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# Changes

*Power, Perspective, Identity*

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C/o Metropolitan University Prague

Dubečská 900/10, 100 31, Prague, Czech Republic

Tel.: +420 724 587 171, Fax: +420 274 817 190, [info@cejiss.org](mailto:info@cejiss.org)

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# Enriching Iranium

*Mitchell Belfer*

Nearly 35 years ago, US diplomatic staff were taken hostage by a group of young Iranian revolutionaries, which included former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. The crisis, which lasted some 444 days, coupled with the failed rescue mission, Operation Eagle Claw (1980) – that caused the death of 8 US servicemen – has epitomised US-Iranian relations ever since. That is, until President Obama decided to break the US's long-standing isolation of Iran in its misguided quest to rehabilitate the Islamic Republic for the sake of nuclear containment. At least that is the official narrative. On the surface, the second Obama administration has negotiated the successful curtailment of Iran's nuclear programme so that the production of nuclear weapons remains a distant aspiration. If only this was true. Instead, the Islamic Republic has duped the US. It is now set to emerge as the main powerbroker in the Gulf region; the US has, ironically, empowered Iran and facilitated its long reach over Iraq and Syria to the Mediterranean Sea. In short the US, together with its French and German allies, are enriching Iran and the regional consequences are unforeseen, but likely tragic.

What is less shrouded is the Iranian drive into Iraq and the support the Islamic Republic is lending to the embattled al Maliki government there. This demonstrates the long-assumed partnership between Iraq's Shia government and Iran, a point that has many around the Gulf watching in guarded disbelief. While there is certainly a high degree of accuracy behind recent reports of the Sunni Islamist surge in northern and central Iraq, many have failed to adequately understand the why and the why now?

The answer is clear; Iranian support to Syria's Bashar al Assad essentially won the war there in May (2014) and Syrian border guards

- on instruction from Damascus - facilitated the movement of rebel fighters to Iraq. So, the defeat of Syria's rebels created a massive bubble of extremist fighters and instead of expending additional resources in fighting them, an agreement was reached to allow their transfer to the Iraqi front. In doing so, Iran and Syria have forced the hand of the us, which had a stark choice to make: allow Sunni Islamists in league with al Qaeda to overthrow an al Maliki government they encouraged and financially and militarily propped-up or work with their avowed adversary, Iran, in preventing that eventuality.

While the choice was stark, few would have anticipated the speed with which it was taken. Obama's team wasted little time in weighing us options and has thrown their stakes in with Iran and has played directly into the Islamic Republic's hand. Despite the heavy 'Great Satan' rhetoric used to publically debase the us, Iranian officials are pragmatic and understand Obama well. They rightly assume that the us government cannot allow an Islamist takeover of Iraq after a decade-long intervention and the countless us material and human costs expended there for the sake of ridding the region of Saddam's totalitarian regime and, in its aftermath, an al Qaeda-esq insurgency. Iran understands the us intolerance of radical Islam and helped create a new problem in Iraq that it will cynically assist in overcoming.

So, Iran is attempting to recast itself as a moderate alternative in the region. Those who understand the Middle East know that the last thing Iran is, is moderate. However, the manner it is approaching the current Islamist surge is well calculated to show the international community that it is a responsible actor set on maintaining the status quo. What its true ambitions are, however, gravitate around increasing its economic activities, financial stability and political reach. Even before this latest crisis, Iran had attracted many hundreds of companies from the us, France and Germany as a reward for negotiating over its nuclear programme. By February 2014, Iran was relieved of its economic meltdown and generated an estimated \$45 billion (USD) for its national coffers.

Unfortunately, there are few doubts as to where that money will end up. On 16 June, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reported that Iran has blocked access to secret nuclear sites, is generally opaque about the country's nuclear programme and is not set to meet the impending P5+1 negotiations deadline. Iran is not complying with

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its denuclearisation commitments. There are other issues as well. In April 2014, Jane's International Defence Review reported that Iran was on track to complete the production and deployment of its Bavar 373 surface-to-air missile system. And, Iran's deployments to Syria were costly, they need to reconstitute their asymmetrical forces and this will also cost money, as does keeping sectarian embers burning in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Money flowing into Iran ends up in the purses of the Revolutionary Guard and the Revolutionary Guard spends it on further armaments.

Now that the Obama Administration has committed itself to working with Iran for the stabilisation of Iraq, the Islamic Republic's adventurism will be overlooked and more sanctions will be lifted. The us, under Obama, is therefore culpable in enriching Iranium and ensuring the intransigent Shia state a place in the chambers of regional power. It is a sad commentary that the survivors of Iranian radicalisation and political violence among the us's diplomatic corps and its allies have to elbow their way to a White House that seems to have forgotten the lessons of history.



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# American “Foreign Policy” in Film

## Post-World War II Identity Creation<sup>1</sup>

*George Hays II*

This article continues the author’s previous examination of sub-elite identification through popular film from “Three Incarnations of The Quiet American: Applying Campbell’s “foreign policy” to Sub-Elite Identifiers.’ Departing from the argument made in that work, this article examines five films ranging in content from the Korean War to Terrorism in the 1990’s. By applying the same theory and methodology to a wider range of conflicts, representations of those conflicts, and time periods of production of those representations, the validity and value of the original argument is tested more thoroughly. The result of the expanded analysis is confirmation of the original findings: applying differential-identification to a sub-elite level (legitimacy makers/policy takers) in the context of an international conflict does not produce the same resultant identity as that anticipated by Campbell’s application of differential-identification to the level of the political-elite (legitimacy takers/policy makers); to the contrary, the resultant differential-identity of the sub-elite level places the enemy actors as well as hero actors both within structure-America. In addition, these two component parts are not the same across time: making some structure-actors in some conflicts the enemy, while in other conflicts the same structure-actors are the hero.



*Keywords: US foreign policy after World War II, international conflict cultural identity, film*

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### Introduction

Imagine you are watching a film, an American blockbuster, about Islamic fundamentalist terrorists attacking New York City. Several inde-

pendent cells terrorize the city, blowing up busses and a theatre, taking school children hostage, and driving a car-bomb into the federal building housing the FBI. In this film, who is the enemy?

Imagine that you are watching a film, an American blockbuster, about the Vietnam War. Throughout the film, horrific scenes are displayed, all the while American soldiers wander through dense jungles and along interminable rivers, being shot at and blown up and killed throughout. In this film, who is the enemy?

Imagine that you are watching a film, an American blockbuster, about nuclear war. The best prepared protocols go wrong, a terrible mistake is made, and a single nuclear weapon is unintentionally delivered to Soviet territory. The result is Soviet retaliation, ending all life on Earth. In this film, who is the enemy?

The answer to the first two examples would seem to be simple: the terrorists and the Vietnamese, respectively. The last example may be more difficult. Perhaps the enemy is the Soviet Union. Perhaps it is nuclear weapons in general. The truth is, in all three American films,<sup>2</sup> the enemy is American. How can this be? and why? The key to the puzzle lies in the understanding and use of the identificational term "American."

Common sense (whatever that might be), Rationalist theories of International Relations, and specifically David Campbell's attempt to challenge such theories,<sup>3</sup> all make the same mistake; the mistake which would have us incorrectly determine the enemy in the above examples based on simple conflict descriptions. The mistake is an association of, and indeed an equation between, the identity aspect "nation" with the political aspect "state." While this is perhaps excusable, for lack of a better term, when it comes to Rationalist theories, it is more troublesome a charge to be levied against a work determined to expose such same failures as is Campbell's *Writing Security*.

Rationalist theories, by default if not by design, concern themselves with the black-box of the state, pushing identity to the background in favour of the simpler-to-determine political structure. Campbell attempts the reverse in his analysis, concentrating on the development/practice of national and American identity throughout the evolution of the political state in both form and essence. The problem Campbell comes into is an almost necessary conflation of national identification with political state leadership, joining his "foreign policy" and Foreign Policy. This leaves him, the challenger, open to challenge.

With advancements in education, communications technology, and the subsequent horizontalisation of information sharing, the political leadership no longer monopolises the discussion, creation, and practice of national identification.<sup>4</sup> With the loss of that position, identity and political structures, the nation and the state, “foreign policy” and Foreign Policy, can be and are separated. The manner of separation is the propagation by sub-elite actors of their own understanding of national identity, the acceptance of these counter-identities by other sub-elite actors, and the consequence that, more often than not, the sub-elite identities are in conflict with the elite identities.

In the first section of this article, the development of Campbell’s “foreign policy” as applied to non-elite actors will be made. Also, the guiding questions which are used for the analysis of the identification-al films will be presented and explained. In the second section, five identificational films depicting forms of international conflict from the Korean War to Terrorism in the 1990’s will be presented and analysed. The final section will present the conclusion of the analysis and its implications both for national identity and for further research.

### “Foreign Policy” and Guiding Questions

Campbell, in *Writing Security*, develops and applies “foreign policy” as a differential-identificational-concept. Uniting this concept with the practice of traditional Foreign Policy, Campbell seeks to investigate and understand the creation and evolution of American identity.<sup>5</sup> In “Three Incarnations of *The Quiet American*,” the “foreign policy”/Foreign Policy construct is disunited and the differential-identificational-concept of “foreign policy” as practiced by sub-elite identifiers in the form of popular mass released film is examined. By looking at “foreign policy” as practiced by this different level of identifier, several important points emerge concerning Campbell’s “foreign policy”/Foreign Policy nexus as well as concerning American identity.<sup>6</sup>

Perhaps the most important point that emerges is that the “us” contained within the identificational construct “us”/“them” is as relative as the “them.” While Campbell rightfully problematizes and demonstrates the latter, he ignores the former. By problematizing the former, it is demonstrated that the identificational “other” of the identity-“America”<sup>7</sup> is actually part of the structure-America.<sup>8</sup> This means that both of

the identificational components of the differential-identity-construct ("self"/"other," "us"/"them," "inside"/"outside," "good"/"bad") are contained within Campbell's concept of "America." In short, the enemy is "within," yet this cannot be the case. The resolution is to abandon Campbell's use of the structural metaphor of "inside"/"outside" for the less objective and fixed metaphor of "here"/"there."<sup>9</sup>

The concept of "here" is both spatial and temporal. It is perfectly subjective, as it is always only knowable based on the contextuality of the speaker; yet it is never limited by any other objective or "objective" borders of any kind. It can move from a position within the self (forgive the "inside" metaphor, but language is limiting), to within the body, to within any area outside of the body and across time based on the event-scenario, the discourse, and the speaker. What this does in terms of conflict and differential-identification is that it allows for the almost infinite fracturing of context regarding the seemingly obvious conflict between two opposing structure-states. The conflict or war between these two structures no longer defines "us" and "them," rather it provides the canvas for the true identificational conflict.

This subjective identificational concept of "here" is most closely touched upon in the literature by the discussion of *Heimat*.<sup>10</sup> The concept of *Heimat*, its depiction, and the study of it are also highly connected to film and film analysis.<sup>11</sup> *Heimat* is a form of conceptual-territorial-space which, at one and the same time, represents and transcends the local, to the regional, and ultimately to the national.<sup>12</sup> Not only is *Heimat* fluid and subjective like "here" is; but *Heimat* also forms the basis for the nation, rather than the nation determining *Heimat*.<sup>13</sup> At first blush, the concept of *Heimat* sounds a lot like the popular American notion of "any-town USA." This is another form of conceptual-territorial-space, yet it does not transcend in the manner of *Heimat*. In fact, "any-town USA" (the agricultural inland) is quite exclusionary to other regions (the coasts, cities, workers in services in general, non-Christians, minorities to a varying degree, etc). A unique examination of this can be found in Dittmer's work on Captain America and 9/11.<sup>14</sup> While the imagery and visual metaphors Dittmer cites are often replete with "any-town USA" (or "Centerville," as it is presented in the work<sup>15</sup>), there is a problem because the central conflict, the attack, happened in not-just-any-towns: New York City and Washington, DC. Dittmer does not come out to recognise this point, and yet

he makes it all the same by analysing how Captain America himself goes to both Ground Zero and Centerville. But Captain America is not just a superhero; he is a true embodiment of identity-“America” and the “here”-ness of the moral-identificational-space. He is the linchpin holding the disparate territories together, making “any-town USA” and New York City one-and-the-same.

It is this issue of the moral-identificational-space actually being the defining point holding together the conceptual-territorial-space that is missing in *Heimat*. There is a “somethingness” about the land itself that is unifying, however not unique. The same is true for “any-town USA.” Yet, what makes it unifying is not the territory, not the objective or “objective” markings, not even the people.<sup>16</sup> Rather, what unifies is the moral-identificational-space existing before/during/after the determination of the conceptual-territorial-space and making it meaningful. This moral-identificational-space, this “here”-ness, is prior to and independent of any bordering. What this also means is that the moral-identificational-space can (and does) change independently of the “objective” structures. One of the best ways to demonstrate this divergence is through an analysis of conflict representation; the resultant identity from the differential-identificational conflict clearly displaying the separation of the subjective moral-identificational-space (identity-“state”) from the “objective” conceptual-territorial-space (structure-state).

The complexity of the contextuality of the differential-identificational conflict is demonstrated in ‘Three Incarnations’ by analysing two film incarnations of the same Vietnam War story, *The Quiet American*.<sup>17</sup> This single story, set in the French-Vietnam War, with largely the same characters, has diametrically opposed resultant identities emerging from the identificational conflicts. The forty-plus years between the two versions were enough to transform the American character from innocent do-gooder and victim<sup>18</sup> to monstrous evil-doer of the highest order rightfully and necessarily assassinated, if only too late.<sup>19</sup> The same structure-state America, in the same conflict and story, has opposing resultant identities based on the contextuality of “here” as expressed and understood by the sub-elite, in this case the film producers and American audiences. That means that the audience, who are both structure-Americans (American citizens) and identity-“Amer-

icans” (identifiers of “America” is “here”/“good”), are participating in a discourse which declares that there is something “inside” structure-America which is “bad” and therefore not belonging to identity-“America.” The “enemy” is “inside,” but is not “here.”<sup>20</sup>

*George Hays II*

This article aims to continue the argument begun in ‘Three Incarnations of *The Quiet American*.’ Departing from the same theoretical and methodological points, this article will expand the universe of discourse beyond *The Quiet American* in order to demonstrate that the arguments and conclusions in “Three Incarnations” are not limited to either the particular story or the particular conflict portrayed in the two films. Before entering on the analysis, however, an introduction and explanation of the methodology is in order.

### *Guiding Questions*

In ‘Three Incarnations,’ a method of guiding questions through which to analyse the differential-identificational conflict presented in a war/conflict story is introduced and used. Those guiding questions and sub-questions are:

1. What is the conflict?
  - a. What is the setting conflict? (What is the war/event happening surrounding the story?)
  - b. What is the real conflict? (What is the engine of the story, what issue separates “the good guy” from “the bad guy”?)
  - c. Are the two conflicts the same?
  
2. Who are the participants?
  - a. Who is “the good guy”? (Not to be confused with the protagonist.)
  - b. Who is “the bad guy”? (Not to be confused with the antagonist.)
  - c. Who is a catalyst? (Who acts, but without significant impact on the real conflict?)
  
3. What is the message? (Who and/or what is “America”?)
4. What is the argument delivering the message? (What occurs to situate an identity of “America”?)<sup>21</sup>

The question now turns to, why this method, why is it important?

In ‘Three Incarnations,’ three conceptual points were problematised: identity, identification, and identifier. The above methodology shifts the role of identifier from the political elite of the structure-America to a sub-elite of the structure-America, Hollywood. After reading the literature on the study of national identity as a whole, one would think that this should not matter. But it does.

The dominant discourses concerning the study of national identity as a whole seem to state that a nation juxtaposed with an enemy should result with the creation/reinforcement of the identity of the nation. Invariably, the discourse also will, at some point, either explicitly or implicitly connect/equate/merge the concept of “nation” with that of “state.” This connection similarly implicitly merges the role of political-state-leadership with identificational-national-leadership. The result of the discourse, then, is that the state enemy should/does become the national enemy, leading to the state identity becoming the national identity. This effect should/does apply to all levels within the structure, meaning that the resultant constitutive identity should/does apply to all levels as well. If we were to change our identifier, then, we should find the same constitutive identity as that discovered by analysing the political elite. This, however, is not the case. With the same goal of national identity, with the same identification process of “foreign policy” centred around ‘experiencing’<sup>22</sup> a war between one’s own structure and that of another, but with a non-elite/non-state identifier, the resultant constitutive identity is much different. In fact, it would appear that in almost every case studied, the five included in this work and the many not included,<sup>23</sup> the constitutive identity is entirely contained within the structure-America.

The guiding questions help us find the ‘true’ conflict that the story is concerned with, and through that conflict, they help us to discover the components and positioning of the identity-“America.” If, when presented with a war film, the guiding questions are applied and the resulting “true” conflict that is at the centre of the story, driving it forward, is that of the structure-enemy being a ruthless evil attempting to destroy “us” in every way, then we can see the justification of the dominant discourses on identity and all is well and good. If, however, the ‘true’ conflict driving the story is deeper than the bombs and bullets and blood; if the enemy of “us” is not the same entity trying to kill us; if that enemy belongs to our same structure, then there is an



identity different and deeper than that of state borders and perceived order within them. This is the case.

## American “Foreign Policy” in Film

*American  
“Foreign  
Policy”  
in Film*

The five films analysed here are *M.A.S.H.*, *Thirteen Days*, *Apocalypse Now*, *Charlie Wilson’s War*, and *The Siege*. These films cover five different conflicts across different time periods. They range from the heavily factual *Thirteen Days* to the heavily fictional *The Siege*.

*M.A.S.H.*<sup>24</sup>

### *1. What is the conflict?*

Setting: Korean War (US/UN vs Communist Korea/Communist China/USSR)

Actual: Civilian/Draft Doctors “Do No Harm!” vs Regular Army “Harm!”

### *2. Who are the participants?*

Good: Hawkeye, Trapper, Duke, Radar, Draftees in general (the unin-  
troduced “we” in ‘You’re what we call a Regular Army Clown.’)

Bad: Burns, O’Houlihan (initially), Henry, Padre, Commander of Japan  
hospital, Regular Army in general (the other half of the above state-  
ment)

Catalyst: The local civilian population, the unseen Communist forces,  
the patients

### *3. What is the message?*

It makes no sense to recklessly destroy life (military operations) and at  
the same time try so hard to save life (the doctors). The only “good” re-  
sult of this tension is to not destroy life in the first place, but rather re-  
spect and protect all life. “America” is a saviour of any who need saving.

#### 4. *What is the argument delivering the message?*

There are many scenes which depict the righteous distinction between the civilian doctors and the military doctors/structures. In addition to the 'regular army clowns' there is the double confusion between morale and morals. It is a double confusion because, as O'Houlihan and Burns are writing their letter of distress to Army command, they confuse both the meaning of morale with morality as well as the degree to which both qualities exist in the camp. Somehow, high spirits are/should be equated with piety, while low spirits are/should be equated with debauchery: instead of being two separate things (which they are) if not comprising the opposite correlation (the debauched do seem happier in that same scene). In addition, by the end of the scene, O'Houlihan and Burns are acting immoral together and improving their personal morale at the same time. The hypocrisy is distilled in that the true issue between them and the draftees is one of honesty. The draftees know what they are doing is wrong, but they also understand why they are doing it and accept the situation. O'Houlihan and Burns are repressing these things, claiming the moral high ground, committing the same immoral acts, and suffering because of the repression.

There is a similar conflict of morality between Burns and Hawkeye, Trapper, and Duke regarding the Korean boy Ho-Jon. Burns initially tries to 'save' him by teaching him English via the Bible. The colonialist overtones are obvious. Hawkeye, Trapper, and Duke, however, attempt to save Ho-Jon from having to serve in the war spawned by the "Western" colonising forces of International Communism and Capitalism.

A moral conflict more directly connected to the issue of "saving lives" in the M.A.S.H. unit comes when Burns blames Boone (a young private) for killing a patient. The patient is severely injured, he goes into cardiac arrest, Burns barks an order for a particular drug and syringe. Boone is unclear what exactly he wants, brings the wrong kind of syringe, and in the course of this the patient dies. Burns blames the young draftee for killing the soldier, rather than recognising it was the war that killed the soldier. Trapper, furious with Burns, punches him. In the scene, there is pictured the futility of the effort of killing and saving at the same time. The decision to do so was made by the Regular Army, and the representative of the Regular Army in the scene (just as the metaphorical Regular Army he symbolizes), does not see that the war is what is killing its soldiers, not the inexperienced young privates charged with saving them.

A scene which ties together many of the above points (neo-colonialism, moral relativism, and the charge of the Medical Corps to save lives) is Hawkeye's and Trapper's trip to Japan. In Japan, they are presented with two sons. The first (and the reason for the trip) is the son of an important American politician. He is a wounded soldier, though the wound is not severe at all. The two skilled doctors were pulled out of their unit, where they are of far more use, because the life of this politician's son is considered more valuable than the lives of other soldiers. While in Japan, Hawkeye and Trapper come across the bastard baby of an American soldier and a Japanese woman. The baby has a serious medical condition and will die without an operation from the two doctors. The Regular Army officer in charge of the hospital will not allow the military's resources to be used on the bastard son, again exemplifying moral relativism and neo-colonialism. Hawkeye and Trapper perform the operation anyways, kidnap the officer when he protests, and make compromising photos of the officer with a prostitute in order to blackmail him into silence.

Perhaps most artistically metaphorical of all is the Last Supper scene dripping with military rhetoric. The gathering is to 'send off' the dentist, who wants to commit suicide because he experienced impotence. Beyond the metaphors and connections of manliness surrounding the character and situation and its relation to militarism, the scene combines the 'holy sacrifice' of the Last Supper with the 'suicide' of a perfectly healthy man while lauding his action with military clichés. 'No one asked him to go on this mission.' 'He knew it meant certain death.' 'This is what we reserve our highest medals and honours for.' The result is an exemplification of the sheer ludicrousness of military sacrifice, all tied back to the size and performance of a man's penis.

### *Thirteen Days*<sup>25</sup>

#### *I. What is the conflict?*

Setting: Cuban Missile Crisis (US vs USSR/Cuba)

Actual: Own Judgment/Conflict Resolution vs Strategic Standard Operating Procedures/Conflict Evolution

## 2. *Who are the participants?*

Good: “Civilians”/independent thinkers (both US and USSR)

Bad: “Military”/rigid strategy thinkers (both US and USSR)

Catalysts: Humanity (everyone waiting for the final outcome and preparing for it, including Cuba)

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## 3. *What is the message?*

Strategic Rationality, which is at the core of Standard Operating Procedures, is inherently Irrational when it comes to surviving potential nuclear conflict. ‘There is something immoral about abandoning your own judgment.’ “America” is “moral” because it will work tirelessly to find a solution to bring peace.

## 4. *What is the argument delivering the message?*

The argument is best demonstrated by clarifying the participants above. The Good and the Bad are not separated purely in terms of Civilian Leadership and Military Leadership, though by and large these groups are so separated. It seems to be part of each group that Civilians think more independently than Military members. There are, however, several Civilians who would be classified as Bad. They are “bad”, though, because they do not use their own thought applied to the specific situation. They think in terms of rigid preconceived strategies (like the Military does). Similarly, some Military members are “good,” precisely because they step outside of their rigid structures to think for themselves at how best to do the most good in the situation (and thereby run the risk of being removed from their place in the Military, thus officially being Civilianised). This split exists in both the US and the USSR.

The three key Civilians are J. Kennedy, R. Kennedy, and O’Donnell. They spend the entire film resisting (and justifying their resistance to) the prepared strategies of the Military, which call for airstrikes and/or the invasion of Cuba. Two historical points are mentioned among the three Civilians in private which work as a single analogy. The first is the distant, though poignant, case of the beginning of World War I. J. Kennedy recalls the danger and damage caused by the Military’s Standard Operating Procedures. He points out that they were designed for the previous war, not the current war, and once those plans were com-

mitted to, they could not be rescinded. The result is the Great War. The more personal historical case is The Bay of Pigs, in which J. Kennedy did not exercise his own judgment and authorised invasion as the Military suggested. The result was a tremendous fiasco, a public defeat, and an increase in the insecurity of the region that contributed to the Cuban Missile Crisis. Taken together, the analogy is that if the Civilians follow the Military plans again, the plans will be wrong and lead to nuclear war with the USSR. Here, J. Kennedy states the Message: 'There is something immoral about abandoning your own judgment.'

The key Military members are the collective Joint Chiefs of Staff. Together, they outline the plans of airstrikes and invasion that the Civilians are resisting implementing, and ultimately refuse. They repeatedly provide probability estimates, strategic statements, and follow their operating procedures without question. In one scene, this dependence on procedure leads the Admiral of the Navy to authorise (counter the President's orders) to fire warning flares at a Soviet ship. His thinking process was contained by a list of predetermined steps, none of which considered that firing anything towards a Soviet ship could result in confusion, retaliation, destruction, and ultimately nuclear war. The Admiral's action was immediately rebuked by the Civilian, Secretary of Defense McNamara, explaining that the embargo line was not a theatre of war, but a form of communication between the two countries completely unique from anything ever seen/done before (and thus outside the realm of pre-planned procedures).

A Bad Civilian would be Acheson, who recommends forceful action against the missiles in Cuba, and then calmly walks the President through the consequences of that action as seen by strategic thought. Acheson stops short of admitting the scenario he is outlining will result in the use of nuclear weapons, but J. Kennedy fills in the blank for him. The response is 'Hopefully, cooler heads will prevail.' This response is ironic because the entire point of having strategic standard operating procedures is to have a cool-headed rational plan to follow. That plan predicts and (eventually) demands the use of nuclear weapons, thereby ending all life. The cool-headed strategists are proposing suicide in the hope/belief that someone will act *irrationally* at some point to prevent the consequence of the irrational-rational policy of brinkmanship.

A Good Military member is Commander Ecker. He flies a low-level reconnaissance mission over Cuba after the Joint Chiefs secure a procedural imperative from the President. If an American plane is at-

tacked, the Military has the authorisation to respond. This is a loophole the Military manages to create to enact their plan of airstrikes and invasion. The Civilians recognise this, and they recognise that the pilots are bound to be shot at. The only option is to convince the pilots to lie. O'Donnell calls Ecker, explaining that breaking with his Military training to obey orders and answer truthfully will save humanity. After the mission, during which Ecker and his wingman are fired upon, Ecker lies to his ground crew, convinces his wingman to lie as well, and then travels to D.C. and lies about the attack to the Joint Chiefs directly. By thinking for himself in the situation, Ecker denies the Joint Chiefs their loophole to go to war.

