likert, Louis Leon Thurstone), and even mathematicians contributed to the development of a scientific method in data collection and interpretation, but the main debate concerned the use (and to some, the abuse) of polls in public opinion research. On the one hand, scholars such as Herbert Blumer (1948) and Lindsay Rogers (1949) questioned the ability of the pollsters to gauge public attitudes, starting from the premise that public opinion was much more than the aggregated opinions of individuals. According to these authors, this entity could not be described without referring to relations and institutional processes from which it was originated. On the other hand, public opinion researchers (e.g., most of the members of the new American Association for Public Opinion Research)⁴ offered a different formulation of the problem, arguing that polls not only provided a crucial tool for studying public attitudes

³ Although national polls on electoral issues had been already introduced by private companies and national magazines (e.g., the Farm Journal and the Literary Digest), Gallup's organization had the merit to show the importance of scientific method in describing public opinion's preferences. In 1936 the AIPO succeeded in predicting the outcome of presidential election, a difficult objective in which other companies had clearly failed.

⁴ The constitution of the AAPOR was formalised on September 4, 1947. In 1948 the *Public Opinion Quarterly* became the official journal of the association.

and preferences but that they also represented an additional mean to show what the people thought of the government's policies and other political issues.

However, the political and sociological perspectives that had led early theoretical works on public opinion gradually disappeared. Consistently with the behaviorist approach that dominated the whole discipline at the time, sociological and psychological processes were becoming the topic of modern research and the survey the instrument used to discover and interpret them.

The 1960s started with the publication of two important works interested in the study of the psychological bases of opinion formation: Campbell et al.'s *The American Voter* (1960)⁵ and Philippe Converse's "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics" (1964). As the title suggests, the former study took "the individual's voting act as a starting point [... and, then,] moved backward in time and outward from political influences to trace the intricate pattern of causality leading to behaviour at the polls" (Campbell et al. 1960, p.521)⁶. Among the conclusions of this group of scholars⁷, based on an attentive study of election survey data (the National Election Studies), was that party identification played a relevant role in voters' decision to cast their ballots. Nevertheless, the American public was 'innocent of ideology', that is, it did not generally think in ideological terms. This argument was developed in Converse's article, in which he claimed that "the common citizen fails to develop more global points of view about politics. A realistic picture of political belief systems in the mass public, [therefore, was] not one that omit[ted] issues and policy demands completely nor one that presume[d] widespread ideological coherence; it [was] rather one that capture[d] with some fidelity the fragmentation, narrowness, and diversity of these demands" (Converse 1964, 247). Such a view derived from one of the main Converse's master themes: the "nonattitudes hypothesis". In a few words, Converse argued that large numbers of the public did not hold any view on major political issues, but when asked their opinion, they expressed one anyway. The reason for this ambiguous behaviour laid in the fact that people were interested in avoiding the embarrassment of appearing ignorant or negligent. These counterfeit attitudes, called by Converse "nonattitudes"⁸, were presented as pervasive features of the political thinking of mass publics, and they were negatively related to the level of political awareness and information.

Unquestionably, both of these works established a baseline for most of the following studies in public opinion. In particular, their statements over the (ir)rational and (un)sophisticated nature of the mass public caused a fervent debate over the forces that affect individual's political behaviour in contemporary democracies and the characteristics of this actor.

The different streams of study that developed from these themes included a large body of methodological research, and distinct models of public opinion were generated even in political science. While some scholars followed Converse's reasoning and described public opinion as an artefact of polls (Bourdieu 1979; Ginsberg 1986; see also Herbst 1993), others minimised the "nonattitude" problem, attributing the largest part of response inconsistency either to measurement errors (Achen 1975; Erikson 1979; Jackson 1983) or data misinterpretations (Key 1966; Brody & Page 1975; Page 1978). Finally, some others openly

⁵ See also Converse (1962).

⁶ This passage is also quoted in Korzi (2000, p.63).

⁷ The authors were colleagues at the University of Michigan.

⁸ This term, however, was coined in a subsequent study: see Converse (1970).

questioned Converse's theory, assessing that the general public's collective preferences were neither meaningless and self-contradictory opinions nor random "nonattitudes". By contrast, they were rational, stable, and coherent preferences whose possible and predictable changes could not be described as mood-driven reactions to the interviewer's stimuli but, rather, as sensible adjustments to the new conditions and information that had been communicated to the public (Shapiro & Page 1988; Page & Shapiro 1992). In this sense, and to better understand the function exercised by modern mass media in shaping citizens' attitudes, public opinion research started investigating how and to what extent news coverage could affect public preferences (McCombs & Shaw 1972; Iyengar et al. 1982; Kernell 1986; Iyengar & Kinder 1987; Page et al. 1987; Brody 1991; Jordan & Page 1992; Jordan 1993).

In sum, if in the 1960s, the picture that most of the researchers gave of the public was not really different from that of the early theoretical works (i.e., a volatile, ill-informed, capricious and incoherent public opinion), by the 1970s and, more impressively, during the 1980s, scholars involved in the field described another public. This second phase of public opinion research ended with the publication of a monumental work, that is, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* by John R. Zaller (1992), which set the bases for a new theory of public opinion.

Briefly, what Zaller argued was that the problem with public opinion was not, as Converse had suggested, that citizens have too few ideas. It was, Zaller contended, just the opposite. Most people, indeed, have many ideas on all sides of different (political) issues. But these ideas are stored in memory without placing them in any order and without verifying a consistency among them. When questioned about a problem, the common man directs his attention to one idea or the other in relation to the relevance of the problem. Therefore, each time he is asked a question (even the same question but in different contexts), he can select different considerations from his memory in answering. Question wording and ordering would have a great impact in this process because they force people to focus their attention on certain aspects of the problem rather than on others. Thus, sampling considerations from memory would be the pivotal mechanism underlying nonattitudes, a mechanism which can explain the instability of people's response probabilities. This explanatory model, however, would not exclude the hypothesis that politically sophisticated respondents (i.e., those who are more interested in politics) might have a more stable response pattern than the unsophisticated ones. It is highly likely, in fact, that the balance of considerations that are present in the formers' mind, which is used for answering survey questions, will be differently exposed to external pressures and changes in political communication than the ideas ordered by the latter group of respondents.

CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH AND THE GROWING INTEREST IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PUBLIC OPINION AND POLITICS

In the concluding chapter of his volume, Zaller (1992) addressed the possibilities of elite domination of public opinion with a sharp eye towards issues of democratic governance. Although the theme was not unknown to public opinion research, it consolidated an emerging tendency of contemporary studies. Taking as their starting point some theoretical models that suggested a substantial impact of citizens' preferences on the policy-making process (e.g., Downs 1957), since the late 1980s, a group of scholars began to investigate the relationship between public opinion and politics both in a 'top-down' and 'bottom-up'

perspective. On one hand, studying the way with which the public assimilated and responded to elite-supplied information and leadership cues, they recognised the unavoidable dependence of mass opinion on the information and analyses carried out in the elite discourse. It followed that individuals and institutions which provided information and factual interpretations of political events played a key role in structuring public's policy preferences. Such a consideration, which was largely in contrast with what scholars had stated in the previous decades⁹, implied that public opinion could be misled and even manipulated if provided with incorrect, biased, or selective information (Brody 1991; Page & Shapiro 1992; Zaller 1992; Jacobs & Shapiro 2000). On the other hand, empirical studies demonstrated that the public (now considered as a collective body) was able to affect the policy-making process of a democratic country. Page and Shapiro (1983) found that significant changes in the American public's preferences were followed by congruent changes in policy about two-thirds of the time¹⁰. Similarly, Stimson discovered a strict correlation between shifts in public mood and government policies (Stimson 1991, 2004). Although any influence of public opinion on the process of policy formation was traditionally regarded with scepticism by policy analysts and policy development researchers (Kingdon 1984; Skocpol 1995, 1996), public opinion scholars demonstrated that the public's sentiment mattered in the policy-making process. Political leaders proved this by taking this actor in strong consideration when they made decisions¹¹.

At this point it must be noted that most of these studies adopted not only quantitative research strategies and survey techniques, but they also made use of qualitative methods to verify the results of the last 40 years' research and offer new methodological perspectives in the study of public opinion. Interestingly, this innovation was concomitant with a greater and more systematic attention to the linkages between the mass public and decision-makers. Although the study of the psychological dynamics which move the public's attitudes still represented a crucial topic, these works had the merit to fill an important gap existing in literature. Public opinion research manifested a vivid interest in the reciprocal influence that the masses and the elites have on each other.

Moreover, especially after the demise of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War era, a number of scholars began to examine the public's attitudes in relation to foreign policy issues (Shapiro & Page 1988; Jentleson 1992; Nincic 1992; Larson 1996; Oneal et al. 1996; Holsti 1996) and the impact that popular sentiments could produce on the management of this policy area. Although the opinion of the public was not necessarily presented as a decisive factor for the undertaking and enactment of a particular foreign policy action, it was shown that public beliefs were sometimes able to influence the way in which a democratic government behaved in foreign affairs (Russett 1990; Powlick 1991; Risse-Kappen 1991; Morgan & Bickers 1992).

THE INTERNATIONALISATION OF PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

Much of the debate on opinion patterns has been centred on the American public. Less attention, instead, has been devoted to other democratic contexts. Several factors have

⁹ Lazarsfeld, for instance, considered the media effect as 'minimal'. Consequently, also the danger that political elites could exploit the media to manipulate mass opinion was minimal as well.

¹⁰ See also Page (1994) and Monroe (1998).

¹¹ See Manza and Cook (2002) and Burstein (2003) for a review of these works.

contributed to this situation. Nevertheless, three of them seem to have exercised the greatest influence.

First, it must be noted that with few notable exceptions (i.e., the United Kingdom and, to some extent, France), opinion polls have developed in the rest of the world with an evident delay when compared to the United States. Moreover, the spread of the survey method would have been very difficult if it had not been for the support provided by some American institutions. After the Second World War, for instance, the U.S. Defence Department sponsored the establishment of survey units in Germany and Japan in order to test these publics' sentiments and to train an embryonic group of survey researchers in these new democracies. Then, the expansion of U.S. business activities and the interest of some American academics in carrying out early experiments of local and cross-national research allowed this research field to progress in other democratic countries. George Gallup and his AIPO were largely responsible for the internationalisation of opinion polling. Between the 1930s and the 1940s, they promoted and financed their work through a network of independent agencies which had agreed to trade data and methodologies. In this way, survey research slowly emerged in Australia, Britain, Canada, France, West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and the Scandinavian countries. Cross-national and multinational research efforts were also made in Japan and Latin America and, by the end of the 1970s, polls were being conducted in all European countries¹², many communist nations, and in numerous Third World countries.

The second factor for a research mainly focused on the American public is partially connected with the first factor in that each of them conditioned the persistence of the other in the early stages of the discipline. Since the overwhelming majority of political scientists involved in this field were Americans, their main interests concerned the study of the nature of American public opinion and its role in U.S. politics. Only a few of them, indeed, tried either to analyse mass attitudes in other democracies or to compare different publics¹³. If, on the one hand, this situation was undoubtedly (albeit not totally) due to the unavailability of data for these publics, on the other hand, it contributed to the persistent indifference of the American research for comparative studies. Only the spread of scientific opinion polling along with a collaborative research effort between American and (mainly) European scholars allowed the internationalisation of public opinion studies between the 1980s and the 1990s (e.g., Eichenberg 1989; Wilcox et al. 1993; Sobel 1996; Nacos et al. 2000).

The third factor deals with the major institutional feature of the American political system. Since the president is directly elected by the people, the government, the opposition, and political analysts have a common interest in understanding the mechanics which link a leader with his/her electorate, even if this interest is motivated by different reasons. If we start from the premise that the final goal of a president is to be re-elected and that of the opposition is to avoid such an eventuality, we can figure out how the understanding of public opinion is important for politics. This is not to say that in parliamentary political systems governments and other elite groups are not concerned with the public's sentiment, but that the institutionalisation of a direct connection between the highest governmental office and the mass public makes the person who holds the presidency more attentive to what the

¹² The Eurobarometer programme, founded in the early 1970s and regularized in 1974, had a key role in monitoring the evolution of public opinion in the European Economic Community's member states.

¹³ Furthermore, non-American scholars who became involved in the discipline often preferred to investigate the relationship between the public and politics in a world superpower rather than starting new research initiatives in smaller and less powerful countries.

people think of his/her performance. This direct connection would also explain the great number of works that American scholars have produced on the subject of presidential popularity – a topic which seems to be much less interesting for most of their European colleagues.

However, as noticed above, these factors did not prevent public opinion research from being established in other countries. In the past twenty years, as progress in technology and polling methodology extended the usefulness, timeliness, and accuracy of poll findings, this discipline experienced a rapid growth.

In modern democracies, public opinion research and polling information are used by officials and politicians to ascertain popular views on various issues, to detect changes in public opinion, to anticipate how the electorate will respond to policy shifts, to verify their own popularity rates as well as those of their adversaries, and for many other purposes¹⁴. Although research suggests that policymakers' responsiveness to public opinion is rather complex and difficult to disentangle, a growing body of studies has pointed to the linkage between politics and public opinion. The interest of the academic community in this discipline is also demonstrated by the number of research centres created within (or associated with) faculties of political science. Nowadays, almost every university in the United States and Europe offers undergraduate and graduate courses in public opinion. Moreover, experts are constantly recruited by mass media, polling agencies, political parties, governments, and other institutions to carry out public opinion analysis.

In sum, public opinion research is experiencing significant development. This does not mean that limitations do not affect the study of mass attitudes. Rather, it means that realistic expectations for improvement exist. Let's see what they are.

CONCLUSION

This brief overview aimed at presenting the main works produced by public opinion research in relation to political issues. Three dominant research traditions have characterised this discipline. The first tradition, which began in the late nineteenth century and lasted until the mid-1930s, saw the emergence of early theoretical works interested in the aggregate study of the mass public. Following a normative approach, scholars such as Bryce, Lowell, Lippmann, and Dewey focused on the sociological and political aspects of this collective actor to describe its effective role within a modern democracy. Although the picture that emerged was not that of an informed, competent, and rational public, some of these authors argued that people's role in public affairs should not be constrained. By contrast, they claimed that people had to be informed and educated for acquiring more political competence and for becoming more participative in politics.

The second tradition shared the idea of a fickle and unsophisticated public. However, scholars belonging to this school of thought did not specifically address the problem of the existing relationship between public opinion and democratic governance. Strongly influenced by the new empiricist methods, their studies were psychologically driven without any substantial interest in politics and democratic theory. If these research efforts contributed to the development of better methodological tools to study the nature of mass public's beliefs, they did not allow public opinion research to progress in the field of political science.

¹⁴ For an overview of the growing use of polls by political elite, see Geer (1996).

Only in the 1980s such a psychological/individual paradigm was substituted by more systematic attention towards the linkages between the mass public and decision-makers. This evolution set the basis for a new research tradition. The study of public opinion – a concept which was intended to be essentially connected to the process of governing – gained renewed meaning, purpose, and direction. As Korzi assesses, this may be described as “an effort to understand not just the ‘micro-politics’ of public opinion, but also the ‘macro-politics’” (Korzi 2000, p.74), that is, the political dimension of the mass public. Thanks to this effort, the debate on the normative implications of public opinion research was stimulated and new results contributed to widening the analytical perspective of this discipline.

Nevertheless, despite the intrinsic importance of a strong intermingling of public opinion and psychological research, the two fields often continue to diverge in their trajectories: the former more centred on the origin of individual belief systems, the latter more interested in aggregate public opinion patterns. Without any doubt, this represents a first limitation for the full understanding of the role of people’s attitudes in contemporary governing processes.

It must be noted that this deficiency only partially coincides with another methodological problem: the separation between qualitative and quantitative research strategies. However, it is unquestionable that, once the distance between normative and empiricist methods was reduced, a contrast emerged between those who mainly relied on quantitative survey methodology to infer about public’s perceptions of political events and those who preferred the use of qualitative tools to examine individual thought processes. If some researchers interested in the study of the relationship between the public and political elites contributed to filling this gap by demonstrating the benefits of adopting both strategies, a clear distinction between them is still being made. Although this seems to be necessary from a strictly methodological point of view, sometimes it was one of the major causes for poor results. Indeed, public opinion research could substantially benefit from a methodological framework which makes use of quantitative and qualitative strategies.

Both of these gaps should be seriously addressed in future research initiatives. Progress in the study of public opinion and politics depends to a considerable degree on the development of projects which combine different research approaches. Only in this way we will be able to synthesise the results of different studies, increasing both their external and internal validity. On the one hand, the separation between aggregate and individual analyses should be overcome by establishing new points of contact between these perspectives, which are both fundamentally intended to study the relationship between public opinion and political elites. On the other hand, the adoption of qualitative and quantitative techniques may provide an extraordinary opportunity to obtain new information on networks, forces, and processes which underpin the linkage between opinion and policy-making.

In sum, the need for broad gauge opinion studies is a really important one. A valuable thinking on the relation between governmental decision and public opinion clearly depends on the joining of different research trends. Although this task does not seem particularly easy to accomplish, it is undoubtedly a worthwhile endeavour. Whether and how this proposal could be included in the agenda for future research and, then, translated into effective projects is a matter of debate.

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Neoconservatism and American Foreign Policy

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Abstract

Neoconservatism has been clearly visible in domestic American politics since the late 1960s, though it has only come to the fore internationally in recent years due to the heavily neoconservative influenced direction of the Bush administration in its formative years after 9/11, principally through its prosecution of its War on Terror and via the rhetoric of the President himself. As a much misunderstood term, subject to media jingoism and heated partisan rhetoric in every corner of the globe, this article establishes exactly what neoconservatism is in relation to foreign policy via a reading of key neoconservative literature and corresponding critiques. Subsequently, using the Bush administration as an example, the article evaluates how neoconservative foreign policy postulates are transferred into reality during the War on Terror. Finally the analysis reaches beyond the Bush administration establishing whether a neoconservative legacy remains active in the present day under the Obama administration.

Keywords: Neoconservatism – War on Terror – Bush Doctrine – American Foreign Policy – Neoconservative Legacy

Neoconservatism is something of a chimera in modern politics. For its opponents it is a distinct political movement which emphasizes the blending of military power with Wilsonian idealism (Mearsheimer 2005), yet for its supporters it is more of a 'persuasion' that individuals of many types drift into and out of (Kristol 1995, ix). Regardless of which explanation is more correct than the other, it is now widely accepted that the neoconservative impulse has been visible in modern American foreign policy, particularly within the George W. Bush administration, and that it has left a distinct impact. This article will first explore the neoconservative ideology as it applies to foreign policy, establishing the domestic foundations on which it was built. Secondly, examples of the implementation of neoconservative ideas into reality will then be analysed, most notably through the examination of the War on Terror, and the relationship between America and Israel. Finally, the article will assess whether after a change of administration in 2009, any of the neoconservative legacy remains alive in American politics.

¹ The author wishes to express thanks for the perceptive comments made on the first draft of this article by the two anonymous reviewers.

NEOCONSERVATISM

Neoconservatism became a distinct ideology, or *persuasion*, in the aftermath of the cultural unrest and university riots in the United States during the late 1960s. A group of largely working class Jewish American intellectuals based in New York, most notably Irving Kristol, interpreted the situation at the time as modern liberalism attacking its own foundations and moral integrity in favour of mass social revisionism. In Kristol's own words:

"Liberals were wrong, liberals are wrong, because they are liberals. What is wrong with liberalism is liberalism – a metaphysics and a mythology that is woefully blind to human and political reality" (Murray 2005, 45).