Finally, this divide between Civilian/independent thinkers and Military/rigid strategy thinkers crosses the US/USSR divide. The clearest and best example of this comes in the scene of R. Kennedy secretly negotiating with the Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin. First, while waiting outside the office, O'Donnell is asked by a Soviet, who is also waiting, 'Who are you?' After thinking for a moment, O'Donnell responds, 'A friend.' He never clarifies whose friend he is, but immediate exchange of relaxed smiles between he and the Soviet would seem to imply that they, as Civilians, are on the same side: resolving the conflict. This scene transitions to inside the office where the negotiation is taking place. In response to R. Kennedy's statement that the US will not allow the weapons to become operational, the Ambassador states, 'Then I fear our two nations will go to war. And I fear where war will lead us.' The delivery of this statement is not a threat. It is more a personal thought and personal fear of the Ambassador, identifying him as being part of the Civilian group. This is solidified when, at the end of the negotiation, the Ambassador states,

We have heard stories that some of your military men wish for war. You are a good man. Your brother is a good man. I assure you, there are other good men. Let us hope that the will of good men is enough to counter the terrible strength of this thing that was put in motion.

Through this statement, the Ambassador similarly identifies himself as a "good man," identifies "good men" within the USSR, and excludes "military men" in large part from this group.

*1. What is the conflict?*

Setting: Vietnam War post-1968 (US vs Communist Vietnam)  
Actual: Civilisation vs Barbarism (both traditional and counter, i.e. Civilisation/order vs Barbarism/anarchy and Barbarism/Eden vs Civilisation/Gomorra; as well as the individual Rational vs Primal).

*2. Who are the participants?*

Good: Willard (ultimately), Vietnamese (if not purely Catalyst)  
Bad: Military, Kurtz  
Catalysts: Vietnamese (if not purely Good)

*3. What is the message?*

To be “civilised” is to ask whether or not to exercise power, before asking how to exercise power. Right makes might. “America” is “civilised”, and is only mighty because of siding with “right.”

*4. What is the argument delivering the message?*

It is quite difficult to place the framework of “good” vs “bad” in this instance. The majority of the film is played out between degrees of “bad.” This is not to say that there is a lack of innocents; that there is no victim. Quite the contrary, the Vietnamese are shown repeatedly to be innocent throughout the film, always on the defensive, always having serene, perhaps sublime, lives disturbed. This state almost helps feed into the conflict of the film; almost creating it entirely: the conflict between Civilisation and Barbarism. This conflict (along with the fight to determine how to classify the one from the other) exists in multiple facets at multiple levels strung throughout the film.

Several specific forms of the general conflict would seem to be obvious. The Americans vs the Vietnamese, the Army vs Kurtz, Willard vs Kurtz, the Boat vs the Jungle. None of these are clear-cut, however, nor

is the list complete. Which is “civilised” and which is “barbaric”? Which of the two is “good”? It becomes clear that the Vietnamese, if considered “barbaric” (as indeed they are outright labelled in the film as well as being so inferred) are portrayed as “noble savages.” As innocents and victims, they are in a way the “good.” It is the cold amoral “civilisation” which is “bad.” As regards the Army and Kurtz, it is revealed that both are actually in the same position, ‘balancing on the razor’s edge’ between “barbarism” and “civilisation.” Kurtz is willing to recognise his dangerous tightrope walk and embrace it, and so he is labelled insane. The Army does not recognise it, and so infer, wrongly, that they are sane and truly, fully, purely “civilised.” Each of the non-Vietnamese participants is a dangerous combination of both “barbarism” and “civilisation:” Kurtz seeing his actions and rationalising them, the Army draping themselves in faux-rationality and the tropes of civilization so as to hide from themselves their true nature – the excruciating, damaging falsehood of the unified duality; a doublespeak of the identity of the soul.

This conflict of the fusion of the best and worst parts of both “civilisation” and “barbarism” exists within the Army and Kurtz, as stated above, but also within the other group actors (the Air Cavalry, the Boat, the USO) and, most importantly, within Willard. The internal conflict concerning Willard is taking place throughout the entire film, meshing thoughts of the jungle battles and Saigon, conflicts of being home, and drunken martial arts at the beginning; and his developing affinity with Kurtz and final choice concerning whether or not to assume Kurtz’s place after he kills him. It is this final decision, within the last few minutes of the film, which ultimately places Willard in the position of “good.”

Before reaching this final scene and final decision, it will be instrumental to provide a few more scenes. One of the first and most famous is the scene of the Air Cavalry attack on a village. The helicopters swoop in to the sound of Wagner’s *Valkyrie* blasting from attached speakers. The terrified villagers run in panicked escape, while the Communist fighters provide defensive and covering fire, evacuate the children from school, and try to help the elderly. The village is laid to waste. The stated reason for the attack is to allow Willard and his boat to proceed on their mission. The true reason, though, is that the Air Cavalry’s commanding officer, Kilgore, wants to surf.

Later on, Willard and the boat crew come to the point of no return. It is a bridge marking the edge of where American forces are to operate.



They come to the bridge at night, during a hellish battle which we find out happens every night. While trying to get some information and supplies, Willard finds out that every day the Military takes/rebuilds/opens the bridge, and every night the Vietnamese take/damage/close the bridge. This nightly battle happens continually so that the Military can state: 'The road is open.' The soldiers engaged in this constantly repeating action (the definition of insanity), are quite understandably disturbed. There is no order, no command, and no sense. There is only constant (and constantly repeated) violence and death for no gain.

The first of these two scenes challenges the moral position of the declared "civilisation." The second challenges its rational position. Throughout the film, Willard is trapped in the organisation of the Military, his mission, and himself; all of which is morally and rationally questionable. Willard saves himself, and returns to true Civilisation, by breaking the cycle of immoral irrationality when given the chance to become a 'god.'

After Willard kills Kurtz, whose only difference from the Military proper was his recognition of the rational recognition of the immorality of his actions, Willard is presented with the option of taking his place. When Willard walks out of Kurtz's temple, all of the members of the tribe bow to him as the new leader. Willard, however, refuses the 'honour' by walking back to the boat and leaving the group. He is not only leaving the tribe, however, as he has already declared himself separated from the Military as well. He refuses his past and present association with the Military as well as his potential future as Kurtz. This break is both rational and moral. It is moral for the obvious reasons of ending his role in the violence of declared "civilisation." It is rational in that, if he became a neo-Kurtz, there would undoubtedly be another assassin sent after him. By breaking the cycle, by refusing to use power that he can quite easily use, he saves himself in both body and soul and returns to true Civilisation.

### *Charlie Wilson's War*<sup>27</sup>

#### *1. What is the conflict?*

Setting: Soviet-Afghan War

Actual: Help Afghanistan (and implicitly, by consequence, "ourselves") vs Hurt Soviets (and implicitly, by consequence, "ourselves")

## 2. *Who are the participants?*

Good: Charlie, Gust, partly Joanne (she gives the goal/demand of 'Afghanistan for the Afghans' but then seems to stop with defeat of the Soviet Union)

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Bad: Other members of the subcommittees, CIA in general

Catalysts: Pakistanis, Saudis, Israelis, Soviets, Afghans, partly Joanne

## 3. *What is the message?*

Merely defeating an enemy does not necessarily bring about peace and security. Helping those in need should. "America" is/should be a force *for* good and aid, not just a force *against* evil.

## 4. *What is the argument delivering the message?*

Just about the entire film devotes itself to delivering the message, including the title and its relation to the opening and closing scenes. Though the movie centres on the Soviet war in Afghanistan and the subsequent American involvement, the conflict, message, and title is concerned with Charlie Wilson's personal war. His war, we are shown, was not one *against* the Soviets, but rather one *supporting* the Afghans. The revelation of this being *his* war makes the ceremony of recognition split between the beginning and end of the film tragic, as it also transforms the seeming humility of the opening scene with thinly veiled disappointment in the closing scene. Charlie succeeded in aiding the defeat of the Soviet Union, but failed in his war to aid the Afghans.

Charlie's war was given to him by Joanne when she charged him with the three tasks related to the Soviet-Afghanistan War. The first and foremost was to 'save Afghanistan for the Afghans.' The means and consequence of this would be to defeat the Soviet Union, and thereby end the Cold War. Again, though he managed the means and consequence of his goal, he failed to achieve his ultimate goal. We see this becoming Charlie's goal more than just Joanne's mission when he visits the refugee camps and sees and hears first hand of the horrors the people are enduring. Yes he has always wanted to defeat the Soviets, and yes he thought that the Afghans deserved help since they were the only ones actually fighting the Soviets, but his visible transformation in the refugee camps clearly makes helping the Afghans his ultimate goal.

A final contrast between the beginning and end of the film demonstrates the true tragedy of this failure. At the beginning of the film, Charlie is in a hot tub with several strippers in Las Vegas. He wants to hear a report from Dan Rather in Afghanistan. The people around him (drunk, high, debauched) do not know where Afghanistan is, what is going on there, or why it is important. This situation is repeated in a meeting of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense. After a multi-year long successful campaign of aiding the Afghans in their war with the Soviets, Charlie is unable to secure minor funding for the building of a school there. He is ridiculed by the few other members of the Subcommittee present, culminating with one Representative saying, 'Charlie, nobody gives a shit about a school in Pakistan.' To which, Charlie, depressed and dejected, replies, 'Afghanistan.' After all the time, publicity, money, and effort, not only has the central concern of *his* war been lost, but the people have been forgotten.

We, the audience, are dramatically informed why this is important in the immediately preceding scene. Charlie's friend and CIA ally Gust finally delivers his long-awaited story of the Zen-Master and the little boy at the party celebrating the Soviet defeat. In telling the story, Gust tries to convey to Charlie the importance of not merely seeing the defeat of the Soviets as the end of the story. He tells Charlie that they are not finished, and must work to rebuild the country and provide the Afghans jobs and hope. Charlie says that he is trying, but Gust takes his demeanour as being a brush-off. He hands Charlie a classified intelligence report as he says, 'the crazies have started rolling into Kandahar like it's a fucking bathtub drain.' Gust tears Charlie's whiskey out of his hand, dumps it in a potted plant (actually and metaphorically trying to 'sober-him-up' by replacing alcohol with intel), and snaps, 'Listen to what I'm telling you!' As he says these words, the sound of airplane engines comes closer and louder from somewhere in the darkness. This scene, and its message, connects the Soviet-Afghan War with the American-Afghan War. It states clearly that our uncompleted efforts, our unwillingness or inability to help the Afghans after wartime, contributed to 9/11. History is connected, and guilt is transferred.

## *The Siege*<sup>28</sup>

### *1. What is the conflict?*

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2/2014      Setting: Terrorism in New York City  
Actual: Protecting American Ideals vs Protecting American Lives

### *2. Who are the participants?*

Good: FBI (Hubbard)

Bad: Military (Devereaux), administration, CIA (Bridger) (to a limited extent)

Catalyst: the terrorists, CIA (Bridger) (to a limited extent)

### *3. What is the message?*

To attack America means to attack its ideals, not its lives. Therefore, to protect America means to protect its ideals over protecting lives. Therefore, to sacrifice American ideals to protect American lives is to attack America. "America" is its ideals.

### *4. What is the argument delivering the message?*

At the centre of the film is whether fundamental American ideals (rule of law, due process, protection from torture, etc.) can and/or should be abandoned 'temporarily' in order to save American lives. Throughout the movie, we see that not only is such a sacrifice unacceptable, but it is also counter-intuitive. As the film opens, we see a Muslim Sheik suspected of terrorism kidnapped under Devereaux's orders and held without recognition or trial. This opening scene, this 'initial' sacrifice of ideals, is later shown to be the main reason the terrorist cells attack New York City.

Trying to fight the cells while also protecting the system is Hubbard and the FBI. In scenes with both of the other two main structure-America participants, he stresses the need (both practical and moral) to act within the system of ideals and laws in order to preserve the ideals. This moves from a procedural discussion with Bridger that he cannot spy on the suspected terrorists without the proper warrant,

to a speech on ethics in the midst of a joint Military-CIA torture session of a suspected terrorist. It is during this second speech that the message and argument are clearly made by Hubbard.

The speech comes after the FBI offices are bombed, resulting in the deaths of Hubbard's friends and co-workers; and after his Arab partner's son is detained in a mass prison camp despite his position as an FBI agent. Hubbard tries to arrest the suspected terrorist, but the Military knows about him too thanks to their spying on Hubbard. The Military attacks the building that the suspect and Hubbard are in, and takes the suspect. Hubbard later finds the suspect, Devereaux, and Bridger in a basement bathroom of the make-shift prison camp. He sees that the two are torturing the suspect, and launches into his defence of the ideals they are breaking. The climax of Hubbard's speech is, if you do this, if you torture, if you abandon the ideals on which America is based, then the terrorists win. This charge is later translated into the point that by violating America's ideals and its laws, by ultimately summarily executing this assured terrorist, Devereaux has done more damage to America than the terrorists with all of their bombs.

This transition comes about in the final scenes where Hubbard and the FBI actively distract, evade, and conflict with the Military culminating in Hubbard arresting Devereaux. The charge is murder of an American, the tortured terrorist. Hubbard walks into the command centre 'armed' with the law. He presents Devereaux with a Federal Writ removing him from power as a consequence of the murder charge. Furious, Devereaux maintains, 'I am the Law! Right here, right now, I am the Law!' In response, Hubbard reads Devereaux his Rights, altering them slightly. He says,

You have the right to remain silent, General. You have the right to a fair trial. You have the right not to be tortured, not to be murdered. Rights you took away from Tarik Husseini. You have those rights because of the men who came before you who wore that uniform.

Devereaux's sense of immediate presence of moral power is shared by Bridger. In an earlier scene, Bridger admits how she is related to the whole situation. When the US was allied with the Sheik and his followers (the current terrorists), she taught them how to make bombs. When it was no longer policy to be allied with this group, they were abandoned by the US and by her. At that time, and ever since, she is

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constantly reacting to situations trying to make things 'right.' She is using whatever power she has in the moment to try and 'fix' things. The problem is, she is willing to do *whatever* is necessary to try and 'fix' things; and 'things' are always changing. By succumbing to moral relativism, by abandoning the ideals she and the others are supposed to protect, she helps make the situation worse.

In the end, Bridger 'fixes' things one last time by sacrificing herself to stop the last terrorist; her personal creation. Devereaux is arrested and removed by Hubbard. Martial Law ends, and the Military leaves New York City.

## Conclusion

In each of the five films analysed, the identificational enemy was not the actor/actors trying to kill Americans (at least not in the largest numbers). The identificational enemy was, in each instance, from within the structure-America. Often times, it was the Military, though Politicians did occasionally factor in too. This is not meant to suggest a trend that sub-elite identifications are solely against the elite, but it does clearly demonstrate that sub-elite identifications "otherise" different actors than the elite identifications. This has several implications to previous research, future research, and our general understanding of "American" identity.

In terms of previous research, the application of the theoretical and methodological components of 'Three Incarnations of *The Quiet American*' to a wider range of conflicts and films should strengthen the conclusions made in that article. The resultant identity of sub-elite identifications did not simply disagree with the dominant discourse due to that particular conflict or that particular story. It was not a fluke.

In terms of future research, the question would now seem to be strong enough to be opened to other national identities, if not also other media of identification. Is this an "American" phenomenon? Is this a Hollywood phenomenon? The answers to both questions would almost have to be "no," but investigation is needed. Perhaps most importantly, what does this mean for our understanding of "America?" As argued in 'Three Incarnations of *The Quiet American*,' if there are multiple claimants to the singular identity "America," then there is logically no "America." If our social reality is the only reality of con-

sequence, and if that reality is based on language, and if our language is steeped with logic, “America” does not exist. Everyone is “America”, and, so, no one is.



*American  
“Foreign  
Policy”  
in Film*

GEORGE HAYS II is affiliated to Charles University and may be reached at:  
*info@cejiss.org*

## Notes

- 1 This work originated within the project for specific university research at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University # svv 265 502: Problems with the Legitimacy of Political Decision Making at the Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- 2 The films are, in order: Edward Zwick (1998), *The Siege* (Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation), Francis F. Coppola (1979), *Apocalypse Now* (Zoetrope Studios, United Artists), Stanley Kubrick (1964), *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (Columbia Pictures, Columbia Pictures). The first two are analysed in this work. While *Dr. Strangelove* is not discussed, *Thirteen Days* is analysed; and the analysis closely (and to a degree, surprisingly) mirrors that of *Dr. Strangelove*.
- 3 David Campbell (1998), *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity: Revised Edition*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- 4 George Hays II (2012), ‘Three Incarnations of *The Quiet American*: Applying Campbell’s “foreign policy” to Sub-Elite Identifiers,’ *Perspectives* 20; and Mary Kaldor (2005), ‘New and Old Wars: Organised Violence in a Globalised Era,’ in *War*, ed. P. F. Diehl, London: Sage Publications.
- 5 Campbell (1998).
- 6 Hays (2012).
- 7 The terms identity-“America” and “America” refer to the subjective identificational qualities of the nation belonging to the country The United States of America. In this work, the key qualities are the “here”-ness of the moral-identificational-space (discussed below). In short, they refer to the essence of American-ness; something like Plato’s forms.
- 8 The terms structure-America and America refer to the objective qualities of the country The United States of America. This means, for example, concepts such as citizenship, political organisations, political decision-making structures and actors, laws, formal institutions, etc.
- 9 Hays (2012).
- 10 Julian Young (2011), ‘Heidegger’s Heimat,’ *International Journal of Philosophy*

- ical Studies 19; Guntram H. Herb (2004), 'Double Vision: Territorial Strategies in the Construction of National Identities in Germany, 1949-1979,' *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 94. See also from discussion in Herb: Alon Confino (1997), *The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Wurttemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871-1918*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press; Alon Confino and Ajay Skaria (2002), 'The Local Life of Nationhood,' *National Identities* 4; and Anssi Paasi (1996), *Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness: The Changing Geographies of the Finnish-Russian Border*, Chichester: Wiley and Son.
- 11 Alexandra Ludewig (2008), "'Heimat, Heimat, uber alles.'" Heimat in two contemporary German Films,' *Studies in European Cinema* 5; and Uta Larkey (2008), 'New Places, New Identities: The (Ever) Changing Concept of Heimat,' *German Politics and Society* 26.
  - 12 Herb (2004), pp. 142-143.
  - 13 Ibid, p. 143.
  - 14 Jason Dittmer (2005), "Captain America's Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 95. See also, Confino and Skaria (2002); and Paasi (1996).
  - 15 Dittmer (2005), p. 639.
  - 16 This point is extremely important as it steps away from the *Heimat* related concept of primordialism. While Captain America is an Anglo-American white male, he is far more an anthropomorphisation of the moral-identificational-space of 'his people' than any kind of ethno-differential model. See Alan Bairner (2009), 'National Sports and National Landscapes: In Defence of Primordialism,' *National Identities* 11; Murat Bayar (2009), 'Reconsidering Primordialism: An Alternative Approach to the Study of Ethnicity,' *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 32; and Joseph R. Gusfield (1996), 'Primordialism and Nationality,' *Society* 33.
  - 17 Graham Greene (2004 edition), *The Quiet American*, New York: Penguin Books.
  - 18 J. L. Mankiewicz (1958), *The Quiet American*, Figaro, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.
  - 19 Phillip Noyce (2002 version), *The Quiet American*, IMF, Miramax.
  - 20 Hays (2012).
  - 21 Ibid, pp. 18-20. Questions 3 and 4 are inspired by, and loosely based on, the methodology developed in Petr Drulak (ed) (2008), 'Identifying and Assessing Metaphors: Discourse on EU Reform,' in *Political Language and Metaphor: Interpreting and Changing the World*, in Carver (et al) (2008), New York: Routledge, pp. 107-108. Question 3 takes the place of 'conceptual metaphors' while Question 4 takes the place of 'metaphorical expressions.'
  - 22 The term 'experience' is obviously used loosely here. What is being stressed is that the context of events between the two levels is being equated as much as is possible. A war with a foreign enemy, rather as a historical event or as a portrayal of a historical event, is being used. This eliminates counter-contextual instances of a historical event (Vietnam War) being compared to a portrayal of a historical event (*All the President's Men*, portraying



Watergate), which would obviously skew the identification. The reasoning of the dominant discourses implies that whether we are considering a political speech act about a historical war-event or a cultural portrayal of that same event, there should be the same resultant constitutive identity based on the same 'experience' of conflict between "us" and "them."

- 23 This work is a representative piece of on-going research involving 70-some war/conflict films covering events from the beginning of the Cold War up to today. Out of that universe of discourse, 2 films *could* have strong arguments made for them that the structure-America and identity-"America" overlap entirely and are not in conflict. Those two films are *Rambo III* and *The Peacemaker*.
- 24 Robert Altman (1970), *M.A.S.H.*, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation.
- 25 Roger Donaldson (2000), *Thirteen Days*, New Line Cinema.
- 26 Coppola (1979), *Apocalypse Now*.
- 27 Mike Nichols (2007), *Charlie Wilson's War*, Universal Pictures.
- 28 Zwick (1998), *The Siege*.

*George Hays II*

# The British Broadcasting Company

## Half a Century of Covering Bahrain

*Nancy Jamal*

Until 1968, Bahrain was a protectorate of the British government during its days of imperial glory, and home to its political agent in the region.<sup>1</sup> Research shows that the first TV programme covering events in Bahrain dates back to the 1950's<sup>2</sup> making, the British Broadcasting Company 'BBC,' the very first international television station that presented news of Bahrain to the world. This work focuses on what vocabulary was being used by the BBC then, and how it developed over time to the narrative we find today. Terminologies being used just under a decade ago have been carried on to this day and have in some cases expanded. The aim of this work is to study how the BBC has set the stage for stereotyping the country in the international media in order to create a strategy, of joint effort, that would overcome this challenge going forward.

### Introduction

On 25 June 2012, the BBC Trust published a lengthy study on the impartiality and accuracy of the BBC's coverage of the events known as the Arab Spring.<sup>3</sup> Nine pages of the report discussed the reportage of the events in Bahrain that took place between 14 February 2011 until the date of publication.

In this context, Ben Dowell of the Guardian wrote that

The report looked at all BBC TV, radio and online coverage with the exception of World Service radio. Content analysis was undertaken by Loughborough University, covering 44 days of BBC output between December 2010 and January 2012, including



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16 days across a range of broadcasters between November 2011 and January 2012. Qualitative audience research was conducted by Jigsaw Research in January 2012, with 10 focus groups across the UK.<sup>4</sup>

And, in the study's closing remarks, Edward Mortimer, asserted that Considerable efforts were made to warn the public of the unverifiable nature of much of this material, but probably this needs to be done even more rigorously and systematically in the future. The fact that UGC generally enables the public to see conflict through the eyes of opposition activists, rather than governments, seems an inescapable fact of life (p. 83).

*The BBC*

Just over a year later, on 23 October 2013, Bahrain's Interior Ministry issued a statement in reference to an earlier BBC television report, announcing that

the report broadcasted yesterday by the BBC Arabic TV station on clashes between police and rioters in Sitra following the funeral of Hussain Mahdi, who was murdered last week, contained a lot of inaccuracies and is a breach of the professional principles of the BBC and the UK standards of television broadcasting.<sup>5</sup>

The Ministry went on to

demand that the BBC Arabic correct the report and to undertake not to broadcast a similar inflammatory material in the future without confirmation, as it incites the commission of crimes and leads to disorder.

This statement came as no surprise to observers of the Bahrain government's international outreach and media policy as it has, since the 1990's, publicly criticised the BBC for engaging in a media war by crafting agendas that promote dissent.

Historically speaking, the UK has paid particular attention to the Arabian region since 1798 when it signed the first documented Treaty in the region with the (then) Sultan of Muscat. For its part, the BBC's coverage of key events in the region and its partisan views, likely reflect Great Britain's former interests and sphere of influence which has included Bahrain since 1967, when Britain's regional naval base was moved from Aden to Bahrain.<sup>6</sup>

To put this into proper context, this study has been conducted to shed light on the entire coverage of BBC with regards to Bahrain, from

its very beginnings and to analyse how it developed over time and what impact it has produced on Bahrain's global image. In short, the main aim of this work is to study how the BBC has set the stage for stereotyping Bahrain in the international media.

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It is intended to help state communicators within governments across the Arab world understand the philosophy and mission of the BBC in its official mission 'to enrich people's lives with programmes and services that inform, educate and entertain' through the core value of 'trust' as 'the foundation of the BBC' that is 'independent, impartial and honest.'

### Assessing Key Themes, Moments and Personalities of BBC Coverage of Bahrain

The BBC's relationship to Bahrain is checkered since there has been a great reliance on the broadcasting company to get images of Bahrain into wider audiences – no simple feat for small countries – and, therefore, great expectations that the images would be impartial and informative. However, this has not always been the case and this section traces the BBC-Bahrain relationship from its earliest, until recent times, by presenting some of the main themes and personalities that have dominated the airwaves – and later print and e-formatted materials – between Bahrain and the UK and, subsequently, Bahrain and the wider international community.

#### *Key Storylines*

The earliest publically available BBC record of Bahrain goes as far back as 1956, as part of a Panorama Report by Woodrow Wyatt. It covered a riot against the (then) British Foreign Minister, Lloyd Selwyn, and the UK's increased commitment to local security.<sup>7</sup> While the riot scenes were certainly important, it was Wyatt's interview of Abdulaziz Alshamlan – a popular member of the self-described 'non-violent,' National Union Committee – which deserves greater scrutiny. This is because the language that was deployed intended to illustrate a growing frustration between the citizens of Bahrain and its monarchy. In fact, Wyatt excuses the violence and targets Sir Charles Belgrave – a British citizen, advisor and Chief Administrator to the rulers of Bahrain

from 1926 until 1957 – as a source of national (Bahraini) instability. It is legitimate to ask, why a BBC reporter took sides in what was clearly a domestic issue that revolved around the distribution of influence? He lambasted Belgrave, and began to discuss issues of sect. Most importantly, Wyatt's message was that violence and riots are okay if they challenge political order. This is perhaps why Wyatt was keen to highlight the state of Bahrain's local security forces and indicated that 'Bahrainis don't like to be policemen,' because, for Wyatt, that meant serving the ruling authorities, which would indicate a gap between the monarchy and the people of Bahrain. This theme has been revisited many times by the BBC since.

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Jamal*

The 1950's and 1960's were a period of immense change to global politics and the Gulf region was, by no means, insulated. In fact, as the UK began to redeploy its military and political personnel out of the region (1968), there was an initial hope that its departure would herald a new era of regional cooperation, stability and security. These hopes were dashed as Iran's Shah moved against Emirati islands (Abu Musa, Greater and Lesser Tunb) and as the Baathist party consolidated power in Iraq. In Western Arabia, the 6 Day War had humbled Egypt and empowered Israel – the BBC had its hands full attempting to cover the wide assortment of events that were unfolding throughout the Middle East. As a result, Bahrain received very little attention in the gap-decade between Wyatt's and John Morgan's own Panorama Report on the UK government's military spending (1964/1965).<sup>8</sup>

Once Bahrain was back on the BBC's radar however, it was clear that little had changed in the thinking of BBC management and the Morgan report included a comprehensive interview with popular opposition leader, Mahmoud Al-Mahdi, regarding the alleged lack of press freedom within the (then) British protectorate. In other words Morgan's reportage actively worked against both Bahrain's government and its British protectors and allies. Certainly it is reasonable for the BBC to present critical views and inspire debate over issues that are important for the British electorate. However, the BBC's role is one of reporter not view-shaper and it is not up to the BBC to try and project UK domestic preferences on Bahrain. So, when Morgan focused on Al-Mahdi and did not seek a second opinion or to verify and double verify Al-Mahdi's claims, he did more than report – he became partial to the situation. Of course, Morgan is not alone and Bahrain is not the only place where

such media distortions occur. However, since Bahrain is geographically a small country, it is more sensitive (than larger states) to the manner in which it is presented internationally and tends to pay closer scrutiny to interference since often small misrepresentations can widely distort the country's image, in addition to fanning the flames of internal tensions. So, when Morgan's report turned to the 1965 bout of unrest and the imprisonment of a teenage protestor – which in larger countries would scarcely be paid attention to – and the tone of the report leads the audience to assume that an insurmountable rift exists between Bahrain's people and its government and that this is best reflected in the Al Khalifa relationship to the UK.

Morgan suggested that the UK should promote democracy within its protectorates, as otherwise it would be associated with unpopular regimes. In other words, Morgan (wrongly) assumed that Bahrainis did not associate themselves with their government. In hindsight, this is a form of manipulating sentiment since there was no reliable data to confirm (or not) an intrinsic tension between the government and citizens in Bahrain in the 1960's. Morgan was insinuating for the sake of promoting a particular idea despite that idea being unsupported by facts.

Wyatt and Morgan shared common views of sympathising with (sometimes violent) demonstrators, abhorrence for the UK's relationship to Bahrain and an assumed gulf in terms of a political class and non-political class. Whilst the realities of Bahrain are significantly more nuanced, these themes formed the bedrock of BBC opinions of Bahrain ever since. This work now moves forward, to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and into the 21<sup>st</sup>, in order to show how this early tone-setting continues until this day.

Consider that the BBC does not cover Bahrain politically again until 1996 – a (roughly) 30 year period – when Sue Lloyd-Roberts deployed hidden cameras to film a documentary that very bluntly sympathises with protestors. In similar vein to Wyatt and Morgan, Lloyd-Roberts production works around a narrative that lauds the opposition, even if (and when) it uses violence. Such reportage often includes the image of an opposition that is “forced” into violence. At the same time, there is the indication that the opposition must “struggle” against a security apparatus that uses excessive force and is brutal.<sup>9</sup> Lloyd-Roberts' report was neither neutral nor investigative. It was a poor attempt

to debase Bahrain's government by blindly siding with demonstrators even those of dubious record in regards to their relationship to Iran and other members of the Shia theological elites in Iraq, Iran and Lebanon. For instance, in the context of reporting on anti-government violence, Lloyd-Roberts interviews Sheikh Abdulmir Al Jamri, one of the more influential Shia theologians (Najaf school) in Bahrain. Whilst this was indeed an important interview, the opinions reflected on by Al Jamri presented only one narrative and was not followed-up with successive explorations of alternative narratives, even from other opposition groups. Instead, Lloyd-Roberts assumes Al Jamri's testimony to be 100% accurate and takes, at face value, the allegations of torture and abuse in prison.

*The BBC*

Yet, Lloyd-Roberts does add to the long-narrative adopted by the BBC; she is the first to introduce the concept that Bahrain is an island that contains a Shia majority and Sunni minority. Whilst this aspect of the narrative has never been adequately verified – since religious sect is not a question on the country's many censuses – it has, nonetheless, become an instrumental part of opposition discourses. In other words, Lloyd-Roberts' work, despite being under-researched, initiated the 'Shia majority' strand of the narrative, which continues to be used to justify political violence until this day (2014). Such demographic book-keeping will be returned to below.

Finally, Lloyd-Roberts introduced the Iranian dimension to Bahraini decision-making and she points out that Manama fears the influence of the Islamic republic. However, just as it seems that Lloyd-Roberts is trying to rebalance her investigation, she takes heed of Saudi Arabia's role to assist its Bahraini ally quell protests. In doing so, Lloyd-Roberts asserts that Saudi Arabia works with Bahrain and against Iran—fanning regional tensions that continue to define political life in and around the Gulf.

## The BBC's Rebalancing Act

Towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there is a decided shift in the rhetoric and personalities deployed by the BBC; it certainly attempted to be more neutral in its coverage of live events and in the type and style of the commentaries prepared for Bahrain. So, even though the main focus of BBC reports and journalists remain the opposition and protest

groups, the BBC does draw its information from many more sources including governmental opinions, public views, expatriate communities and a wide assortment of opposition groups ranging from socialists to Sunni and Shia religious groups.<sup>10</sup>

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At this time, most coverage is short and precise and sought to explain political events, criminal arrests and court sentences with the limited use of adjectives that yield sympathy or promote a cause. In other words, in the 1996-1997 period, the BBC attempted to fulfil its institutional ethos and report the news and events from a non-partisan perspective. As a result (and rather surprisingly) in November 1998, the BBC used the word 'terrorists' to describe those engaging in political violence.<sup>11</sup> So, instead of characterising armed groups for the rhetoric they deployed – as Wyatt, Morgan and Lloyd-Roberts had – the BBC began presenting the tactics deployed. This reflects the global transition to a world more aware of the dangers of international terrorism (even before the 11 September attacks) and the BBC had to remain consistent. If the pre-Good Friday Agreement Irish Republican Army (IRA) was depicted as a terrorist group, certainly other groups around the world that deployed such tactics were also terrorists, irrespective of the ideology they stood for.

For Bahrain, the BBC's shift from narrative shaping to reportage meant increased attention for the country's unique security situation both internally and regionally. For instance, in the previous period of narrative shaping, the BBC often quoted unidentified organisations that made claims against the Kingdom regarding Human Rights (etc). Instead of specifying which groups had said what, it was common for the BBC simply to suggest that 'international human rights groups' claimed this or that. However, for the first time, in a 1999 documentary, the BBC specifically attributed a rights abuse allegation to Amnesty International.<sup>12</sup> This small change in the BBC's behaviour significantly changed the playing-field; now the government was able to react directly and pointedly, to make counterclaims and to invite members of the claimant organisations to see the situation for themselves. In other words, the BBC – in those years – assisted in making Human Rights organisations more accountable for their statements and allegations against Bahrain. It is also noteworthy that the BBC, in the same documentary, fairly covered the public accusations of Iranian interference in local Bahraini politics.



## *Bahrain's New King*

With the ascension of the new monarch to the throne in March 1999, His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, declared the nations' re-birth through political, social and economic reform. With this declaration, the BBC's coverage nearly always portrays Bahrain, and its government positively and as a model of regional development.<sup>13</sup> This is not to say that the BBC ignored some less high-profile issues; it covered a wide assortment ranging from the impact of reform to exiles abroad. However, it is important to note that the tone of the BBC's reports was less aggressive and more constructive. Whilst the BBC did not desist from interfering in Bahrain, at this time the type and level of interference was actually positive and reinforced the state and its civil society. Consider, for instance, a March 1999 documentary that highlighted Bahraini political activists located in the UK vocally asking their local supporters (in Bahrain) to respect the death of the late Amir and refrain from violent behaviour. The same report uses the words 'Shiite militants' for the first and only time in the BBC's long history of reporting on Bahrain.<sup>14</sup>

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For a number of years, the BBC's reportage on Bahrain was based on promoting King Hamad's reform project and Bahrain observer, Paul Woods, in his September 2002 report, describes it as a 'bold experiment.'<sup>15</sup> The indication was that Bahrain's reforms were unique in the region – a region plagued by conservative systems – in that they were an honest attempt to change the internal dynamics of Bahrain and produce a workable civil society in which each citizen and resident would be an actual shareholder.

Despite such coverage, there were some persistent themes of older times that continued to be proliferated by another group of BBC journalists. It was as though a parallel reportage system had developed in the BBC in regards to Bahrain. One of the clearest examples of this is seen in the demographic (mis)management of BBC explorations of Bahrain.

## *The BBC and Demographic Accounting in Bahrain*

As mentioned above, Lloyd-Roberts was the journalist to first introduce the theme of 'Shia majority' in Bahrain. Since then, the BBC, as an institution, has swayed back and forth in how it portrays the de-

mographic makeup of the country. Whilst this should not have been so important considering that Shia-Sunni relations are overwhelmingly good (only a small number of each sect have developed a more aggressive approach to one another), it has risen to prominence as some minority groups of Shia began to use the demographic argument to legitimise their anti-government violence. It is both interesting and important to provide a brief overview of how the BBC has reported on the demographic makeup of Bahrain over the past decade; that is, since demography became a national issue.

After reviewing BBC reports, it became clear that the media outlet is deeply confused about Bahrain's demography. Indeed, if one were to believe the reportage coming from the BBC, then Bahrain has among the most unstable demographic situations in world history with huge numbers of Shia coming and going day-by-day and year on year. In reality however, the BBC's numbers simply do not add up. There have been no significant changes to Bahrain's demography (in terms of Bahraini Arabs) since 2003. Yet, five different demographic accounting terms have been deployed by the BBC since then.

First, in October 2003, a BBC report mentions that the Shia population to be a 'slight majority'<sup>16</sup> in Bahrain. Whether 'slight' means 50.1%, 51% or 55%, is unclear. However, that there were no numbers included in the report does indicate that the precise demographic balance was (and is) largely guesswork, which is fine since sect has never really been an important identity generator in Bahrain. And yet (second), a mere two years later (2005), the 'slight' majority leaps to the now famous, 70:30 split where Mounira Chaib of the BBC Arabic Service, in February 2005, introduced the 70% ratio of Shias to Sunnis on international television.<sup>17</sup> This has become the standard international accounting standard of the sectarian split and has constantly undermined Bahrain's regional and international standing. In short, Chaib's unresearched and unsubstantiated claims has changed Bahrain's international and internal political situation. Third, only three years later in 2008, and the Shia majority is down 5% and holding steady at 65%, according to Bill Law. Again, there is no way to know how this number was derived at, but for a while – until 2010 – it stuck.<sup>18</sup> That is until the Shia population numbers again shot-up to 70%, at least according to the BBC which defended its demographic accounting tooth and nail throughout the 2011 crises.<sup>19</sup> That is until April 2013 when it drops to 60%.<sup>20</sup>

There is no way to determine accurate numbers amongst Bahrain's sects just like there is no way to fully gauge the impact the BBC's loose accounting produced in terms of local, regional and international fallout. However, it seems that the BBC is sectarian obsessed and has done more than even the staunchest anti-establishment organ in Bahrain to polarise Bahrain's society according to sect. Consider that on the BBC's official website the overview of Bahrain – comprised of an entire 624 words profiling the entire nation and its long history – the word 'Shia' is mentioned 5 times in independent contexts.<sup>21</sup> In other words, the word 'Shia' is disproportionately represented and deployed, mostly, to show intra-Bahraini tensions. With the sole exception of the BBC's note that there are Shia parliamentarians in Bahrain, the other four instances attach terms like, 'tensions,' 'discrimination,' 'resentment,' and 'majority' to the Shia; as though the entire history of Bahrain were reducible to such binary discourse.

## What is in a Word?

### Understanding the BBC's Terminology vis-à-vis Bahrain

But what is in a word? How important are they for understanding the mood of a people or nation? This work regards words as singly the most important expression of national consciousness and identity and hence, when words are used to erroneously depict a political community the likely outcome will shift from words to deeds. Words then are the engines driving actions.

To make this point clearer, this work has created a timeline to better understand the development of terminology within the BBC's coverage of Bahrain since the 1950's and how specific content is repeated, or changed, regardless of source.

What is interesting about the table below is that the words are not only recurring but also build-up over time and become accepted as common concepts that are adopted by others and perhaps used to stereotype different interest groups. It is this very point that makes authorities, such as the Bahrain government, suspicious of foreign news agents. It is therefore essential to understand the manner in which the BBC depicts Bahrain through keywords.

It is clear that many of these terms are exaggerations and feed into the very issues being covered by the BBC. Understanding the words chosen by the BBC to provide its listeners, watchers and readers infor-

mation about Bahrain is vital for understanding the opposition narratives which tend to use these terms in support of their own political goals, which are not a reflection of UK values but have learned to speak the language of the BBC for other, less inclusive ambitions. The recent events collectively called the Arab Spring have revealed this word-game problem very clearly.

## The Arab Spring and After

Bahrain in 2011, after a surge of revolutions in North Africa and the overtaking of the iconic Pearl shaped roundabout and the severing of the heart of the island from the main road connections leading to all strategic areas of the country; changed the once safe haven forever.<sup>22</sup> No Bahraini who experienced the past three years of unrest, will give the same account, or the same analysis.

Until this day, international channels send their correspondents or hire local stringers, to cover the repercussions of whatever took place in 2011. Many of those correspondents have developed, or had pre-existing, ties with Bahraini's from all walks of life, making it only natural for them to adopt the stance of their relations.

Many BBC correspondents have covered Bahrain and its internal affairs with regards to local politics and social developments over the past few years.<sup>23</sup> The names that are readily available are Frank Gardener and Bill Law with others such as Caroline Hawley, Ian Pannell, Jonathan Marcus, Bridget Kendall, Justin Webb, Steven Sackur, Carrie Gracie, Simon Atkinson, John Silverman, Julia Wheeler, Phillip Hampsheir, Paul Woods and Adam Curtis, all of who appear to have covered stories in countries that were undergoing revolutions of the so called 'Arab Spring' prior to the events that occurred in Bahrain.<sup>24</sup>

It has been implied that Frank Gardener is, perhaps seen by those aligned with the government as, the most accurate of the BBC's correspondents assigned to the region and known within local political circles for balanced reportage.<sup>25</sup> The BBC Trust's report on the impartiality and accuracy of the BBC's coverage of the Arab Spring quotes an interview with Frank Gardener:

The BBC was accused from many quarters of mis-telling the story. I went down twice last year – in April and November – and heard a lot of complaints from expat Brits, Sunnis, and expat Asians, that BBC coverage was utterly one-sided in the

early months. That's taking it too far, but ... because Bahrain is not a hub centre – it doesn't have a resident bureau with proper analysts or resident journalists – when something takes off if it's big enough you parachute in 'firemen.' So in February we sent in people straight from Tahrir Square or Tunis, and they applied a one-size-fits-all matrix 'protesters good, government bad.'<sup>26</sup>

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On the other hand, there is Bill Law, who is often frowned upon by Bahrain's authorities, and suspected of promoting the opposition's views alone, as he clearly reveals in his reports.<sup>27</sup> One might say that his British sarcasm, when mentioning the government, is lost on those who resent his work. Yet when investigating his reportage of Bahrain, all the way back to 2008, in at least 11 independent pieces, only the more 'radical' element of Bahrain's opposition is portrayed. In fairness, it is necessary to point out that on 15 March 2011, he was the first to mention the savage killing of a policeman and the difficult job of the security personnel during those hard times.<sup>28</sup>

Such discrepancies in reporting, however, are irresponsible and send mixed messages to the wider international public. Since the BBC is meant to report on unfolding global situations, it is difficult to understand how there is so much room to interpret events. In Bahrain, this has had such acute repercussions that it is fair to suggest that the BBC is interfering in the domestic political affairs of the country. For the most part, in the BBC's coverage of Bahrain, since 2011, the government is depicted somewhat monstrously whilst the opposition is treated as a victim and the rest of Bahrain's society, seemingly, doesn't exist at all. So, when on 19 February 2011, the BBC TODAY programme presented an audio of Justin Webb with David Mellor who highlighted Shiite extremism and mentions a history of association with Iran to the extent of military training for affiliated Bahrain based extremists,<sup>29</sup> it is clear that there is more to the story. However, the BBC has gotten used to slicing away the national metanarrative in favour of sub-narratives that divide the nation and infuse the next generation of violence.

## Conclusion

It is only through research, analysis and reaching a common understanding that the science of communications has developed. The marriage between media rhetoric and public opinion is a fascinating dis-

cipline that needs much more study, given the ever-changing, forever expanding world of media. Because of this, many divergent parties will claim to know better when it comes to the coverage of news. Whilst the media rushes to report the correct, and in some cases 'juicier' story, governments worry about the impact of their international image on local affairs and vice versa.

The BBC, being a well-entrenched media conglomerate, falls to the whim of different interest groups and stakeholders. Such is the case for any organisation within the same industry. It has displayed self-discipline on many occasions and has acted with courage and goodwill by publishing a report on the standard of its operations.<sup>30</sup>

No doubt, it is up to the powers that be to impose integrity and encourage precision. Yet in the end, it is the people in the field, journalists, political activists, human-rights defenders, story-tellers, on-line sources and even official communicators to demonstrate good judgment, benevolence, honesty and candour.



NANCY JAMAL currently holds the status of Minister Plenipotentiary at the Bahrain Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She is Acting Director for Information, Studies & Research.

She was previously Director of External Relations & Global Outreach at the Bahrain Center for Strategic, International & Energy Studies where she reported to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, & Diplomatic Affairs Advisor to HM the King. She also acted as a Communications Advisor to various government organizations in addition to being a member of the National Committee delegated to the World Petroleum Council.

Prior to that she was Chief of Press and Foreign Media where she played a vital role in setting the country's international communications strategy & was in charge of establishing and operating information offices in Washington D.C., London, Paris and Cairo. During this period she served within the Cabinets' of the the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Information.

Ms Jamal is a former investment banker with broad knowledge of the principles of contemporary Islamic banking and combating money laundering. She has also held the positions of Executive Committee

Member for the United Nation's Khalifa Award for Urban Development and Member of Bahrain's National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking.

A Fulbright Scholar and Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute, UK, Ms Jamal earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a focus on Finance from the University of Bahrain and a Master of Arts in Public Communications from the American University, Washington D.C with a focus on Politics of the Middle East.

*The BBC*

Ms Jamal is a recognized crisis communications expert in the region and specializes in political strategy development, public policy promotion, social conflict resolution, civic engagement, and International-Intercultural public diplomacy. She is an advocate of the arts and has great interest in Gulf Arab anthropology. Ms Jamal may be reached at: [info@cejiss.org](mailto:info@cejiss.org)

*Disclosure Statement: The information and opinions in this document are the sole responsibility of the author and in no way reflect the views of the employer nor any other party of interest.*

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# The Limits of Human Development in Weak and Religiously Fractured States

## The Case of Lebanon

*Martina Ponížilová*

Deploying Lebanon as a case study, this work considers the concept of human development in the context of a weak and failed state to provide insights into ways of enhancing the implementation of development strategies. Lebanon serves as an example of a weak state characterised by sharp religious cleavages. Lebanon's weak statehood is examined in connection with practices to promote human development, which is very limited due to weak state institutions and the insufficient distribution of basic goods and services. As a result, the role of state institutions in implementing development policies and providing services to citizens is taken over by non-governmental organisations, religious institutions and even political parties. This study argues that providing development aid and services based on religious affiliations and political loyalties only exacerbates domestic societal tensions and deepens religious divisions. It proposes an alternative model of 'functional networking' as a strategy to fulfil human development based on support and emphasising cooperation in securing livelihoods. This model has the potential to overcome fracture lines in a society.

*Keywords: human development, weak/failed states, non-governmental organisations, functional networking, Lebanon, confessional system Hezbollah, Future Movement, the Hariri Foundation*



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## Introduction

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Weak, failing or failed states are, to varying degrees, incapable of fulfilling their commitments to their citizens because weak statehood has a direct influence on the provision (or the non-delivery) of public goods by the state. Due to this dysfunction – and in some cases the absence of a central government, the ineffectiveness of government institutions and the lack of financial, technical and human resources – segments of the population have limited or no access to basic social and health services. In such cases, the role of provider of services and at least some basic public goods may be assumed by foreign and/or local non-governmental organisations (NGOs), donors, local religious and political organisations or civil society groups.

These actors often stumble on the problem of insufficient financial resources and other obstacles introduced by an unsupportive central government and local representatives. Many resources allotted for development in conflict-ridden areas, for aid to people in need or for improving the standard of living of people in neglected areas, are, thus, simply “lost” en route from donor to recipient. One way to avoid ineffective and corrupt state institutions, and thus compensate (at least temporarily) for their lack of basic functions like providing services to their citizens, is to supply development resources directly to NGOs, which can distribute aid and resources according to the specific needs of citizens. In so doing, these NGOs can ensure that resources are used with maximum effectiveness directly in the places where they are most needed. This study aims to explore this broad theme.

This situation applies to Lebanon, which is the focus for the second and third parts of this discussion. Taking the example of the inability of Lebanon’s state institutions and government to control their territory and provide citizens with crucial services, this work identifies the benefits that a functional networking approach could have in a country characterised by severe social fractures and a history marred by civil war. When internal conflicts and on-going disputes fully exhaust public resources and weaken or almost completely disintegrate state institutions, non-state actors become the main agents for delivering development policies.

The fundamental problem with having religious organisations or political parties provide services is that these groups tend to distribute aid mainly to members of their respective religious communities and

constituencies. As a result, they do not contribute to the development of the whole society and to raising the standard of living of all citizens regardless of religious beliefs, political sympathies or ethnicity. Such an intentionally selective method of distributing aid actually helps to sustain and deepen cleavages in a society, creating a basis for further inequalities among individual groups of citizens and potentially leading to social collapse. Societies need to be motivated in some way to unite and stand together. Such an approach, based on creating functionally-focused groups of people who are in need of financial or technical aid from donors and NGOs, has the potential to build mutual trust between individual groups (e.g. Lebanese religious communities) and develop their cooperation.

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### The 'Functional Networking' Approach<sup>1</sup>

Functional networking was created for use in weak state environments, which by their nature cannot provide a stable national framework for development strategies. Therefore, this model favours small-scale, local solutions and emphasises both the day-to-day livelihood of families and individuals and the involvement of civil society and NGOs. NGOs should become the main implementers of development activities, which ideally include both the cooperation of local populations and external experts and workers with contacts to financial resources. Where local populations lack awareness of or interest in civil society participation, NGOs from third countries can be the impulse which sparks their involvement; putting pressure on individuals across various social groups to participate should be the most important role of these external actors. For this strategy to succeed, however, it is absolutely imperative that these local populations are involved as early as possible.

NGOs may, thus, enter a region with only relatively broadly defined goals based on their preliminary research. Implemented projects must, however, be local and prepared by working with local needs, initiatives and ideas. This is an essential condition if local populations are to become involved in implementing various activities, interested in sustaining results and able to take responsibility for implementing projects and to show at least a basic degree of integrity in dealing with the goods or property entrusted to them.

To enable development cooperation in practice, there is an implicit need to categorise individuals into various groups which are then addressed by some development policy. Although unfortunately unavoidable, this is a harmful practice as it gives preference to social factors over 'functional' ones. It is not appropriate to categorise individuals according to their gender, ethnicity, religion or memberships of clans or regions. This reinforcement of existing social groups is a hindrance to the development of society as a whole. Societies in weak states are often divided, and supporting these rifts promotes disintegration and social cleavage rather than integration. This can lead to the creation of an uncooperative and closed system, a situation which is not only ineffective for strengthening society and the state but potentially dangerous since it may inadvertently escalate latent conflicts.

The functional networking approach counters the demand for nation-building with a call for the building of a society based on support for associations of individuals who make their livings in a similar manner (e.g. associations of fishermen, etc.) and who define their own needs and cooperate to improve their working conditions. Support for these associations must be based on the operation and successful guarantee of the livelihoods of those involved, and not on ethnicity, religion or gender. Here donors and NGOs have a crucial role to play by supporting the formation of such groups on a local scale, setting the gradual overcoming of social barriers as a condition for resource provision and, at the same time, acting as mediators in any disputes among members. Such activities can be arduous and long-term and they often lead to dead ends. On the other hand, overcoming social differences through shared work towards a common goal can result in the building of a unified, pluralistic and non-fragmented society.

Inspired by the liberal tradition of international relations, the functional networking approach is based on the assumptions that prosperity is in the shared interests of all people and it can be achieved through long-term cooperation among the widest possible variety of stakeholders to achieve this end. This cooperation can also help to overcome stereotypes and build trust. This aspect of functional networking is absolutely vital in divided societies since it will allow for the lifting of the international community's disciplinary hand so that the society functions independently.

If successful, consensual functional networking, established and enforced using the economic emergencies of average citizens, can spill

over into other branches of social life. A society which overcomes its internal antagonisms for the sake of livelihoods and prosperity can serve as motivation for the strengthening the state. The strengthened state can then gradually take over the role which external NGOs would otherwise fill under the functional networking approach.

To a certain degree, functional networking can stand in for a deficient state authority in distributing resources, protecting safety, securing livelihoods and providing an array of services. A significant portion of this burden falls on donors, who ensure that money makes it to needed areas according to their priorities, but NGOs also play the role of the central authority on a micro level. The benefits of the model have been highlighted above, but we should also consider the desperate situation of some local citizens who, lacking education, property or forms of social networks, have the opportunity to gain at least partial independence and ensure a dignified livelihood. Furthermore, it is likely that weak states will have no objections to such activities happening in their territory as this reduces the pressure on them to provide a complete range of services and goods.