For Kristol, then, reality was such that mankind was naturally evil. Socialism had failed, so the solution was the pursuit of a non secular liberal democracy that addressed the crisis of relativism (Murray 2005, 46-47). To paraphrase Allan Bloom, American minds had become so open that they had become closed (Bloom 1987, 337-339). The early neoconservatives sought to reorient the United States domestic politics by harnessing the readymade moral foundations that religion provided, without necessarily being religious themselves, and mould that together with Platonist ideology via the reading provided by Leo Strauss. Indeed Strauss is often cited as the ideological father of neoconservatism, although within the persuasion his influence is often downplayed (Murray 2005, 37). The use of religion was simply due to the fact that the Judeo-Christian moral package provided a clear sense of right and wrong that could be harnessed. Finding morality through secularist ideals would lead to moral bankruptcy, crime and underachievement (Kristol 1995, 365). In the true Platonic sense, the neoconservatives had realised what was best for America and they felt it their duty to steer the misguided populace, and later the world via neoconservative application in foreign policy, to their senses.

Having found an identity in the domestic political sphere, foreign policy postulates followed. Irving Kristol describes three central pillars: a strong idea of patriotism, a round rejection of anything resembling or pointing towards a world government, including round rejection of the United Nations and NATO – which were "on their way to becoming moribund" (Kristol 2003, 367), and finally the view that statesmen should clearly distinguish friends from enemies (Kristol 2003, 2). These pillars are fused with a strong Manichean morality that compels America to use its power for the common good rather than reserve it. This would become viscerally clear in Bush's War on Terror, but it can be identified as far back as in the early Reagan and late Carter administrations according to Francis Fukuyama (2006, 45). In direct opposition to the timely practice of *realpolitik* in foreign affairs, the foreign policy of a country must represent its internal moral character. Maintaining alliances with dictators and unfavourable regimes is therefore abhorrent to neoconservatism. Therefore, American power has been and could be used for 'moral' purposes. Iraq is the stock example in the contemporary era and highlights clearly through the practice of *regime change* and *democratisation*, aided by interventionist military force, how neoconservatism applies to modern foreign policy. Neoconservatism holds the domestic and international sphere to a clear moral and ideological standard and champions the use of militarism to further that standard globally. It does not ignore soft power issues, but rather, "when your only tool is a hammer, all problems look like nails" (Fukuyama 2006, 63). Put more plainly, "the world is adrift, and for our safety it needs to be moored" (Murray 2005, 55). At the turn of the century Neoconservatives believed that they alone possessed the moral and ideological

foundations to successfully direct international relations towards the benefit of all and that the United States was blessed with the unique opportunity to prosecute such an endeavour:

"Americans should understand that their support for American pre-eminence is as much a strike for international justice as any people is capable of making" (Kagan & Kristol 2000, 24).

In the post Cold War era, neoconservatism identifies closely with *The End of History?* thesis (Fukuyama 1989). This presupposes that liberal democracy will spread globally in the wake of the West emerging triumphant in the Cold War, rendering all opposing political orientations obsolete. The support for democratisation and the spread of liberal institutions into non Western areas seems fairly conventional when applied alongside Kantian cosmopolitanism and Doyle's 'democratic peace thesis', however it obtains its distinctive neoconservative flavour when the use of interventionist military policies to affect democratisation of a certain target nation are used to affect and artificially accelerate that process. Indeed, it is the application of this strategy that has caused mass critique of the Bush foreign policy package in the post September 11 world. In 2006, writing on the War on Terror which he describes as "predominantly shaped by neoconservatives" (2006, 3), Francis Fukuyama abandoned his neoconservative persuasion and condemned the use of morality and ideology in foreign policy precisely because America has no remaining moral credibility in the Middle East as a result of past and present actions (2006, 187). That lack of credibility has demonstrably lowered American international standing and led to suspicion that the democratisation efforts are a veil for imperialism and a means to control access to the oil reserves of the Middle East, representing an essentially unchanged regional policy from that of the Cold War era. As the idea of democratisation has both predated and survived the neoconservative era of the Bush administration, justifiable suspicion remains regarding its legitimacy now that it has been tainted with the fallout from the War on Terror through its faltering applications in Afghanistan and Iraq.

THE NEOCONSERVATIVE 'WAR ON TERROR'

The events of September 11 provided the opportunity for those with a neoconservative persuasion to gain prominence in the Bush administration as they were able to offer a readymade logic with which to view the new post 9/11 era and could point to a legacy of literature and. For much of the 1990s, neoconservative literature was expanding in opposition to the New World Order of peace, offering the view that this peace was deceptive. It thus claimed that America should use *The Unipolar Moment* (Krauthammer 1990) to create a *unipolar era* of unrivalled American power projected globally (Kagan 2002, 136-138). This school of thought, although a seemingly marginal position, is validated at least in part by many leading neo-liberal academics. John Ikenberry acknowledged that the global order is an American System based on the proviso that "the United States makes its power safe for the world and in return the world agrees to live within the American system" (Ikenberry 2001, 21). Krauthammer describes the American system more vividly: "unashamedly laying down the rules of world order and being prepared to enforce them" (Krauthammer 1990, 33). Both express no desire for this to change, but Ikenberry does contemplate the potential danger of the overzealous projection of American power recognising that "all this could go sour" (Ikenberry 2001, 31). The souring of this system is the moving away from the multilateral and inclusive posture of the elder Bush (Bush 1) and Clinton administrations towards the unilateral flavoured and confrontational nature of the George W. Bush administration.

To depart momentarily into International Relations semantics, Michael Lind emphasizes the difference between neoliberal *institutionalism* – within which he situates Ikenberry and former President Bill Clinton, and neoliberal *internationalism*. Neoliberal internationalism is, in Lind's description, an evolution of the Roosevelt tradition of self determination and non aggression as the bedrock of international affairs – a similar view to the one upheld by George H. W. Bush. Human Rights, global market liberalisation, and democratisation; all wedded to neoliberal *institutionalism*. They are loftier goals "which should all be promoted by exhortation rather than coercion" (Lind 2006). There is no need to resort to conceptual stretching to identify here a similarity between neoliberal institutionalism and neoconservatism. Both point towards American global hegemony, albeit in different ways. Lind makes this point in expressing that the only difference between the two is that neoliberals are dishonest about admitting their intentions for American power, whilst neoconservatives are open about it. The divergence is over what kind of empire America should have; one disguised through using multilateral institutions and soft power to hide the true reality of American global domination, or a global empire backed by the open use of hard power and unilateralism. Nevertheless, both end goals are in fact similar, which again raises concerns over the true legitimacy of such currently active American foreign policy goals as democratisation. Lind's position is an interesting nuance, and one that suggests that there is much more of a logical flow from Clinton to Bush in their approach to foreign policy, despite the perceived change in structure after 9/11.

Neoconservatives lamented the Clinton years as a period in which America did not capitalise on a once in a lifetime chance to cement its leading position in the world while it stood without any serious competitor. Colin Powell, for example, condemned the Clinton foreign policy decision making process as no more than "a coffee house chatting session" with no dominant voice propelling it (Brzezinski 2007, 87). The fundamental blow that 9/11 struck to the national consciousness was an opportunity to push for a new direction for America and awaken the political establishment from its post Cold War slumber. Quickly after 9/11 President Bush became a convert to the neoconservative persuasion, something clearly visible in his West Point speech of 2002, and even more so in the 2002 National Security Strategy. Both publicly outlined the new Bush foreign policy direction and re-introduced neoconservatism to mainstream American foreign policy. At West Point, Bush made the seminal remark:

"We cannot put our faith in the word of tyrants, who solemnly sign non-proliferation treaties, and then systematically break them. If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long" (Bush 2002).

This statement introduced the policy of preemptive force as a proactive feature of American foreign policy although in both its subsequent use and its description, it was more correctly a policy of *preventive* force – which is a degree of magnitude above preemption and holds greater implications for the structure of the international system, and via international law is widely interpreted as illegal. Later in the same speech, Bush invokes an extreme moral absolutism:

"Some worry that it is somehow undiplomatic or impolite to speak the language of right and wrong. I disagree. Different circumstances require different methods, but not different moralities. Moral truth is the same in every culture, in every time, and in every place" (Bush 2002).

Binding the idea of a moral purpose to foreign policy is not unusual in American politics. However, using it so prominently to define the emerging War on Terror, taken

together with Bush's public disregard for multilateral institutions and his unilateral posture, is without doubt inspired if not directly underwritten by a significant dose of neoconservatism.

Combining the neoconservative persuasion and the Bush administration's policies further, the 2002 National Security Strategy stated that "the war... is a global enterprise of uncertain duration" (The National Security Strategy of the United States of America (NSS) 2002, iii) and that "the only path to peace and security is the path of action" (NSS 2002, IV). In the 2006 NSS, President Bush continued the neoconservative rhetoric despite ongoing difficulty and loss of support in Iraq stating that America has chosen "leadership over isolationism" and endeavours to "shape the world, not merely be shaped by it" (NSS 2006, iii). Much was made of a supposed 'return to realism' from 2006 onwards, most notably watermarked by the departure of Donald Rumsfeld from the Pentagon. However, despite a generally more nuanced rhetoric from the White House owing to increased domestic opposition, falling approval ratings and the Iraq quagmire, the general thrust of the foreign policy package was retained. Additionally, the 2006 NSS document did not simply repeat the vague and generalistic language of the 2002 documents but contained clear and specific threats to 'rogue states' such as Iran. Furthermore, it maintained the provision to extend the use of preventive military action.

NEOCONSERVATISM AND ISLAM

In order to understand the neoconservative focus on the Middle East at the expense of other geo-political theatres, and to explain the receptiveness of George W. Bush to their persuasion, an examination of the controversial works of two academics is necessary: Bernard Lewis and Samuel Huntington. Lewis, a neoconservative, was received at the White House by Karl Rove in November 2001 in order to discuss the subject of his thesis which states that as the current Middle Eastern status quo was created by 'Imperial partition' drawn over and through ancient civilisations, there is a legacy of instability in the region (Lewis 2004, 417). He therefore asserts that this unresolved clash of identities must be addressed as a priority as there are only two possible solutions to the ongoing instability of the region: either Islam or democracy (Lewis 2004, 423). Islam, with its own unique set of legal principles enshrined in Sharia Law is at odds with liberal democracy and, according to Lewis's reading, is therefore mutually exclusive and incompatible. Conflict is therefore inevitable. The established contemporary American position towards the Middle East was primarily status quo oriented. Iraq's advance into Kuwait was repelled but no regime change was attempted; it resulted in the Gulf War doing no more than restoring the status quo. Clinton's whole approach to Iran and Iraq was based on containment and sanctions, not regime change – again perpetuating the status quo. If Lewis's controversial thesis was correct, these policies were enabling a ticking time bomb to threaten America.

Following on, Huntington, who is not a neoconservative, borrows the words of Hedley Bull who stated that the West's 'apogee' was 1900. Since then it has been slowly declining in stature and influence. Bull predicted that as Europe declined after the major World Wars, America would follow suit in the near future as part of a larger inevitable process of rebalancing internationally (Huntington 1997, 83). Huntington wants to categorically dismiss the validity of the neoliberal 'End of History' argument by re-emphasising the possible decline of the West in line with Bull's prediction. In Huntington's eyes a determined

opposition by the other civilisation groupings, most notably those connected with Islam, in a fight for the survival of their (incompatible) way of life through a clash of civilisations is possible – as is the mirrored possibility of a pre-emptive fight by the ‘West’ to halt their own decline. The author thereby develops Lewis’s thesis of a future run either by democracy, or Islam. It is not a wild leap to view the War on Terror as symptomatic of this as viewed from both sides of the fence. This helps to understand why the views expressed in the neoconservative literature thus far analysed that advocated the need for American dominance and unrivalled strength were seen as necessary, and seen as all the more urgent after 9/11. From this perspective, American policy towards the Middle East would have to change significantly, and it did.

Iran is the only logical candidate for a leader of such a theoretical ‘Islamic force’ to oppose the ‘West’. A nuclear armed Iran would make that threat more alarming; and given the blurring of the lines between proliferation, state sponsored terrorism, and the rise in religious extremism in the post 9/11 era, Iran would become an existential threat for the United States and its designs for the Middle East. Of course this train of thought grossly underestimates the deep divisions in the Islamic world, prominently the Shi’a composition of Iran (as opposed to the vast majority of Muslims belonging to the Sunni branch of Islam) and their predominantly Persian rather than Arab ethnicity. Nevertheless, Norman Podhoretz insists that America must take military action to end Iran’s nuclear programme. This is necessary as September 11th marked the beginning of World War IV (the Cold War being the third) and Islamofascism is merely the most recent mutation of the totalitarian disease that has plagued the Twentieth Century (Podhoretz 2007, 17). America must destroy Iran to stop it creating an “Islamofascist” world order (Podhoretz 2007, 20). Extreme as it is, this sentiment was directly voiced by Bush in 2005:

“The militants believe that controlling one country will rally the Muslim masses, enabling them to overthrow all moderate governments in the region and establish a radical Islamic empire that spans from Spain to Indonesia”²

That Islamic Empire, an *Islamic Caliphate*, dedicated to bringing Islamic law and teachings to the entire world, is the manifestation of the fears of Podhoretz. It precisely underlines the extremity of the neoconservative world view, the reason for the focus on the Middle East, and the significant departure neoconservative doctrine represents from the traditional liberal and realist dichotomy in foreign policy.

John Ikenberry offers an extensive critique of neoconservatism, noting that far from creating a unipolar era, it experienced only a ‘moment’ in the limelight before failing visibly in 2004. For Ikenberry, Iraq was a geostrategic failure; the ideology of the War on Terror was unsustainable politically and financially; American military might had been miscalculated; unipolarity is not legitimate when weighed against multipolarity, nor is preemption; and the neoconservative ideology is unstable, crude and ethnocentric (Ikenberry 2004, 8-19). Ikenberry derides the persuasion as fundamentalist stating conclusively that “their history is defective, their policies ineffective” (Ikenberry 2004, 20). This rejection is derived from a reading that places high credence in the two ‘grand bargains’ of the global system: the realist idea of security and stability, and the liberal institutionalism that tempers that realism. This duopoly makes American power safe for the world (in theory), and it is through the upsetting of this delicate balance that the neoconservative persuasion of the Bush Presidency has not only highlighted the illegitimacy of that persuasion through its actions, but perhaps

² <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/low/world/americas/4316698.stm>

irreparably damaged faith in the entire system (Ikenberry 2001, 19-22). The neoconservatives themselves do not believe they are fundamentalists *per se*, but rather that they observe a danger that others ignore:

"Events of recent years have given us no reason to change our fundamental view either of the emerging dangers or of the prescriptions for meeting those dangers. If anything, the trend of the past few years has proven more troubling than we anticipated" (Kagan 2000, vii).

The realist critique of the neoconservative doctrine in foreign policy is perhaps the most persuasive one. John Mearsheimer offers a similar critique of the legitimacy of neoconservatism to Ikenberry, but contextualises his dissent:

"The dispute about whether to go to war in Iraq was between two competing theories of international politics: realism and the neoconservatism that underpins the Bush doctrine" (Mearsheimer 2005).

Rather than simply stating that neoconservatism underpins the Bush doctrine, he goes on to assert that both are essentially the same thing: a merger of idealism and power in foreign affairs described as "Wilsonianism with teeth" (Mearsheimer 2005). He accuses the Bush doctrine of presuming that the preemptive exercise of American power will produce a domino effect persuading other nations such as Iran to surrender to America's will, when in fact timely honoured realist thinking has shown that the likely outcome would rather be a militarization of said nations to protect their sovereignty and attempt to balance American power (Mearsheimer 2005). In this instance, the realist critique of neoconservative foreign policy has so far proven incredibly accurate as Iran actively continues to develop nuclear technology and adopts an increasingly belligerent posture towards America and Israel. Iraq and Afghanistan are now arguably failed states and terrorism and violence in the region has escalated dramatically as an advertisement from the op-ed page of the *New York Times* on 26 September 2002 predicted in advance. This was signed by 33 scholars of international relations including Kenneth Waltz and John Mearsheimer. Developing the critique further, the Wilsonian core of the neoconservative ideology, enshrined in democracy promotion as a foreign policy tool, is cited as an ambitious failure: "this was to be social engineering on a massive scale and it was to be done with a mailed fist" (Mearsheimer 2005).

The failure was in overlooking the important realist postulate that to citizens of any nation, nationalism and sovereignty are more powerful and carnal than loftier ideas of democracy. Hence, it is entirely inkeeping with *realpolitik* to view the Iranian quest to develop an independent nuclear deterrent as a rational choice in line with seeking a credible deterrence from American or Israeli militarily-enforced regime change. Hence, the entire episode of neoconservatism as applied to the Middle East can be validly read as a self fulfilling prophecy.

Even those within the neoconservative persuasion who accept that the exercise of neoconservative foreign policy has not heralded the intended results plead for its continuation, to finish the job, so that the rest of the world can look back in posterity and see that they were right. The legitimacy of that point of view, as expressed most passionately by Podhoretz through his pleas to bomb Iran and enact a regime change strategy there to jump start the democracy domino in the Middle East, remains to be seen – and remains vocally active even in the Obama era. It is impossible to predict the future; even realism could not do that in the case of the sudden ending of the Cold War. However, realism survived that failure and perhaps neoconservatism will survive the apparent failure amongst popular consensus.

Whilst not wishing to roundly condemn neoconservative postulates, taken at face value as those postulates were in the Bush administration, it certainly seems a very hard case to answer for. The Iraq quagmire was forewarned by the 33 scholars, yet it was pursued. The failure of the democratisation domino effect was widely predicted, yet Afghanistan and Iraq linger in a worse state than prior to invasion and the Middle East is experiencing growing anti-Americanism and increased terrorism in countries such as Pakistan. The core neoconservative tenet of distinguishing friends from enemies and the 'with us or against us' rhetoric that followed from it throughout the Bush administration has stretched the alliance with traditional allies in the European Union and, as Ikenberry points out, damaged the delicate grand bargain of American power tempered with multilateral legitimacy. Such damage has been actively acknowledged by the Obama administration as from day one it sought to roll back to a more multilateral, inclusive and diplomatic position internationally, more in line with the American position professed by Ikenberry. Obama even won a Nobel Peace Prize for his initial efforts, which was no doubt a political seal of approval for the anticipated end of the Bush era of unilateralism. However in reality, the changes have turned out to be much more subtle.

THE ISRAEL FACTOR IN NEOCONSERVATISM

The core postulate of Bush's neoconservative foreign policy package, revolutionary democratisation, is intricately tied to Israel's security. Israeli politicians have long stressed that they live in a 'tough neighbourhood' and frequently stake their claim to be the only truly democratic nation in a sea of dictatorships and corrupt regimes. Both the domestic Israel lobby and the Bush administration believed toppling Saddam Hussein would lead to a domino effect of democratisation that would simultaneously fulfil the aims of increasing Israel's security and the wider aims of the Bush doctrine³. In that sense, Mearsheimer and Walt (2007) argue that the lobby was the key variable in making the Iraq war happen when it joined the neoconservative chorus.

Where this applies to Iran is ever more important. Mearsheimer and Walt postulate that the lobby was equally as concerned, even as far back as the Clinton years, with Iran. In a pragmatic way the various groups in the lobby understood the neoconservative desire to deal with Iraq first (see Perle 1999), yet read the Bush administration's intent as one of enforcing regime change in Iraq and then Iran in quick succession. Hence the frustration when this did not occur (Mearsheimer & Walt 2007, 233-234). In reality, Iran provided significant tactical support in the Afghanistan campaign. It offered a significant normalisation dialogue with the United States in the immediate aftermath of the 2003 Iraq invasion, presumably fearing it could be next at a time when American power appeared to be at its zenith. In all cases, the lobby made a "concentrated effort" to spoil the process (Mearsheimer & Walt 2007, 282-302). The authors cite a stream of empirical data to demonstrate their thesis and state:

"Israel and the lobby...are the central forces today behind all the talk in the Bush administration and on Capitol Hill about using military force to destroy Iran's nuclear facilities" (Mearsheimer & Walt 2007, 282).