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### Lebanon's Weak Statehood and Deep Social Divisions

Lebanon is known as one of the most democratic and liberal states in the Middle East. The fragile democracy – flawed as it is – that exists in the country today reflects a long tradition. If it is at all possible to speak of state unity in Lebanon, then we should at the same time mention how difficult it is for the country to maintain this situation since it is threatened on almost a daily basis by political and social conflicts among the members of its confessional communities. Some authors therefore highlight the structural weakness of Lebanese sovereignty,<sup>2</sup> which is caused on the one hand by a history of weak governments, and on the other by the way that regional powers (particularly Syria) have intervened in Lebanon's internal affairs and to a lesser or greater degree influenced domestic political developments. The weakness or ineffectiveness of state institutions results, then, from the inclination of past government representatives to minimise state interventions in the workings of the economy (at times under pressure from business elites) and society.<sup>3</sup> Hilal Khashan, a professor at the American University of Beirut, locates the causes of weak state authority in the current political system set up by party leaders at the time when an independ-

ent Lebanon was being formed in 1943. This was a system that aimed to keep the central government weak enough to allow individual religious communities to act independently.<sup>4</sup> Such a partisan political system ensured that state power would be maintained by individual religious sects.

For many decades, religious diversity has been a distinct characteristic of Lebanese society,<sup>5</sup> and roughly 18 recognised religious denominations presently coexist in Lebanon. This diversity was reflected in the division of political power and state functions among the most influential religious communities during the creation of the sovereign state.<sup>6</sup> In spite of Lebanon's relative political stability and speedy economic development from the time of independence until the 1970s,<sup>7</sup> the fragile, carefully maintained confessional system collapsed under large waves of Palestinian immigrants and pressures from abroad, notably, Israel, Syria and Western (etc) along with other factors.

The Lebanese civil war (1975-1990) seriously affected the country's development and population in a number of ways. Although independent Lebanon was a relatively rich state thanks to its developed financial and business sector, the Lebanese economy took a serious blow during the civil strife. There were significant declines in the economy, and debt grew on the back of the steadily climbing costs of the war and the funds needed to repair devastated infrastructure, public buildings and residential areas. During the 1990s, the country became more and more dependent on foreign aid.<sup>8</sup> It was average citizens, naturally, who suffered the most, losing their loved ones, homes and educational and work opportunities as their quality of life plummeted. Some areas and segments of the population were, however, afflicted more than others, aggravating the hostility among various communities. The Taif Accord, which formally ended this civil conflict, actually reinforced these religious quarrels.<sup>9</sup> Instead of focusing on the creation of a secular civil society and avoiding the further collapse of the confessional system, the Accord dealt mainly with the division of power among various sects.<sup>10</sup> Although the division of political roles according to religious affiliations was done to avoid disputes over power among these communities' representatives, the effect was to make the state more vulnerable. Any change in the balance of power between individual communities or feelings of injustice and oppression directed from one group to another could lead to conflicts – the civil war was just one, albeit the most convincing, of any number of examples.<sup>11</sup>

Religious divisions in Lebanese society not only make cohabitation more difficult and lie behind many past disputes and conflicts, but also represent a serious barrier to human development. The long and bloody civil war left scars not just in the Beirut, the country's capital, but in other cities and especially in the memories of those who survived; memories which recall the deeply ingrained animosities and mistrust of an era when various parts of the capital and subsequently the whole country were ruled by sectarian militias that created semi-autonomous areas, each possessing its own economic, political and social systems.<sup>12</sup> This situation led to the reinforcement of mutual suspicions and even greater religious segregation.

The low level of political mobilisation among the Lebanese population and practical non-existence of civil society have also proved extremely problematic.<sup>13</sup> Today's civil society groups and NGOs do not seem to interact with the political system and, thus, the impact of these organisations on political processes is marginal at best.<sup>14</sup> In contrast with the situation in Western countries, these organisations do not exert pressure on the government, political parties or other political actors in an effort to reflect citizens' interests and are therefore completely cut off from political decision-making. As such, they prove highly ineffective.

State authority is also weakened by another significant factor, strong clientelism, which is allowed and strongly supported by the sectarian political system. The basis of this clientelistic behaviour is loyalty to one specific political leader known as *za'im* in Arabic, who provides his followers with certain services in exchange for their support in elections. The *za'im* is the leader of the local community (sometimes the same as the religious community) and often possesses his own armed group which protects his interests.<sup>15</sup> Corruption and an overall lack of transparency are serious problems in Lebanese politics, and they extend to the administration of funds from development aid.<sup>16</sup>

In addition, politicians prioritise the interests of their own religious communities over those of the entire country, leading ultimately to the weakening of state institutions and state loyalty. Brogan reiterates that it was mainly the provisions of Lebanon's founding National Pact which – by strengthening the autonomy of religious communities at the expense of state authority – shaped prevailing loyalties to specific religious communities over the state as a whole.<sup>17</sup> Although average citizens gladly assert that they are not Arabs but Lebanese, identifica-

tion with the Lebanese state itself is relatively weak. Khashan confirms that citizens of Lebanon are not defined by their affiliation to the state but by the strength of their identification with their own sect.<sup>18</sup>

Paradoxically, this sectarian division of society can also diminish state authority externally because of the influence which foreign powers and/or neighbouring states have on individual communities. Iran, for example, draws on heavy financial and military support and the ideology of the Iranian revolution to exert influence on Hezbollah's policies and thus indirectly on the Shiite community. It was, however, Syria which for the longest time attempted to influence domestic political processes including the selection of a president with allied opinions. Syrian troops were stationed in Lebanon for three decades until they were forced to withdraw in 2005 when the assassination of ex-PM Rafiq Hariri gave momentum to the so-called Cedar Revolution.

The influence of foreign governments on domestic politics is also connected with the martial power (or rather powerlessness) of Lebanon, which has very limited military capacities. During the civil war and afterwards, the Lebanese army was seen as a very weak and poorly organised institution incapable of protecting Lebanon's territory or its population.<sup>19</sup> Another blow to state authority came from the presence of militias within its borders. Weak statehood is not a consequence of the activities of Hezbollah's militant offshoots; it is rather its cause. However, the fact that this movement controls certain areas of Lebanon and its armed members have been active in this territory for some time, serves further to undermine state. The Hezbollah resistance is currently the only armed, non-state group in the country, as well as the sole group capable of defending Lebanese territory against an external attack – it actually has more modern arms technology and better training than the official Lebanese army<sup>20</sup> and demonstrated its military capabilities in the Summer War against Israel (2006).

In contrast to the armed, non-state actors which central governments struggle against in other countries, Hezbollah has shown no anti-state tendencies; it is not striving to overthrow the government *by force* or attempting to declare an independent state or autonomous area in the territories where it operates (though it does in reality rule those areas).<sup>21</sup> Although the disarming of all sectarian militias was called for under the Taif Accord, Hezbollah was allowed to keep its weapons due to its armed resistance against Israel,<sup>22</sup> an arrangement approved



by all former governments. This raises questions about whether Hezbollah's militias actually disrupt the sovereignty of Lebanon – after all, the central government has acknowledged both Hezbollah's existence and its anti-Israeli strategy, and the areas the group dominates seem to be outside the control of the national government and official army.

Given that Hezbollah has repeatedly deployed its militants to achieve its own (non-state) goals, the argument that its military activities do disrupt state sovereignty since they happen without the consent or directions of the government is valid. The Lebanese state has actually (if not always willingly) accepted Hezbollah's activities *ex post facto* since it was not capable of stunting the movement's growth from the outset. The government was left with basically no choice but to come to terms with Hezbollah so long as its activities stayed limited to the fight against Israel and defending Lebanon against Israeli attacks. If government decisions limit Hezbollah's political power and threaten its operations, the movement will not hesitate to use armed force to apply pressure and enforce or defend Hezbollah's interests.<sup>23</sup> That the Lebanese army has no control over Hezbollah's armed forces and the organisation unlawfully intervenes in the democratic process are obvious signs of the disruption of state sovereignty.<sup>24</sup>

One point should be made clear. Both Hezbollah's armament and the social services that it provides are manifestations of Lebanon's weakness. If Lebanon were a strong state with effective civil and military institutions, it could crack down on the unwarranted operations of militant groups within its territory. But the state's political authority, like the military capabilities of former governments, has been insufficient, and it has proven helpless to remedy the situation. We can complete the overall picture of Lebanon's weak statehood by considering the ineffectiveness of its institutions when it comes to ensuring basic services and distributing goods to the population.

## Human Development in an Institutionally Weak Lebanon

The Lebanese government has experienced problems not only in ensuring public safety, but in distributing public goods. Since the civil war ended in 1990, Lebanon has struggled to meet its population's basic needs: of these, security and power supply issues are foremost and the cost of living falls next in line. The country's development plan has

been one of the most important tools called on by several of its governments to stabilise domestic life. The slogan 'balanced development,' which aims to reduce regional inequalities, has been invoked by many politicians going as far back as the 1950s.<sup>25</sup> Despite the painstaking (and unfortunately often only rhetorical) efforts of Lebanese politicians to make changes in this area, the practical impact has been felt by only some of the population; by the first half of the 1970s, the overall standard of living had risen, but differences in the development of individual regions had not lessened, and in some cases, they had widened.

Since 1990 when the new Lebanese constitution took effect, both the central government and local authorities have been faced with a lack of adequate human and financial resources and technical equipment to ensure essential services to the population. Among the causes of this is the failure of the central government to intervene in the ineffective operations of local authorities and so pressure them to improve the living standards of their population.<sup>26</sup> In 1992, the Lebanese government, led by Rafiq Hariri (1992-1998, 2000-2004), attempted to launch widespread rebuilding of the war-torn country. The government first focused on reconstructing the capital, and Beirut began to see significant progress in the revival of its devastated centre. Even so, this development neglected both the southern suburbs inhabited by the majority Shiite population and the countryside, which had been crippled by the war just as seriously as the capital.

In addition to the building of better infrastructure, the post-war reconstruction delivered major investments in the healthcare and education systems. Initially, the country's relatively high economic growth allowed for similar development programmes, but later growing state debt<sup>27</sup> and a simultaneously weakening economy<sup>28</sup> forced the government to draw its resources mainly from western governments and donors from the Arab world.<sup>29</sup> Lebanon became largely dependent on foreign aid. According to some estimates (exact numbers cannot be obtained due to the non-transparent appropriation of funds), foreign aid made up as much as 25% to 35% of the state budget.<sup>30</sup> The government's efforts to improve the economic situation and fulfil development goals were blocked not just by economic problems and political disputes, but by a high level of corruption, ineffective state administration and intermittent armed conflicts such as the one between Hezbollah and Israel in 2006. Combined with the small-scale battles

that raged between the Lebanese army and the Fatah al-Islam group in the Nahr al-Barid Palestinian refugee camp a year later, these conflicts caused great damage to infrastructure and put mounting pressure on the country's economy.

At present, the situation is only slightly better, and improvements have only reached certain areas. High government spending is not reflected in reduced poverty across the population,<sup>31</sup> and nor has it improved the quality of services in public education institutions or the healthcare system.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, the lack of good quality public services is hitting rural areas and the peripheral regions of cities hard - some of these regions lack sufficient water supplies and proper sewage systems, while electricity blackouts take place regularly in the capital. The state has also failed to coordinate the work plans of state institutions and offices, and it has not prevented their mandates and authorities from overlapping. This has had a dampening effect on not just the effective distribution of public goods but the fulfilment of development programmes. Despite the extensive funds provided to Lebanon through foreign resources, the state has not been able to ensure timely and effective completion of the projects financed by these foreign donors.<sup>33</sup> Naturally, postponing the deadlines of individual projects has also inflated their cost substantially.

On top of these obstacles, which make the provision of good quality public goods impossible and any development slow, it is necessary to highlight the corruption and nepotism made possible by minimal or non-existent checks on state institution operations and public resource distribution. One commentary puts it, '(c)hecks and balances are replaced with reciprocal political consent and politicians tolerating each other's misdeeds.'<sup>34</sup>

The geographical distribution of public goods in Lebanon does not match the economic needs of individual regions,<sup>35</sup> and it has not led to a balanced decrease in poverty, on the contrary. Salti and Chaaban observe that 'public funds have been channelled along a vector remarkably consistent with political concern, for sectarian balance.'<sup>36</sup> The influence of political decisions on the allocation of development aid resources is one reason for vast discrepancies in the progress of individual regions; this is clear, for example, in the quality of education and health services. Closely connected with the country's often mentioned development problem are the different living standards

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of individual religious communities. These interregional differences are significant and underscore the markedly unequal access of citizens to the social welfare system. In more developed areas such as Mount Lebanon (home to a Christian majority), the number of absolutely indigent citizens is as much as ten times lower than in the long-neglected southern (Shiite majority) and northern (Sunni majority) regions of Lebanon.<sup>37</sup> For example, Shiites living mainly in the impoverished southern suburbs of Beirut (as opposed to the modern and wealthy central business district), southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley have largely been ignored as a group by the state.<sup>38</sup>

The lower living standards, tougher economic situation and lesser political power of the Shiite community in comparison with Lebanese Sunnis and Christians, all date back to the foundation of an independent Lebanon. Those who dominated the economic and business sector were more often affiliated with the Sunni and Christian communities while the Shiites, who at the time mostly inhabited rural agricultural areas, formed an economically weaker group. Their lower standard of living was also the outcome of inferior access to education and importantly a lack of clientele ties.<sup>39</sup> This was all determined by the division of state political power at a time when Shiites lacked proper political representation in political decision-making. The fact that the Shiites came out of the civil war as the most demographically and militarily unified of all the religious communities helped to strengthen their political power – even so, the Taif Accord and its provisions on changes in the political system failed to reflect the growth of the Shiite population in recent decades.

Another factor that clearly worsened the social and economic situation of the Shiite community – already facing significant poverty after the civil war – was the position in which they found themselves on the front lines during conflicts with Israel. The Shiite community was forced to bear the greatest suffering and damage while remaining more or less neglected by the government. As a consequence of the war and various other conflicts, Shiites moved from rural areas of Beka'a and south Lebanon into cities, particularly Beirut. This steep increase in Shiite populations in the southern suburbs of the capital actually led to even lower standards of living for this community.<sup>40</sup> Khashan points out that while Shiites should not be seen as a community lacking political representation since they are properly represented in the country's bureaucratic and political system<sup>41</sup> (and Hezbollah remains the only

armed group in the country), their socio-economic status is still only improving very slowly.<sup>42</sup>

Vast differences in living standards across sects, much like the different degrees of their political representation and their unequal access to resources, have been the cause of many past inter-community disputes. If the potential causes of these schisms are to be eliminated in the future, then improving living and work conditions for the most disadvantaged groups of the population will be crucial - and a condition for their non-violent cohabitation.

The lack of government efforts to improve conditions for Shiite citizens and its favouring of Beirut's development at the expense of southern Lebanon caused Hezbollah to emerge as a significant distributor of basic services to a mostly Shiite population. Hezbollah quickly proved its competence in this role, which theoretically should have belonged to the state; the movement was able to provide a wide range of social services which citizens otherwise had no access to due to the incapability of state institutions. Moreover, Hezbollah carried out this work much more effectively than government authorities, and unlike the latter, it was not plagued by a corrupt past. In regions inhabited by Shiites (initially Baalbek and Nabatieh and later Beirut's southern suburbs), Hezbollah filled the vacuum that appeared in the absence of government authority, and the movement began to provide a network of health and welfare services that actually became more extensive than the state welfare system in other parts of Lebanon.<sup>43</sup> In addition to providing education in their own schools and healthcare in a number of their own hospitals,<sup>44</sup> clinics and health centres, Hezbollah began to take care of the post-conflict reconstruction of villages and suburbs and the rebuilding of infrastructure as well as affordable living and waste disposal, and it provided aid to the families of soldiers killed in battle. In doing so, Hezbollah elements were easily able to plug the gap in the distribution of basic public goods and services (including security) that was created due to the impotence or practical absence of state institutions and military forces.<sup>45</sup> Hezbollah remain one of the most effective and important providers of social services in the country. It is this very marked success of Hezbollah which underscores the incapacity of the Lebanese government and its state institutions.<sup>46</sup>

Next to Hezbollah, the most significant political organisation (in terms of size and financial resources)<sup>47</sup> which also provides extensive social programmes is the Sunni Future Movement, which reigns over

many Sunni charity institutions. Rafiq Hariri, who once headed this organisation (it is now led by his son Saad Hariri), created the largest representative body of the Lebanese Sunni community from the Future Movement.<sup>48</sup> Like Hezbollah, Hariri's foundation (a charitable wing of the Future Movement) was largely a reaction to the insufficient state welfare system of the period.<sup>49</sup> The foundation built and now runs a number of schools, including one university, in Sidon and Beirut. It has already provided thousands of students – including non-Sunnis – with generous scholarships over two decades (1978-2000). In addition to schools, this movement has constructed clinics and runs the public hospital Rafiq Hariri Government Hospital. In brief, its emergence makes clear that minimal state interventions into the social welfare system create enough space for many non-state actors to occupy the void caused by the absence of state control.

The neglect of the distribution of public goods and services by the central government is not only a social issue, but a political one as well. Making the social welfare system more effective for the country's population has actually become a strategy for political parties and other organisations set up by these parties.<sup>50</sup> In this way, they attempt to safeguard the support of their followers and voters and also gain new supporters.<sup>51</sup> Khashan notes that 'Hezbollah's ability to win the hearts and minds of the Shia community was based on providing goods and services that elsewhere in other countries belong to the state.'<sup>52</sup>

The use of social programmes for political gain is not limited to Hezbollah – many Lebanese political parties use this tactic to gain the support of members of their 'own' communities and, during voting periods, to ensure votes from their constituencies. It must also be mentioned that the sectarian political system – and the distribution of services and public goods which it influences – makes these practices even easier. Cammett and Issar claim that in pluralistic societies such as Lebanon, 'social welfare can be a terrain of political contestation, particularly when states fail to provide basic public goods and social services.'<sup>53</sup> This means that raising the level of social well-being in this environment cannot be separated from sectarian politics.

It is also important in this case to emphasise the interconnection between the nature of the political system and the provision of services or distribution of resources. Because the political system is sectarian, all communication and transactions must also take place on a confes-

sional basis, i.e. in terms of relations between state and community representatives on the one hand, and community representatives and community members on the other. There is, thus, no direct relationship between the population and the state (or government). '[W]hen the government interferes on behalf of the people, it happens through sectarian intermediaries,' as one commentator notes.<sup>54</sup> The state's role lies mainly in financing the welfare system (primarily in the areas of education and healthcare),<sup>55</sup> but the task of actually *fulfilling* the basic needs of the population shifts to the representatives of individual religious communities, i.e. sectarian-oriented political organisations. These organisations gain resources from the state and then distribute them throughout their own communities, thus finally gaining the support of the citizenry although the funds that they use come (by an overwhelming majority) from the state treasury. This serves to strengthen loyalties to the individual religious communities and their representatives (e.g. Hezbollah for the Shiite community, the Future Movement for the Sunni community, etc.) rather than the state even though state loyalty is sorely needed in a fractured society like Lebanon. This also explains why religious communities are in fact the most important institutions in the state.

As has been seen, it is common in societies divided along religious lines for the members of a given religious community to be favoured in the provision of welfare services. In the case of Lebanon, access to Hezbollah's extensive social welfare programmes and various services goes first and foremost to the Shiite community (and to a lesser degree to Christians and Sunnis living in Shiite communities) and not to the members of Lebanese society as a whole. Although Hezbollah insists on claiming that it provides its services to all Lebanese citizens in need, Shiites – who form the vast majority of Hezbollah's voting base – are invariably the target population group to which the group delivers its services.<sup>56</sup> One main exception in the area of development and post-conflict aid came with the war with Israel, which allowed Hezbollah 'to polish a populist pan-Lebanese image.'<sup>57</sup> In light of the government's ineffectiveness, the movement began to provide needed reconstruction services indiscriminately to all afflicted groups in the population.

Saab notes that charity work and service are an important and integral part of Hezbollah's strategy as it attempts to establish an Islamic

state in Lebanon.<sup>58</sup> Hezbollah cannot achieve this goal, however, without the support of the majority of the country's citizens and it is therefore expanding the 'target group' for its development and welfare programmes and making efforts to appear to be the protector of the entire country rather than just one religious group. According to Flanigan and Abdel-Samad, employees of Hezbollah's non-profit organizations<sup>59</sup> do not look on their work as merely volunteer or humanitarian activity, but see it as an act of resistance (against Israel) or a jihad-related act.<sup>60</sup> Some Sunnis and Christians have a problem with Hezbollah's welfare programmes for religious reasons – although they need aid, they do not want to incur religious obligations to Hezbollah and thus decide to reject aid from NGOs which are affiliated with Hezbollah. However, not every individual has a choice – in some areas or communities these organisations are the only ones which actually offer such aid and social services.<sup>61</sup>

In contrast with Hezbollah's social programmes, the Future Movement and its charity affiliate, the Hariri Foundation, provide welfare services to both Sunnis and non-Sunnis.<sup>62</sup> Aside from these two institutions, the vast majority (up to 80%-90% according to estimates) of NGOs in Lebanon are religious<sup>63</sup> while only a few are secular.<sup>64</sup> This is again due to the sectarian political system (and, thus, the sectarian social division), which influences the structure of civil society – NGOs wishing to heighten their effectiveness must adapt to the way in which the system functions and therefore be sectarian-based.<sup>65</sup> Religious NGOs are then 'key platforms of social and political expression.'<sup>66</sup> The gaps where the state fails to function are filled by representatives of various communities through political-religious organisations and movements.

This all raises the question of why this vacuum – created by the absence of state institutions – has not been filled by independent, secular and non-political NGOs instead of being taken over by political actors and the organisations they established. Khashan points out that although there are actually a relatively large number (i.e. a few thousand) of NGOs and interest groups in Lebanon, in reality many of them do not function as they should.<sup>67</sup> This stems from various factors including the weak political mobilisation of the population, the highly ineffective nature or practical absence of civil society and insufficient



funding for NGOs, which lack contact with the government and receive no state funding in contrast with the representatives of religious communities.

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### Functional Networking or 'Hezbollah Style'?

How can human development be assured in a country where the state institutions are largely incapable of providing their citizens with basic services and crucial public goods? The state function of maintaining a social welfare system has been taken over in Lebanon by political parties (and their affiliated organisations and charities) representing individual religious groups. At first glance, it may seem logical for a state with a sectarian political system and strong loyalties to the religious community that social services are taken care of by representatives of individual sects. This system fails, however, to provide access to resources and services to all groups of the population – or all regions of the country – equally. Three factors play a determining role here: first, which religious community citizens belong to, second, whether or not they are supporters of a specific political movement,<sup>68</sup> and whether any NGOs actually function in the areas where they live. In the end, all of these factors affect whether citizens are provided with quality (or any) services. It is vital for human development that all citizens have equal access to all services and aid.

Another critical disadvantage for Lebanon stems from the fact that this system deepens the cleavages across a society which should instead be looking for paths and policies that would help strengthen trust among sect members and foster loyalties to the state rather than to individual religious communities. In so doing, Lebanon could avoid future eruptions of the inter-religious disputes which are today so common in the country.

How can these prevailing practices be ended when the most effective, subsidised and expansive development organisations in the country are political parties (or the NGOs connected to them)? For some of the population, aid from Hezbollah, the Hariri Foundation and similar organisations has surely been beneficial or even fundamental to survival. The positive effect of these actors' development activities to improve the living conditions of conflict-stricken or other disadvantaged

groups cannot be denied. It is true, however, that large segments of the population are denied access to this support. Further, the work of organisations based on political-religious affiliation only adds to hostilities across the entire community; this causes harm to both society and the state in the long run.

Additionally, the methods by which resources and services are provided at present, namely through political organisations which force citizens to perform reciprocal services (e.g. compulsory political activism, voting for a given party in elections, support for specific representatives from a given party, etc.) prevent those who refuse to submit to these conditions from taking up these services and resources. Palmer Harik confirms this fact when she reports: 'People all over would love to have the state provide [for] them because they don't want to be beholden politically, but the state doesn't do it.' For such people, cooperation with secular local or foreign NGOs is an appropriate alternative as these organisations do not demand an exclusive commitment and are apolitical. To provide help, they require that people merely assert some of their own initiative and be willing to cooperate and take responsibility. They do not demand votes or other forms of political or ideological support.

The form of aid which these NGOs provide, i.e. the whole system of functional networking, would therefore allow and support people to be active, and not passive, recipients of aid – a substantial problem for people in Lebanon, according to Khashan.<sup>69</sup> To a large degree, it would encourage them to actively participate in improving their living conditions. The obstacles which these people meet on the path to ensuring a livelihood and employment can be cleared by these NGOs. This system would encourage people to seize the initiative and become active and capable of taking care of themselves in a situation where external aid is initially necessary to overcome certain challenges – challenges which are to a large degree the “product” of weak statehood and non-functional state institutions.

People who are denied access to resources and services for political or religious reasons find themselves in hopeless life situations and need external (financial or technical) aid in order to ensure their own livelihood. For this very reason, such people will be more willing to cooperate with foreign NGOs and act according to their rules, i.e. paying only the “price” of establishing cooperation with their fellow citizens

who are also struggling with similar problems. Through such a process, some barriers between people from different religious communities may gradually be broken down; a process not currently being furthered due to the distribution of aid on a political-religious basis. The present system in which the distribution of resources is controlled by organisations with a political-religious base, is not only deepening the fissures in society, but compounding differences in the development of individuals, communities and whole regions. Functionally-based organisations do not strengthen these hostilities in a society. On the contrary, they have the potential to slowly build trust among members of the population across varying faiths and to establish non-state and civil society associations, initiatives and organisations based on cooperation. It will then be possible to build stronger, more stable and more effective state institutions with the help of such organisations. This could also serve to weaken loyalties to communities and strengthen a national identity that could unite the citizens of Lebanon: this Lebanese identity still needs to be defined.

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While Khashan is sceptical about the opportunities for cooperation among citizens across various denominations, he notes that professional groups (e.g. associations of physicists and teachers and various labour unions) that are actually nation-wide rather than sectarian, do exist in Lebanon.<sup>70</sup> Though there are not many of these organisations in light of the reign of religious-political movements, some do exist and operate, giving rise to at least some hope and setting an example for other secular-, functionally- or professionally-based organisations. Secular (local or foreign) NGOs supervising the distribution of aid from foreign donors can ensure that no individual religious community or region will be given preference over others and that aid will be provided according to needs and not according to political support or religious affiliation. In doing so, a more balanced process of development can be brought to regions and their populations. This will also give individual communities the chance to achieve a more equal standard of living. Decreasing the socio-economic differences in Lebanese society will at once ease tensions in the community and help to avoid sectarian conflicts.

In addition, the funding of members of the population will not be used as a means of gaining political power as is the case at present among many of Lebanon's political parties. Aid and services will cease

to be tools for currying people's favour and increasing political authority, and support and loyalty will wane for those who act in this way. Such a system (ideally combined with a unifying idea) has the potential to decrease religious rifts across a society and overcome the fragile sectarian political system so as to create a space for strengthening state unity – an issue which remains complex and problematic.

In today's Lebanon, sectarianism is still deeply ingrained not only in politics, but in society as a whole. The slightest fluctuations in power relations between communities can therefore reignite sectarian disputes. Prospects for the future are not the brightest, and we cannot expect change to come from the top down, i.e. from the government and state institutions. On the contrary, it should come from the bottom up, from the society itself. In the last few years, civil society groups, often founded by young people, have taken shape in an effort to create a more secular and democratic political system.<sup>71</sup> Above all, this requires a fundamental change in the sectarian political system (together with the political culture still defined by sectarianism) along with the creation of a stronger feeling of citizenship among the people and the revival of civil society.<sup>72</sup> Although some of these groups were not successful and their activities quickly came to an end or had little influence on creating more fundamental change in society,<sup>73</sup> others, for example, those focusing on humanitarian and development aid, have fostered growing unity and cooperation among the Lebanese people.<sup>74</sup> The main initiatives and activities that work towards society-wide change have, thus, come from the younger generation, which is the greatest hope for the future. In contrast to the older generation, young people have not been traumatised by civil war and are more prepared for dialogue, cooperation and changes towards a more democratic and liberal state. We can also expect the number and effectiveness of NGOs striving to transform the political system to grow in the future.

Neither the supposed unwillingness of citizens to cooperate nor an ineffective civil society will be the most difficult obstacle to overcome—this is reserved for the politicians. If governments are incapable of offering services and public goods, they will leave this task to political and non-governmental organisations. Jawad notes that this is the case in Lebanon, whose government actively encourages local NGOs to provide for social services.<sup>75</sup> Therefore, it is not the central government, but local authorities and political parties which may create barriers for the operation of foreign or local, secular NGOs. Hezbollah, for example,

has great political power not only at a state level, but also at a local level as it controls a large number of districts in south Lebanon, in the southern suburbs of Beirut and in the Bekaa Valley. As Flanigan and Abdel-Samad point out, based on this multi-level political power and strong influence in various regions, Hezbollah is able to interfere with the work of NGOs, which need its consent to function in a given area or community.<sup>76</sup> This may obstruct the provision of development aid from foreign NGOs, just as international donors may not always be able to overlook an organisation such as Hezbollah.

## Conclusion

Given that the state is the entity responsible for ensuring basic public goods and welfare services to citizens, and it should guarantee them equal access to resources and opportunities, Lebanon has clearly failed in both these respects. Its failure to meet these obligations partly stems from the fact that it has allowed political parties to replace its basic role as the main representative of communities. It has also permitted these political parties to gain citizens' trust and integrate themselves into society. In order to prevent these parties from taking further control over the welfare system and to avoid the subsequent weakening of the state, there needs to be a mutually enriching relationship between human development and strong state institutions.



MARTINA PONÍŽILOVÁ is affiliated to the Department of Political Science and International Relations at the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen, Czech Republic and may be reached at: *mponizil@kap.zcu.cz*

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## Notes

- 1 The discussion in this section is adapted from Magda Leichtová, Linda Piknerová and Martina Ponížilová, 'Limits of Development in Weak and

- Failed States,' unpublished manuscript.
- 2 Leonhardt van Efferink (2010), 'How Hezbollah Affects Lebanon's Sovereignty,' PSA Graduate Network Conference 2010, available at: <[http://www.psa.ac.uk/journals/pdf/5/2010/1608\\_1461.pdf](http://www.psa.ac.uk/journals/pdf/5/2010/1608_1461.pdf)> (accessed June 20, 2012), p. 1.
  - 3 Ibid, pp. 1, 5.
  - 4 Hilal Khashan, interview, July 16, 2012, American University of Beirut, Lebanon.
  - 5 Lebanon is, however, at the same time very ethnically homogenous as Arabs make up the majority of its population.
  - 6 According to the National Pact of 1943, the president of the country should be a Christian Maronite, the head of government a Sunni Muslim, and the head of parliament (Speaker of the House) a Muslim Shiite, and Christians and Muslims should be represented in parliament according to a ratio of 6:5. The Taif Accord (1989) modified this to a 1:1 ratio.
  - 7 A significant exception was the conflict between Maronites and Muslims in 1958, which destabilised the country in this era.
  - 8 For more information, see Ghassan Dibeh (2007), 'Foreign Aid and Economic Development in Postwar Lebanon,' Research Paper No. 2007/37, United Nations University – World Institute for Development Economic Research.
  - 9 Nisreen Salti and Jad Chaaban (2010), 'The Role of Sectarianism in the Allocation of Public Expenditure in Postwar Lebanon,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 42: 4, p. 652.
  - 10 In the past, various Lebanese politicians have voiced their support for the establishment of a secular form of democracy in the country. In the spring of 2011, Lebanese protests within the Arab Spring showed the population's desire for changes to the sectarian system, but no reforms have yet taken place.
  - 11 Lebanon's political scene and society have been divided over countless domestic problems and foreign policy issues such as the assassination of Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri in 2005, the conflict between Hezbollah and Israel in the summer of 2006 and most recently the assassination of Wissam Hassan, Head of the Intelligence Bureau of the Internal Security Forces, in October 2012.
  - 12 A. Nizar Hamzeh, (2001), 'Clientalism, Lebanon: Roots and Trends,' *Middle Eastern Studies*, 37: 3, p. 174.
  - 13 Khashan (2012).
  - 14 For NGOs connected with political parties that represent a particular religious community, the situation is slightly different. See the discussion in the following section of the text.
  - 15 Hamzeh (2001), pp. 170–174; Thomas Collelo et al (1987), *Lebanon. A Country Study*, Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress.
  - 16 Committee on Foreign Relations – United States Senate (2010), *Following the Money in Yemen and Lebanon: Maximizing the Effectiveness of U.S. Security Assistance and International Financial Institution Lending*, 111th Congress, 1st Session, U.S. GPO: Washington, available at: <<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CPRT-111SPRT54245/pdf/CPRT-111SPRT54245.pdf>>, (accessed

- 20 June, 2012).
- 17 Cited in van Efferink (2010), p. 5.
  - 18 Khashan (2012).
  - 19 van Efferink (2010), p. 8.
  - 20 Bilal Y. Saab (2008), 'Rethinking Hezbollah's Disarmament,' *Middle East Policy*, 15: 3, p. 99, 101.
  - 21 The regions under Hezbollah's control are therefore not a 'state within a state' according to Hafez, cited in van Efferink (2010), p. 11.
  - 22 Even some Palestinian militias were initially allowed to remain armed since they were meant to ensure the security of Palestinian refugee camps.
  - 23 Proof of this includes, for example, the events of May 7, 2008, when the government disconnected Hezbollah's telecommunications network, prompting violent responses from the organisation. Hezbollah temporarily occupied western Beirut and Rafik Hariri Airport using armed force against the state.
  - 24 The current situation is increasingly complicated as since 2011, the government has been led by Najib Mikati, who was nominated by the March 8 Alliance, a coalition of political parties dominated by Hezbollah. Sixteen of the thirty government chairs are now occupied by politicians related to Hezbollah or its allies.
  - 25 Salti and Chaaban (2010), p. 640.
  - 26 Shawn Teresa Flanigan and Mounah Abdel-Samad (2009), 'Hezbollah's Social Jihad: Nonprofits as Resistance Organizations,' *Middle East Policy*, 16: 2, p. 128.
  - 27 In 2006, public debt reached 180% of GDP in Lebanon. See Committee on Foreign Relations – United States Senate (2010), p. 26.
  - 28 Lebanon's economic expansion took place mainly in the first half of the 1990s, with average economic growth of 6.5% between 1992 and 1995. The subsequent fall-offs are clear from the figures for 1998 (2.6%) and 1999 (0%). See Index Mundi, Lebanon GDP – real growth rate, available at <[http://www.indexmundi.com/lebanon/gdp\\_real\\_growth\\_rate.html](http://www.indexmundi.com/lebanon/gdp_real_growth_rate.html)>, (accessed November 17, 2012)
  - 29 For more information, see Talal Nizameddin (2006), 'The Political Economy of Lebanon Under Rafiq Hariri: An Interpretation,' *Middle East Journal*, 60: 1, pp. 95–114.
  - 30 Committee on Foreign Relations – United States Senate (2010), p. 26.
  - 31 Post-war reconstruction efforts meant that government spending rocketed from 1.4 billion USD to more than 7 billion USD in 2003. See Salti and Chaaban (2010), p. 641.
  - 32 Ibid, pp. 643, 648.
  - 33 Ibid, p. 649.
  - 34 Ibid, p. 641.
  - 35 It is typical in a pluralistic society for specific groups of citizens to concentrate in certain areas based on their religious (or if relevant ethnic) affiliation. These areas may be city neighbourhoods, suburbs or whole villages or regions.
  - 36 Salti and Chaaban (2010), pp. 637, 649.

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- 37 In 2004-2005, 5-8% of Beirut's population was living in poverty (where the poverty level is set at 4 USD per day per person); in the northern region, the rate was roughly 52% of citizens, while in the south it was 42% and in the Bekaa region, it was 29%. See Heba Laithy and Khalid Abu-Ismaïl and Kamal Hamdan (2008), *Poverty, Growth and Income Distribution in Lebanon*. Country Study No. 13. UNDP International Poverty Centre, available at <<http://www.ipc-undp.org/pub/IPCCountryStudy13.pdf>>, (accessed July 15, 2012), pp. 45, 47.
- 38 The article deals only with Lebanese citizens and does not focus on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, who generally have very poor living conditions. Most of these Palestinians live in refugee camps, have very poor access to healthcare, welfare services and education and lack any property rights, and a large number of them experience poverty and unemployment.
- 39 Brogan cited in van Efferink (2010), p. 3.
- 40 Flanigan and Abdel-Samad (2009), pp. 126-127.
- 41 In recent years, the political power of Shiite Hezbollah has grown, and since 2005, its members have become the members of a number of governments.
- 42 Khashan (2012).
- 43 Flanigan and Abdel-Samad (2009), p. 123.
- 44 Hezbollah also ensures the operation of hospitals, some of which were previously run by the central government, which lacked the financial and technical capabilities to operate them.
- 45 Hafez cited in van Efferink (2010), p. 11.
- 46 In 2005-2006, the official government provided for the operation of only five of 160 hospitals, roughly 10% of a total of 453 health clinics and 1399 of a total of 2792 schools. Moreover, these schools lacked sufficient equipment and quality education. See Melani Cammett and Sukriti Issar (2010), 'Bricks and Mortar Clientelism: Sectarianism and the Logics of Welfare Allocation in Lebanon,' *World Politics*, 62: 3, pp. 390-391.
- 47 Political organisations have additional sources of financing: contributions from wealthy members of the community, Lebanese donors living abroad, etc. For example, Hezbollah gains funds for its expensive system of services from both Lebanese emigrants and the Iranian government, which according to some estimates may contribute up to 20 million USD per month. Rafiq Hariri, in contrast, used his own resources for many projects and drew on finances which he gained personally from Saudi Arabia. See James B. Love (2010) *Hezbollah: Social Services as a Source of Power*. Joint Special Operations University Report 10-5, available at <[http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2010/1006\\_jsou-report-10-5.pdf](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2010/1006_jsou-report-10-5.pdf)>, (accessed November 18, 2012), p. 28; Ilene R. Prusher (2000), 'Through Charity, Hizbullah Charms Lebanon,' *Christian Science Monitor*, 92: 103, p. 1; Khashan (2012).
- 48 Cammett and Issar (2010), p. 400.
- 49 Hariri began his charity work during the civil war, and established the Islamic Institute for Culture and Higher Education in 1979, which has been the Hariri Foundation since 1984. He supported many Lebanese NGOs in



- various regions of the country. His personal interests and efforts to heighten his popularity were behind the geographical expansion of his development projects. See Cammett and Issar (2010), p. 400.
- 50 The origin of political organisations' involvement in the social welfare system can be traced to the era of the civil war: sectarian militias arranged for services not only to their members, but to the civilians who lived in the territory controlled by these militias. After the civil war, when these militias transformed into political parties, they did not cease to offer these social services. Ibid, p. 390.
- 51 Flanigan and Abdel-Samad (2009), p. 128.
- 52 Khashan (2012).
- 53 Cammett and Issar (2010), p. 381.
- 54 Khashan (2012).
- 55 Cammett and Issar (2010), p. 390.
- 56 Flanigan and Abdel-Samad (2009), p. 127.
- 57 Martin Patriquin (2006), 'Party (of God) Time,' *Maclean's*, 119: 43.
- 58 Saab (2008).
- 59 Hezbollah's system of social services is based on a number of organisations: the Social Unit, Educational Unit and Islamic Health Unit. The movement also encompasses other organisations which are connected directly to its resistance activities. These are the Jihad Construction Foundation (Jihad El Binaa), the Martyr's Foundation, the Foundation for the Wounded and the Khomeini Support Committee.
- 60 Flanigan and Abdel-Samad (2009), p. 122.
- 61 Ibid, p. 135.
- 62 The Future Movement was able to focus on non-Sunni populations since its groups enjoy relatively strong control over Sunni politics. As such, it did not have to compete for influence and position with other Sunni parties. This gave the Future Movement "free rein" to seek out support from outside the Sunni community as well. For a discussion of this point, see Cammett and Issar (2010), pp. 382, 399.
- 63 In addition to Sunni and Shiite organisations, Christian groups attempt to care for the wellbeing of the population and the members of particular communities, and they make efforts to fulfil basic needs. There are many Christian charities, for example, in East Beirut and other Christian areas.
- 64 Rana Jawad (2008), 'Religion and Social Welfare in the Lebanon: Treating the Causes or Symptoms of Poverty?', *Journal of Social Policy*, 38: 1, p. 144.
- 65 Khashan (2012).
- 66 Esposito, cited in Jawad (2008), p. 144.
- 67 Khashan (2012).
- 68 Voters who actively support the political parties that control the distribution of resources, receive more than those who do not show such support. See Cammett and Issar (2010), p. 416.
- 69 Khashan (2012).
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 Proof can be found in the aforementioned protests during the Arab Spring

of 2011, which called for a change to the sectarian system.

72 Alex Klaushofer (2008), 'Lebanon's Civil Society Movement,' *The Middle East*, 2008/385, p. 60.

73 Many of these organisations were purely Christian. Although they were mostly apolitical, people from other religious communities did not trust them or their actions.

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74 Klaushofer (2008), p. 61

75 Jawad (2008), p. 144.

76 Flanigan and Abdel-Samad (2009), pp. 123, 135.

# Israel and Turkey

## From Realpolitik to Rhetoric?

*Petr Kučera*

This article analyses the media discourse about Israel in Turkey during the crisis period that followed Israel's Operation Cast Lead (2008) and culminated in May 2010 when Israeli armed forces attacked the *Mavi Marmara*, a ship operated by a Turkish Islamic NGO, leaving nine Turkish activists dead. For the purpose of this inquiry, two leading Turkish newspapers are considered: *Zaman*, the best-selling national daily known for its Islamic conservative leanings and its general support for the Justice and Development Party (AKP) government, and *Hürriyet*, the third largest Turkish newspaper, which has a secular-Kemalist orientation and a critical eye on AKP policy choices. By examining opinion pieces and columns in both these dailies over a three-year period (2009-2011), this work makes the case that the full dimensions of the Israeli-Turkish showdown cannot be grasped solely through a foreign policy analysis. It is necessary to address the Turkish public's receptiveness to historic and religious stereotypes of Israel/the Jews, which are to a large degree reproduced and sustained by the Turkish media. The media's handling of Israel-related issues, moreover, sheds light on the fault lines in Turkey's polarised society. Israel functions in the media as the vehicle for a more abstract discussion of the nature of Turkish identity (religious/secular, Western/Eastern), domestic politics, the Kurdish question and the ongoing Europeanisation process.

*Keywords: Turkey, Israel, media discourse, Mavi Marmara, Hürriyet Zaman*



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### Introduction

In November 2002, a few days after a landslide victory brought the conservative Justice and Development Party (AKP) to power in Turkey, its

deputy chairman Murat Mercan assured journalists amid fears that the party's Islamic orientation might radically transform Turkish foreign policy, that there would be no change in Turkish-Israeli relationships. The party, he declared, did not act based on its religious orientation: Turkish foreign policy would be a politics rooted 'in practical rather than ideological considerations,' that is, one of "realpolitik."<sup>1</sup> Despite occasional criticisms of Israel's Palestine policy by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and other government members, the close Turkish-Israeli bond, dating back to the 1990s, survived and again seemed to be safe and sound after AKP's second electoral victory in 2007. Israel and Turkey even conducted joint military exercises together with the US in the Eastern Mediterranean in early 2005. Then, hardly four years passed, and the Turko-Israeli alliance was in tatters. Ambassadors were recalled, military cooperation frozen and Erdoğan became a hero on the streets of the Arab world for his increasingly harsh words about Israel.

How can we explain this reversal of this 'remarkable tie,'<sup>2</sup> as one analyst once called it? Was it solely due to the unfortunate series of events that came hard on the heels of one another shortly after AKP's second electoral victory, starting with Israel's attack on Gaza in 2008 – which deeply offended Turkish sensitivities and thwarted Ankara's efforts at brokering a peace between Syria and Israel – then continuing in diplomatic tussles and culminating in the killing by Israeli armed forces of nine Turkish activists on board the ship *Mavi Marmara* carrying humanitarian aid to Gaza in May 2010? By examining the media discourse on Israel in Turkey, this article argues that the full scope of the Israeli-Turkish confrontation cannot be understood solely through a foreign policy analysis; we must take into account both the public's receptiveness to certain heavily covered foreign policy issues and the fault lines in Turkey's polarised society, which arguably result from democratisation and desecuritisation processes under way since 2002. The issue of Turkey's relationship to Israel has turned into a rhetorical battlefield where not only matters of foreign policy and national security are discussed, but also issues of identity (religious/secular, Western/Eastern) and domestic politics, along with the Kurdish question and the ongoing Europeanisation process.

To provide some context for my discussion, I will start with a brief assessment of the shifts in Turkey's policy towards Israel since 2002

and then move from the age of “realpolitik” to the more obscure and amorphous field of “rhetoric.”<sup>3</sup>

## From Strategic Partnership to Strategic Rivalry

*Petr Kučera*

When we talk about the unprecedented deepening of Israeli-Turkish ties in the 1990s – including robust military cooperation, a steep increase in bilateral trade (from \$91 million in 1989 to \$800 million [USD] in 1998)<sup>4</sup> and in the number of Israeli tourists taking holidays in Turkey, the development of joint business projects and a flurry of reciprocal visits by state dignitaries and agreements on student exchanges<sup>5</sup> – one fact should not be overlooked: the rapprochement between Israel and Turkey was quite a deliberate choice made by the Kemalist secular elite and the military,<sup>6</sup> and did not reflect popular sentiments or the ‘social limits’ to the alliance, as one Turkish scholar has described them.<sup>7</sup> Zvi Elpeleg, the Israeli ambassador to Turkey between 1995 and 1997, warned quite prophetically that a crisis in Israeli-Arab relations would not damage the Israeli-Turkish entente, but the deterioration of the situation of Palestinians undoubtedly would:

“Their sensitivity on that point is almost as great as on the Armenian issue. Many millions in Turkey are interested in nothing outside their own borders more than the Palestinian issue; no government in Turkey can withstand the pressure of those millions.”<sup>8</sup>

The Turkish-Israeli alliance was from its very beginning ‘a zone of contestation over Turkey’s national orientation and yet another source of polarization between contending segments of society.’<sup>9</sup> One anti-Israeli rally held on 02 February 1997 – the so-called Jerusalem Day organised by the Welfare Party’s mayor of Sincan, an Ankara suburb to protest Israel’s occupation of East Jerusalem – in which the Iranian ambassador to Turkey participated, even served as a symbolic pretext for a “postmodern coup” toppling the Islamist Welfare Party government led by Necmettin Erbakan. Public opinion, however, had little impact on the course of foreign policy. The latter was structured by elite military and secularist civil bureaucracy whose decisions and recommendations were more often than not passively adopted by the elected government. Thus, the military cooperation agreements of 1996 were signed by Deputy Chief of General Staff Çevik Bir although

government officials apparently had only a vague idea about their content. The same was true of the Turkish public, which could hardly form a picture of the extent of Turkish-Israeli ties from the snippets of information leaked to the press, let alone express an opinion.<sup>10</sup> It stood to reason that the situation might easily be overturned by a strong, popular government boasting a comfortable parliamentary majority, nationwide support and the ability to resist pressures from the non-elected military-secular establishment and respond to voters.

What many observers found surprising was therefore not that Israeli-Turkish relations reached a freezing point a couple of years after the populist Justice and Development Party, an offshoot of Erbakan's Islamist Welfare Party, assumed power in 2002. Rather, it was the fact it took so long. This was, however, a serious misreading of AKP's policy both domestically and abroad. The first term of AKP rule was actually characterised by a tidal wave of pro-European democratisation reforms that astonished everyone, including party supporters. This dynamism soon reverberated across foreign policy. Ahmet Davutoğlu, first chief foreign policy advisor to Erdoğan and from 2009 the minister of foreign affairs, developed the fresh concept of "strategic depth", which was propped on two pillars: "geographical depth" and "historical depth." The former denoted the fact that Turkey, an heir to the vast, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural Ottoman Empire, was a nation of multiple identities and spheres of influence (being at once a Mediterranean, Caucasian, Middle Eastern, European and Black Sea country), while the latter spotlighted Turkey's far-reaching historical and cultural roots across the entire region. By building on these strategic depths, Turkey was said to be able to establish multiple cross-regional alliances and reach out to every country willing to cooperate. Davutoğlu's contention that Turkey had 'zero problems with its neighbours' soon manifested itself not only in an unparalleled dynamism in Turkish foreign policy, but also in a serious and quite successful attempt to mend its ties with most countries in the region.<sup>11</sup>

Under these conditions, there was no place for anything like Erbakan's provocative rhetoric about Israel. On the other hand, there was also no 'objective necessity' to maintain close military ties at all costs:<sup>12</sup> the Israeli-Turkish bond was premised on perceived common threats to national security, stemming particularly from Syria and Iran (which supported Kurdish separatism in Turkey and threatened the existence

of the State of Israel) and a rising wave of Islamic fundamentalism, as well as on the prospect of mutually beneficial military cooperation (driven by the need for modern weaponry in Turkey's case). There may also have been the added psychological pull of a 'common sense of otherness'<sup>13</sup> – both countries considered themselves to be secular, democratic and pro-Western in a hostile Arab environment – but the bond was essentially a security pact that had little to do with sympathies. Moreover, the Turkish military used the rapprochement with Israel for domestic political gains: in its crusade against *irtica*, or religious reactionism, it tried to embarrass and intimidate the pro-Islamic Welfare Party and counteract the government's stillborn attempts to fasten Turkey to the Islamic world.<sup>14</sup>

When, in the context of Turkey's new multi-directional foreign policy and search for new markets for its booming economy, relations improved substantially with countries like Syria and Iran – previously seen as posing a high risk – and both domestic and foreign policy entered a process of desecuritisation, the special relationship with Israel shed a good deal of its attraction. Turkish foreign policy began to be formulated by elected politicians and foreign policy experts rather than dictated by the security establishment. The military itself was not immune to this changing environment or a total stranger to the reorientation of Turkey's foreign policy, as the public statements of high-ranking officers make clear. At any rate, it accepted the new status quo silently if only because on the one hand, it saw the advantages of a powerful Turkey in the international arena, and, on the other, the army could hardly oppose a strong, highly popular and successful government if it wanted to hang on to any legitimacy in the eyes of the public.

Warning and Kardaş are, however, right, when they say that '[t]aking Ahmet Davutoğlu's Strategic Depth doctrine as a blue-print for the JDP [AKP]'s foreign policy, there is much reason to assume that Turkey's recent engagement in the Middle East has not been an inevitable result of the post-Cold war 'anarchy,' but to a large extent the outcome of its identity politics.'<sup>15</sup> Ending the unconditional, and often unreciprocated orientation to the West and taking advantage of Turkey's unique identity (both Western and Eastern, open to the coexistence of Islam, modernity and secularism, and thus, able to speak both to the West and the Islamic world), was seen as both an alternative to the clash of

civilisations and a model to be emulated by other countries in the Middle East.<sup>16</sup> This turn was also perceived as more a sign of Turkey's "European nature" than an indicator of its "Middle Easternisation." One scholar put it, "Turkey is acting as a European country in the Middle East, just as Greece is seen as a European country in the Balkans, rather than a Balkan country in Europe."<sup>17</sup>

In this context, it becomes less surprising that Ankara entertained friendly relations with Israel even under the "Islamic democrats" and despite its expanding relations with Arab countries and public antipathies. Israel's Operation Cast Lead (OCL) against Hamas, ordered by Ehud Olmert on 27 December 2008, which left hundreds of Gazans dead, was the first sign of a looming rift. Syria immediately withdrew from the peace negotiations with Israel which were being brokered by Turkey. Erdoğan was not only appalled by what he saw as a brutal war against civilians, but also deeply offended that this operation, prepared totally unbeknownst to the Turkish government, thwarted all his efforts at mediating between Syria and Israel. This was followed by Erdoğan's lashing out at Shimon Peres in a panel discussion on Palestine at the Davos Annual Meeting in January 2009, and later, in October 2010, by a diplomatic scandal (dubbed the "low seat crisis" in Turkey) when Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon humiliated the Turkish ambassador Oğuz Çelikkol before TV cameras in response to the broadcasting of an anti-Israeli soap opera on Turkish state TV.<sup>18</sup> After this, Turkish-Israeli relations soured, but were far from being irreparably damaged. The breaking point came only after 31 May 2010, when Israeli armed forces launched an attack in international waters on *Mavi Marmara*, a ship operated by a Turkish Islamic NGO (İHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation) and supposedly carrying humanitarian aid with the aim of breaking through the blockade of Gaza. This attack killed nine Turkish activists on board.