According to this estimation, the next President in 2009, despite their particular orientation in foreign policy, was just as likely to attack Iran to halt its regional ambitions and remove the threat that poses to Israel, as the lobby will continue to shape policy in that

³ See 'A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm'. Available at: <http://www.iasps.org/strat1.htm>.

particular direction. Having now witnessed the approach of Obama for some 18 months on Iran, this prediction has been largely proven accurate, at least in rhetoric if not in action. Obama's inauguration year promise to "reach out a hand" to Iran, has been replaced with a reappraisal of the Bush approach⁴. In addition, the publicly announced statement that the force option is still "on the table"⁵, conciliated by the Iranian steadfast desire to not negotiate with any good faith on making concessions on its nuclear program.

Walter Russell Mead states that the growing power of the lobby is a distortion, and much of the Israel bias in American foreign policy (which he also recognises) is really the result of the significant evangelical rise in American political life. Their desire to fervently support Israel is based on their own convictions derived from their particular reading of the Bible (Mead 2006, 41). Indeed, with Bush's evangelical orientation, Mead's point is well advised. Moving on, Gorenberg notes that the influence of the lobby has been overstated; being correct in the recognition that they *attempt* to control American policy – as any lobby will naturally do within its sphere of interest – but never really achieves the magnitude of success Mearsheimer and Walt credit them with due to the diverse network of competing and divergent interests on Capitol Hill (Gorenberg 2008, 32). Gorenberg's point is valid in the sense that the lobby and successive Israeli governments have still not received clear US support for their steadfast desire to forcibly and urgently end Iran's nuclear program, which is frequently described as an 'existential threat' to Israel's existence. Finally, the neoconservative publication, *Commentary*, published a response to Mearsheimer and Walt, rejecting their thesis, stating that it employed anti-Semitic stereotypes and lacked original research, relying instead on secondary sources and crass generalisations (Stephens 2007).

Whilst there is a valid argument to be made that the book does oversimplify and perhaps over-emphasize the role of Israel and the lobby on foreign politics in America, it is a baseless accusation to accuse the authors of anti-Semitism or bad scholarship. The real conflict between the neoconservatives and Mearsheimer and Walt here is most probably based on the fact that both authors are prominent realists. Realists, particularly Mearsheimer, have provided an acute and sustained critique of the whole neoconservative project from the outset. The standard defence of those in the Israel lobby, of which many neoconservatives are closely allied (although not all neoconservatives are Jewish), to anyone accusing them of wielding a disproportionate influence in foreign policy and of acting in interests which are not American, is by 'playing the anti-Semitic card'. This has been a contrived defence strategy that has stunted any serious debate.

Mearsheimer and Walt's book has finally allowed the issue to be addressed academically rather than at the margins of society. Additionally, the stature of its authors has allowed for much deeper and wider debate than has been the case previously. The Israel lobby thesis visits, yet dismisses, the importance of other lobby interests in the future of the Middle East, such as the oil lobby and the arms industry, which comes across as premature. Yet despite the apparent flaws, dismissing the thesis out of hand as *Commentary* predictably wishes, is a missed opportunity when attempting to understand the full scope of how American policy is forged towards the Middle East. This is especially the case when observing the strikingly similar rhetoric of both Israel's senior political figures and the American neoconservatives, most notably regarding Iran.

⁴ For more on this see: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/12/04/iran_is_no_existential_threat.

⁵ <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2010/04/14/world/main6395688.shtml>.

CONTINUITY OR CHANGE?

With a new President in office as of January 2009, Barak Obama and his administration have demonstrated a clear desire to distinguish themselves from their predecessors. However, the fact remains that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have continued – escalated in some senses – and rhetoric on Iran, for example, has progressively hardened despite the early offer of constructive dialogue with Iran. It may be fair to ask whether there is much difference in practical terms between the Bush and Obama pursuit of Middle Eastern policy. Whether or not this can be attributed to a continued active neoconservative influence in the Obama administration is doubtful. However, considering the Obama administration inherited such deep foreign policy baggage and American military entrenchment in this part of the world, a course reversal would be much more extreme than a tacit continuation of the general thrust of the previous approach. The decision to keep Robert Gates in the Pentagon is certainly an indication of this intent. Whilst Obama is clearly not of the neoconservative persuasion, he certainly seems to be tacitly sympathetic to the broad logic of the Bush approach in the Middle East, or at the very least cognisant that dramatic change would be more disastrous politically than continuation.

Maintained support for the ongoing policy of democratisation in the Middle East may prove to be the glue between the two administrations, though in a clear semantic break Obama has steered clear of trumpeting the power of democracy as Bush frequently did, preferring to use terms such as 'freedom' and 'development' in his public rhetoric (Bouchet 2010). This is clearly a break in semantics, though not in policy, similar to Obama's jettisoning of the term 'War on Terror', as both the War on Terror and the American democratisation project in the Middle East are evidently continuing apace.

It is an often observed trend in international politics that foreign policy rarely dramatically changes; rather it slowly evolves. President Truman famously declared that he saw foreign policy as residing above the partisan divide. In American politics and the politics of national security, his words have indeed proven largely accurate. A standard example given by historians is the continuation of bipartisan American involvement in the Vietnam War across five administrations between 1959 and 1975. To take the analysis of continuity deeper, many designate Ronald Reagan (an icon for the neoconservatives) for the ramping up of American military spending and overturning the decline in strength witnessed in the detente era, which in turn led to the eventual economic strangulation of the Soviet Union as it failed to keep up. In truth, this process was initiated by Jimmy Carter in 1979-1980. He was infuriated by the revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Reagan simply rode the wave and carried it forward, and belatedly took credit. Similarly, many attribute Richard Nixon for creating the 'twin pillar' strategy of fortifying the Middle East by building up Saudi Arabia, and especially Iran, via advanced weaponry sales and military training. This was used to act as a buffer for the southward spread of the Soviet Union when the British declared they would withdraw their security blanket from the Persian Gulf by 1971. Yet, this process was already in motion in the final years of the Johnson administration, and it was more accurately a strategy devised and promoted by the Shah of Iran as early as 1965⁶, not by the Nixon administration. One final example was in the Eisenhower sanctioned CIA/ British SIS coup in Iran in 1953 which reinstated the Shah as ruler of Iran, overthrowing the democratically elected nationalist leader, Mohammad Mosaddegh. Many have attributed this

⁶ See: Telegram from the Embassy in Iran to State. Tehran, December 29, 1965. *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-68, Vol. XXII, Iran.*

decision to the change in President, Eisenhower having replaced Truman, and he was widely regarded as leading a much more aggressive administration. However, careful examination of the declassified papers revealed that Truman had significant CIA assets and operations active in Iran, suggesting much more of a continuity than a change in policy (Marsh 2005).

Therefore it is often easy to accredit policy changes to a change in leader, but this is rarely accurate, and defies the momentum that foreign policy has across administrations and across the partisan divide. All previously given examples highlight not only changes in administration, but changes in governing party from Democrat to Republican, highlighting the comparative ease with which a certain foreign policy course can override standard partisanship. In Obama's case, he inherited a foreign policy momentum in the Middle East that he has chosen to see through, rather than halt. There have been changes in language and posture, such as the careful jettisoning of the term 'War on Terror', yet the general thrust of the Bush legacy in the region remains intact, in what is surely a bitter pill to swallow for all those who voted for 'change' in November 2008. Nowhere can this be more visible than in the case of Iran as it continues to approach full mastery of the nuclear cycle in defiance of steadfast American and Israeli wishes.

The Iranian President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, recently noted that America under Obama had not changed from the America of Bush in its foreign policy application in the Middle East. Obama has not closed Guantanamo Bay despite promising to do so, has not altered American refusal to countenance a truly independent Iranian 'civilian' nuclear program, and he has not changed course in Afghanistan or in Iraq. Similarly, unconditional support for Israel – the frequent demon in Iranian domestic discourse regarding America, has been broadly retained, though with some qualifications. Such statements are of course true, despite their unpopular source. Cutting through the friendly appearance and conciliatory rhetoric of the Obama administration, the Nobel Peace Prize award, and considering its refusal to use the term 'War on Terror' does not detract from the reality that regarding foreign policy towards the Middle East, nothing of substance has indeed changed. The fact that arguably the world's most notorious 'elected' statesman has pointed towards this elephant in the room does not mean that it should be ignored.

THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE PERSUASION

Neoconservatism did not accurately perceive American military power, the power of democratisation, or the failure of the world's population to accept its ideological persuasion in the midst of convincing evidence to the contrary, particularly as things turned sour in Iraq. It seems that far from playing the final act in the end of history, the neoconservative persuasion has caused a crisis of legitimacy in the global system. American power is no longer seen as legitimate by many, and the jury is still very much out on whether the wave of euphoria circulating around the election of Obama has actually gained any long term traction in repairing the damage. The United Nations' normative and legal power base was dealt a serious blow by the Iraq invasion, and Iran did not follow the democratic domino course, leading to a popular fear that American actions in the Middle East will actually ignite a clash of civilisations.

That being said, perhaps surprisingly, the Obama administration is broadly continuing the Bush, neoconservative inspired, legacy in the Middle East, despite its more multilateral and diplomatic persona in international politics and its desire to be viewed as clearly

different from its predecessor. The neoconservative *persuasion* may not have fared well in the broad ideological sense, but its general approach as demonstrated in the implementation of policy application may have fared better. Neoconservatism's approach of democratising the Middle East via military intervention, tempering terrorism in the area, and dealing with Iran decisively has already formed the core of Obama's policy package – all continuations from the Bush administration. Barely anything of significance has changed in a practical sense, and the continued standoff over Iran's nuclear proliferation has highlighted this for all to see. Barak Obama may have started out intending to pursue a different regional strategy than that of George W. Bush, as displayed most clearly in his early dealings with Iran. Nonetheless, predictable belligerence and brinkmanship from Iran over continuation of its nuclear programme has quickly resulted in the new President having to withdraw his invitation to enter into a constructive dialogue and resorting to an approach indistinguishable from the one carried by the Bush administration.

Obama is not a neoconservative; but history may, perhaps surprisingly, record his actions in broadly continuing the logic of the 'War on Terror' (albeit by another name) and the continuation of the neoconservative plan for the Middle East.

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East Asian Regionalism: Origins, Development and Prospects for the Future

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Abstract

East Asian regionalism is a dynamic process changing the political and economic environment of an increasingly important area of the world. The region has experienced a variety of cooperation mechanisms, including post-war American-led regionalism, the closed regionalism of the 1960s and 1970s, and the new regionalism of the 1980s and 1990s. Yet it was the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis that forced East Asia to embark on a deliberate and concerted effort to construct a regional architecture. Recent successes demonstrate the determination with which this task has been undertaken. The process has also attracted a considerable amount of attention. Despite some overly critical opinions, East Asian regionalism today should be recognized as a decidedly unique process with great deal of promise for the future.

Keywords: ASEAN – Asian Financial Crisis – East Asia – Regionalism – Cooperation

East Asian regionalism is a dynamic process changing the political and economic architecture of an increasingly important area of the world.¹ How the region is undergoing this transformation, and how extensive it will become, has, understandably, become a matter of much discussion and debate. Nevertheless, it is unmistakable that governments in the region are not following the pattern of legalistic, binding regionalism pursued in Europe. Rather, the origins and expansion of the regional project have been a positive process of coordination and synchronization that emerges from the peculiar East Asian attitudes toward governance.

The world has seen a variety of cooperation schemes come and go, particularly in the post-war period. East Asia is no exception. The region has experienced the post-war regional efforts of the United States; the processes of old regionalism embodied in the early creation of Southeast Asia's regional political project, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN); and the early new regionalism of the 1980s and 1990s that coincided with the "Asian Miracle" period. Today, the region is ambitiously remaking the regional architecture,

¹ Here, "East Asia" refers to Northeast Asia (China, Japan and South Korea) as well as Southeast Asia (Brunei, Burma/Myanmar, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam). The states of South and Central Asia, as well as those of the greater Asia-Pacific, are not included.

largely to address the fallout of the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis. Familiarity with these past experiences is critical to understanding the region today.

This article seeks to provide this understanding so that the emergence and development of East Asian regionalism can be further understood. The first section will comprise a short theoretical discussion of what constitutes a region, a step necessary before commencing any discussion of regionalism. This will be followed by a short discussion of regionalism's economic benefits. The third and fourth sections will discuss the post-war, old and new regionalisms East Asia has experienced. This will be followed by sections covering the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis and how that crisis served as a catalyst for a renewed regional project. Selected criticisms of East Asia will then be addressed, followed by conclusions and expectations for the future.

WHAT IS A REGION?

Before any discussion of regionalism can begin, the question of what constitutes a region must first be addressed. Regions are classifications created to compartmentalize a complex world. Thus, an inherent difficulty complicates attempts at definition. The diversity of scholarship concerning their taxonomy clearly demonstrates this fact. Yet despite this theoretical eclecticism and variety of opinion, it is possible to develop a relatively straightforward definition for the purposes of this study.

At a fundamental level, a region is a group of similarly situated states in a distinct geographic area. The states in this area do not necessarily need to be physically connected; the example of the North Atlantic area is a primary example of a distinct physical space despite its oceanic partition. Walters (2002) expands on this idea by arguing that regions are distinct geographic places wherein formal political equality is shared between sovereign states. A region is, thus, a governable territorial space that has developed one or more political systems to address the need for governance.

While they are governable spaces, regions are not pre-determined or unchangeable. Rather, they are constructions dependent upon the political will of states. In this conception, regions are "what states make of them" and are characterized by "varying compositions, capabilities and aspirations" that can be altered (Fawcett 2004, 434). Therefore, states can actively organize and dismantle regional constructs to address new economic, socio-political or security considerations. The example of Europe – once split into two opposing regions but today regarded as one – is demonstrative of this state power to define and create regions in order to address new circumstances.

In a more normative fashion, regions cannot be considered as "natural, objective and ontologically given spaces" but, rather, should be recognized as "spatial and temporal constructs contingent on a variety of interests and agendas" (Nair 2008, 122). This conception greatly widens the regional project's participation pool. While states are overwhelmingly responsible for the final formalization of a region, they are not the only actors formulating the idea. States can be influenced by a large number of domestic actors, each with a particular reason for lobbying their respective governments to collaborate with others. Yet since regions are groups, it is impossible for one state to create a region on its own. Rather, two or more states must agree to differentiate themselves. Regions are, then, the cognitive constructs of multiple societies. At their creation they are the "discursive

creations [of] the interplay between language and politics," where language is the regional classification itself and politics is its rationale for existence (Jones and Smith 2007a, 175).

In sum, a region can be understood first as a governable, territorial space. Political systems arise within that space to fill the need for governance, and those systems may seek to organize into a collective for a variety of socio-economic, political or security purposes. It is this creation that is the region. Since regions are classifications fashioned on the basis of circumstances that may rapidly shift, they are not unalterable. Indeed, the variety of state and non-state actors involved in their formation ensure that changing circumstances and interests may quickly lead to a region's reorganization.

THE RATIONALES OF REGIONALISM

Regions, then, are classifications created to address the various socio-economic, political or security circumstances confronting a group of governments. External pressures can alter these circumstances over time, and some of the greatest pressures in the post-war period has come from the forces of economic globalization. While the "more intrusive and intense economic interaction" between state and non-state actors has bestowed a cornucopia of benefits, it has also presented governments with complex challenges (Haass and Litan 1998, 2). Unrelentingly targeting the traditional authority of the state and its ability to effectively govern, globalization has increasingly forced states to recognize the necessity of "re-aggregation of... authority" beyond the now punctured national level but short of the global level (Lupel 2004, 155). Regionalism has increasingly been looked upon as a method with which to achieve that objective.²

Despite the explosive popularity of regional trade arrangements (RTAs), the verdict concerning their overall economic benefits continues to be "mixed and frequently inconclusive" (Ravenhill 2008, 199). Proponents of RTAs focus on the benefits they can provide to members (Mansfield 1998; Ranjan 2007). They can be tailored to suit members, do not require states to stop participating in global trade, and can appeal to a government's desire to implement policies that maintain national competitiveness in the globalization era while simultaneously appeasing the demands of dislocated domestic actors (Gibb and Michalak 1996; Väyrynen 2003; Krugman 1993; Cavanagh et al 2002; Chase 2003). Regionalism allows states to "reduce their dependence" on the international economic system by aggregating resources and "becoming more economically competitive" within the specified regional market (Pelagidis and Papisotiriou 2002, 522). Opponents charge that RTAs can distort both intra-regional and global trade, may lead to the misallocation of resources, and provide an overall lower level of benefits than would be acquired in a global free trade system (Laurence 2003). While important, the questions of gains and losses, as well as of costs and benefits, are not major concerns here. For better or for worse, regional trade arrangements have become an integral component of the global trade order (Ethier 1998a; Ethier 1998b; Mansfield and Milner 1999; Fawcett 2004).

Much of this success can be attributed to the fact that regionalism is not solely an economic undertaking. It is also a remarkably successful breed of political project that represents a rising form of intergovernmental cooperation that can serve numerous political

² The concept of "regionalism" in this study encompasses the relatively straight-forward process of multiple governments cooperating over a sustained period of time on a specific economic, political or security agenda.

purposes (Ravenhill 2008). An RTA, then, is often the “product of purposive action by state elites” who have considered the political benefits such an arrangement and found it supportive of their own interests (Ravenhill 2010). RTAs also present opportunities for states to forego some of the efficacy challenges presented by global institutions and processes, while simultaneously building relationships neighboring governments sharing similar interests (Larner and Walters 2002; Gibb and Michalak 1996).

POST-WAR “REGIONALISM” IN EAST ASIA

Regionalism is multilateralism on a smaller scale. Like its global counterpart, regional multilateralism is a cooperative process occurring within a framework designed for equalizing the varying status and influence of member states (Kahler 1992). Owing to the ravages of the world war period, the post-war years saw a significant degree of attention paid to the appeal of fostering a variety of multilateral political and economic efforts across the globe. At the same time, nascent Cold War geopolitical interests focused the attention of the United States on particular regions. There, American officials actively pursued the establishment of a series of multilateral security arrangements to contain Soviet expansion.

As in Western Europe, the United States had compelling national security interests in East Asia. Thus, the early efforts at regionalism were overwhelmingly American-led endeavors serving those American interests. Chief among these efforts was the 1955 creation of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). Designed as a collective defense organization, SEATO was meant to be the regional counterpart of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in stopping the advance of communism. Unfortunately, it suffered from a number of issues that hampered its effectiveness. The number of official members whose countries were actually in the region was laughable – only Thailand and the Philippines – while its inability to address numerous regional crises illustrated the ineffectualness of the organization as a whole.

Hemmer and Katzenstein (2002) argue that American efforts in East Asia were hampered by the “weakness of identification” with the region as well as the view that it represented “part of an alien and... inferior community” (Hemmer and Katzenstein 2002, 598 & 575). The common racial, socio-political, and historical experiences between the United States and Europe were simply not present. Yet the effects of this disconnect went past simple racial or historical levels. Suffering from more than American officials’ inability to connect with East Asian governments, SEATO was a failure because the kind of collective purpose that made NATO successful could not be generated.

NATO was, and has been, successful because a group of like-minded governments sought to institutionalize cooperation in order to achieve a common goal. In the post-war period, this common goal – the prevention of Soviet expansion – was not shared by the majority of East Asian governments. Nor was the overwhelming willingness to follow American direction present across the region. The United States found post-war allies in Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea, but communism reigned in Cambodia, China, North Korea, North Vietnam, and Laos. Thus, the creation of a regional system in East Asia was inherently problematic because a mutual threat and a common goal were not present.

The organization’s breakdown was representative of the greater American failure to construct an effective regional architecture in East Asia. With the failure of SEATO to develop into an East Asian NATO, American efforts in East Asia increasingly focused on the

creation of a network of bilateral alliances.³ The hub-and-spoke nature of that system prevented the aggregation of East Asian influence, thereby allowing the United States to exercise "greater control" over regional partners than if it would have had to "deal with them collectively" (Wright 2009, 169). It also allowed the United States to bypass the lack of common threats and goals among governments in the region that had hampered its earlier actions.

Throughout this period, it became increasingly clear that circumstances would prevent the implementation of a regionalism like that taking root in Western Europe at the time. American-led regionalism focused on security, and what allies the United States was able to acquire were overwhelmingly bilateral. With the tripartite division of regional governments between American allies, Soviet followers, and non-aligned multilateralists, regional ambitions died quickly. Yet when regional governments began to become disenchanted with this initial arrangement, the region as an organizational concept began to attract renewed interest.

WAVES OF REGIONALISM: OLD AND NEW

During the 1960s and 1970s, many developing states perceived the post-war international order to be an inequitable and unfair framework benefiting only the interests of the industrialized states. This sentiment was a principal causal factor in the rise of the first wave of regionalism. Denoted as 'old' or 'closed' regionalism, this was a method of regional cooperation wherein (mostly developing) states sought to create blocs to escape the post-war multilateral order. Many of these efforts were driven by economic interests. Particularly, "a desire to substitute... insufficient multilateral liberalization" for the protection of the regional bloc while simultaneously "holding aloof from what [aspects of] multilateral liberalization" might already have been implemented were key considerations for states looking for an alternative path to economic success (Ethier 1998a, 1150).

With its pervasive security concerns and unsteady interstate relations, Northeast Asia stayed largely on the sidelines of this first wave. Japan and South Korea were allied with the United States, while China was undergoing a series of domestic policy disasters. Southeast Asia, in sharp contrast, embarked on a regional project with the 1967 creation of ASEAN. The organization's founding members – Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand – sought to create a framework for cooperation on a wide range of agricultural, cultural, defense, scientific, socio-economic, and technical issues. It was at its formation a bloc; even with its subsequent expansions, official ASEAN membership remains held solely by Southeast Asian states.⁴ Apart from this exclusivity, ASEAN was a regional project drastically different from Western Europe.

On that European continent, a series of treaties had been laying a supranational, legalistic framework over its members for nearly two decades. The creation of ASEAN, in contrast, saw no efforts to implement a similar series of binding treaties. This was largely due to the association's attitude about interstate governance. The "ASEAN Way" – with its

³ Key treaties included the 1951 security treaty with Japan; the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty with the Philippines; the 1952 Australia, New Zealand, United States Security (ANZUS) Treaty; and the 1953 Mutual Defense Treaty with South Korea.

⁴ Expansions occurred in 1984 (Brunei Daussalam), 1995 (Vietnam), 1997 (Laos and Burma/Myanmar), and 1999 (Cambodia).

principles of non-interference in others' internal affairs, mutual respect for sovereignty, and dedication to decision-making by consensus – ensured that treaty-based, legalistic regionalism would not be favored. The legacy of this concept can still be observed in East Asian regional processes today.

In 1977, member states took their regional project further with the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Preferential Trading Agreements (ASEAN PTA). The ASEAN PTA, like the organization itself, envisioned cooperation within the bloc. It was meant to “act as a stimulus to the strengthening of... economic resilience” at both the national and regional levels (Tin 1981, 2). Like other similar organizations, the bloc's PTA was envisioned as an incubator for national economic development. This focus on increased national strength through regional cooperation was expressive of the ‘closed’ character of ‘old’ regionalism.

With the slow demise of the Cold War, however, a ‘new’ or ‘open’ style of regionalism began to emerge. As its name suggests, the ‘new’ regionalism was dramatically different from its older counterpart. In this second wave, states had their sights set on active participation in global economic, and, to a lesser extent, political, affairs. The process involved smaller, developing states undertaking significant liberalization reforms while simultaneously “linking up” with larger, more developed economies in their immediate geographic region (Ethier 1998a, 1150)⁵. Two economic considerations – the desire for growth that comes with increased international openness and the allure of strengthening economic competitiveness in the global marketplace – were dominant in the creation of these organizations (Schiff and Winters 1998).

East Asia was greatly affected by this period of new regionalism. Harvie and Lee (2002) offer a number of explanations as to why East Asian governments chose to actively participate in this process, including the relatively slow liberalization process within GATT as well as the regional agreements signed in the Americas and Europe during the 1980s and early 1990s. Moreover, the economic dynamism of the “Asian tiger” economies, the economic powerhouse that was Japan, and the economic stirrings of China all gave rise to a class of East Asian businessmen and entrepreneurs who vigorously pursued cross-border connections. These groups' actions were expressive of the role non-state actors could play in the formation of regions, as their focus on developing the linkages necessary for their enterprises to grow and thrive led regional governments to recognize the need for greater economic cooperation (Kurlantzick 2001; Kurlantzick 2007).

The framework needed for a more intense economic cooperation was absent in East Asia. Governments therefore set out to create a series of new mechanisms to promote regional cooperation. Two early entrants were the unofficial Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) in 1980 and the official Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation organization (APEC) in 1989.⁶ Subscribing to a variant of the “ASEAN Way,” both PECC and APEC stressed that actions would be based on “cooperation and policy coordination” (PECC 2009) and that decisions would be made on “the basis of non-binding commitments, open dialogue and equal respect” (APEC 2009b).

⁵ Notable examples to arise from this period include the creation of the Common Market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR) in 1991, the European Community in 1993, NAFTA in 1994 and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) in 1994.

⁶ Due largely to the nature of ‘new’ regionalism, as well as increasing interconnectedness of the global economy during this time, these organizations possessed a varied and far-flung membership base.

Additional creations included the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), founded in 1994 to create trust and facilitate cooperation on security issues through confidence building and preventive diplomacy; the East Asia Summit (EAS), first held in 1995 and including a number of states outside the immediate region; and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), first held in 1996. These organizations, alongside PECC and APEC, represented "loosely knit associations" embodying the concept of "proto-regimes" rather than fully legalistic, binding institutions (Aggarwal 1993). At the time, these organizations were the kind of non-intrusive arrangements favored by regional governments. Over the horizon, however, a crisis loomed that would drastically alter attitudes concerning the character of regional architecture.

THE 1997-98 FINANCIAL CRISIS

The crisis broke in July 1997. The Thai government, after spending billions of its foreign exchange reserves to protect its currency's value from speculative attacks, determined it would end the baht's decades-long dollar peg and allow it to float on the world market. The massive devaluation that followed led to a crisis that quickly spread across the region during the fall of 1997 and throughout 1998. Real gross domestic product growth was wiped out in these economies hardest hit⁷ and fears that the crisis would bring down the international financial and monetary systems were rampant. The fear manifested itself in a 554.26 point one-day plunge of the Dow Jones Industrial Average less than four months after Thailand's devaluation (Richardson 1998).

The crisis was, in part, one "deeply rooted in the... economic strategies, political coalitions, and state forms that underpinned" the export-led growth models pursued throughout much of East Asia during the previous years (Jayasuriya 2003b, 203). In 1999, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) offered its opinion of what had initiated the crisis, stating:

"The crisis unfolded against the backdrop of several decades of outstanding economic performance in Asia, and the difficulties that the East Asian countries face[d] are not primarily the result of macroeconomic imbalances. Rather, they stemmed from weaknesses in financial systems and, to a lesser extent, governance. A combination of inadequate financial sector supervision, poor assessment and management of financial risk, and the maintenance of relatively fixed exchange rates led banks and corporations to borrow large amounts of international capital, much of it short-term, denominated in foreign currency, and unhedged. As time went on, this inflow of foreign capital tended to be used to finance poorer-quality investments" (IMF 1999a).

This statement was expressive of the general Western attitude, which saw the crisis as a severe debt servicing problem that briefly challenged the IMF's ability to normalize disruptions in the global economic system (Hellmann 2007). The role of speculative currency attacks and other non-regional factors in the crisis were disregarded in the early assessments.

The crisis starkly displayed a significant problem within regional political economies. During the 1980s and early 1990s, the processes of open regionalism fostered a deeply-rooted collusion between government and business in many East Asian economies. To address the needs of economic growth, a complex system of political patronage and institutionalized

⁷ In the period 1997 to 1998, annualized real GDP growth rates fell 10.2 percent in Thailand, 6.7 in South Korea, and 14.2 percent in Indonesia. See: IMF (2000)

economic trade-offs between governments, banking institutions, and business interests had developed. The process was described as "embedded mercantilism" and known more informally as "Japan, Inc." (Jayasuriya 2003a; Zhuang et al. 2001). Thus, the crisis showed the period of open regionalism in East Asia had not been about "regional market making," but instead was concentrated on governments ensuring their economies had what they needed to continue their exceptional rates of growth (Jayasuriya 2003a, 341).

While these strategies may have been good for growth in the short-term⁸, the process left structural deficiencies within regional economies that were easily aggravated by the crisis. Reliance on interventionist currency policies and easy foreign credit by many East Asian economies were two principal examples. Speculative currency attacks had occurred as investors' fears about East Asian debts increased. These attacks meant huge sell-offs of the region's soft currencies, and rapid depletion of the affected states' foreign exchange reserves. What followed were real exchange rate depreciations, drastically higher domestic interest rates, and waves of loan defaults (Radelet and Sachs 1998; Dash 2003). As fears of contagion spread, international investors intensified the disaster by withdrawing the foreign credit on which regional economies had hitherto depended. The rate of private foreign investment flowing into Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand, for example, swung from a \$93 billion inflow in 1996 to a \$12.1 billion outflow in 1997, an astounding \$105 billion negative swing (Radelet and Sachs 1998, 5).

The multilateral financial institutions did not neglect the region, however. IMF assistance came in the fall of 1997 and into 1998. The global lender of last resort propped up the most damaged economies, committing \$40.1 billion to Indonesia, South Korea, and Thailand.⁹ Yet the funds were delayed in arriving, with the first disbursement to Thailand coming almost two months after assistance was first requested. Moreover, all IMF funds came attached with a series of mandatory structural adjustment reforms which followed the policy prescriptions collectively known as the Washington Consensus.¹⁰ For governments particularly cognizant of threats to their sovereignty, these conditions only added insult to injury.

Malaysia's *Business Times* scornfully remarked in September 1998 that, had there been "more consultations with governments and less rigidity" in IMF crisis management, "things could have been salvaged" (*Business Times* 1998). Japan was even so bold as to call for the creation of an Asian Monetary Fund in the midst of the crisis. The proposal was doomed from the start, largely because of the perception that it was "half-baked and devoid of meaningful details" (Lipsy 2003, 94). Nevertheless, it was a stark vocalization of regional exasperation with the IMF and other global lenders. The majority of East Asian states believed the IMF was "acting to protect the interests of Western lending institutions... at the expense of Asian workers and the sovereignty of Asian countries" (Bowles 2002, 238). This perspective would have widespread implications as the region went forward.

⁸ Indeed, pre-crisis economic growth in East Asia was spectacular. In the period 1991 to 1997, the average annual percent increase in GDP growth rates in regional economies was: China 11.2; Hong Kong 5.2; Korea 7.2; Malaysia 8.5; Singapore 8.4; Taiwan 6.5; and Thailand 6.8. In contrast, the average annual percent increase in GDP growth in the developed economies was only 2.5. See: IMF (1999b).

⁹ Additionally, these three countries received assurances of \$26.9 billion from the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, as well as \$58.3 billion from bilateral sources. Of the total \$125.3 billion committed, \$66.6 billion was disbursed. See: IMF (2000).

¹⁰ These included bank closures, restoration and adjustment of capital standards, tightening of domestic credit, fiscal contraction, and other structural changes. See: Radelet and Sachs (1998).

EAST ASIA REACTS TO ITS FINANCIAL CRISIS

The crisis starkly displayed the inability of governments to withstand the powerful, and occasionally destructive, forces of financial globalization (Dittmer 2002). East Asian governments were quick to lament the lack of proper regional mechanisms for dealing with the crisis. If these had been in place, governments might have been spared the humiliation of accepting conditionality loans from the IMF. It was not just East Asians criticizing these loans. Some saw the IMF was degenerating into a "mendicant, politicized" institution (Walsh 1998), while others believed the crisis revealed "grave flaws" within the institution's policies and procedures (Sachs and Woo 2000, 6).

Despite the criticism that was pointed at the IMF, a large share of the blame belonged to regional governments. The lack of regional mechanisms that could have been used to defuse the crisis was a result of regional governments' earlier unwillingness to create them. The organizations created in the region throughout the 1980s and early 1990s demonstrated an "absence of a strong and stable commitment to the institutionalization of cooperation" (Aggarwal 1993, 1038). They were mechanisms meant to facilitate consultation, rather than to address specific regional needs.¹¹ This perception of failure led regional governments to consider making a rapid shift that increased the attention to exclusive East Asian regionalism.

One of exclusive regionalism's principal attractions is the inherent association with localization, which allows for higher degrees of economic harmonization and cooperation among a smaller number of states (Lamer and Walters 2002). The ensuing increase of economic opportunities accorded to each member limits the need or desire to expand membership to others. A smaller membership roster also makes decision-making far easier.¹² In the post-crisis period, exclusivity was a method to concentrate regional authority; East Asian governments would create mechanisms to address East Asian issues.¹³ This cognitive shift led to a number of important developments throughout the 1990s and into the new millennium.

A major outcome was the 1997 creation of ASEAN Plus Three (APT), a cooperative framework between ASEAN, China, Japan, and South Korea. Although the APT was intended primarily as an economic cooperation mechanism between Southeast and Northeast Asia, the agreement grew to include political, social/cultural, and security issues as well. The creation of the APT also demonstrated the powerful role of state interest in the creation of regions; two previously different regions were integrated into one. Government interest had become strong in large part because of "the frustration and disappointment" felt to the "perceived reluctance" of the IMF and Western governments to provide aid during the crisis (Simon 2008, 280).

¹¹ APEC's post-crisis initiatives were a laundry list of the needs that should have been addressed before 1997. The list included a renewed focus on financial market supervision, an assessment of banking supervisory regimes, the improvement of credit rating agencies, the development of "deep, liquid and mature" domestic bond markets, and the implementation of an action plan to maintain "free and stable" flows of capital. See: APEC (1999).

¹² During the crisis, the diversity of member states was one of APEC's key impediments to action. Effective action from an organization with membership spread as far as Australia, Chile and Mexico could hardly have been expected.

¹³ It should be noted that exclusivity does not require a withdrawal from forums, organizations or institutions which are more inclusive in membership. Rather, it prescribes the creation of complementary forums, organizations and institutions with more limited membership.

The APT was the first significant step toward the creation of an exclusive East Asian regionalism. It proved to be a critical development in a number of ways. First, it was a quite profitable arrangement for those involved¹⁴. It also allowed East Asian economies to increase their share of world trade, in large part because of the APT's effect on regional trade integration¹⁵. Yet most importantly, it provided a springboard from which to launch a series of new regional initiatives. Two key examples are the 2000 Chiang Mai Initiative (CMI) and 2003 Asian Bond Markets Initiative (ABMI).

The CMI was conceived as a regional currency swap arrangement to address national liquidity concerns in financially trying times. While "more symbolic than truly effective," it laid the foundation for the creation of the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization Agreement (CMIM) (Sussangkarn 2010, 6). The CMIM, a \$120 billion regional currency swap fund, was initiated in March 2010 and represents the finalization of CMI goals. Like the CMIM, the ABMI is focused on the provision of alternative financing to East Asian economies. It focuses on the development of "efficient and liquid bond markets" throughout the region in order to "enable better utilization of Asian savings for Asian investments" (ASEAN 2003). The \$500 million Credit Guarantee and Investment Mechanism, housed within the Asian Development Bank, is an essential ABMI funding component.¹⁶ The 1999 ASEAN Investment Agreement, the call in 2003 for the creation of an ASEAN economic community by 2020, and the implementation of the APT free trade areas rounded out the spate of new measures.¹⁷

RESPONSES TO KEY CRITICISMS

The construction of regional frameworks that began following the Asian financial crisis continues to be a work in progress. It is natural to observe and comment on the progress being made. Many of these comments, however, are overly doubtful of the region's prospects. Much of the criticism focuses on three issues – the dearth of institutionalization in the region, the unresolved tension between exclusive or inclusive regionalism, and the lack of a sense of community to help facilitate regional cooperation. When each issue is examined, however, the region may have brighter prospects than are often accorded to it.

Regarding the first criticism, there is little doubt that the region lacks legalistic institutionalization like that found in Europe's regional project. Critics lament the perceived inability of governments to make binding decisions or initiate substantive, formal institutionalization. Instead, critics note, the pervasive "ASEAN Way" constrains governments to the issuance of "broad declaratory agreements and benchmarks" (Camilleri 2005, 254; Jones and Smith 2007b). Others, however, reject this critical opinion altogether. They argue that past attempts to understand the region have been marred by an

¹⁴ Total ASEAN exports to the Plus Three countries reached over \$225 billion in 2008. Total ASEAN trade with the Plus Three countries reached just over \$480 billion in 2008 to represent just over 28 percent of ASEAN's total global trade. The Plus Three countries also sent \$10.3 billion in foreign direct investment to ASEAN in 2008, 19.3 percent of ASEAN's total incoming FDI that year. See: ASEAN (2009).

¹⁵ IMF statistics show that the share of world trade held by "emerging Asia" – China, Hong Kong SAR, South Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand – increased from 21 percent in 1990 to 34 percent in 2006. See: Gruenwald and Hori (2008).

¹⁶ Bond markets carrying securities denominated in local-currency have been established in China, Hong Kong SAR, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

¹⁷ FTAs between ASEAN and China, Japan and Korea entered into force in January 2010, December 2008 and June 2009, respectively.

unambiguously Eurocentric focus (Poon 2001; Kang 2003). Poon argues instead that, owing to various cultural and political factors, governments are overwhelmingly focused on the establishment of "a neutral international space" wherein each state can pursue its own advancement while simultaneously raising the boats of its neighbors (2001, 252). While Ravenhill dismisses this idea, his contention of the "shallowness" of East Asia's institutionalization is itself an implicit comparison with the deeper institutionalization of Europe (2010, 201).

East Asian governments have not avoided creating institutions, as recent measures demonstrate. Moreover, the nature of these institutions – their depth – has been overwhelmingly "sovereignty reinforcing" and, thus, unlike those of Europe (Ginsburg 2010, 38). The ARF and APT are two primary examples. In these cases, as in others, the focus was on the creation of a normative mechanism "for exchanging... views and build[ing] up respect and confidence" between states (Lyou 2004, 306). Currently, governments do not seem to be concerned with the establishment of institutionalized governance structures that could someday infringe on national sovereignty (Gilson 2007). Thus, East Asian regionalism is occurring in precisely the manner intended; the focus is *meant to be* on norms and processes, at least until the divisive differences present in the region can be properly addressed.

Regarding the second criticism, it is true that East Asian regionalism suffers from the unresolved tension between inclusion and exclusion. The region's economic and geopolitical importance means that many of the region's organizations include states from around the globe (Nair 2008). Yet these circumstances have not prevented regional governments from implementing a host of significant initiatives notable for their exclusivity. There is practical incentive for exclusion, as an international institution's effectiveness declines relative to the number of members and diversity of viewpoints (Emmers 2005). Yet the assertion that post-crisis East Asia has engaged in a "proactive, helter-skelter rush" to create ad-hoc, exclusive regional organizations is only partly correct (Hellmann 2000, 841). It is true that the construction of regional frameworks has been remarkably proactive, but the process has been anything but "helter-skelter."

In the immediate aftermath of the crisis, there may have been a fair amount of improvising by governments. Yet as the dust settled, East Asian governments began both a purposeful examination of regional weaknesses and a coordinated implementation of a series of critical initiatives to address them. Considering the relatively short time spans between conception and successful execution, exclusive regionalism has clearly won a degree of favor with East Asian governments.

The third criticism focuses on the absence of a sense of community in the region. European officials, to their credit, have made some progress in fostering a sense of common identity based on shared values and common experience.¹⁸ In East Asia, a host of historical, cultural, demographic, political, and economic factors have impeded the development of any such identity (Murphy 1995). Even the post-crisis cooperation likely stems more from a pragmatic pursuit of mutual self-interest than any sense of 'we.' Moreover, post-crisis initiatives have largely been undertakings of political elites, with little real input from average citizens (Nair 2008).