This incident had an immense impact on public opinion (as is discussed below) and on the political establishment which Israel had crudely underestimated. Turkey withdrew from the Reliant Mermaid naval exercise, which was planned for 05 July 2010 and had been carried out regularly by Turkey, Israel and the US over the previous 10 years, and demanded a formal apology, compensation for the families of those killed and an end to the naval blockade of Gaza. Despite the tension, both sides apparently still believed in the possibility of salvag-



ing the Israeli-Turkish partnership. The Turkish media reported that in secret negotiations held between 18 and 19 July 2011, both sides had almost reached an agreement (including on an apology and compensation), but due to the opposition of Israel's Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, this was never finalised.<sup>19</sup> After Israel failed to comply with Turkish demands, Ankara decided, in September 2011, to downgrade its diplomatic relations with Israel to the level of second secretary and suspend all military cooperation, and the Turkish parliament dissolved its Israel Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group.

The situation was aggravated when Israel embarked on a process of forging closer ties with Greece and (Greek) Cyprus. While June and August 2011 saw the historic visits of the Greek prime minister to Israel and Israeli prime minister to Greece – a country traditionally supportive of the Palestinians and cooperation with Arab states – Israel and (south) Cyprus agreed on cooperation to exploit oil and natural gas deposits in the Mediterranean within a so-called economic exclusive zone – a move Ankara perceived as directed against the interests of Turkish Northern Cyprus. The possibility of a triple alliance among Greece, Turkey's traditional rival, and (South) Cyprus and Israel only added fuel to the fire and intensified the Israeli-Turkish stand-off. This all generated an explosive situation in which realpolitik easily gave way to rhetoric. It is hardly surprising that the tension was both accompanied and fomented by displays of anti-Israeli sentiment in Turkey. And it is this aspect of the tension between Turkey and Israel that the second part of this study will explore.

## Israel in the Turkish Public and Media Discourse

There is little doubt about the preoccupation of the Turkish public with Palestine, which has both religious and historical roots. From the beginning of OCL, anti-Israel imagery and rhetoric mushroomed. A 13-episode television series called *Separation: Palestine in Love and War* about the suffering of Palestinians under the Israeli occupation and abounding in scenes depicting Israeli soldiers committing all imaginable atrocities against women and children especially, was broadcast by the Turkish public channel TRT 1 in the second half of 2009 and drew angry responses from Israel. More than 2 million people in Turkey saw the movie *The Valley of the Wolves: Palestine* (2011), which featured

the Turkish James Bond-cum-Rambo Polat Alemdar on a mission to capture Commander Moshe Ben Eliezer, an alleged mastermind of attacks on humanitarian flotillas to besieged Gaza and a ruthless killer of innocent Palestinians. The film, whose opening scenes were shot aboard the real *Mavi Marmara*, bears more resemblance to a computer game, with the main hero and his friends shooting every Israeli soldier in range. One episode of the extremely popular tv series *Valley of the Wolves*, on which the movie was based, had already spurred accusations of anti-Semitism for its depiction of its Turkish superhero shooting a Mossad agent dead in a building owned by the Israeli embassy as blood splayed over the Star of David. These tv series and the film had certain elements in common: their depiction of Israel as a racist, land-hungry empire of evil akin to Nazi Germany, and their dehumanising of Israeli society and legitimising (and even glorifying) of violence against Israeli targets. The legendary Turkish “soft power” – its soap operas which have mass followings across the Arab world and the Balkans – can be very harsh when it comes to Israel.

Examples of anti-Israeli sentiments were not restricted to the silver screen. Tens of thousands of protesters poured onto the streets during OCL and after the *Mavi Marmara* incident to denounce Israel (‘Israel is a killer!’ and ‘Down with Israel!’ were the most repeated slogans), and during sport events, players and fans alike expressed affection for Gaza and disdain for Israel.<sup>20</sup> Campaigns, some organised by municipalities and the state-run Directorate for Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Bakanlığı*), took place all over the country to raise money for Gaza (while also, quite naturally, indulging in harsh “anti-Israelism”). Posters addressing Israelis and proclaiming ‘You cannot be a child of Moses!’ were prepared by the Islamic-oriented Dayanışma Vakfı (Solidarity Foundation) and seen on billboards belonging to the Istanbul municipality. At the height of OCL in January 2009, Hüseyin Çelik, the Turkish Minister of Education, issued a circular urging primary and secondary schools to hold moments of silence in commemoration of the young Palestinians who had lost their lives at the hands of the Israeli army. It also announced a drawing and essay competition on the theme of ‘the human drama in Palestine.’

It would be easy to continue listing these examples that reveal the “Palestine obsession” of the Turkish public and state officials and their stereotyping of Israel. The line between criticism of Israel’s policies

and anti-Semitism in these instances is very thin. While there is constant denial of the harbouring of anti-Jewish feelings – politicians, journalists and ordinary citizens alike often shrug off the spectre of anti-Semitism as a Western invention, non-existent in Turkish culture or Islam – public surveys show quite the opposite. A poll conducted in mid-2009 highlighted that most respondents (57%) would not want to have atheist families for their neighbours, with Jewish (42%) and Christian (35%) families following next behind. Jews were also the least trusted group when it comes to their attachment to the Turkish Republic (based on the word of 48% of those polled).<sup>21</sup> A survey carried out by SETA in mid-2010 revealed Turks' general distrust of other nationalities, with Armenians and Jews leading the chart of the most suspect ethnic groups (for 73.9 % and 71.5%, respectively).<sup>22</sup> And, finally, in an opinion poll from 2011, Israel was pronounced the second biggest threat to Turkey (24%) preceded only by the US (43%).<sup>23</sup>

Negative perceptions of Israel and Jews are sustained by a widespread sociological phenomenon in Turkey: conspiracy theories. Freemasons, Jews and *dönmes* ("converts") or crypto-Jews<sup>24</sup> and Mossad are seen as the secret evil powers pulling the strings in Turkey, as even random browsing through any Turkish bookshop will attest. This belief can reach astonishingly absurd proportions: the media, for instance, reported that peasants from Edirne held an injured, low-flying vulture for an Israeli agent who had been spying on them.<sup>25</sup>

Reflecting the general sensitivity about Palestine and importance assigned to Israel in domestic affairs, newspapers give considerable space to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Turco-Israeli relations. To map how they viewed the deteriorating situation between Turkey and Israel, I examined opinion pieces and columns from two leading Turkish newspapers from January 2009 to December 2011.<sup>26</sup> This period coincided with the events that put Turkey and Israel on a collision course, starting with OCL and culminating in the freezing of diplomatic and military ties after *Mavi Marmara*. Although I did look at other types of articles for comparison, regular columns and opinion pieces were my deliberate focus. Op-eds lie at the heart of Turkish newspapers, unlike the set-up of most Western dailies, and to a large extent these columns determine the paper's editorial line and its overall policy. Many columnists are well-known public figures and influential intellectuals and enjoy something of a cult status with a mass following. Moreover, in

today's polarised Turkey, certain groups of intellectuals and political movements tend to convene around specific newspapers (leftist, secular-Kemalist, Islamist, nationalist), making the debate on a wide range of issues acutely personal and politicised.

*Zaman* (Time), the largest Turkish newspaper with an average daily circulation of almost 1 million, can be described as a conservative, pro-government daily. It is known for its closeness to the Fethullah Gülen movement, and appeals to roughly the same people who support the ruling AKP: religious, but progressive-minded readers of all backgrounds, especially the educated conservative middle classes. *Hürriyet* (Freedom) has a circulation of around 450 000 copies daily<sup>27</sup> and is the third best-selling Turkish newspaper after the tabloid *Posta*. It maintains a critical stance towards the government and has a pro-Western, secular-Kemalist orientation. Both dailies belong to the mainstream media and employ well-known names from the Turkish intellectual scene. They represent opposing poles in Turkish society – the religious-conservative camp on one side and the secular-Kemalist on the other – but are far away from the hardliners at either end of the spectrum, and so more representative of the population as a whole.

OCI and Erdoğan's subsequent appearance at Davos were both spotlighted across all media, which supplied the public with daily news and images of the plight of Gazans and the brutality of Israel's incursion. Writers sympathetic to the ruling party quickly coined a nickname for Erdoğan, who received a hero's welcome on his return to Turkey: "Davos fatihi" (the Conqueror from Davos). It would be quite natural to expect some of the public sentiment to be reflected in the newspapers. *Zaman*, indeed, echoed – and in turn fed – the popular mood. Its columnists univocally condemned Israel's attack on Gaza, declaring it a genocide, a crime against humanity and state terrorism. All of them hailed Erdoğan's reproof of Shimon Peres in Davos as a morally and politically justified act and 'historic speech;' staying silent, one author claimed, would have been tantamount to 'participating in war crimes.'<sup>28</sup> Ali Bulaç and Ali Ünal, both prominent Muslim intellectuals who are very prolific on Israel,<sup>29</sup> and others sometimes shrouded their criticism in religious rhetoric, focusing on different aspects of Judaism (like the meaning of "chosen people" in the Quranic context<sup>30</sup>) while at the same time dismissing allegations of anti-Semitism as alien to Islam and Turkish culture and a product of the West; such charges, they

said, were readily taken up by local secular circles feeding on Western philosophies and ideologies.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, “liberal” writers like Alpay Şahin and Herkül Milas, while denouncing Israel’s government, warned of the danger of identifying the policy of a state with its inhabitants; they strictly refrained from searching for religious connections and condemned any manifestation of anti-Jewish tendencies in Turkey.

*Zaman* regularly publishes translated articles from a wide range of Arabic newspapers, which are, as one might expect, not very sympathetic to Israel. In January 2009, it even ran an article on Israel’s intervention in Gaza written by Khalid Mashal, Chairman of the Hamas Political Bureau and published originally in a Jordanian newspaper. *Zaman* also features op-eds on Israel and the Middle East from American and British dailies and surprisingly even *Ha’aretz*. This definitely broadens the spectrum of views on Israel. Yet if we look at the kinds of articles the Turkish daily chooses, we see that most, including the *Ha’aretz* pieces, are highly critical of Israel’s policies. There is a genuine feeling in the public, also shared by *Zaman*, that Turkish-Israeli relations are now being “normalised.” The argument goes that the Israeli-Turkish alliance in the 1990s was forced upon the nation and its representatives by unelected senior military officials and then sustained by a tiny elite of Kemalist bureaucrats and politicians. Current foreign policy, in contrast, is said to be democratising and more responsive to voters.

Like *Zaman*, *Hürriyet* devoted a lot of space to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but with a strikingly different interpretation. *Hürriyet*’s opinion articles did criticise OCL as brutal and disproportionate, and at times they even labelled it a ‘massacre.’ They were, however, united in condemning Hamas as also blameworthy for the situation in Gaza. *Hürriyet*’s columnists pointed to the fact – totally missing from *Zaman*’s commentaries – that Hamas was firing missiles at Israel and Israel’s intervention was therefore at least partially justified. Moreover, in *Hürriyet*’s pages Hamas was almost always described as a terrorist organisation which had rejected the universal values of ‘civilisation and modernity,’<sup>32</sup> established a cruel sharia regime and turned Gaza into a ‘hell for women,’ as one columnist put it.<sup>33</sup>

In practically all *Hürriyet* columns explicitly dealing with Israel in 2009, Erdoğan was lambasted on counts including his ‘rude’ and ‘uncivilised’ behaviour and his clumsiness and unnecessarily harsh and

undiplomatic words. He was also described as a thug from an Istanbul suburb, accused of crude populism and compared to Hugo Chávez and Nikita Khrushchev although many also saw Peres's emotional speech at Davos as provocative and unbalanced. There seemed to be a shared conviction among *Hürriyet's* writers that through its uncompromising attitude against Israel, Turkey had become a mouthpiece for Hamas, drifting dangerously away from the West and losing its role as an impartial mediator in the Middle Eastern peace process. AKP's policy was viewed as unprincipled for combining a benevolent response to Hamas with exaggerated critique of Israel (while remaining silent about Darfur and the Uygurs). Alongside this, Hadi Uluengin published a series of articles on the dangers of rising anti-Semitism in Turkey (in February 2009) and painfully deconstructed the myth that anti-Jewish attitudes had always been foreign to Turkish culture. Together with *Hürriyet's* other writers, he rejected the introduction of moments of silence for Palestinian victims as only inciting local anti-Semitism. As the Israeli-Turkish crisis unfolded, *Hürriyet's* columnists maintained their conciliatory tone. This was clearly visible in their negative commentary on the TV series *Separation*. Some columnists seemed to comprehend Israel's irritated reaction (which they compared to Turkey's response to *Midnight Express*) and asked why the government did not take any steps against these types of soap operas.

It is barely possible to exaggerate the impact that the *Mavi Marmara* incident had on the perception of Israel in Turkey. Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu repeatedly said that it was – in terms of the psychological shock it created in the state – the Turkish 9/11. In a rare gesture, the Turkish press united against Israel, regardless of political orientation, producing a strongly worded denunciation of what it took to be an act of 'state terrorism' and 'barbarism'.<sup>34</sup>

*Zaman's* writers intensified their denunciations of Israel, calling it a rogue state, a pirate state, a country that willingly set itself apart from civilised nations, a bully in the region and a monster that could only keep a nation together through fear. Ahmet Turan Alkan described Israel as a political project that was 'the worst invention in history',<sup>35</sup> while Naci Bostancı – borrowing from Karl Jaspers's classification of (German) guilt and Zykmund Baumann's thesis that under suitable conditions anyone can become a Nazi – found parallels between Israel and the Nazi regime.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, Ali Bulaç viewed the emergence

of Israel as a 'great tragedy' because the state was founded in blood – by purging the promised land of Palestinians – and later led by the 'mass murderers' who took part in these massacres; the state, he insisted, was created to appease Western imperialistic ambitions in the region.<sup>37</sup> Providing a 'dialectic reading' of Turkish-Israeli relations, Süleyman Seyfi Özgün claimed the Jews, seeking to purify themselves of the horrors of the holocaust, had forced the same bitter experience on the Palestinians, using methods that they had learned from the Nazis. Some authors asked for strong measures to be imposed on Israel, with one guest contributor declaring the attack 'a clear *casus belli*' and calling on the Turkish army to show its power by flying Turkish fighter jets over the south-east Mediterranean to 'harass Israel.'<sup>38</sup> Most commentators demanded diplomatic pressure and an apology. A series of university lecturers presented different legal analyses of the incident, all coming to the conclusion that Israel had breached international law and was guilty of war crimes.

Quite widespread among *Zaman's* columnists was the view that the storming of the *Mavi Marmara* was a deliberate attack aiming to destroy Turkey's position as an impartial broker in the Middle East and quell its growing influence in the region. This was a bid, they said, to undo Turkey's efforts to find a diplomatic solution to the Iranian crisis (which had brought Iran into collision with the us), overturn Erdoğan's rising popularity among Arabs and sow seeds of discord in Turkish society. A common thread running through a number of commentaries, especially those by Ali Ünal, hinted at or even openly alleged a connection between the *Mavi Marmara* raid and a PKK attack on a military base in İskenderun (which occurred on the same day). Israel was blamed for collaborating with Kurdish separatists to create Great Kurdistan to Israel's benefit in the region.<sup>39</sup>

Despite the castigating tone of most of its articles, *Zaman* rarely slipped into the vicious anti-Israelism with anti-Semitic overtones that was prevalent in the Islamist media. *Zaman's* success as a newspaper probably lies in the fact that it provides a space for a wide variety of opinion writers and columnists of very diverse backgrounds. Alongside op-eds denouncing the state of Israel after *Mavi Marmara*, *Zaman*, for example, published extended pieces by Lütfü Özşahin, an expert on the history of religion, in which he excoriated those who called for the destruction of Israel, nurtured anti-Jewish views and

encouraged the tendency to see Israeli society/Jews as a monolith by ignoring the various currents and world views that exist among today's Jewry.<sup>40</sup> Herkül Millas, a Greek-Turkish writer, lamented the 'martyrdom discourse' and usage of religious references in connection with *Mavi Marmara* because this only deepened the divide between 'us' and those 'others,'<sup>41</sup> while Mümtaz'er Türköne deconstructed popular conspiracy theories. Surprisingly, Fethullah Gülen, Turkey's most influential religious leader – *Zaman* is considered his movement's flagship paper – refused to censure Israel and insisted that the activists of the "Freedom Flotilla" should have sought permission from Israel – their failure to do so was a 'sign of defying authority.'<sup>42</sup>

After the *Mavi Marmara* incident, the tone changed even in *Hürriyet*, whose writers hastened to condemn what they called 'state terrorism' against Turkish citizens. Many used expressions like 'folly' and 'atrocities' and described Israel's government as 'racist and fascist' and 'spoiled and aggressive'; they too spoke of a rogue state guilty of piracy in international waters. There was, however, also a feeling of palpable fear in many of these *Hürriyet* pieces about the consequences an Israel-Turkey showdown might hold for Turkey's future. As Zeynep Güranlı rightly noted, this time it was not about rhetoric: this time blood had entered Turkish-Israeli relations.<sup>43</sup> Some authors saw this as a trap to divert Turkey away from the West and send it into the orbit of radical Islam. Journalist Ertuğrul Özkök, whose articles on Israel had always been admiring of the Jewish state and deeply critical of any hint of intolerance towards the Turkish-Jewish community, published a tellingly emotional column on 01 June 2010, one day after the *Mavi Marmara* attack. Titled 'I call out to you, my Israeli friends,'<sup>44</sup> it expressed anxiety about Turkey's shift towards the Arab world and asked the Israeli people to raise their voices against their government, which had harmed not just Turkey's interests, but Israel's standing in the world; its policy of brute force, he was quick to add, was 'gradually increasing the number of fanatics among us.' Interestingly, on the very same day that most newspapers printed articles blasting Israel in the strongest terms, Yılmaz Özdil described in great detail the constant fear that Jewish schoolchildren must live with in Turkey due to all the security measures; their 'shivers of fear,' he wrote, were not worth less than those of Palestinian children.<sup>45</sup> Other voices, notably Özdemir İnce, offered a more nuanced view of the incident than most newspaper contributors.



Questioning the real aims of the organisers of the “Freedom Flotilla,” he hinted at İHH’s ‘paramilitary structure’ and yearning for martyrdom. While condemning the attack itself, most op-eds in *Hürriyet* called for calmness and an investigation of the incident; there was a prevailing sense that it would be a mistake to end all dialogue with Israel. What all these writers agreed on was that it would be extremely difficult to erase this tragic event from the collective memory of the Turkish people and the Turkey-Israeli alliance was too precious to sacrifice now – a formal apology by Israel was seen as the first step to resuming normal relations.<sup>46</sup>

The extent to which “Israel” penetrated the media and everyday political discourse was also apparent from the fact that accusing one’s opponent of being “Israel’s lawyer” became a very popular game in Turkey after OCL. It was not just media outlets who accused each other of supporting Israel or even being on its payroll,<sup>47</sup> but also politicians. The leaders of the two strongest parties in Turkey, the ruling AKP and opposing leftist Republican People’s Party (CHP), each devoted a lot of energy to rebuking one another for being proxies of Israel. The debate heated up in September 2011 with news of plans to station a NATO anti-missile radar in Turkey, a move seen as designed to protect Israel.

## Conclusion

By following the tensions between Israel and Turkey over the three-year “crisis period” between 2009 and 2011, we can easily see that the topic of Israel has a semiotic power for the public which only a few other policy issues possess in Turkey. *Mavi Marmara* was undoubtedly the breaking point since it was widely understood as an affront to Turkey’s national pride and an attack on the country’s growing influence in the region. But the policy on Israel appears to have been driven at least as much by emotion as strategy since OCL. The loosening of Turkish-Israeli ties was the result of both external geopolitical shifts and domestic changes. The gradually fading clout of the old Kemalist guard in public affairs and the waning political power of the military since AKP’s victory in 2002 enabled a “marginalised majority” from the conservative Muslim middle classes to make its images, symbols, values, world views and attitudes prominent, acceptable and even preferable to the public. This can at least partially explain the visibility of

“Muslim solidarity” with Palestine and a hostility to Israel very rarely seen to such an extent in the previous decade in mainstream media or public demonstrations. We may infer that even in the absence of OCL and *Mavi Marmara*, the Turkish-Israeli alliance would inevitably have lost its vigour. With the pendulum swinging back in favour of the religiously-oriented classes in Turkey, secular-Kemalist circles quite naturally expressed anxiety about the direction the country was moving in. As this study has tried to demonstrate, this was very much manifest in the discussion on Israel in newspaper commentaries. *Zaman*, the voice of the emerging Muslim bourgeoisie, pigeonholed Israel as a state filled with violence and engaged in the violation of universal human norms, but gave very few glimpses of the actual workings of Israeli politics or society. While *Hürriyet* stood out from the general discussion on Israel by offering alternative views, even this seemed to be done mostly for domestic purposes: secular-Kemalist writers saw the growing divide between Turkey and Israel and the rapprochement with the Arab world and Iran as another sign of the creeping Islamisation of the country and a threat to its secular order and pro-Western orientation. As Anat Levin, who analysed Turkish and Israeli media in the late 1990s, observed (about both countries), there was a lack of ‘genuine understanding of the other side’s frame of reference’ and only ‘rarely insight into the context within which the other country is operating.’<sup>48</sup>

Connecting tensions with Israel with Turkey’s most burning issue, the Kurdish problem, as many newspapers and politicians were quick to do, was further proof of how fast the public perception of a country might change in a setting overloaded with emotions, rumours, conspiracy theories and stereotypes: while in the 1990s the Turkish-Israeli alliance had been considered a great asset in the fight against the PKK, and the ability of Mossad and Israeli armed forces to monitor PKK’s activities exaggerated, after OCL and *Mavi Marmara*, the media, politicians and the public immediately began to “discover” clandestine connections between Israel and Kurdish separatists, and again shift the issue of Israel to the national identity debate.

The current debate on Israel in the media and across the political spectrum confirms the unfortunate prospect that it will take a long time to mend Turkish-Israeli relations politically and probably even longer to change public opinion. Outside observers sometimes wrongly associate the possibility of a renewed Israeli-Turkish alliance with a future change of government in Turkey (and/or in Israel). This seems

fairly spurious, however, as almost no party (unless backed by the military or plotting secretly as in the 1990s) would be able to maintain its legitimacy while taking a unilaterally reconciliatory approach to Israel. One positive sign that Israeli-Turkish relations are not doomed to break down altogether is the steady growth of business relations between the two countries regardless of political tensions: trade between Turkey and Israel was up by 24.5% between 2009 and 2010, and by 22.7% to \$4.449 billion in 2011 from \$3.440 billion in 2010 (with imports from Israel climbing by more than 50%).<sup>49</sup>

On the other hand, it can be assumed that unless there is a major breakthrough on the Palestinian question, a serious settlement between Israel and Turkey on *Mavi Marmara* and general acceptance of Turkey's new role in the region, the public debate and formulations of foreign policy are unlikely to change.



PETR KUČERA is affiliated to the Charles University in Prague and has authored numerous articles on Turkish literature and culture and translated several works of fiction from Turkish, among them six novels by Orhan Pamuk. His *Comprehensive Grammar of Turkish* came out in 2014. He may be reached at: [info@cejiss.org](mailto:info@cejiss.org)

## Notes

- 1 Anonymous (2002), 'AK Party Sees No Change in Israel Ties,' *Hürriyet Daily News*, available at: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=ak-party-sees-no-change-in-israel-ties-2002-11-08>.
- 2 Amikam Nachmani (1998), 'The Remarkable Turkish-Israeli Tie,' *Middle East Quarterly*, pp. 19-29.
- 3 This article reflects the state of affairs at the time when it was first written (spring 2012). Some slight changes have been made to include information about the current situation in the spring of 2014. The focus of the essay is, however, the crisis period from 2009 to 2011, and no attempt has been made to analyse the media discourse after that time.
- 4 Çağrı Erhan and Ömer Kürkçüoğlu (2010), 'Relations with Non-Arab States,' in Baskın Oran (ed.) (2010), *Turkish Foreign Policy 1919-2006. Fact and Analysis with Documents*. University of Utah Press, p. 871.
- 5 For a detailed analysis, see the relevant chapters in Oran (2010). See also Joseph Codispoti (2000), *Star and Crescent. Turco-Israeli Partnership in a Tough Neighborhood*. Maxwell Papers 22, Air War College: Maxwell; Suha Bolukbasi (2009), 'Behind the Turkish-Israeli

- Alliance: A Turkish View', *Journal of Palestine Studies* 29/1, pp. 21-35; Nachmani (1998); Daniel Pipes (1997/98), 'A New Axis: The Emerging Turkish-Israeli Entente', *National Interest*, available at: [www.danielpipes.org/article/293](http://www.danielpipes.org/article/293).
- 6 For the views of one of the architects of the alliance, Turkey's then deputy chief of general staff Çevik Bir, see Çevik Bir and Martin Sherman (2002), 'Formula for Stability: Turkey Plus Israel,' *Middle East Quarterly*, IX/4, pp. 23-32.
  - 7 Gökhan Bacık (2001), 'The Limits of an Alliance: Turkish-Israeli Relations Revisited,' *Arab Studies Quarterly* 23/3, pp. 49-63.
  - 8 Elpeleg was quoted in *Ha'aretz* on September 30, 1997, cited in Amikam Nachmani (2003). *Turkey: Facing a New Millennium: Coping with Intertwined Conflicts*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, p. 209.
  - 9 M. Hakan Yavuz (1997), 'Turkish-Israeli Relations through the Lens of the Turkish Identity Debate,' *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 27/1, p.23.
  - 10 Kılıç Buğra Kanat (2011), 'Türk-İsrail İlişkilerinde 96'dan bugüne değişenler,' *Zaman*, available at: <http://www.zaman.com.tr/haber.do?haberno=1186602&title=yorum-dr-kilic-bugra-kanat-turkisrail-iliskilerinde-96dan-bugune-degisenler>.
  - 11 See Ahmet Sözen (2010), 'A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges,' in Barry Rubin (ed.) (2010) *Islamization of Turkey under the AKP Rule*. Routledge, pp.101-121.
  - 12 Birol Akgün (2009), 'Ortadoğu'da bozulan ezberler veya Türkiye-İsrail ilişkilerine balans ayarı,' *Zaman*, available at: <http://www.zaman.com.tr/haber.do?haberno=819296&title=yorum-birol-akgun-ortadoguda-bozulan-ezberler-veya-turkiyeisrail-iliskilerine-balans-ayari>.
  - 13 Alan Makovsky (1996), 'Israeli-Turkish Relations: A Turkish 'Periphery Strategy'?' in Henri J. Barkey (ed.) (1996), *Reluctant Neighbor: Turkey's Role in the Middle East*. Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, p. 169.
  - 14 Other reasons given to explain Turkey's willingness to cooperate with Israel, such as the need for an ally on the Cyprus issue, efforts to increase Turkey's strategic importance in the eyes of the West after the end of the Cold War and the benefit of having the powerful American Jewish lobby on side to offset the anti-Turkish Armenian and Greek lobbies, were rather a secondary calculation. Undoubtedly, the Madrid conference (December 1991) and Oslo Peace Process (1993) helped to legitimise the alliance.
  - 15 Martina Warning and Tuncay Kardaş (2011), 'The Impact of Changing Islamic Identity on Turkey's New Foreign Policy Alternatives,' *Turkish Journal of International Relations*, 10/2-3, p. 150.
  - 16 Ibid, p.154.
  - 17 Tarık Oğuzlu (2008), 'Middle Easternization of Turkey's Foreign Policy: Does Turkey Dissociate from the West?' *Turkish Studies* 9/1, p.16.
  - 18 Çelikkol has presented his views of the crises and Turkish-Israeli relations in a recently published book *One Minute'ten Mavi Marmara'ya. Türkiye - İsrail Çatışması* [From 'One Minute' to Mavi Marmara. The Conflict between Turkey and Israel] (2014). Istanbul: Doğan Kitap.

- 19 Kadri Gürsel of *Milliyet* claimed to have personally seen and studied the document. Gürsel (2011), 'Türkiye-İsrail: Yeniden düşünmek-2,' *Milliyet*, available at: <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/turkiye-israil-yeniden-dusunmek-2/kadri-gursel/tvrehberi/yazardetay/21.11.2011/1465363/default.htm>.
- 20 In fairness, it should be acknowledged that some instances of hate-inciting behaviour towards Israel were prosecuted. A lawsuit was brought against sports fans who shouted anti-Israel slogans during a Eurocup volleyball match between Turkey and Israel in July 2011. Erdoğan also spoke openly of anti-Semitism as 'a crime against humanity' at the Davos conference in 2009.
- 21 The poll was conducted by Frekans with the support of the European Commission delegation to Turkey between May 18 and June 18, 2009. It can be accessed at: [www.turkyahudileri.com/images/stories/dokumanlar/farkli\\_kimliklere\\_yahudilige\\_bakis\\_algi\\_arastirmasi\\_090930.pdf](http://www.turkyahudileri.com/images/stories/dokumanlar/farkli_kimliklere_yahudilige_bakis_algi_arastirmasi_090930.pdf).
- 22 Ahmet İnsel (2011), 'Biz 'biz'i sever miyiz?', *Radikal*, available online at: <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalYazar&ArticleID=1048071&Yazar=AHMET-INSEL&CategoryID=97>.
- 23 The poll was conducted by Metropoll across different Turkish provinces between December 25 and 29, 2010. Available at: [www.metropoll.com.tr/report/turkiye-siyasal-durum-arastirmasi-aralik-2010](http://www.metropoll.com.tr/report/turkiye-siyasal-durum-arastirmasi-aralik-2010).
- 24 Historically, *dönmes* are descendants of the Jewish followers of the self-proclaimed messiah Sabbatai Zevi, who converted to Islam in Istanbul in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. See, for example, Jacob Landau (2007), 'The Dönmes: Crypto-Jews under Turkish Rule,' *Jewish Political Studies Review*. 19:1-2, pp. 109-118.
- 25 *Hürriyet*, January 1, 2011.
- 26 I looked at the online versions of both periodicals ([www.hurriyet.com.tr](http://www.hurriyet.com.tr) and [www.zaman.com.tr](http://www.zaman.com.tr)), which to my knowledge include the same opinion articles and columns as the printed versions plus additional commentaries only available online.
- 27 The average daily sales of *Zaman* fluctuated between 825 000 (in the first week of January 2009) and 980,000 (in the last week of March 2012); the equivalent figures for *Hürriyet* were 524 000 and 421 000, respectively. For precise numbers, see <http://medyatava.com/tiraj.asp>. These statistics do not take into account the (presumably large) pass-along and online readership. According to some figures, *Hürriyet* is the most widely read online newspaper, while *Zaman* is only the fifth most popular: see <http://www.xgazete.com/net-tiraj.php>
- 28 Ekrem Dumanlı (2009), 'Lütfen biraz samimiyet! Ya Erdoğan tepki vermeseydi', *Zaman*, available at: [http://www.zaman.com.tr/ekrem-dumanli/lutfen-biraz-samimiyet-ya-erdogan-tepki-vermeseydi\\_810699.html](http://www.zaman.com.tr/ekrem-dumanli/lutfen-biraz-samimiyet-ya-erdogan-tepki-vermeseydi_810699.html).
- 29 Ali Bulaç (b. 1951) has written several books on Islam and politics and regularly appears in TV discussions. Ali Ünal (b. 1955) writes extensively on Islam and has translated many works by Fethullah Gülen as well as the Quran into English.
- 30 See, for example, Turan Alkan (2009) "İsrailoğulları, gerçekten günah keçisi mi?", available at: <http://www.zaman.com.tr/ahmet-turan-alkan/israil>

- logullari-gercekten-gunah-kecisi-mi\_819727.html
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- 32 Bekir Coşkun (2009) 'Koyun ve bacağı...', available at: [http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/10862314\\_p.asp](http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/10862314_p.asp).
- 33 Mehmet Yılmaz (2009), " Hamas'a duydukları sevginin nedeni," available at: [http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/10837302\\_p.asp](http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/10837302_p.asp).
- 34 Most newspapers from June 1, 2010, spoke about 'state terrorism' (which was the headline in *Milliyet*, *Türkiye*, *Haber Türk*), 'barbarism' and a 'massacre'. *Zaman* and *Hürriyet* ran similar headlines: 'The Whole World in Uproar' and 'World in Uproar'. The tabloid *Posta*, the second most popular newspaper in Turkey, said simply 'Israel Has Gone Mad'. The headline in the leftist *Cumhuriyet* read 'Israel Has Attacked Humanity' and was echoed by *Radikal*'s 'Bullets against Humanity'. *Sabah* proclaimed a 'Global Intifada against Israel's Massacre', while *Vatan* wrote of 'A Shameful Act'. Islamist newspapers heaped slurs on Israel, with headlines like 'Hitler's Children: They Only Know How to Kill' (*Yeni Şafak*) and 'Zionist Dogs' (*Vakit*).
- 35 A. Turan Alkan (2010), 'İsrail: Tarihin en kötü icadı', available at: [http://www.zaman.com.tr/ahmet-turan-alkan/israil-tarihin-en-kotu-icadi\\_990693.html](http://www.zaman.com.tr/ahmet-turan-alkan/israil-tarihin-en-kotu-icadi_990693.html).
- 36 M. Naci Bostancı (2010), "Cezai, siyasi, ahlaki ve metafizik suçluluk," available at: [http://www.zaman.com.tr/yorum\\_yorum-m-naci-bostanci-cezai-siyasi-ahlaki-ve-metafizik-sucluluk\\_993348.html](http://www.zaman.com.tr/yorum_yorum-m-naci-bostanci-cezai-siyasi-ahlaki-ve-metafizik-sucluluk_993348.html).
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- 39 This view seems to be rather pervasive in the Turkish media and even among politicians. AKP's general vice president Hüseyin Çelik and Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, the chairman of the main opposition party (CHP), seriously doubted that the two attacks were unrelated (see *Radikal*, May 31, 2010).
- 40 Lütfü Özşahin (2010), 'İsrail niçin bu kadar gergin?', available at: [http://www.zaman.com.tr/yorum\\_yorum-lutfu-ozsahin-israil-nicin-bu-kadar-gergin\\_941179.html](http://www.zaman.com.tr/yorum_yorum-lutfu-ozsahin-israil-nicin-bu-kadar-gergin_941179.html); (2009), 'Bütün Yahudiler aynı mıdır?', available at: [http://www.zaman.com.tr/yorum\\_yorum-lutfu-ozsahin-butun-yahudiler-ayni-midir\\_816830.html](http://www.zaman.com.tr/yorum_yorum-lutfu-ozsahin-butun-yahudiler-ayni-midir_816830.html).
- 41 Herkül Milas (2010), 'Onlar-biz veya biz insanlar', available at: [http://www.zaman.com.tr/yorum\\_yorum-herkul-millas-onlar-biz-veya-biz-insanlar\\_993003.html](http://www.zaman.com.tr/yorum_yorum-herkul-millas-onlar-biz-veya-biz-insanlar_993003.html).
- 42 Joe Lauria (2010), 'Reclusive Turkish Imam Criticizes Gaza Flotilla,' *Wall Street Journal*, available at: <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB1000142>

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- 43 Zeynep Gürçanlı (2010), 'İsrail'le ilişkilerde şimdi ne olacak', available at: <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/dunya/14889261.asp?gid=373>.
- 44 Ertuğrul Özkök (2010), 'Size sesleniyorum İsraili dostlarım', available at: <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/14896168.asp>.
- 45 Yusuf Özdil (2010), 'Mavi Marmara', available at: <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/14895528.asp>.
- 46 Through its prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel's government did indeed apologise to Turkey in March 2013 for the *Mavi Marmara* incident almost three years earlier, and expressed its willingness to compensate the victims of the raid. Nevertheless, matters have become more complicated since May 2014 when the Istanbul 7th Court of Serious Crimes ordered the arrest of four Israeli commanders who were allegedly involved in the raid on the *Mavi Marmara*. Thus, normal relations between Turkey and Israel have not been resumed to date.
- 47 The most famous case is *Vakit*'s public allegation that Doğan Media Group, owner of *Hürriyet*, was part of an Israeli media consortium. In a fierce campaign, the paper also accused Özdemir İnce of being a traitor and lawyer for Israel (*Vakit*, June 10, 2010). Other newspapers (including *Zaman*) frequently spit fire at (unnamed) 'pro-Israeli' Turkish media.
- 48 Anat Levin (2010), 'Turkey and Israel: Reciprocal and Mutual Imagery in the Media, 1994-1999,' *Journal of International Affairs* 54/1 (2000), p. 240.
- 49 This data has been compiled from statistics published by the Turkish Statistical Institute ([www.turkstat.gov.tr](http://www.turkstat.gov.tr))

Petr Kučera

# How the 2004 and 2007 EU Enlargements Weakened the CFSP and CSDP

## A Socio-Economic and Geopolitical Analysis

*Keith White-Hunt*

From its very beginnings, defence and security related issues were a major concern of EU policy. However, it was the demise of the USSR in the early 1990's and the end of the Cold War that – between 1998 and 2004 – gave a major push to the evolution of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). These changes, combined with the expansion of the EU as a result of the rapid accession to membership of many new countries, spawned the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and propelled it forward in concept and operation as “European Foreign Policy” under which the EU has conducted more than 20 civilian and military missions. However, closer economic and security analyses from suggests the EU enlargement in 2004 and 2007 weakened its CFSP and CSDP and that future enlargement is only likely to dilute resources further while at the same time introducing new threats with which the EU will have to contend.



*Keywords: EU, CFSP, CSDP, Geopolitics, Westphalian international relations, European Security Strategy*

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### CFSP and CSDP: An Introduction

From its very beginning, defence and security related issues were a major concern of EU (or its antecedents) policy. The origin of the Europe-



an Union (EU) can be traced to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in the early 1950s and one of its principal objectives was to reduce the capacity for war between France and Germany as a result of integrating the production and supply in these basic materials of modern industrialised warfare. The European Atomic Energy Community was also set up in the 1950s, not only for cooperation in developing nuclear energy, but also to monitor and control the spread of fissionable materials and technology. Both organisations were folded into the European Economic Community (EEC) the forerunner of the European Union under the Treaties of Rome, signed in 1957 and coming into force on 01 January 1958.

The original six members of the “EU” were the Western European nations of France, Germany, Italy and the Benelux countries (Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg) and in 1973 were joined by Denmark, Ireland (Eire) and the United Kingdom. Norway had originally applied to join the EEC in 1962 and resumed its negotiations along with these other three countries in 1970. However, a referendum held in that country in 1972 subsequently produced a majority vote (53.5 %) against accession. Greece joined in 1981, followed by Portugal and Spain in 1986. With the exception of periods of some degree of military dictatorship in Greece, Portugal and Spain (although in the case of the latter two countries, being an overhang from pre-wwii right-wing regimes very much conditioned by the international politics of that period) all of these countries had enjoyed long experience of democratic political institutions; respect for human rights and the rule of law; and a free market economy (though most had witnessed periods of greater or lesser public ownership and/or government controls and regulation of their economies).

As these were, and are, the guiding principles that drive the expansion and integration of the EU, it follows that the incorporation of all these countries into the EU was a relatively painless exercise. Austria, Finland and Sweden joined in 1995 (Norway had again voted against accession by a 52.2% majority in a referendum held in 1994). However, it should be remarked that the absorption of Austria and Finland would probably not have been possible had it not been for the demise of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s and the ending of the Cold War since until then, although enjoying a kind of neutral or “No-Man’s-Land” political status, these countries were nevertheless very much

within the Soviet 'sphere of interest' despite not being occupied or members of the COMECON group of the Soviet Union's Eastern European satellites (although Finland had "Observer Status" with it). This is important because the collapse of the Soviet Union and ending of the Cold War posed threats as well as opportunities for the EU in the sphere of defence and security as these potentially unstable and formerly communist countries emerged as new independent sovereign states. While the former East Germany became part of the EU as a result of its merger with West Germany the position of other countries was not nearly so easy to rationalise and indeed, German Reunification was only achieved at massive economic and financial cost both nationally and internationally.

In the light of the ending of the Cold War, a European Council was held in Copenhagen in 1993 at which the criteria for membership of states seeking to join the EU in the future were agreed encompassing the guiding principles referenced above, as well as the willingness to fully accept the obligations and intent of the EU, including the aims of political, economic and monetary union. Thus it was this Copenhagen Conference that determined the conditions to be met by future candidate countries in order to be granted EU membership and under which ten countries (in addition to Austria and Finland that had earlier joined the EU in 1995, but which had also previously existed under the Soviet shadow) were admitted as full members of the European Union in 2004. Seven of these ten countries were either former Soviet republics or satellites: the Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and the Eastern European countries of Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia (the latter two having formerly been the country of Czechoslovakia). One – the Balkan state of Slovenia – was an ethnic spin-off from the dissolution of the former socialist country (though relatively autonomous of Soviet control) of Yugoslavia. Two were Mediterranean island nations, both having strong British connections although less than in former times: Cyprus and Malta. Similarly, these were followed in 2007 by two other former Soviet satellites, Romania and Bulgaria, bringing the number of EU member states, at that time, to 27, with a combined population in round figures of 500 million inhabitants or 7.3% of the world population.<sup>1</sup>

## CFSP and CSDP: An Evolution

The Treaty on European Union, often referred to as the Treaty of Maastricht established as one of the key pillars of the EU the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) encompassing foreign policy and military matters and which was a further development of an earlier attempt to codify European political cooperation under the Single European Act of July 1987 that had been the first major revision of the 1957 Treaty of Rome. This very much represented the idea that the EU's CFSP should reflect the same guiding principles as those that had conditioned its membership (and enlargement) criteria discussed above. The Office of High Representative for the CFSP was created in 1999 with the role of coordinating EU foreign policy which was further strengthened under the Lisbon Treaty (2009) and retitled The High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy which post was then occupied by (Baroness) Catherine Ashton.

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White-Hunt*

A European Security Strategy was first issued at about the same time as the 2004 enlargement of the EU and has since been further developed and refined. Following from earlier discussions to develop a common European approach to defence and security issues, it took the position that in the light of the post-Cold War World, large-scale external aggression against any member state was highly unlikely and in this context highlighted the EU's main CFSP concerns.<sup>2</sup>

These included: terrorism (especially linked to religious extremism and viewed as not only coming from outside the EU's borders – such as Al Qaeda – but also as an internal threat from potentially culturally and economically disaffected and alienated recent foreign immigrants); the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs), including nuclear, biological, and chemical; overspill from regional conflicts, especially near to the borders of the EU; failed states (such as Somalia) and the chaos of post-conflict states (such as Libya post-2011) that could lead to waves of refugees; organised crime with cross-border trafficking in drugs, illegal immigrants, weapons, women and counterfeit goods representing a major external threat to the EU's internal security and that has close links with all the above.<sup>3</sup>

As pointed out under the European Security Strategy document, the EU has sought to be prepared to respond to these threats in a number

of ways.<sup>4</sup> For instance: after 9/11 it adopted a European Arrest Warrant; took steps to target the financing of terrorist activities; and entered into an agreement on mutual legal assistance with the US. As referenced above, the EU had pursued policies against nuclear proliferation over many years and took further steps to strengthen the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) with measures to tighten export controls and to deal with illegal shipments and illicit procurement of fissionable material, while at the same time seeking universal adherence to and strengthening of multilateral treaties governing nuclear issues and tightening inspection and verification provisions.

To help deal with regional conflicts, the EU and its members have intervened in a number of cases to restore peace and protect civilians and, so far as is possible, institute plans to reconstitute failed states. One example is the intervention in the former Yugoslavia to prevent a return of ethnic-cleansing and restore good government; to foster democracy and help indigenous authorities deal with problems of organised crime.

Unlike the danger posed to Western Europe from the USSR and its Eastern European allies between 1945 and the ending of the Cold War period in the 1990s, the challenges the EU faces to its security are no longer viewed as simply military and therefore have to be addressed by a variety of different approaches; often being a combination of methods and responses although sometimes including the use of military assets, depending on the nature of the issue. For example, tight export and customs controls, as well as applying economic and political pressure and in some case sanctions on suspect states, is used to prevent the previously referenced problem of seeking to prevent the proliferation of WMDs. Additionally, all the usual elements of intelligence, police, legal, military, socio-economic and political methods may be mobilised to combat terrorism. In the case of failed states, while the EU recognises that military intervention may be needed to restore order, in the aftermath of any such action, various forms of aid will almost always be required to deal with the likely subsequent humanitarian crisis. In the case of failed states, the EU also seeks to assist towards the political process that will always be required to find a lasting solution to any regional conflict, yet understands that the use of military peace-keepers and the establishment of an effective police force are still almost always needed in post-conflict phases, as well as socio-eco-

conomic development and administration to help in the restoration of normal civil government in the longer term.<sup>5</sup> The CFSP and CSDP are seen as being particularly well suited and aimed towards addressing these issues. Additionally, the EU is concerned with establishing security in its neighbourhood and thus on its borders and as such is particularly concerned with the politics of the Mediterranean area, including the Middle East.

Despite concerns about defence and security over the 40 or so years of its earlier development, before the 1990s there were very few tangible examples of external EU involvement in the field of defence and security and:

Any notion of an autonomous EU role [i.e. outside NATO] in the field of security (let alone defence) was virtually unthinkable for most of the 1990s. Yet between 1998 and 2004 the evolution from an essentially 'civilian' notion of the CFSP towards a European Security and Defence Policy seemed almost to portend a revolution in the concept and operation of a 'European Foreign Policy.'<sup>6</sup>

However, its evolution and development was driven by the collapse of the Soviet Union, the ending of the Cold war and that Europe appeared to no longer be an area of major concern for the US as it switched its strategic attention to the Arab Gulf, the Middle East and Asia. It also presented the problem of potentially bankrupt, chaotic and lawless states on the EU's eastern and southern borders.

Additionally the traditional Westphalian reading of international affairs that had kept states from interfering in the internal affairs of others providing one party had not actually been attacked or disadvantaged in any way by the other, were deemed as no longer seeming to apply in the new World of globalisation and the dangers of rapid international security contamination, not to mention a heightened international view of collective responsibility for humanitarian issues. The 1998 St. Malo Meeting between UK Prime Minister Tony Blair and France's President Jacques Chirac in 1998 can be viewed as very much as the 'crossing of the Rubicon' in this respect.

Soon after the Anglo-French Accord, the EU introduced what was known as the Helsinki Headline Goals named from the location at which discussion on these issues took place between member states. The main proposal was to put in place the capability to rapidly deploy

50,000-60,000 troops with the ability to maintain this battle-group (of all arms) in the field for one year. However, this objective has never been completely achieved and indeed, has always been short of airlift and sealift capability, as well as many essential arms and munitions and weapons and support systems that could only be supplied through NATO, as well as lacking headquarter facilities and coordination and common command structures and funding agreements.

Some negotiations have taken place between the EU and NATO on resource sharing, but it is fair to say that this has never been a very comfortable relationship and in particular the US (very much dominant) component of NATO has always been suspicious regarding EU military action. This is because of the perceived plethora of politically-motivated and varying degrees of commitment quite apart from issues concerning combat-zone effectiveness (although it is fair to say that it sometimes suits the diplomatic purposes of the US if not so much pragmatic military considerations, to have either the EU involved or even taking the initiative on certain international crises e.g. Libya in 2011).

These difficulties notwithstanding, from the perspective of the EU, a major revision was needed to take place in what constituted defence and security issues in response to the new post-Cold War era in international relations and therefore how foreign policy would henceforth be interpreted. Thus evolved a major component of CFSP in the form of the CSDP under which the EU has conducted more than 20 civilian and military missions.

### *Missions*

A brief summary of continuing or completed operations include:

- A civilian mission aimed at the improvement of security at Juba International Airport in the World's newest country of South Sudan (2012-2015),
- A military mission to train Somali security forces of the Transitional Federal Government (2010-2015),
- A European Naval Force to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia and in the Indian Ocean (2008-2014),
- A police mission in Afghanistan aimed at contributing to the establishment of sustainable and effective civilian policing (2007-2013),
- A regional training mission aimed at strengthening the maritime ca-

- capacities of eight countries in the Horn of Africa and the Western Indian Ocean to combat piracy through developing appropriate military, legal and socio-economic infrastructure (2009-2014),
- A civilian crisis management mission aimed to provide integrated training activities for Iraqi professionals working in the country's post-Saddam Hussein era criminal justice system (2005-2013),
- Advice and assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo security authorities interlaced with the promotion of policies that are compatible with human rights, as well as principles of good public management and the rule of law (2005-2012),
- A military operation to Bosnia and Herzegovina aimed towards the stabilisation of the country and to assist it in making progress towards its possible integration with the EU. (2004-14),
- A mission aimed at the reform of the Congolese national police including its integration and interaction with the justice sector (2005-2012),
- A mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina to support the reform of the police forces and in particular consolidate local capacity and regional cooperation in the fight against major and organised crime (2003-2011),
- The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo which is the largest civilian mission ever launched under the CSDP and is also part of a broader effort undertaken by the EU to promote peace and stability in the Western Balkans and many believe (though still a politically-sensitive issue) to possibly move Kosovo towards statehood and eventual membership of the EU (2008-2014),
- An autonomous civilian monitoring mission in Georgia to contribute to the stability of the country and the surrounding region following the conflict between Georgia and the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia which subsequently received Russian support and are still occupied by it despite remaining legally part of Georgia (2008-2012),
- A monitoring mission to help effect the Israeli-Palestinian Authority Agreement by providing third-party assistance on movement and access at the Rafah border crossing in Gaza (2005-2012),
- A mission to establish sustainable and effective policing arrangements and training in the criminal justice sector for the Palestinian territories (2005-2012),
- A border assistance mission to the Republics of Moldova and

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- Ukraine to support capacity building for border management and customs to prevent smuggling and trafficking of goods, weapons, drugs and people on the whole Moldova-Ukraine border, including the border between Ukraine and the separatist Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova as Moldovan authorities are unable to be present there due to the continued presence of Russian military forces (2005-2012),
- A military operation in support of humanitarian operations in response to the crisis situation in Libya; although it could be argued that this went well beyond its original mandate and actively assisted regime change (2011-2012),
- Supporting the reform of the security sector in Guinea-Bissau (2008-2010),
- A military operation aimed at the stabilisation of the security conditions and the improvement of the humanitarian situation in Bunia in the Democratic Republic of Congo (2003),
- A military operation in support of the United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to support the elections process (2006),
- A police mission in Kinshasa province in the Democratic Republic of Congo to help the National Police keep order during the transition to democracy, particularly during the electoral period referenced previously (2005-2007),
- A civilian-military action to support the African Union's enhanced Mission to Sudan/Darfur (2005-2007),
- A military bridging operation in eastern Chad and the north-east of the Central African Republic to protect refugees and displaced populations as well as permit the safe movement of international and local personnel engaged in the delivery of humanitarian aid (2007-2010),
- A mission to monitor the implementation of various aspects of the peace agreement between the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement that had been fighting for self-rule of this Indonesian province, including the decommissioning of armaments held by the latter and removal of the military and para-military police forces of the former, with the advent of local elections and a move towards a degree of regional autonomy (2005-2006),
- A military operation in Macedonia to help create a stable and secure



environment in the central Balkans beset as it was with inter-ethnic conflict and fleeing refugees following the dissolution of the former Republic of Yugoslavia and to help contribute towards the establishment and stability of this new country (2003),

Two advisory missions to advise Macedonia's police on border control, public order and accountability and combating corruption and organised crime (2003-2006),

A Rule of Law mission to Georgia to mentor and advise Ministers, senior officials and central government bodies on challenges in the criminal justice system and to assist the overall reform process towards building a democratic state (2004-2005).<sup>7</sup>

*EU Enlargements*

### *Enlargement*

It might well appear that the EU has an extremely broad and proactive CFSP and much of this is effected through an active and effective CSDP that has been bolstered as a result of the collective political objectives and through the pooling of the resources of 27 member states (as of 2007) as suggested by the fact that in 2004 the combined EU (then 25) member states defence expenditure stood at an estimated US\$ 208 billion, equivalent to just over 50 per cent of that of the USA<sup>8</sup>.

However, closer analysis invites two questions: (1) did the EU enlargements of 2004 and 2007 really strengthen or indeed, could they have weakened its CFSP and CSDP and (2) are these policies and their resulting application as an effective realisation of EU power as they are represented to be by those who extol the defence and security benefits of a politically integrated EU?

The 2004 EU enlargement added another 74.43 million to the combined population of its then members of 393.26 million; an increase of almost 20%. The addition of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007 added a further 29.51 million people representing a total increase in the population of the EU by 103.94 million or 26.43% in four years!<sup>9</sup> However, in these same four years, the combined economies of the 12 new members of the EU in 2007 added only 7.59% to its total GDP!<sup>10</sup>

It is clear from these figures that on a purely numbers basis alone, the indigenous defence and security issues and needs brought by the new member states would not even be balanced by the additional economic resources they contributed and therefore, would be likely to be

a net drain on the existing resources of the EU available for CFSP and CSDP activities prior to enlargement.