¹⁸ A 2004 Eurobarometer survey conducted before that year's EU enlargement found that 56 percent of participants saw themselves "in the near future... as European to some degree or another." See: EEIG (2004).

The current lack of common identity may not be as negative as is often perceived, however. Regionalism is a constructive process whereby states with dissimilarities can transition from "relative heterogeneity to increased... homogeneity" (Lyuu 2004, 261). Therefore, a variety of socio-economic, political, and cultural systems do not necessarily make regionalism impossible. Indeed, this diversity may prove to be beneficial for a region.¹⁹ There may already be signs that East Asian regionalism is paying small dividends in this category. ASEAN's slogan – "One Vision, One Identity, One Community" – has received greater emphasis as the organization's successes have continued. Additionally, economic growth over the last two decades has fostered a nascent cross-border consumerist society increasingly connected by interstate cultural and artistic exchanges (Kurlantzick 2007). Questioning the effects of an identity deficit on the region is rash considering the relatively recent emergence of the processes that may someday fill that shortage.

CONCLUSIONS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

East Asian regionalism continues to be an evolving concept building on past experiences. Each of these experiences has left its own legacy on the current state of regional affairs. The ultimately unsuccessful regional attempts of the United States demonstrated the importance of timing. The region was not in a geopolitical position wherein cooperation would have been possible. The failure of SEATO to develop as envisioned by American officials only further demonstrated the inefficacy of externally driven regionalism. With the 'old' regionalism of the 1960s and 1970s, a nascent regional consciousness – manifested in ASEAN – emerged that followed the bloc orientation fashionable at the time. The 1980s and early 1990s witnessed a more 'open' regionalism whose adoption helped spur the "Asian Miracle."

It was not until the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis, however, that East Asian governments recognized the grim need for greater levels of substantive regional coordination. It was at this point that East Asian regionalism matured. Shifting from its pre-crisis focus on growth at any cost, the process began to actively study and address regional needs. The seriousness of regional purpose was demonstrated by the creation of a host of new, need-based institutions and cooperation mechanisms including the APT, CMIM, AMBI, and APT FTAs. Moving forward, however, East Asia will have to recognize that its regional project must increasingly address non-economic issues.

While East Asia's post-crisis regionalism has been exceptional at addressing the economic needs of the region, it has simultaneously neglected to address other important regional issues with the same determination. Of these, security issues are perhaps the most pressing. While the ARF provides a forum within which regional governments can consult and communicate, there must be a new focus on the resolution of East Asian security issues much like the post-crisis focus on economic matters. This is critical to the future stability of the region, on which recent economic developments depend.

Moving forward, East Asian regionalism will continue on its positive course pursued since the financial crisis. It will surely be a slow, gradual, and occasionally interrupted process. It will also not come to resemble European regionalism any time soon. To continue in the study of East Asian regionalism, therefore, a great degree of patience and an open mind is necessary. The ongoing coordination of regional governments will continue to have

¹⁹ The example Europe, itself a war-ravaged continent just over six decades ago, is again useful for this point.

increasingly important implications for the rest of the world. Study of the phenomena must recognize the peculiar socio-political, economic, and historical considerations that have contributed to the fascinating development of East Asian regionalism.

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Northern Ireland and Israel-Palestine: Spoilers and the Politics of Inclusion

A comparative analysis of peace processes

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Abstract

This paper examines the extent to which lessons from the Northern Ireland peace process can be applied to Israel-Palestine. It argues that one of the principle reasons for the Northern Ireland peace process was the decision taken by the British government, in partnership with the Republic of Ireland, to include militant groups in negotiations, on the condition of ceasefire and the adoption of the Mitchell Principles. While noting that there are many unique structural aspects of the Northern Ireland case it is argued that the adoption of a similarly inclusive process may reignite the peace process in the Middle East. The analysis is organised through the framework of 'spoilers' and the extent to which the concept is useful in understanding the dynamics of peace processes.

Keywords: Northern Ireland – Israel-Palestine – Spoilers – Peace Processes – Inclusion

It is an observable phenomenon in Northern Ireland, and elsewhere, that tension and violence tend to rise when compromise is in the air.
Bertie Ahern, former Irish Taoiseach, 1998¹

If we stop military operations today, how will the [Palestinian] Authority exercise pressure on Israel so that it would abide by what it is required to do? In Cairo [in the lead up to the 1996 elections], when the Authority asked us to stop military activity we told them: okay, now you are negotiating with the enemy, what [leverage] will you have to force Israel to give you statehood and abide by its commitments...? ...When you negotiate for the final settlement, what cards will you have? If you stop resistance, there will be no pressure on Israel, and Israel without pressure does not give.
Mish'al, Hamas, 2002²

We want peace, but not at the price of our security.
Benjamin Netanyahu³

The above quotations from three key actors in the conflicts of Northern Ireland and Israel-Palestine highlight the dialectic inherent in any attempt to establish peace in societies engaged in protracted conflict. That is to say, attempts to establish peace often paradoxically create new opportunities for violence. Particularly in asymmetric conflicts

¹ Quoted in Darby & Mac Ginty (2000, 230).

² Quoted in Gunning (2007a, 203).

³ Quoted in The Jerusalem Post, 19 April 2010.

like Northern Ireland and Israel-Palestine, violence may be understood as a source of leverage by violent non-state actors and justification for opprobrium and disengagement by those in power during peace negotiations. Therefore, the effective management of violence 'when compromise is in the air' may be considered a central component of any successful peace process; the management of spoilers and the use of violence in the Northern Ireland and Israel-Palestine peace processes will be the primary focus of this study.

The use of the Northern Ireland peace process as a model for conflict resolution, and particularly its relevance to the Middle East, is questioned by some (see, Trimble 2007; Bew & Frampton 2008). Nonetheless, this paper will argue that two relevant lessons may be drawn from the peace process in Northern Ireland. First, the case of Northern Ireland illustrates the importance of creating an inclusive peace process. Mac Ginty (2006, 153) notes that the inclusion of paramilitaries in negotiations, the so-called powerful veto-holders of the conflict, was an important contributory factor that led to the success of the Good Friday Agreement, a factor that had been absent from previous peace initiatives. Similarly, Darby (2001, 188) has argued that while it is impossible to include all factions in a peace process, success is impossible unless those with the power to bring down the process with violence are actively included. Therefore, it will be argued that if a peace agreement is to be successfully implemented in Israel-Palestine, then powerful veto-holders, specifically Harakah al-Muqawamah al Islamiyyah (Hamas), need to be included in the process (see also Milton-Edwards & Crooke 2004). Secondly, Darby and Mac Ginty (2000, 8) have identified the importance of addressing the 'central issues in dispute' of any conflict as a core requirement for the successful navigation of a peace process. As will be shown below, both in the case of Northern Ireland and Israel-Palestine, 'spoiler' violence has prevented these core issues from being addressed. By exploring the specific experience of the Northern Ireland peace process, the extent to which a robust framework to manage violence during negotiations can be recreated in Israel-Palestine will be examined.

Stedman's (1997) definition and typology of spoilers will be used as a starting point for this analysis. In his seminal work on the subject, Stedman defined spoilers as 'leaders and parties who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power, worldview, and interests, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it' (1997, 5). As actors differ in their goals and commitment to advance or act against the peace process, Stedman created a typology of limited, greedy and total spoilers (1997, 10). In creating such a typology, Stedman aimed to enable external 'custodians of peace' to adopt suitable strategies to minimise the threat of spoilers, advocating policies of inducement, socialisation and coercion according to type (1997, 12). Stedman's typology has been criticised for being insufficiently capable of identifying 'the spoiler type ex ante' (Zahar 2008, 160) and for failing to be sufficiently flexible to facilitate the fact that actors may move from a total to a limited spoiler as the process develops (Darby 2001, 47).

However, another potential limitation to the concept of spoilers is the very pejorative connotations implicit in the verb 'to spoil'. It will be argued, like Newman and Richmond (2006), that because of these negative connotations, certain normative values are implicit in the application of the label 'spoiler'. This normative element may point to some limitations in its usefulness as an analytical framework for understanding the dynamics of peace processes. The action of labelling a group a spoiler, may at times be a political act, rather than an impartial exercise, that uncritically lays the blame for the failures of a peace process at the door of the spoiler and leaves the potential limitations of the process unexamined (Gunning 2007b, 125). Arguably, one of the successes of the Northern Ireland peace process was to

challenge the uncritical application of the term 'spoilers' to militants through the requirement of adherence to the Mitchell Principles. The Principles demanded peaceful pursuit of political objectives as a prerequisite for inclusion in talks; thus creating a normative framework acceptable to all parties for the expression of political voices during the peace process. The extent to which this may be recreated in Israel-Palestine will be examined.

The paper will begin by briefly outlining the history of each conflict. Parallels will be drawn between each region, paying particular attention to elements that facilitate the creation of an inclusive peace process, in order to establish the extent to which lessons from one peace process may be extrapolated to the other. The analysis will conclude by arguing that, notwithstanding the significant differences between the case of Northern Ireland and the Middle East, if the international community is serious about re-igniting the Israel-Palestine peace process a framework for managing spoilers and the inclusion of Hamas may prove a key ingredient for the successful negotiation and future implementation of peace accords. However, such a framework must go beyond a definition of spoilers that is limited to violent behaviour and include non-violent spoiler activity in order to establish consequences for non-implementation of both Israeli and Palestinian commitments.

The focus on the issue of spoilers is not to preclude the importance of addressing other elements necessary for sustainable peace such as inter alia the structural causes of conflict, demilitarisation, economic development, trust-building across communities, or constitutional reform, but to suggest that by putting a robust framework in place which can absorb spoiler activity, a space may be created in which these central issues can be addressed.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland was born out of the Government of Ireland Act 1920 which partitioned Ireland in the midst of the Irish War of Independence in order to satisfy unionist demands to remain part of Britain. Following partition, the history of Northern Ireland can be broadly divided into three periods; The Stormont Era 1921-1972, Direct Rule from Westminster, and the peace process (Knox & Quirk 2000, 30). The Stormont government, as a devolved executive, had legislative responsibility for most functions of the state excluding trade policy and foreign affairs which remained with Westminster. During this period, the unionist (predominantly Protestant) majority dominated state institutions. Members of the nationalist communities widely believed that Stormont employed discriminatory practices against the minority nationalist (mainly Catholic) population in areas such as electoral policy, justice and policing, employment and social housing policy (Knox & Quirk 2000, 30). In the late 1960s, peaceful civil rights marches aimed at highlighting these grievances became a catalyst for widespread communal violence along sectarian lines and marches frequently ended in clashes with the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). Despite some attempts to reform the legitimate grievances highlighted by the civil rights movement, riots continued throughout the final years of the 1960s and into the 1970s. With violence reaching uncontrollable levels in 1969, British troops were deployed to Northern Ireland to aid the RUC.⁴ While initially welcomed by the Catholic community, the so-called 'honeymoon' period between the British army and the Catholic population was short-lived. The souring of relations is blamed on the role the army played in escorting Orange Marches alongside Catholic areas and an active policy pursued by republicans to alienate the army from the

⁴ See the Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN): <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/troops/sum.htm>.

population (O'Dochartaigh 1997). Relations were irrevocably soured by the controversial events of Bloody Sunday on the 30 January 1972 when British troops shot and killed 13 unarmed civilians marching in Derry.⁵

The Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) emerged as a splinter group from the official Irish Republican Army in 1969 to protect their nationalist communities from communal violence. They led a campaign of violence in Northern Ireland, mainland United Kingdom (UK) and the Republic of Ireland throughout the following three decades.⁶ Corresponding loyalist paramilitaries such as the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) emerged in 1966 and 1971 respectively.⁷ The British army, republican and loyalist paramilitaries, thus, made up the constituent parts of the triangulated conflict that spanned three decades. As the Stormont government continued to lose control of law and order, Direct Rule was imposed by Westminster in 1973 (Knox & Quirk 2000, 31). Despite attempts by the British government to address the conflict through negotiated settlement throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the Troubles were marked by the militarisation of society. This process was reflected in the relationship of paramilitaries to their communities, who, particularly in republican areas, took on specific extra-judicial policing roles (see Cavanaugh 1997; Knox 2002), and through the militarisation of state institutions. Militarisation of the state included the use of emergency legislation that increased the surveillance powers of the security services, internment, diplock courts, heavily armed military checkpoints and increased stop and search and detention powers (Breen Smyth 2004, 549). Northern Ireland is currently governed by a devolved government, the Northern Ireland Assembly, a power-sharing executive created by the ratification of the Good Friday Agreement by two separate referenda in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland in 1998.

ISRAEL-PALESTINE

The creation of the state of Israel (1947) had two important consequences that require note: the effect on the region as a whole and the displacement of the Arab population. Israel was established against the backdrop of violence between Arabs in the British Mandate of Palestine and a growing Jewish immigrant population which began to arrive in the territory from the 18th century onwards to escape anti-Semitism.⁸ The establishment of Israel, by the adoption of a United Nations (UN) resolution proposing partition of the British Mandate between Arabs and, Jews, sparked a general war in the region. By the end of this war Israel controlled approximately 77% of the relinquished British Mandate, while Jordan and Egypt controlled East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.⁹ The decades following the establishment of Israel witnessed considerable instability in the region. Regional conflicts involving Israel include the Suez Canal Crisis (1956), the Six Day War (1967), the Yom Kippur War (1973) and several military engagements with Lebanon in 1978 and 1982, Israeli occupation of South Lebanon from 1982-2000 and another Lebanese-Israeli war in 2006

⁵ See the Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN): <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/bsunday/sum.htm>.

⁶ See the Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN): <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/organ/iorgan.htm#ira>.

⁷ See the Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN): <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/violence/paramilitary.htm>.

⁸ See the Middle East Research and Information Project:
http://www.merip.org/palestine-israel_primer/toc-pal-isr-primer.html.

⁹ *ibidem*.

(Milton-Edwards 2009, 62). Thus, the Israel-Palestine issue has had a highly destabilising effect on the region as a whole.

Second, while the original UN partition plan proposed that 56% of British Mandated Palestine would become the state of Israel, at the time Jewish landownership accounted for only 8% of the land in question. Despite the designation of the territory to include areas already densely populated by Jewish communities, under this plan, the existing Arab population in the territory would have accounted for 45% of the population of the proposed Jewish state. It was believed this demographic imbalance would be readdressed over time in anticipation of more Jews fleeing post-Holocaust Europe (Milton-Edwards 2009, 172). While scholarship is divided on the extent to which Israel pursued an active policy of expulsion of Palestinians from its territory, nonetheless between 1947 and 1949, approximately 700,000 Palestinian Arabs were exiled and became refugees in neighbouring Arab states (Milton-Edwards 2009, 70). The issue of the right of return of these refugees and their descendants is a key concern in the contemporary conflict (Ranstorp 2006, 242).

The Six Day War marked a watershed in the Israel-Palestine conflict. The Arab states lost control of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Arab East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights and the Sinai Peninsula to Israel, and, most significantly, it marked the beginning of Israeli military occupation of the Palestinian territories which has dominated their history since (Milton-Edwards 2009, 121). The aftermath of the Six Day War led to what some have termed the 'Palestinisation' of the conflict (Knox & Quirk 2000, 88). That is to say, with the defeat of neighbouring Arab states, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), established in 1964 under the guidance of the surrounding Arab states, emerged as a significant and independent actor in the conflict in their own right (Robinson 2010). The PLO, an association of diverse Palestinian organisations dominated by Fatah, became the locus of national Palestinian identity under occupation, a platform for the advocacy of Palestinian self-determination and rights and functioned as a government in exile. It provided social welfare, health and education provision to Palestinians in the Occupied Territories (Milton-Edwards 2009, 133). The PLO, and, in particular, the Fatah, emphasised the need for armed resistance against Israeli occupation, which has been a feature of the conflict since the Six Day War (Ranstorp 2006, 246). The PLO and subsequently Hamas, Islamic Jihad and others, have all engaged in violent campaigns against the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) and Israel's civilian population. This in turn has provoked harsh military responses from Israel with two notable escalations of violence: the First Intifada (1987-1993) and the al-Asqa Intifada (2000-2005).

Following the Six Day War, Jewish settlement in the occupied territories has been a key source of contention. Civilian settlement of occupied territories is deemed to be in contravention of the Fourth Geneva Convention regulating the behaviour and obligations of an occupying power (Milton-Edwards 2009, 128). However, by rejecting the term 'occupied territories' in preference for the term 'disputed territories', Israel has freed itself from its legal obligations to the Palestinians within the territories (Milton-Edwards 2009, 122). Security concerns are the key Israeli justification for these settlements (Hermann & Newman 2000, 134). Despite widespread optimism in 1993 that a formula for peace had been found in the Oslo Accords, the peace process in the Middle East has so far failed to produce and implement a sustainable peace agreement. After the outbreak of the al-Asqa Intifada, the Mitchell Report (2001) noted that, despite their long shared history and close proximity, some Israelis and Palestinians have failed to fully appreciate each other's legitimate concerns. Israel fails to understand the humiliation and frustration caused by its military occupation and Palestinians fail to see the genuine security concerns of Israel confronted by a sustained

violent campaign against its civilian population (Ranstorp 2006, 242). Furthermore, the material and ideological significance that the physical control of territory plays in the conflict encourages it to be interpreted in zero-sum terms and has made the implementation of peace agreements difficult (Hermann & Newman 2000, 108).

CONFIGURING THE CONFLICTS

This paper contends that the Israel-Palestine peace process may benefit from adopting a policy of inclusion of violent groups, such as Hamas, and a framework to absorb spoiler behaviour that characterised the Northern Ireland peace process. However, the question must be posed: how similar are these conflicts? What factors unique to Northern Ireland created an inclusive peace process and limited spoiler activity, and can these factors be recreated in Israel-Palestine? The invocation of Northern Ireland as a model for conflict resolution has become popular since the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. For example, senior British politicians, such as former Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Peter Hain, have advocated that the lessons of Northern Ireland be applied to the Middle East peace process, placing particular emphasis on the importance of dialogue without pre-condition with militant groups (Hain 2007). While the concept of borrowing from one process to another is becoming increasingly commonplace, (see Darby 2008), the appropriateness of the Northern Ireland model to the Middle East will be examined in light of two key interrelated factors: the structure of each conflict and the role external parties play.

It is important to note, however, that while the Northern Ireland peace process is regarded as relatively successful, it is not without its weaknesses. Institutional progress has been sporadic and intermittent, stumbling frequently on the long drawn out issue of paramilitary decommissioning; sectarian segregation remains high and communal violence, while certainly considerably diminished, continues to be a feature of Northern Ireland society (Breen Smyth 2008, 1-4). Furthermore, the process has been criticised for allowing 'an acceptable' level of violence to develop, the repercussions of which, such as paramilitary extra-judicial justice, continue to be felt across communities long after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement (Knox 2002, 171-172; Mac Ginty 2006, 167). Nonetheless, despite these weaknesses, an agreement has been implemented; the most significant paramilitaries of both sides have decommissioned and, for the most part, committed themselves to democratic politics.¹⁰ With this caveat in mind, what factors contributed to the creation of the dynamics of the Northern Ireland peace process?

First, as a semi-autonomous region of the UK, when the Stormont government failed to maintain law and order, Northern Ireland's failing regional institutions were superseded by a more powerful central government that was physically removed from the conflict. Therefore, even though violence pervaded society, important political institutions were sufficiently removed from the locus of violence to ensure a level of institutional continuity such as the provision of amenities, collection of taxes, healthcare and education. In other words, the conflict did not lead to state collapse. Notwithstanding the IRA bombing campaigns in mainland Britain, Westminster was at once spatially removed from the daily realities of the conflict and legally responsible for its resolution. Failed attempts at peace initiatives such as

¹⁰ See the Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN): <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/violence/paramilitary.htm>.

the Sunningdale Agreement in 1974, which was unequivocally rejected by unionists,¹¹ illustrated how elite-level decision making and Westminster's distance from the conflict at times worked against its capacity to find a resolution. Similarly, negotiations leading up to the Good Friday Agreement were negatively affected by John Major's hung parliament, whose dependency on unionists in Westminster restricted his freedom to act when stalled multi-party talks threatened the peace process (Knox & Quirk 2000, 41). However, arguably, the presence of the UK government and its relative distance from the region played a positive role in negotiations leading up to the Good Friday Agreement, particularly once Tony Blair became Prime Minister of a strong majority government in 1997 (Breen Smyth 2008, 19). Furthermore, O'Kane notes that beyond Northern Ireland, the issues at hand have little electoral saliency for British politics; thus, the engagement with the peace process by Westminster is said to be characterised by a high level of bipartisanship, further improving the potential for it to play a positive role in the peace process (O' Kane 2010, 252). Arguably, this level of bipartisanship would be difficult to recreate elsewhere.

Second, through the cultivation of a cooperative relationship with the Republic of Ireland government, formally institutionalised by the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985, the British and Irish governments emerged as natural proxies for the nationalist claims of unionists and republicans respectively. Stedman has noted that the corporate interests of external custodians of peace may lead them to undertake actions that are in line with their own interests rather than in the interests of the peace process itself (1997, 16). With the British and Irish governments as the primary custodians of the peace, the peace process in Northern Ireland was, for the most part, saved from this particular pitfall. As O' Kane notes, neither the British nor Irish governments were likely to go to war with one another over Northern Ireland and could, therefore, cultivate a partnership with regards to the region (2010, 252). This is most explicitly evidenced by the principle of consent agreed between the governments in the Declaration of Principles 1993. The referendum held in the Republic of Ireland, rescinding its irredentist claims on Northern Ireland as part of the Good Friday Agreement, and Westminster's agreement to respect any future majority decision within Northern Ireland to leave the Union institutionalised this principle of consent.

Third, the relationship of the British and Irish governments to Northern Ireland, and the absence of any material interest in the region, created a superstructure with an unusual degree of neutrality in which the peace process could operate. Mac Ginty (2006, 167) has noted that the use of penalties to manage violence during the peace process was largely a function of the cooperation between the British and Irish governments, as they were able to establish credible parameters for the peace process. This relationship was important in creating an environment that could limit and absorb spoiler violence. Indeed, the importance of the function of the British and Irish governments was evident again in February of 2010 when Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Taoiseach Brian Cowen travelled to Northern Ireland as the Northern Ireland Assembly threatened collapse over the delicate issue of the devolution of policing and justice powers.¹²

David Trimble (2007), former leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), has criticised those who advocate the view that the inclusion of militant groups in negotiations without pre-conditions is a key lesson to be learned from Northern Ireland. He argues this view is

¹¹ See the Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN): <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/sunningdale/chron.htm>.

¹² See: McKevitt, G. 2010. "As it Happened: the Northern Deal" *BBC News Channel* April 26. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/8499926.stm.

predicated on three misconceptions: the successes of the peace process lay in its inclusivity alone, such inclusivity was only possible due to the absence of pre-conditions, and the process was an unqualified success (2007, 6). Trimble argues that circumstances in the 1990s were such that the IRA was sufficiently weakened militarily to encourage a strategic shift away from armed struggle and towards dialogue within its ranks, rather than a fundamental shift occurring in British policy (2007, 7). Thus, he emphasises the importance of considering the historical context of the lessons of one peace process before relating them to another. Bew and Frampton (2008) have also cautioned against blithe proposals to accept dialogue with militant groups as a panacea to deeply rooted conflict without reference to their military and political strength, arguing that the IRA of the 1990s was very different to the Hamas of today. Furthermore, as shown above, three structural elements of the Northern Ireland conflict contributed to the dynamics of the peace process and its ability to absorb spoiler violence; the status of Northern Ireland within Britain, the relationship between the UK and the Republic of Ireland and the lack of any material or strategic interest of Britain and the Republic of Ireland in the region.

How do these conditions compare with the Israel-Palestine peace process? Arguably, regional dynamics, the role of international actors and the legal status of Palestinians have impeded similar progress of the peace process.

First, as previously noted, the Israel-Palestine conflict has spread beyond the borders of Israel several times. As the only non-Islamic state in the region, Israel has persistently portrayed itself as a marginalised state surrounded by hostile neighbours (Hermann & Newman 2000, 124) and a national security discourse has developed within Israel which informs the acceptable parameters of any peace agreement (Hermann & Newman 2000, 122). This discourse is readily accessible on the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs website.¹³ Here, comparisons of the size of Israel with other states can be found to illustrate its small size relative to other powers across the world. Similarly, maps can be found that illustrate the threat 'tiny' Israel faces

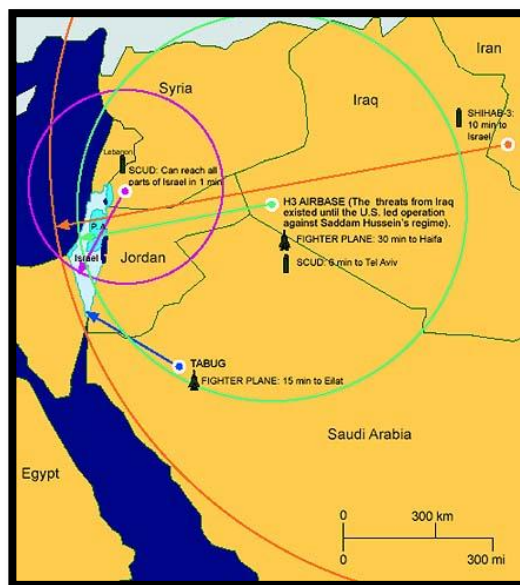


Figure 1 'Regional Threats to Israel' from *Israel in Maps*. Source: Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Facts+About+Israel/Israel+in+Maps/Regional+Threats+to+Israel.htm>.

from its neighbours (see Fig. 1¹⁴). This security discourse has created an Israeli position that links any Israel-Palestine resolution to wider regional concerns. For example, Israel has recently demanded that any new peace agreement be conditional on the United States (US) preventing Iran from gaining nuclear weapons capabilities (Asseburg & Perthes 2009, 21). Bew and Frampton (2008) argue the cooperation and the commitment of the Irish and British governments to achieving peace and stability in Northern Ireland considerably weakened terrorist organisations and ultimately led to a re-evaluation by IRA of the strategic value of armed struggle. Conversely, they point to Syria and Iran actively encouraging the

¹³ See "Israel size comparisons" available at: <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Facts+About+Israel/Israel+in+Maps/Israel+Size+Comparisons.htm>.

¹⁴ See also Hermann and Newman (2000, 123).

violence of Hamas, supplying arms, training activists and providing political refuge for its leaders. While consecutive British and Irish governments were able to forge working relationships in favour of peace, and provide natural proxies for each side of the conflict, it seems unlikely a similar relationship will naturally emerge between Israel and its neighbours that would provide a comparable level of stability.

Furthermore, a particular difficulty in negotiating settlement between state and non-state actors in deeply divided societies is that the state, having a legal identity, often acts as both 'participant and umpire', determining the rules of the game in which militant non-state actors petition a grievance during the negotiations (Kierke 2005, 131). Even when the international community may recognise 'the long history of government repression' as part of the problem, the legitimacy of the state often prevails. Unlike Britain and Ireland, Israeli negotiators must contend with the acute saliency of the conflict to domestic politics and the sense that the conflict and its protagonists pose an existential threat to the state (Bew & Frampton 2008). As umpire and participant, Israel is in a weak position to engineer parameters of peace that are likely to be acceptable to all sides, including its own population.

Second, the role of external mediators, particularly the role of the US, is more complicated in the Middle East than in Northern Ireland. The US has played an important role in each conflict and even share Former Senator George Mitchell as an external mediator. However, the particular relationship of the US to the Middle East arguably impacts negatively upon its effectiveness as a custodian of peace. While perceived as sympathetic to its security concerns and, thus, acceptable to Israel, Milton-Edwards (2009, 166) argues that the material interests of the US in the region, the need to consider domestic reactions to peace negotiations and its geopolitical concerns limits the capacity of the US to act in the best interests of the peace process. As the US is widely perceived as the only state with any significant influence on Israel, given the enormous aid packages Israel received from the US, its reluctance to use that influence, in the face of the continued creation of settlements and violations of peace accords, has tarnished the reputation of US in the eyes of the Palestinians as an unbiased peace broker in the region (Milton-Edwards 2009, 166).

Stedman has noted that the 'biggest potential liability in managing a spoiler are member states that are patrons of the spoiler' (Stedman 1997, 16). While noting that these patrons may exert either a positive or a negative influence on the peace process, depending on their commitment to forging a peace deal, Stedman argues that often domestic groups are present within those patron states that support these spoilers and, thus, maintains that "pressures from these groups, as well as prior policy commitments to the spoiler, can lead the patron to continue to support the spoiler, even in the face of outrageous behaviour" (Stedman 1997, 16-17).

If we extend the definition of spoilers beyond the use of violence, as Mac Ginty (2006) advocates, then the role of the US as a peace-broker in the region becomes complicated. Given the domestic concerns, its ideological commitment to the spread of democracy and the strategic importance of Israel as an ally in the Middle East, the freedom with which the US can broker a peace deal is severely limited. Thus, a failure to create credible and visible consequences for Israeli non-compliance with peace agreements may contribute to a sense that violence rather than dialogue creates the necessary leverage with which to obtain political gains in organisations like Hamas. As noted at the opening of this paper, this sentiment is captured by Mish'al arguing: "if you stop resistance, there will be no pressure on

Israel, and Israel without pressure does not give".¹⁵ The specific context of the peace process in Northern Ireland created credible parameters for non-violent dialogue, which was significantly aided by what Bew and Frampton (2008) have called the stabilising effect of British and Irish cooperation. The relationship of regional actors to the conflict, and that of external mediators such as the US, has no such stabilising effect. Therefore, from the perspective of actors like Hamas, in this context, violence rather than dialogue may seem like a logical expression of political voice.

Finally, the difference in the legal status of the minorities within each conflict needs to be addressed. While the Stormont (1921-1972) government certainly did engage in discriminatory practises such as gerrymandering and the allocation of council housing (see Cameron 1969), and while there is considerable evidence to suggest that emergency legislation was often used prejudicially against Catholic communities (see Hillyard 1993), throughout the Troubles in Northern Ireland the Catholic minority, on paper at least, had the same rights as the Protestant majority within a state structure. As highlighted above, republican and loyalist paramilitaries often provided 'rough justice' in response to petty crime and collusion with the enemy (be it security services or enemy communities) in their constituent communities, which, for republicans at least, reflected the absence of a legitimate source of law and order (O'Leary 2007, 205). However, this points to a crisis of state legitimacy rather than the absence of the state as is the case for Palestinians.

As noted above, in the absence of statehood the PLO functioned as a government in exile for the Palestinian population. However, the PLO has not enjoyed sustained support from either the international community or regional states; plane hijacking and assassinations turned the PLO into terrorists in the minds of those outside the region (Milton-Edwards 2009, 168). Similarly, PLO involvement in the internal politics of both Jordan and the Lebanon led to the development of complex regional relationships (Milton-Edwards 2009, 134). Furthermore, following expulsion from Lebanon after the Israeli invasion, the PLO leadership was exiled to Tunis and the PLA was spread across North Africa. The spatial distance of the leadership of the PLO served to alienate them from those it claimed to represent in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, whose experience of Israeli occupation they did not share (Milton-Edwards 2009, 135). This is significant because an important element of peace negotiations is the function leaders perform in persuading their followers to endorse a peace deal (Darby 2001, 120). This is made harder if direct interaction between leader and grassroots is disrupted and makes the emergence of splinter groups more likely.

These issues are further exacerbated by the task of correctly identifying credible representatives for the Palestinians. The PLO was not recognised as a legitimate representative of the Palestinian cause by the US until 1988, following the outbreak of the first Intifada (1987) and the international media attention it attracted that highlighted the realities of Israeli occupation in the daily lives of Palestinians (Milton-Edwards 2009, 168). By this stage, and increasingly as the Oslo Accords began to fall short of expectations, the PLO began to be perceived by Palestinians as an organisation of elites, characterised by a culture of corruption and personal patronage centred on its leader, Arafat (Milton-Edwards 2009, 134). Currently, the legitimacy of the PLO, or more specifically Fatah, as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians has been severely challenged by the rise of Hamas, who emerged in part in response to the culture of such nepotism and corruption within the PLO elite (Gunning 2007b, 126). The defeat of Fatah by Hamas in PA elections in

¹⁵ Quoted in Gunning (2007a, 203).

the Gaza Strip and the West Bank in 2006 led to a crisis in Palestinian politics. In 2007 the Gaza Strip descended into internecine violence between the militant wings of each group. The Hamas victory in the Gaza Strip was followed by revenge attacks against Hamas supporters and institutions in the West Bank by the al-Asqa Martyrs' Brigade, the militant wing of Fatah. Both sides have been accused of human rights violations in light of this violence.¹⁶ Therefore, while Fatah enjoys international recognition and legitimacy, part of the Palestinian population at least disputes this view.

The legal status of Palestinians, in part, creates an environment in which internecine violence and a divided political front are highly likely. The marginalisation of Hamas, despite its electoral success, shows that even with the institutional development that the Oslo Accords brought in the form of the Palestinian Authority, Palestinian political movements still require external legitimisation by the international community before being admitted to the peace process. This potentially makes the identification of possible participants in peace negotiations (and consequently the identification of spoilers) a political exercise. As such, it greatly increases the likelihood of spoiler violence during the peace process. In addition, following 9/11, the stateless nature of Palestinian political parties and the presence of militant groups allowed Israel to begin to employ global War on Terror rhetoric and to equate its responses to Palestinian violence with the US response to al-Qaeda, thus justifying its military response (Milton-Edwards 2009, 168).¹⁷ The use of coercion to manage spoilers is one that Stedman advocates for total spoilers (Stedman 1997, 15); as we shall see below, many question the understanding of Hamas as a total spoiler. This will be the subject of the following section.

HAMAS - BLOCKING THE PATH TO PEACE?

The structural differences between the conflict in Northern Ireland and Israel-Palestine create difficulties for the peace process, particularly in terms of the attitude adopted by the international community towards Hamas. However, the attitude toward Hamas is not unlike that held by unionists towards the IRA and Sinn Fein prior to and during the Northern Ireland peace process. The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) campaigned against the Good Friday Agreement referendum on the grounds that the inclusion of Sinn Fein in negotiations was 'incompatible with non-violent democratic politics' (Mac Ginty 2006, 164). Similarly, the UUP support and engagement with the peace process has been described as a realpolitik decision. Mac Ginty has argued that the UUP engaged in the peace process out of a tactical desire to influence it rather than to support it *per se*, faced as it was with republicans, the British government and the Irish government all aligned in a political process that was to have profound consequences for the region's future (Mac Ginty 2006, 165). Many have argued for the inclusion of violent veto holders in peace processes in order to reach a sustainable settlement (Darby 2001, 118; Heiberg, O'Leary, & Tirman 2007, 416; Mac Ginty 2006, 153; Ricigliano 2005). However, one of the difficulties with such an endeavour is that to include militants in any peace process is to go against the 'surround sound' chorus of condemnation that governments generally employ against non-state actors using violent

¹⁶ See B'Tselem (The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories). "Violations of Human Rights of Palestinians by Palestinians" B'Tselem website. http://www.btselem.org/English/Inter_Palestinian_Violations/Index.asp.

¹⁷ Milton-Edwards (2009, 169) and Gerges (2010) have noted that Hamas has rejected the transnational agenda of Al-Qaeda.

means (Mac Ginty 2006, 156). The Mitchell Principles were the framework devised to circumvent this 'surround sound' in the Northern Ireland peace process. In response to unionist fears that the IRA and Sinn Féin were untrustworthy partners for peace, adherence to the Mitchell Principles became a requirement for inclusion in peace negotiations, and, thus, established the normative parameters of the Northern Ireland peace process. By agreeing to the Mitchell Principles, a significant willingness to submit to the rule of law was signalled through a commitment to 'exclusively democratic and peaceful political actions to resolve conflict and negotiations', to 'total' and 'verifiable disarmament', 'to abide by the terms of any agreement' and to use 'exclusively peaceful methods' to alter any aspect of the agreement'.¹⁸

However, despite the significance of the Mitchell Principles, it should be noted that they did not engender a great deal of trust between the parties. The saliency of the decommissioning issue throughout the peace process illustrates this most clearly. For republicans to disarm before a settlement was agreed was tantamount to surrender and, thus, unacceptable, while for unionists to accept IRA decommissioning post-settlement was to concede defeat on the long-held IRA 'troops out' campaign and confirmed the suspicion that the IRA ceasefire was a tactical one (McInnes 2006, 154). As argued above, one element that facilitated negotiations was the relationship of the British and Irish governments to the conflict and their ability to create credible parameters for the process. While neither this framework nor the Mitchell Principles created trust between the parties, they did create consequences for spoiling and opportunity for militant groups to formally express their commitment to the process and to submit themselves to it.

Despite the structural differences between each conflict the international community may have a role to play in creating similar credible parameters for negotiation. The position of Hamas in the peace process is particularly problematic. The ideological position of Hamas has led most to identify it as total spoiler. Following Stedman's typology, a total spoiler is an actor who holds 'immutable preferences' (1997, 10). The Charter of Hamas explicitly calls for the liberation of the whole historic Palestine on the basis that it is an Islamic *waqf*, a territory entrusted by God to all Muslims, and thus seeks the destruction of Israel (Gunning 2007b, 123). This has led to an international policy of isolation towards Hamas (Scham & Abu-Irshaid 2009, 1). However, as Scham and Abu-Irshaid (2009) convincingly argue, Hamas's actual behaviour has shown political flexibility and considerable willingness to co-exist with Israel, although, as this has been expressed in Islamic terms it has been disregarded by the international community (2009, 7). By proposing *hudna* with Israel, a long but impermanent Islamic exit strategy from debilitating wars, Scham and Abu-Irshaid (2006, 10) argue that Hamas has shown its willingness to accept the political reality of Israel and the necessity of co-existence in a manner that preserves its ideological position and support base (2009, 8).¹⁹ Therefore, Hamas may be better understood as a limited spoiler, i.e. spoilers who have limited rather than absolutist goals (Stedman 1997, 10); according to Stedman's typology, strategies of inducement or socialisation rather than coercion are more appropriate to this spoiler type (1997, 16). Gunning (2007a, 202-203; 2007b, 125) has argued this point quite convincingly, carefully showing that on close examination of the political context in which the controversial use of suicide bombing occurs, political considerations, rather than absolutist

¹⁸ The Mitchell Principles of 1996, quoted in Cox, Guelke & Stephen (2006, 508).

¹⁹ Arguably, *hudna* and the principle of consent, institutionalised in the Good Friday Agreement, reflect similar attempts to reconcile an unpalatable political reality with opposing ideological positions of the parties in conflict, with republicans letting the question of a united Ireland to future generations.

religious doctrine, are to the forefront of Hamas's decision making. In addition, Araj (2008) has found that, across the Palestinian groups employing suicide bombing against Israel, there is a close relationship between the occurrence of harsh Israeli military repression and the popularity and frequency of suicide attacks, suggesting the use of violence is reactive to context, and thus perhaps amenable to change in the correct environment.

Ranstorp (2006) describes how successive relapses in violence on both sides and the unabated creation of 'new facts on the ground' re-expose underlying fears and suspicions about the true nature of the others' intentions in Israel-Palestine (2006, 247). Whereas Israel perceives 'the concept of compromise' to be absent from Arab discourse (Ranstorp 2006, 248), Palestinians fear coercive policies are designed to break their spirit, and the Israeli policy of 'systematically creating irreversible facts on the ground' puts into question Israel's genuine interest in peace (Ranstorp 2006, 250-251). In such a situation it is unlikely that the primary political actors alone will be able to overcome the 'surround sound' of condemnation to which Mac Ginty alluded. Thus, the role of credible external custodians of peace may prove particularly important in this regard.

As was shown in the case of Northern Ireland, the presence of credible proxies for the opposing sides of the conflict helped to create an environment conducive to negotiation, while their commitment to the process provided a structure through which the process could withstand (to an extent) deadlock in negotiations. Given the regional dynamics of the Israel-Palestine conflict, it is unlikely two such natural proxies will emerge within the region; therefore, this role will most likely fall on international actors. The international Quartet of Peace Mediators for the Middle East (the European Union, the US, the UN and Russia) have demanded that Hamas renounce violence, recognise Israel and commit to all agreements signed by the PLO before admitting it into the peace process. In response to its refusal to do so, the Quartet has adopted a 'West Bank first' approach (Asseburg and Perthes 2009, 20). However, this position is risky as it does not take Hamas's constituency or strength into account, and thus excludes an important 'veto holder' from the process. Furthermore, by identifying Hamas as a spoiler, an opportunity to critically explore the potentially legitimate grievances of Hamas with the peace process is missed. Most importantly, a coercive policy towards Hamas seems to have failed. Despite international isolation, direct military attack during Operation Cast Lead and a blockade on the Gaza Strip, the popularity of Hamas has grown, even in the traditionally Fatah dominated West Bank (Asseburg and Perthes 2009, 19). Thus, perhaps a new approach would be expedient. Notwithstanding the difficulties of such an approach in the Middle East, the process of creating credible space in which an alternative path to violence is understood as a viable option may prove key to real progress in the Middle East peace process.

A useful step forward for the process may be to establish a credible counter-balance to Israel's position of relative strength that engages with the complexities of Palestinian politics and facilitates the creation of a unified political front. Asseburg and Perthes (2009, 22) argue that the EU may successfully fill this position by taking a more robust role in the peace process. If the international community is serious in successfully mediating the Israel-Palestine peace process, a framework for managing spoilers, and specifically the inclusion of Hamas, may prove key ingredients to the end. The uncritical use of spoiler rhetoric has thus far prevented this from happening. Perhaps, if, as in Northern Ireland, the rhetoric was challenged, some concrete progress in Israel-Palestine may be achieved.

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The work and wisdom of...

Philippe C. Schmitter

By Benoit Monange

For students of political science, the academic production of Philippe Schmitter is both a reference you cannot avoid and an endless source of inspiration. *Unavoidable* because his proudly comparative work covers such a large specter of the discipline – and such a large part of the globe as well – that it would be a challenge for someone to try to become a political scientist without ever encountering at least a portion of the results of this abundant scholarly productivity. In addition, his lasting impact unquestionably stems from his ability to craft concepts that are thought provoking and debate triggering, concepts that, whether you like them or not, you will have to work with – or against – but that you cannot just dismiss. *Inspirational* because his reflections on his own work and on the state of our discipline, as well as his willingness to share his experience and provide advice to students, have made him a useful guide for young explorers trying to find their way throughout the craggy field of political science.

Philippe Schmitter started his career as a rebel and never ceased to challenge conventional forms of thinking. At a time when pluralism was prevailing, he criticized it for not being able to account for the large influence the state can exert on civil society. His neo-corporatism¹ alternative to the pluralist theory has since been widely used in the analysis of interest group politics (1974, 1981).

His second line of research involves a detailed examination of comparative dimensions of democracy and democratization². From his seminal work with Guillermo O'Donnell on *Transitions from Authoritarian Rules* (1986) to his report for the Council of Europe with Alexander Trechsel on the *Future of Democracy in Europe* (2004), he explored many facets of modern democratic regimes: transitions (1991), consolidation (1992), promotion, accountability (2004b), quality, types of democracy...

He is also widely recognized as one of the leading scholars for the study of the emerging 'Euro-polity' (1996, 2000) and, more broadly, on regional integration processes (2007).

More recently, Philippe Schmitter has produced some remarkable pieces on the state of political science and comparative politics that are of great help to understand the development of our discipline. He has warned against the "Americanization" of political science and the vacuity of rational choice theory and promoted diversity in concepts and methodologies (2002), argued that the future of comparative politics lies in its '*complexification*' in order to grasp the 'complex interdependence' at play in the contemporary political world (2009) and suggested a critical re-examination of the discipline's foundation that moves it towards a more pluralistic model of inquiry (2010a).

Finally, his chapter on "The Design of Social and Political Research" (2008) is a must read for any student embarking on a PhD.

¹ P. Schmitter defines neo-corporatism as "a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, noncompetitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and support" (1977, 93-94).

² P. Schmitter recently published a personal synthesis of his works and findings on democratization entitled "Twenty Five Years, Fifteen Findings" (2010b).

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Videography :

Several videos of conferences, keynotes, lectures, interviews, debates... can be found at http://videlectures.net/philippe_c_schmitter/.

Video lecture on the "The Micro-Foundation for the science(s) of politics" can be found at : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iN73BRiLHBg>.

Video interview on the "Future of Political Science" can be found on IAPSS facebook account at: <http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=135435077752>.

His personal webpage which feature a lot of working papers can be found at : <http://www.eui.eu/DepartmentsAndCentres/PoliticalAndSocialSciences/People/Professors/Schmitter.aspx>

Interview with Philippe C. Schmitter

Which authors do you consider as having been the most influential for you as a young scholar?

Philippe C. Schmitter: Machiavelli, Marx and Tocqueville among the ancients. Ernst Haas, Karl Deutsch and Sheldon Wohlen among the moderns.

Which one of your works are you the most proud of?

P.C.S.: I would like to think that it is the one I am about to finish. But more seriously, the "*Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*"¹ that I wrote with Guillermo O'Donnell is certainly the one that has traveled the furthest.

Which recent "cutting-edge" or innovative work would you recommend for a student looking for inspiring research?

P.C.S.: I do not see a lot of "cutting-edge" stuff emerging these days. Instead I see a lot of scholastic conformity, especially in the name of "rational choice." But I have been impressed with what my students have been doing with Charles Ragin's QCA².

I also read closely anything that is written by my friend and co-author, Wolfgang Streeck, or that comes out of his shop, the Max-Planck Institute in Cologne.

The literature linking varieties of capitalism and types of democracy, especially comparative research coming out of Eastern Central Europe, I have also found

¹ O'Donnell, Guillermo, Schmitter, Philippe C. 1986. *Transitions from authoritarian rule: tentative conclusions about uncertain democracies*, Baltimore : Johns Hopkins University Press.

² QCA stands for "Qualitative Comparative Analysis". QCA was crafted by the American sociologist Charles Ragin as a way to facilitate the making of causal inferences in qualitative studies that deal with a small number of cases. It is described by its designer as a "new analytic technique that uses Boolean algebra to implement principles of comparison used by scholars engaged in the qualitative study of macro social phenomena". [For more information, see Charles Ragin website dedicated to QCA at <http://www.u.arizona.edu/~cragin/fsQCA/>]

Key dates:

1936:

Born in Washington D.C. from a French mother and an American father

1968:

Receives PhD from UC Berkley.
Dissertation on "Development and Interest Politics in Brazil."

1967-1982:

Professor at the University of Chicago

1974:

His article "Still the Century of Corporatism?" is published in *Review of Politics*

1982-1986:

Professor at the European University Institute in Florence

1983-1984:

Vice-president of the American Political Science Association

inspiring -- but that is because this is what I am currently thinking about.

What are the readings you would recommend for a student entering a graduate program in political science?

P.C.S.: Obviously, this would first depend on what the graduate student wants to work on. My standard advice has always been to go as far back as possible in time and read the precursors first – before getting too attached to the current literature on any particular topic. For me, that has often meant re-reading Machiavelli, Tocqueville or Marx – but lately, I have found some inspiration in the works of James Coleman, Charles Tilly and Robert Dahl.

If you were to start your PhD today, which subject would you elect?

P.C.S.: No question, comparative politics (but I was "pre-destined" for that by my personal and family background).

What would be your advice to students wishing to pursue a career in political science?

P.C.S.: Spend some time living in several places, doing different types of work and, above all, get interested in 'real' politics. Too many of today's political scientists not only have no experience with the sorts of dilemmas politicians actually have to face (or, when they do, it is only about politicians in one country), but they are even hostile to the intrinsic messiness, uncertainty and conflictuality of the subject-matter. They treat politics as if it were a disease interfering with economic efficiency, rather than a (potential) cure for violent conflict and social exploitation.

What are, according to you, the main challenges facing political science today?

P.C.S.: Probably, it would be adapting to a world of politics in which the "sovereign nation-state" is no longer the exclusive or even pre-dominant actor – either

1986:

Edits with G. O'Donnell and L. Whitehead a 4 volumes book series on "Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy".

1986-1996:

Professor at Stanford University

1996:

Authors with G.Marks, F. Scharpf and W. Streek the book *Governance in the European Union*

Since 1996:

Professor and professor emeritus at the European University Institute

2000:

Authors the book *How to Democratize the European Union...and Why Bother?*

domestically or in foreign relations. Without the presumption of (prior) stateness and nationhood, virtually the entire vocabulary of politics and political science has to be re-examined and often revised.

Do you think political science can have an impact? Can it make a difference?

P.C.S.: It certainly has in two fields that I have been involved in:

(1) The "re-discovery" of corporatism not only changed the perception of academics of the relationship between capitalist development and political institutions, but it also affected the behavior of actors and their associations;

(2) Even more, the emerging literature on democratization very quickly became part of its subject-matter. Actors involved in transitions referred to it and took some lessons from it (not, incidentally, always the ones I would have preferred).

What is the most surprising thing you have learned thanks to political science?

P.C.S.: That I could make a decent, honest and even exciting career out of being a political scientist.

What do you think was the greatest joy of your career?

P.C.S.: I think that it may be about to happen when I start giving my course on "The Theory and Practice of 'Real-Existing' Democracy" in Shanghai this Fall. If I do not get summarily ejected and manage to inspire some Chinese students on their home grounds, I will be very "joyful" indeed.

[For longer developments on the life and work of Philippe Schmitter, see:

Schmitter, Philippe C. 1997. "Autobiographical Reflections: Or How To Live With A Conceptual Albatross Around One's Neck." in Hans *Comparative European Politics. The Story of a Profession* edited by Daalder Hans. London: Pinter: 287-297.

Munck G. 2007. "Interview with Philippe C. Schmitter: Corporatism, Democracy and Conceptual Traveling." in *Passion, Craft and Method in Comparative Politics* edited by Munck G. and Snyder R.O. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press: 305-350.]

2004:

Edits with A. Trechsel a Green Paper on the "Future of Democracy in Europe" for the Council of Europe

2007:

Receives the European Consortium for Political Research lifetime achievement award

2009:

His article "The Nature and Future of Comparative Politics" in published in the first issue of the *European Political Science Review*

2009:

Receives the IPSA Mattei Dogan Prize & the Johan Skytte Prize

-----Book Review Section-----

RODRIGUEZ, ROBYN MAGALIT. *MIGRANTS FOR EXPORT: HOW THE PHILIPPINE STATE BROKERS LABOR TO THE WORLD.* MINNEAPOLIS AND LONDON: UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA PRESS, 2010.

By **Liberty Chee**, *National University of Singapore*

Robyn Magalit Rodriguez makes a significant contribution to the scholarship on international migration, specifically one coming from the perspective of the most organized labor-sending country in the world. *Migrants for Export* is an institutional and discursive characterization of a new typology in the literature - the "labor-exporting state." Labor brokerage is the set of practices employed by a migrant-sending country to deploy temporary workers on-demand.

The institutional aspect of the study deals with an ethnographic survey of the Philippines' "migration bureaucracy", that is, the agencies tasked with recruiting, marketing and deploying migrants to global labor markets. The discursive aspect deals with the ways in which the state molds what the author calls "migrant citizenship", a necessary reconfiguration to reproduce the labor brokerage system.

The author contends that this system was born out of the Philippines state's adjustment to the neoliberalizing global economy. "Regimes of labor brokerage", she argues, are a kind of institutional fix to resolving the conflict between the demand for migrant labor in receiving countries and the need to restrict immigration.

The study is most successful in its unpacking of the Philippine state as a labor exporter. Rodriguez dispels the myth perpetuated by successive Philippine

administrations that the country does not have a labor exporting policy. She does this through an exposition of the ways in which the migration bureaucracy finds labor markets and negotiates with potential "clients" overseas.

The state employs the entire diplomatic apparatus to anticipate openings in labor markets where the country has diplomatic posts. The state apparatus, from the labor attachés in embassies to the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA), does "market research." Migration bureaucrats then go on "marketing missions" where they meet with government officials and prospective employers of receiving countries. She calls this "labor diplomacy." The inter-state relations in labor diplomacy conclude in bilateral labor agreements (BLAs) and memorandums of understanding (MOUs). The Philippine state also takes advantage of intergovernmental mechanisms such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), among others, to conduct "market development activities."

More importantly the author characterizes the state as a guarantor of sorts, ensuring that its migrant workers adhere to their employment contracts and that they would return to the Philippines once these contracts expire. The Philippine

state may also intervene in cases of labor disputes, as she outlines in the example of striking garment workers in Brunei. Rodriguez says that the state being able to perform this role of guarantor is crucial in reproducing the labor brokerage system and to maintain the Philippines' "competitiveness" vis-à-vis other labor exporting countries.

At the state-society level, migrant citizenship serves as a social glue which anchors the migrant worker to his roots even as he is physically dislocated elsewhere. Rodriguez makes the fine point that scholarship on international migration usually focuses on how the notion of citizenship changes in migrant-receiving countries. She argues that the same can be said for sending countries as well.

The author outlines some discursive practices employed by the state to ensure that the migrant citizen's sense of belonging is rooted in the home country. The study emphasizes the ways in which the labor brokering state interweaves love of family (those left behind) with love of country; and the "real" manifestation of this sense of belongingness is manifested in remittances. Remittance-sending then becomes one of the most important obligations of the migrant citizen and it is tied up in the discourse of nationalism and familial responsibility.

The institutional "fix" that is the labor brokerage state, Rodriguez argues, is riddled with contradictions. The state's role as protector of its migrant citizens is severely limited by its other role as guarantor of temporary labor. The capacity, even the willingness of the state to enforce workers' rights conflicts with the state's need to avoid jeopardizing relations with its "client" government. She illustrates this with a case study of striking Filipino garment workers in Brunei. The workers were demanding the remuneration stated in their contracts and enlisted the help of the Philippine

government. In the end, the workers were repatriated without their demands having been met.

Finally, the author asserts the need to pay attention to the state as a level of analysis in international migration. The scholarship thus far usually focuses on processes from "above" or "below" without paying attention to state agency, and much less from the sending-country's perspective.

While the reorganization of work in a globalizing economy plays an important background in Rodriguez' thesis, the study is less successful in its attempt to link the Philippine labor brokerage system to this process. The author mentions the global commodity chains and how the Philippine government takes advantage of openings, as in the case of the garment workers in Brunei. These were employed by subcontractors of American companies Gap and Old Navy. While the agency of the state in supplying temporary workers to this particular commodity chain is apparent, it is unclear how the globalizing economy elicits such a demand in the first place. Perhaps this was beyond the scope of a book. Nevertheless it would be an interesting subject for further study.

The extent to which the globalizing economy poses pressures on the labor brokering state is demonstrated in the need to generate foreign exchange. Here Rodriguez argues that migration has become part of the developmental trajectory of the country. She credits the dislocation of migration (and the need to generate external financing through remittances) to neoliberal restructuring which the Philippines underwent in the late 1970s. The author makes note of debt conditionalities imposed by international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and outlines the initial labor export policy of the Marcos administration. While she explicitly links labor export to the need to earn dollars to

solve the balance of payment crisis during the Marcos years, there is little explanation of how this external pressure impacted on the administrations which followed it. The relationship of structural adjustment programs to labor brokering is also unclear. There is mention of how the Philippines followed the export-oriented path recommended by IFIs but how this change impacted on the domestic economy and its link to labor export is not explained.

In all, *Migrants for Export* succeeds in its intent to describe the inner workings of

the labor brokering state and some of the tools it employs to reproduce the labor export system. It meets the “how” questions but perhaps did not intend to fully answer the “whys.” It is an important addition to the scholarship on international migration as it, not only reiterates the importance of the state as an agent in a transnational process, but also seeks to draw a fuller picture by providing information on a labor-sending country that is now widely recognized as a “model” in “migration management.”

KASUYA, YUKO AND QUIMPO, NATHAN GILBERT, EDS. *THE POLITICS OF CHANGE IN THE PHILIPPINES*. MANILA: ANVIL PUBLISHING, 2010.

By **Raymund John P. Rosuelo**, University of Makati

For a country at a political crossroads, the book edited by Yuko Kasuya and Gilbert Quimpo not only offers an important diagnosis of the status of and prospects for political reform in the Philippines but also proves to be prophetic about the near term political changes in the country.

In general, this book is a remarkable collection of essays about the state of post-Marcos politics in the Philippines. Quimpo and Kasuya in their balanced and exciting introduction of the book deftly distill the prospects for substantive political and social change. The book is a compendium of articles which attempts to problematize issues that often affect countries that are in the process of democratic consolidation.

This book includes themes such as the nature of the political regime, democratic consolidation; elections and electoral reform; the reform of other political institutions; reform efforts by civil society and state actors; mass media, and social classes. The number of themes contained in this collection gives the impression that the

book is being ambitious in attempting to contain all current issues in Philippine democracy. Despite this shortcoming, the book is an easy read for those who want to be introduced to Philippine politics in general.

Mark Thompson and Nathan Gilbert Quimpo essentially discuss the seemingly repetitive character of Philippine politics. Thompson postulates that Philippine politics is moving in a cyclical pattern from populism, clientelism and reformism. Quimpo on the other hand, maintains that the post-Marcos era saw the transformation of the state apparatus from a clientelist regime during the Aquino and Ramos administrations to a predatory regime during the dispensation of Estrada and Arroyo.

Another contributor, Joel Rocamora, takes a different point of view to the earlier assertions in the book by subscribing to the idea that there is a real possibility to generate reform in the Philippines. For him, a necessary condition for the realization of

this agenda is the coming together of a powerful reform constituency led by the then presidential frontrunner Benigno “Noynoy” Aquino. Rocamora’s contribution to this compendium is however somewhat suspect due to his admitted partisan association with the political actors he had studied.

The Philippine electorate is also given substantial treatment in this book. Yuko Kasuya highlights the challenges that must be confronted by the Philippines to achieve democratic consolidation. An examination of the political psychology of Filipinos regarding their attitude towards democracy reveals possible strong constraints for the acceptance of democracy as the only game in town.

Three authors, Julio Teehankee, Cleo Calimbahin and Masataka Kimura, discuss election-related topics. Teehankee argues that the ascendancy of mass media and of public opinion polling has effectively diminished the reliability of traditional bailiwicks to deliver candidates to victory at the national level. Teehankee postulates that issues, now more than ever, are important consideration for winning the presidency as evidenced by his study of post-1986 presidential elections. This chapter provides a rather prescient preview of the electoral dynamics for the 2010 elections. In contrast, Calimbahin and Kimura do present a rather pessimistic perspective of Philippine elections. This is perhaps due to the history as well as the uncertainty of reform efforts in agencies in charge of the Philippine electoral system.

Institutions as agents for political reform are also extensively highlighted in this book. Teresa Encarnacion Tadem for her part focuses on the role of technocrats. She offers a comparative diachronic analysis of role of these technically trained reformers from the middle class during the Marcos and post-Marcos eras. She argues that the government’s development program did not

reduce poverty and bridge the gap between the rich and the poor during both periods under scrutiny. Another author, Quilop delves into the reform process in the Philippine military. He argues that the depoliticization of the military and its transformation into a professional force requires structural reforms such as stronger constitutional provisions against extra constitutional actions and patronage ties with political leaders.

Three other authors – Rocamora, Michael Pinches and Peter Kreuzer – underline the significance and potential civil society may have. Rocamora asserts that civil society in the Philippines has succeeded in bringing down presidents. Pinches, for his part argues that civil society has become a platform for challenging the legitimacy of the established political elite. Kreuzer delves into the role essayed by civil society forces in bringing about a peaceful resolution between the Philippine state and Moro separatists. He asserts that civil society movements in the Southern Philippines have fallen short of their avowed goal in bringing about a lasting peace in the area. This debate would likely spawn additional academic interest among Philippine scholars.

Other dimensions of political change explored in this book are presented in Raul Pertierra’s chapter. This description of what he calls the “new media” underscores the importance of advancements in information technologies that are readily accessible to the masses. He argues that these modes of communication have eroded the capacity of local elites to determine the discourse of politics that is consumed by ordinary folk. He also posits that the “new media” has the capacity to intensify symbolic power as is the case with the death of former President Corazon Aquino.

Given the recent political developments in the Philippines, some claims in the book have since been

validated. In particular those that foresaw the victory of presidential candidate Noynoy Aquino and the importance of market campaigning in this year's synchronized national and local elections. All in all, the discussion, analyses and various case studies make *The Politics of Change in the*

Philippines a valuable resource for understanding the unfolding political dynamics in Asia's oldest democracy. This is a good book, though it could have been better if it had strictly subscribed to either a theoretical or an empirical thematic structure for organizing its collection.

KLEIN, AXEL. DRUGS AND THE WORLD. LONDON, UK: REAKTION BOOKS, 2008.

By **David Alexander Robinson**, *Edith Cowan University, Australia*

Drugs and the World by Axel Klein is a wide-ranging work that intertwines analysis of theoretical perspectives on drug-use and drug-control, with examination of the historical impacts of drug economies and international prohibition regimes. Spanning topics from the role of drug-foods in the development of European empires, to the geo-political impacts of mass-produced narcotics in Twenty First Century Asia and South America, Klein successfully demonstrates that not only is the issue of drug prohibition essential for a full comprehension of the contemporary international system, but that the misunderstanding of drug politics and economics has fuelled many contemporary conflicts. The United States' 'War on Drugs' is central in Klein's exposition, which he asserts has, in addition to spurring international conflicts, "initiated an expansion of the powers and the punitive apparatus of the state that is without parallel in the history of modern democracies" (p.8).

In chapters such as, 'Taking Leave of our Senses: Drug Use and Drug-taking in the Twentieth Century', 'The Pathology of Drug Use', and 'Redefining the Issues: Symptom of Decadence or Development Issue', Klein lays out and dissects the discourses on drug-use that have dominated temperance and prohibition regimes since

the Nineteenth Century, and challenges these hegemonic appraisals. Historically, drug-use has predominantly been "regarded alternately as a moral weakness in the individual or as a disease" (p.19). The latter interpretation has particularly informed state intervention in the Twentieth and Twenty First Centuries, as the 'epidemic model' "removes responsibility from the social and political environment; it strips the individual user of voluntary agency and denies his/her right to take decisions" (p.116).

Klein highlights how the modern discourse on drugs always frames usage as being motivated by external sources which have corrupted law-abiding citizens, rather than importation being fuelled by the combined demand of a large number of consumers. Whether it is the ethnically-different producer countries, who smuggle drugs into developed nations, or the socially-marginal elements within Western societies who sell the drugs, the blame for drug use can be shifted onto 'outsiders'. The focus of state intervention can thus be preventing these elements penetrating national borders, and deterring distribution networks through law enforcement. This simultaneous medicalisation and criminalisation of drug-use then justifies "the mass incarceration of citizens as a therapeutic measure for health damages

they had inflicted solely upon themselves” (p.113). Klein challenges these dominant categorisations at their ideological roots in chapters like, ‘Possible Benefits of Drug Use’, ‘Positives and Negatives of the Drugs Economy’, and ‘Drugs and the Management of Pleasure’.

However, for an audience predominantly interested in the political ramifications of the ‘War on Drugs’, Klein’s chapters, ‘How Drugs Have Shaped History in the Modern Era’, ‘International Drug Control: System and Structure’, and ‘Drugs and Development Along the Silk Route’, may be of more immediate relevance. Klein details the international drug prohibition conventions that have been instituted over the past 100 years, and points out that regardless of how intensely world powers have implemented military programmes to quell production, global availability has only grown, while prices have generally fallen. While drug enforcement measures may be temporarily effective in targeted areas, the ‘balloon effect’ of drug enforcement guarantees that: “pressure applied to any particular drug supply route will only push the bubble somewhere else. It is possible to close down the Mexican overland route into the US, say, but that will only reroute the drugs via the Caribbean or West Africa” (p.135). Worse still, once drug-production colonises new districts it becomes entrenched, ever-expanding the number of nations supplying the international narcotics market.

Klein also highlights how, in some examples, the global drug trade has been facilitated rather than suppressed by US government intervention. While the United States and assorted allies are still trying to negotiate their withdrawal from the most recent conflict in Afghanistan, it is

important to understand the contributing impact of previous Western operations. The opium production that makes Afghanistan the world’s largest heroin supplier, and has in recent years funded the Taliban regime, was encouraged during the CIA’s support for mujahadeen activities against the Soviet army. In fact today the Golden Crescent (Afghanistan-Pakistan-Iran), and the Golden Triangle (Burma-Laos-Vietnam-Thailand), are the world’s two largest opium-producing areas, and both were primary zones of CIA activity during the Cold War – where Western intelligence agencies cultivated rugged, hill-dwelling clans into centres of anti-communist activity. Operations against drug production were always subjugated to wider imperial interests.

Klein’s *Drugs and the World* details the history of changing attitudes towards, and prohibition regimes against, illicit drugs over the last hundred and fifty years. Generally, Klein argues that social attitudes to drugs in Western societies have failed to come to terms with individuals’ voluntary choices to take drugs, in the effort to achieve pleasure or enlightening psychological experiences – the reaction instead being one in which “young drug users are arrested, incarcerated and branded for life with the stigma of criminalization in order to save them from the danger of self-inflicted drug use” (p.13). Internationally this perspective plays out through the ‘War on Drugs’, which destroys the targeted drug-producing societies while drawing ever more countries into drug production and trafficking. Whatever one’s perspective on drug consumption and policing, readers will find Klein’s book thought-provoking and informative, and certainly essential for any well-rounded investigation of the subject.

EHRHART, HANS-GEORG AND PENTLAND, CHARLES C., EDs. *THE AFGHANISTAN CHALLENGE: HARD REALITIES AND STRATEGIC CHOICES.* MONTREAL & KINGSTON, CANADA: MCGILL-QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2009.

By **Ilyas Saliba**, *University of Hamburg, Germany*

The book combines a compilation of works connected through the relation to Afghanistan and the ISAF mission, from the perspective of two involved major peacekeeping countries. The collection of essays by Canadian and German scholars analyzes the current state of the Afghanistan mission and furthermore addresses future prospects and develops policy recommendations. On the one hand the transatlantic co-operation is aimed to widen the perspective on possible strategies regarding the future challenges of peacebuilding in Afghanistan; on the other hand it is an attempt to produce a positive stimulus for further co-operation and therefore establishing a German-Canadian dialogue. The editors claim that both sides can profit from an established dialogue, since learning from one another can mutually help the involved parties in assessing and improving the strategies and policies of tomorrow with the knowledge of their combined experiences and expertise.

The first part of the work consists of eight chapters which analyze different aspects of the international peacebuilding mission in Afghanistan. The contributors examine the mistakes of the past and try to show options for future strategic possibilities through profound analysis of the current situation. In the second part of the book the authors take a step further, analytically linking the Canadian and German perceptions, discourses and strategies to their respective approaches implemented within the ISAF mission. Due to the large number of articles within this book in the following I will focus on selected articles from the compendium.

Florian P. Kühn stresses the importance of *rentier-structures* in Afghanistan and the resulting problems for any attempt of external state or nation-building. He argues that the estranged State-Society relations in Afghanistan have been the perfect breeding ground for establishing *rentier-structures*. In a first step Kühn describes how these structures have been established through a long absence of statehood. Secondly these structures have developed over decades and are rooted in the funding provided by external superpowers. Thirdly the combination of modern stateness and tribal society is identified as another reason for the strong establishment of *rentier-structures*.

Kühn argues that established local *rentier-structures* have not been considered by the external actors when they implemented their state-building strategies in Afghanistan. On the one hand through the financial support of the international community, the Afghan political and economic elite has developed an intense dependency on external actors. On the other hand the financial dependence on its own people – through taxes and so forth – is almost irrelevant due to the insufficiently established state-structures in the relevant sectors. The author claims that the immense international funding, together with the will to quickly establish local ownership within the administrative and bureaucracy, has led to corrupt and ineffective state structures and institutions. Furthermore these institutions do not primarily rely on legitimation through the Afghan people, but due to the importance of external resources

their main obligations are dictated by the international actors. This dilemma is Kühn's main criticism towards the implemented Afghanistan strategies. In the final part of his contribution he takes another perspective on the *rentier-structures* with regard to the Afghan drug trading economy. From Kühn's point of view drug traffickers themselves have adapted to the rentier-system and due to their financial resources they themselves have taken the place of local rent-donors. He closes his essay concluding that the *rentier-structures* will remain in place and unless effective taxation is established, rent dependency will continue and define the behaviour of the local political and economic elites.

Kühn shows a profound analysis of an important aspect of local power structures in Afghanistan. He gives us a glimpse of the the problematic topics of international engagement versus ownership and external dependency versus internal legitimacy. His analyses show that to develop a new and more effective strategy for Afghanistan one has to consider more closely the role of the local societal-structures. His arguments explain the difficulties when imposing externally designed systems of order and state-building. However he does not give any concrete recommendations on how to resolve the problems and dilemmas described. He might be right with his criticism of the quick establishment of local ownership but it is hard to see what would have been the alternative? Would an international administration and government not have led to even more resistance? The excellent analysis still leaves space for answers to the questions that resulted from it.

Ehrhart and Kaestner argue for a comprehensive change of strategy in Afghanistan, to adapt to the present situation and pave the way for further development. In the first part of the essay the authors give a comprehensive analysis of

the situation in Afghanistan and measure the development since the external engagement based on the three factors: security, governance and development. For the security factor they draw a rather negative picture of the progress so far, concluding that the security situation has been deteriorating since 2005. This is demonstrated by the increasing number of western soldiers killed in combat, rising influence of the *neo-taliban* forces and the build up of afghan security forces (military and police) falling far behind the benchmarked schedule. Turning to governance measures Ehrhart and Kaestner conclude that the international actors have exaggerated benchmarks and expectations. The attempts to reach these standards are hindered by corruption and a patronage system that supports it. According to their analysis this led to a stagnation of the building up of governance structures and effective institutions. Thirdly regarding development progress it is said that the living conditions of the majority of the Afghan population have even worsened since the international engagement. Only very few people profit from the new free-market economic system and the development aids are mainly lost in the corrupt government or the administrative machinery. Afghanistan remains one of the poorest counties in the world with a per capita income of less than one US dollar per day. In addition, the high unemployment rate combined with the rapid population growth leads to further tensions. Afghanistan is analysed as a rent-based state which lives on subsidies from external actors. Furthermore an examination of societal structures concludes that local tribal and clan structures essentially deteriorate the state-building efforts and the in place central government in Kabul. After the assessment of the efforts taken so far in Afghanistan the contribution from Ehrhart and Kaestner finally leads to their recommendation for a comprehensive

change of strategy, including five dimensions. First of all the authors argue for *more modest goals* and benchmarks, considering the local situation in Afghanistan as a base of future progress analysis. Secondly they plead for an *Afghanisation of security* through more efforts in instructing and education within this sector to strengthen Afghan capabilities and regain legitimacy. Thirdly Erhart and Kaestner want to establish a *decentralised governance approach*, taking the local societal-structures into account. The fourth assessment is to adapt the development strategy, to prevent further drowning financial resources in the corrupt bureaucratic machinery. Therefore the authors bring forward the idea to give *local and regional level support* a higher priority. The final suggestion is an argument for a

regional integration of the overall Afghanistan strategy. To reach a more comprehensive approach in stabilising Afghanistan one has to include the neighbouring countries and the regional context.

The contribution from Erhart and Kaestner delivers a short and sharp analysis of today's situation in Afghanistan and the consequences for the international actors involved. Furthermore the authors develop a new, more extensive strategy approach building on their former analysis.

All in all, for any interested reader, the book gives profound and comprehensive analyses as well as incentives for strategic assessments from different points of views on various aspects of the international engagement in Afghanistan.

COLL, STEVE. *GHOST WARS: A SECRET HISTORY OF THE CIA, AFGHANISTAN, AND BIN LADEN, FROM THE SOVIET INVASION TO SEPTEMBER 10, 2001.* NEW YORK: PENGUIN PRESS, 2004.

By **Katherine Errington**, *University of Auckland, New Zealand*

The matrix of covert action, terrorism and counter terrorism which has haunted Afghanistan since the Soviet invasion of 1979 exploded onto the American consciousness with the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In his book 'Ghost Wars,' Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Steve Coll addresses the key question Americans were left asking- who could have stopped it, and why did they fail? To do so he tracks the history of US military action in Afghanistan, and in particular the effects of the alliance between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the US that was created to expel the Soviet Union's forces. There is a further focus on the machinations within the CIA and the White House that led to the failure to stop the support for anti American groups

in the war against the Soviets, and subsequently the failure to strike at Bin Ladin before he could carry out a large scale attack.

The result is considered through a chilling account of a horrific era in Afghani history, with the various actors' motivations and failings exposed through Coll's painstaking research. Ghost Wars is a measured documentary that seeks to expose how mistakes were made and how they can best be avoided in the future.

The book begins with the gripping account of the attack on the American embassy in Islamabad. The chapter's title 'We're Going to Die in Here' refers to the five hours embassy staff spent locked in a

panic room to escape armed Islamist extremists who had stormed the grounds. Despite the immediate alert being raised to the authorities, the extremists had destroyed the embassy grounds and were closing in on the panic room before the police arrived. The negligence of the Pakistani police nearly led to the biggest loss of life in the history of the US diplomatic service. Puzzlingly, President Carter offered the next day his thanks to the police for their 'heroic efforts' in helping the staff. These incidents - where political machinations involve a denial of the reality - provide Coll with the richest material for criticism in his account of US interaction with Afghanistan. The tension between what is politically viable and what is militarily practical is an issue that re-surfaces frequently throughout the book. The Islamabad incident also embodies many other flaws in American policy at the time - the reliance on allies with hostile agendas, the refusal to engage with regional politics and the forceful personalities that dominated decision making within the CIA and the White House.

Coll does an excellent job of exposing the secretive processes that led to the CIA channelling funding towards Islamist extremists over other groups taking part in the 'Soviet Jihad.' Through extensive interviews and unprecedented access to once classified reports he exposes a CIA that is deeply scarred by its experiences in Vietnam, and therefore determined to avoid meddling in third world politics. This philosophy, coupled with a blind determination to drive the Soviets out of Afghanistan, resulted in the US surrendering the front line responsibilities of choosing which armed groups received funds to the Pakistani secret service - the ISI. The ISI believed that in the interests of bolstering their own national security, Islamising Afghanistan was the most desirable option: they saw it as a way of subduing the Pashtun nationalism of the

Afghanis that threatened to spill over their own borders. They also saw the resulting trained 'jihadist' fighters as a valuable resource to be deployed against India in Kashmir. Saudi Arabia then appeared as the third ally in the incongruous triad, which provided significant financial support to the jihadists. For Coll, the corollary of this period was that through a combination of ambivalence and a one eyed focus on communism as the greatest threat, America gradually supported the creation of a movement that was fundamentally hostile to its interests.

The actions of particular individuals within the CIA are explored in great depth in 'Ghost Wars.' Indeed at times the detail can seem excessive - Coll's writing is full of tangents - and opportunities to exploit the lighter moments in the account are rarely taken advantage of. As an example, he mentions that Reagan so disliked reading that his aides made briefings for him on videos instead. This is absurd, but the calm style of Coll's writing never wavers, in keeping with his background as a writer for the Washington Post. Yet his analysis of individuals such as Richard Clarke "who was so powerful precisely because no one new exactly what he did for a living" and CIA chief William Casey whose mission was to "wage war on the Soviets" - whatever the cost, provides an invaluable insight into the driving forces behind decision making. No criticisms are made lightly; all are backed up with a wealth of evidence and analysis.

After the expulsion of the Soviets from Afghanistan in 1988, and then the end of the Soviet Union, Afghanistan fell off the US political radar entirely. The country was abandoned to an increasingly violent fate, with thousands of weapons left in the hands of reactionary groups, and without any plans for reconstruction. Coll then turns to charting the rise of the Taliban, and Bin Ladin begins to take an increasingly prominent role in the creation of what

became arguably the most repressive regime on earth. Coll describes with a sense of disbelief the continuing Pakistani support for the Taliban, even as their authoritarian excesses become horrifyingly clear. America in the meantime had other priorities, and Bill Clinton's attitude towards the CIA was on the verge of becoming hostile. His leadership quashed any possibility of a covert raid on Bin Laden, opportunities which with the benefit of hindsight seem futile, but were full of obvious pitfalls that Coll outlines with his characteristic detail.

Ultimately, Coll's mastery of the matrix of connections, secret initiatives and politics in both regions allows the reader to understand the true complexity that is modern conflict in Afghanistan. There were and are no simple binary answers as to who the enemies are and what are they trying to achieve. The various actors that fuelled the

conflict did so in pursuing contradictory and incompatible agendas that eventually came to a head on September 11, 2001. In *Ghost Wars*, Coll has provided readers with an invaluable resource in understanding the ugly reality of Islamic extremism, providing us with a window into the context surrounding what can seem an impenetrable web of religious beliefs, hostile rhetoric and ethnic loyalties.

Ghost Wars is a brilliant and thought provoking text in which Steve Coll succeeds in illuminating the complexities of one of the most bitter conflicts in history. It is also a call to action, a call for better policy making based on a better understanding of local realities in the region and a critique of the inadequate efforts made by past leaders in this area. We can only hope his message is headed.

Notes on Contributors -----

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Call for papers

The Editorial Board of Politikon, the International Association for Political Science Students' Academic Journal, invites graduate and undergraduate students to submit papers for review and possible publication.

Politikon accepts submissions on a rolling basis all year round. However, in order to be included in **Vol. 16, No. 2. Year 2010**, submissions will have to reach us before **November 20th 2010**.

Politikon aims at publishing works of high quality by political science students to give them visibility and recognition in the academic world.

The Editorial Board will only consider original works for publication in the journal. Any manuscript that contains extensive material that has been published elsewhere is not suitable.

All articles published by Politikon are carefully peer-reviewed on a dual level, first internally by the Editorial Board and then externally by established political science professors and academics.

Articles submitted to the journal should meet the following standards:

- **English language**
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- **Microsoft Word or RTF file format**
- **Fully referenced, with references formatted according to the APSA style format:**
<http://www.ipsonet.org/data/files/APSASStyleManual2006.pdf>
- **An abstract of no more than 120 words**
- **4 to 6 keywords that identify the subject and field of the paper**
- **Biographical information of the author (no more than 100 words)**
- **Be concerned with political science, political theory, international relations, political sociology or related fields**

Submissions and inquiries should be emailed directly to politikonjournal@iapss.org.

Best regards,

The POLITIKON Editorial Board

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The books reviewed should :

- present a general interest for scholars and students in the fields of political science, political theory, international relations, political sociology or related areas
- be fairly recent titles
- be written in English (or have an English translation available). Possible exceptions to this rule can be granted for non-English books that present an important academic contribution that interest an international audience

All book reviews should:

- **be written in English**
- **be between 500 and 1000 words**
- **be submitted in a word (.doc) or rtf file format**
- **include the complete details of the book (author(s), publisher, date of publication...)**
- **include a brief presentation of the reviewer (no more than 50 words)**

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- be submitted in a word (.doc) or rtf file format
- include the complete details of the book (author(s), publisher, date of publication...)
- include a brief presentation of the reviewer (no more than 50 words)

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