In fact, when turning to economic data for defence spending the position was even worse. In 2004, the addition of the defence expenditure of the 10 new member states added less than 5% to the overall defence expenditure of the then existing EU and over two-fifths of this was contributed by Poland, leaving the other nine to account for little more than the defence expenditure of Sweden.<sup>11</sup>

On the basis of manpower contribution the picture appears to be a little better with the 10 new members having added almost 20% to the total armed forces of the EU in 2004.<sup>12</sup> However, this figure is deceiving. First, Poland alone was responsible for almost 52% of this net gain and many of the troops are not equivalent to the professional, highly-trained and well-equipped soldiers of for instance, the British Army, Navy and Air Force, but mainly inadequately armed and often short-term conscripts having little more than skills in drilling and the use of small-arms. Additionally, many of the new states lacked either naval or air assets or both; not to mention heavy and/or high-technology armour, artillery and weapons-systems, as well as logistics, information-gathering and communications material.

The situation in 2014 is little changed with if anything the percentage of their GDPs allocated to defence expenditure rolled back across the EU member states in general and the thirteen new members (with the accession of Croatia) joining since 2004 in particular, as the worldwide economic recession and especially the continued troubles in the Eurozone. Indeed, in July 2012 even the UK announced its intention to reduce the size of its army by 20,000 soldiers (resulting in the loss of 5 battalions including such iconic names as “The Green Howards”) as well as plans for major cuts across its armed services as a whole. Despite making commitments to new weapons systems such as two new-generation aircraft carriers, the first of which (HMS Queen Elizabeth) was launched for further fitting-out and sea-trials in July 2014, major economic concerns still pose possible constraints. Such concerns relate to the equipping HMS Queen Elizabeth with its full complement of jet-fighters; the schedule for completion of the second Carrier; and provision of sufficient Royal Navy escort vessels for the Carriers.

In addition to the need to provide defence and security for the additional (almost) 110 million population of the EU added since 2004, let

alone project and protect beyond its frontiers, its land area increased in size with enlargement by over one-third or the equivalent of over 13 times the size of the UK.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, the physical location of some of the new entrants in 2004 and 2007 extended the EU's frontiers towards regions of potential security problems and the new countries brought with them their own historical and political issues to add to the EU's existing defence and security issues.<sup>14</sup>

*Keith  
White-Hunt*

## The Legacy of the CFSP and CSDP

The Czech Republic has been cited by international police agencies as a major trans-shipment point for southwest Asian heroin as well as a minor transit point for Latin American cocaine being distributed into Western Europe. Additionally, it is a local producer and regional distributor of synthetic illicit drugs such as 'ecstasy' as well as harbouring organised crime in sex trade trafficking. There is also a quite vitriolic dispute with Austria which is seeking the closure of the Soviet-era nuclear plant in Temelin which is close to the latter country's borders.

Estonia is also an important trans-shipment point for cannabis, cocaine and opiates as well as locally-produced synthetic drugs into Western Europe as well as the gambling business having been developed to boost economic activity, provide jobs and government revenues becoming a home for money-laundering. Politically there still exists tension with Russia as Estonia continues to press for a realignment of its borders based on the 1920 Tartu Peace Treaty.

Very similar to the Czech Republic although considered to be an even bigger problem, Hungary is also cited by international police agencies as a major trans-shipment point for southwest Asian heroin as well as a transit point for Latin American cocaine entering into Western Europe. It is also a major producer of feedstock chemicals for the manufacture of synthetic illicit drugs and is a home to organised crime. Hungary also has disputes with some of its neighbours regarding the use of resources related to the Danube, including water-rights and hydro-electric power generation.

Latvia has many of the same problems as its Baltic neighbour Estonia with the addition of being a centre for counterfeiting, prostitution and the trans-shipment of cars stolen in Western Europe. Latvia still has disputes with Russia regarding the treatment of ethnic Russians

still living within its now sovereign territory as well as in regard to Maritime boundaries with its Baltic neighbour Lithuania due to concerns about potential offshore oil and gas deposits.

As might be expected, Slovakia shares similar problems with regard to crime as its former 'other-half' did prior to its "Velvet divorce" from the Czech Republic and an on-going dispute with Hungary as referenced above.

Poland shares many of the same crime-related problems as the other former Communist states of Eastern Europe, but because of its economic base is probably an even bigger producer of illicit synthetic drugs, as well as having a major problem combating illegal immigration and trade along its long border with the corruption-rife former Soviet republics of Belarus and the Ukraine.

In addition to drug-related crime, Slovenia still has some outstanding land and maritime border issues with neighbouring Croatia although these were largely resolved as a precursor to the latter's forthcoming accession to the EU as its 28<sup>th</sup> member state in 2013.

Cyprus was a former British colony that became independent in 1960. Due to its geography it is a major concern as a transit location for heroin and hashish, particularly from Turkey and Lebanon, as well as being a centre for money-laundering due to relatively loose oversight of offshore money transactions. However, the major security issue revolves around the Turkish-Greek ethnic divide of the island's population that erupted in outright hostilities in 1974 and its subsequent division into two halves and a 1,000 strong UN peace-keeping force maintains the border zone in between. When Cyprus joined the EU in 2004 it was curiously allowed to do so even though the required standards for entry were suspended for the north (Turkish part) of the island. Cyprus is still an outstanding and major issue for defence and security for Turkey as well as colouring the latter's relationship with Greece and therefore, its solution would be a necessary step prior to Turkey's potential membership of the EU. The fact that Turkey is an important ally of the USA, particularly with regard to security in the Middle East and Caucasus Region and that the UK still maintains military bases in Cyprus, further complicates matters for the EU in regard to this country. Turkey's opposition to Cyprus has also been evident in recent years regarding the latter's unilateral allocation of oil & gas exploration rights around its shores and in agreeing maritime bound-

aries with Lebanon. With the economy and indebtedness of Cyprus in the same relatively poor state as that as its neighbour Greece (despite being absolutely much smaller) the security situation is only likely to further deteriorate.

Until recently the tiny island nation of Malta did not bring any immediate defence and security issues, other than small-scale smuggling of hashish from North Africa. However, in recent times it has become a major half-way-house destination for illegal immigrants seeking to enter the EU from impoverished and war torn North Africa and especially since the overthrow of President Gaddafi in Libya.

Romania is a major trans-shipment point for southwest Asian heroin into the EU and its banks, currency-exchange houses and casinos provide considerable opportunities for money-laundering. Romania has significant disputes with the Ukraine over the ownership and administration of certain Danube islands; maritime boundaries in the Black Sea; and the latter's plans for a canal link between the Danube through Ukraine to the Black Sea.

Bulgaria has all the same crime-related problems as Romania, but the scale and reach of its organised crime is probably far greater. An 'unholy alliance' of some of its former communist-regime intelligence personnel and local mafia-type criminal gangs has created one of the major sources of trafficking in drugs, people (especially in the sex trade), weapons and counterfeit and/or smuggled and/or stolen goods and created a new major and violent crime-wave in the Balkans and southern Europe.

Croatia of course, was not part of the 2004 and 2007 enlargement, but similar considerations relate to the EU's most recent member state and which has also brought its own particular security issues. Croatia was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until after WWI in 1918 when the Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes formed a new country, known after 1929 as the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. After WWII (during which time many Croats actively sided with Nazi Germany within the puppet Ustasha State) Yugoslavia became a federal state which although communist, under the strong rule of Marshal TITO, was relatively independent of the Soviet Union. Declaring its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, it took four years of sporadic, but often bitter fighting before occupying Serb forces (as well as most of the ethnic Serb population) were cleared from Croatia. Under UN supervision, the last

*EU Enlargements*

Serb-held enclave in Eastern Slavonia was returned to Croatia in 1998. The country joined NATO in April 2009 and the EU in July 2013. With such a history it is hardly surprising to have numerous inherited international disputes, such as: with Bosnia & Herzegovina over several small sections of the boundary related to maritime access; with Slovenia over sovereignty rights in Pirin Bay and various villages, as well as in the Adriatic Sea (although, as already referenced above, in 2009 Croatia and Slovenia signed an arbitration agreement to define their disputed land and maritime borders, which led to Slovenia lifting its objections to Croatia joining the EU). Additionally, Croatia is seen as a major access point via land from the Balkans for the transit of illicit drugs, such as Heroin from Asia; and Cocaine via maritime shipments from South American, to Western Europe.

The fact that all member states are required to implement the provisions of the 1985 Schengen Agreement (with the exception of the UK and Eire who have opted out of some) since it was absorbed into EU law in 1999 under the Amsterdam Treaty has led to the elimination of internal border controls and as a result created a field-day of opportunity for criminal elements from the post-2004 membership countries to penetrate Western Europe.<sup>15</sup>

While the European Naval Force operating in the Indian Ocean to suppress piracy (particularly emanating from the failed state of Somalia) purports to be a joint taskforce from 26 of the member states, in fact the majority of military assets have been supplied by the traditional maritime powers of Western Europe (for example France, Spain, Netherlands, UK etc.) with the contribution from the post-2004 members being negligible. For example: a small coastguard team from Estonia operating on-board a German frigate and even one officer provided by Lithuania to the onshore operational headquarters is referenced as a token means of increasing EU member involvement.<sup>16</sup>

The EU operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad and the Central African Republic have largely been carried out by French and Belgian forces that as a result of colonial antecedents and language ties, have unilaterally maintained a continuing political and economic 'sphere of interest' in these regions, regardless of EU membership and despite both completed and on-going assistance missions conducted under the EU's CSDP there were reported to have been almost 4 million deaths from insurgency, counterinsurgency and general lawlessness in the DRC between the mid-1990s and the middle of the

first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and which regrettably is continuing in the second decade.<sup>17</sup>

EU involvement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Libya and Afghanistan have all been part NATO led operations and depended little on contributions from the new post-2004 members (although there was small contingents of particularly Polish troops deployed in a non-combatant role in the latter). This of course, introduces a major aspect of EU CFSP and particularly CSDP. As touched on above, without access to significant NATO assets EU forces would have great difficulty in projecting force beyond their frontiers (or even in some cases within their borders). While the EU has negotiated with NATO to be allowed to utilise resources, it is still very much a contentious issue, particularly with the US which is highly suspicious of multi-polity arrangements and as already remarked, frequently disparaging concerning their military effectiveness. The EU has even found it difficult to reach agreement between its own members regarding the permanent commitment of some of their national military assets to a standing EU combined-arms taskforce and has also failed to even get fixed commitments as to a minimum percentage of their GDP that each member state is prepared to contribute to their own defence spending.

EU involvement external to its borders has also in some cases given rise to creating their own new security threats and/or political disputes. For example, EU involvement in Kosovo that has been linked with the de facto independence (though some might say semi-colonial status) of this former Yugoslavian (and still technically Serbian) province has invited tension between Balkan states and especially with Russia. Likewise, the recent (June 2014) Association Agreements with Georgia, Moldova and particularly the Ukraine which looks towards full integration (and possibly also NATO membership - in a move towards this eventuality in July 2014 the U.S. Congress passed a bill, whereby Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia can obtain the status of allies of the U.S. even without full membership of NATO) can only add to the EU's security overhead.

The addition of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007 again brings up the contribution of post-2004 states to overall military spending referenced above. However, in 2010 the 2004 and 2007 entrants together contributed only 7.29% of total defence spending by all EU member countries. Again, if Poland is taken out of the calculation then this contribution is reduced to 4%! It is small wonder that the larger eco-

*Keith  
White-Hunt*

conomic and military powers within the EU are highly reluctant to aggregate (one might say dissipate) their defence capability into an EU force. The UK, France, Germany and Italy (ranked in that order) are the four big military spenders of the EU and Britain alone accounts for 22.33% of the whole of EU defence spending and three times as much as the combined post-2004 and 2007 new member states put together (Poland included)! In the same year (2010) military spending by the US was more than 2½ times as large as that of the EU, accounting for 4.8% of its GDP compared with 1.61% of the 'EU's GDP' (while some countries, such as the UK at 2.56% of GDP, spend more than this average many – and especially the post-2004 entrants – spend a significantly smaller percentage of their GDP on defence). It must also be recalled that EU defence spending is spread over 28 armies, 24 air forces and 21 navies; many with different types of equipment, command structures, operational and combat procedures, traditions and standards and, not least, languages! Politically, sovereign control over military and defence assets is likely to be the last area that the government any member state will be willing to surrender to common EU control and especially for those countries having a military tradition such as the UK and France, which though absolutely small in relation to the US, are still relatively heavy-hitters in international terms.<sup>18</sup>

## Conclusion

While the EU's record in security areas such as combating organised crime and terrorism and the illegal trafficking (of all kinds as discussed above) and money laundering with which it is associated seems to be laudable, it would be very hard to argue against the fact that the post-2004 (and especially the post-2007) enlargement of its membership (and borders) has in fact significantly increased its exposure to these problems as well as diluting the capacity to control them. Though tasks such as humanitarian actions relating to conflict prevention and peace-keeping, crisis management and providing military and police advice and guidance on state-building and governance infrastructure have achieved some success, they have had considerable short-comings in regard to the military component required for their success and again, the EU enlargement since 2004 has hardly added any capacity while at the same time introducing new dangers.



The EU has been described as ‘economic giant but a political dwarf.’<sup>19</sup> However, since the ultimate political and military power of any nation or alliance is dependent on its economic base and, in 2011, the EU-27 was the World’s biggest economy with a GDP of \$15.39 (USD) trillion, surpassing even the US with a GDP of \$15.04 (USD) trillion on first consideration this might suggest that the EU would not only be a significant but a growing international presence in security and military international power projection.<sup>20</sup> However, just as the impact on the EU of the post-2007 economic recession has been exacerbated by its too-rapid and more so poorly controlled enlargement, as discussed above this has also weakened its CFSP and CSDP and additionally, the two (economics and security) are interlinked. Plans for future enlargement are only likely to dilute resources further while at the same time introducing new threats with which to contend, not least being the possible membership of Turkey that would bring European frontiers to the very borders of the world’s hottest trouble spots in the Middle East.

Seven years on, the author can both concur and reinforce the conclusion of Brown and Shepherd (2007)<sup>21</sup> that the post-2004 enlargement has meant ‘the likelihood of the EU fulfilling what states such as France view as its destiny as a counter-balance or alternative pole to the US, is ever more unlikely’ and failing to get the balance right between pre-existing [pre-2004] commitments and the process of enlargement ‘will ultimately undermine not only the EU’s sense of security, but also its longer-term credibility as a security actor.’



Professor KEITH-WHITE HUNT is affiliated to the School of Business at Edge Hill University and is the acting Chairman of Academic Review Panels in Business and Management at the National Commission for Assessment and Academic Accreditation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He may be reached at: *drkwh@btinternet.com*.

## Notes

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# Seeking Community Reconciliation Through Traditional Ceremonies

## A Strategy of Conflict Management

*Katerina Werkman*

The debate on the role of traditional conflict management and reconciliation practices in modern post-war situations is enduring. The central concern is whether approaches that reflect the cultural context of the conflict setting would be better suited for responding to the challenges of reconciliation in war-affected societies. In Sierra Leone, the government and the international donor community focused their efforts and funds on pursuing judicial (through the Special Court) and truth-seeking (through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission) processes. But outside the official mechanisms, people in villages across the country deployed a wealth of strategies and practices of reconciliation, healing and coming together. These included ceremonies and other forms of ritual, the meanings of which were familiar to those participating in them. This article discusses these “traditional” ceremonies and finds that they were an important resource in people’s efforts to remake social relationships and restore community cohesion in the direct aftermath of war. It also notes that such cultural resources have been severely impacted by the war. In the processes through which the communities strive for reconstruction and reconciliation these practices are also renewed and reshaped.



*Keywords Sierra Leone, re-integration, reconciliation, traditional ceremonies, community reconciliation*

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## Introduction

For quite some time, discussions have taken place concerning the place of local practices and mechanisms for dealing with conflict and reconciliation in contemporary peacebuilding efforts in Africa have been around for a while. They emerged within the theoretical debates in the conflict resolution field where the concept of transformative peacebuilding produced an emphasis on more culturally sensitive approaches. Lederach, a key proponent, stresses that 'peace building initiatives and solutions [...] must be rooted in the soil where the conflict rages and must be built on contextualized participation of people from that setting if reconciliation is to be sustained.'<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the field of transitional justice as an approach to justice specifically focused on societies emerging from periods of systematic and large-scale human rights abuses and violent conflicts has experienced a clear growth in interest and research into the potential of African traditional practices.<sup>2</sup> Traditional mechanisms have also been put into peacebuilding practices in a number of African post-war countries since the early 1990s. They were explored and adapted to become part of national as well as international strategies and programmes designed to deal with the legacy of violent conflict and find ways for the people to live together. In Mozambique, traditional cleansing and purification ceremonies have contributed to reintegrating ex-combatants into their communities. In Rwanda, the local *gacaca* tribunals have been adapted to deal with the backlog of perpetrators and pursue justice and reconciliation.

In Sierra Leone too, local traditional practices of dealing with conflict, reintegration and reconciliation were adopted in several different contexts.<sup>3</sup> First, many people advocated that the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) make use of the local beliefs and customs which would reinforce people's ownership of the whole TRC process.<sup>4</sup> Ultimately however, this was reduced to the presence of traditional chiefly authorities and religious leaders at the TRC's public hearings and to the final day's closing ceremonies that on many occasions drew inspiration from traditional rituals of forgiveness and reconciliation. While the symbolic value and healing and reconciling effect of these ceremonies has been acknowledged by some outside observers,<sup>5</sup> the limited use of the traditional practice and beliefs was seen by many as a wasted opportunity.<sup>6</sup>

Second, a number of national and international agencies and NGOs, such as UNICEF, the International Rescue Committee, Caritas Makeni

and Children Associated with War, employed traditional cleansing ceremonies in their programmes for child ex-combatants' reintegration. The ceremonies took various forms in the different communities according to the specific local practice but usually consisted of a small sacrifice, washing the child with specially prepared water containing herbs or kola nuts and a prayer.<sup>7</sup>

*Katerina  
Werkman*

Third, a local NGO Forum of Conscience launched the Fambul Tok (FT) programme in Kailahun district in 2008 designed to assist local communities across the country in organising traditional reconciliation ceremonies that they themselves identify as necessary. By the end of its second year of work, Fambul Tok had conducted more than 60 reconciliation ceremonies across Kailahun, Kono, Moyamba and Koinadugu districts.<sup>8</sup>

While distinct in the way they have approached local traditional practices and beliefs, these examples share a commonality – there has been an outside actor either initiating their exploration and utilisation or providing material support for them, or both. Moreover, the TRC closing ceremonies have only been performed at the district headquarters towns and the Commission largely failed to reach out to the more remote areas of the country. The child ex-combatants reintegration programmes have focused on facilitating the return of these children into their homes and not on the other issues pertaining to community reconciliation. Fambul Tok, although specifically encouraging community reconciliation through traditional ceremonies and eventually planning to work nationwide, had only been launched in 2008.

But what did people do to promote reconciliation and reintegration when there was no outside support? Graybill writes that the initiative's consultations preceding the launch of the programme 'revealed that local cultural traditions, dormant since the war, could be reawakened for social healing.'<sup>9</sup> But were they really 'dormant'? Or have they informed and assisted in any way the processes of coping, healing, and coming together in the villages? In what way? And what challenges did they face?

Understandings of the ways in which local techniques of reconciliation and reintegration inform communities' post-war recovery remain limited. This work seeks to partially remedy this by exploring some of the traditional ceremonies and practices that were performed in the villages and by discussing the role they played in the efforts of the villagers to deal with the challenges of post-war reintegration and recon-

ciliation. It builds on informal interviews conducted in Sierra Leone between January and February 2010. I spent twelve days in Freetown and travelled the rest of the time across the country. I visited two districts in the Northern – Port Loko and Koinadugu – and the Southern – Moyamba and Bo – Provinces and one – Kailahun – in the Eastern Province. I spent seven to ten days in each district town and visited two to four surrounding villages; 18 villages in total. I usually returned for two, occasionally three days to each village. I conducted a total of 105 interviews, 55 of these were one-on-one or tandem interviews with people in the communities – chiefs, victims, ex-combatants and civilians. Another 30 were community focus groups with between 3 and 12 participants. In addition to in-depth interviews and group discussions with the villagers, I interviewed religious leaders, NGO staff, and academics in Freetown and the district headquarter towns of Port Loko, Makeni, Kabala, Bo, Kailahun and Moyamba. I had 19 individual interviews with experts – NGO staff, civil society members, religious leaders, academics – and an expert focus group. The expert interviews were done to obtain a broader range of perspectives and perceptions and to consult the preliminary findings from the villages. In total 261 people participated in the research.

Before commencing on the bulk of this work, it is necessary to briefly qualify the use of the terms “tradition” and “traditional” which are problematic in many ways – they often bear Eurocentric connotations that tend to view such institutions and practices as ‘patterns followed from “time out of mind” in static political and social circumstances.’<sup>10</sup> But tradition is not something inert, unaltered or archaic. Rather, it is ‘inspired by a group’s past’ but continually updated, adapted and adjusted to respond to the changing political, economic and social circumstances as well as able to incorporate external influences in order to survive.<sup>11</sup> It is in this sense that “tradition” is understood in this work.

This work is structured as follows. First, this work provides a very short background to the war in Sierra Leone as a means of contextualising the conflict and its victims. The next part discussed the meaning of reconciliation based on the interpretations provided to me by the interviewed Sierra Leoneans. The last part explores the ceremonies and their role in reconciliation and post-war recovery at the village level in the selected communities.

## The War

The official beginning of Sierra Leone's civil war dates back to March 1991 when rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), led by a former army corporal Foday Sankoh and numbering initially just over a hundred men, entered the Kailahun and Pujehun districts, in the south-eastern parts of Sierra Leone, from neighbouring Liberia.<sup>12</sup> The attacks were preceded by several decades of deteriorating political, economic and social conditions in the country, largely resulting from bad governance and abuse of power, disastrous economic policies, the plundering of the country's rich mineral resources and rampant corruption. Since the introduction of a one-party system in 1978, power and resources were fully in the hands of the All People's Congress (APC) government in Freetown while the upcountry rural areas were largely marginalised – especially the opposition Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) strongholds in the eastern and southern parts of the country.

The abuse of power was not limited to central government. In provincial areas, local government officials and chiefs who retained an important role in interpreting customary law used their authority to 'reinforce hierarchies of class, gender and age and to silence or marginalize those who they perceived as a threat.'<sup>13</sup> It was mainly young men who suffered from this abuse. Compounded by poor educational and employment opportunities this led to the alienation of young men, many of whom left their villages for diamond mines or big towns. The disgruntled youth then formed a ready pool of recruits for the armed factions when the war broke out.<sup>14</sup>

Presenting themselves as liberators, the rebels achieved initial success and enjoyed some (albeit limited) degree of support from the population as they tried to capitalise on people's frustration. The first phase of the war until November 1993 was a 'conventional "target" warfare' with close-quarter fighting between the RUF and the Sierra Leone Army (SLA).<sup>15</sup> After a military coup by a group of young army officers in April 1992, and the setting up of the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), intensive military operations were launched that brought the RUF to the verge of defeat in November 1993. The NPRC was also seen by many citizens as the desired regime change which detracted the initial sympathy for the RUF. It was at this point that the RUF announced a reversion to jungle warfare that relied on ambush and terror

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Conflict  
Resolution*

tactics against both soldiers and civilians, and used abductions, mainly of children, as the main means of recruitment. By making the lives of ordinary people unbearable through large-scale violence that included murder, amputations, rape and torture as well as the systematic destruction of property, the RUF aimed at forcing the government to negotiate a power-sharing deal.<sup>16</sup>

Successive military and later democratically elected governments waged war against the rebels but were unable to decisively defeat them. In reaction to the RUF's scare tactics, the government forces often adopted 'irrational responses' and also committed many serious crimes.<sup>17</sup> After a rebel offensive on Freetown in January 1999 that left many civilians dead and half of the city burnt in its wake, a peace agreement was finally signed in Lomé in June 1999. It granted a blanket amnesty to all combatants<sup>18</sup> and envisaged the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission as an accountability mechanism to 'address impunity, break the cycle of violence, provide a forum for both the victims and perpetrators of human rights violations to tell their story and get a clear picture of the past in order to facilitate genuine healing and reconciliation.'<sup>19</sup> The terms of the peace accord were continuously violated over the next two years and only in January 2002 President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah declared the war was officially over. The 11-year war was characterised by extreme levels of violence against civilian populations and left tens of thousands of people displaced, maimed and traumatised and their communities shattered. Rebuilding these communities and finding ways for the people to reconcile and live together again – combatants and civilians, victims and perpetrators – was arguably one of the greatest challenges the country faced in its aftermath. And yet, a comprehensive approach was undertaken and it is important to flush out an understanding of reconciliation from the perspective of Sierra Leoneans.

## The Meaning of Reconciliation in Sierra Leone

The concept of reconciliation has been used with increased frequency on the global level, contributing to a certain ambiguity, an elusiveness in reaching consensus on an appropriate definition. Since discussion of the different approaches to reconciliation is beyond the scope of



this work, I will only attempt to present the most important ingredients of reconciliation as they came out of the conversations with Sierra Leoneans. This will be complemented by insights from other research on post-war reconciliation and reintegration in the country.

The English word reconciliation made its way into Sierra Leonean parlance most probably through the work of the country's TRC and activities implemented by local and international NGOs. Consequently, it is used to describe the national level efforts; the terms used to describe the process at the community level are different. On an individual level, reconciliation is expressed through the notion of having '*kol at*' (cool heart).<sup>20</sup> Although having '*kol at*' is a personal condition, its meaning is strongly relational. It means that one's heart does not contain feelings of anger, resentment or grudge against others and refers to the person's capacity to have proper social relationships with others.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, Shaw notes that in Temne, one of the major local languages, parts of the body are often used 'as tropes for the capacity to relate to others.'<sup>22</sup> A young man in a village in Kailahun District likened '*kol at*' to 'peace of mind' which was a necessary condition for one to be part of a working community: '*If you have peace of mind as an individual, you will come together with the others, eat together, hug each other and that will bring reconciliation.*'<sup>23</sup>

Collective reconciliation at the level of a community, be it a family, village or a larger group, is best expressed by the phrase '*le we mak wan word*' (let's make one word): '*A single tree cannot be a forest. So one person cannot promote or develop the community until others go with him, you go together, put things together, then you try to work for the better to develop this community. It is unity. And that is wan word.*'<sup>24</sup> Unity and the ability to work together resonated very strongly in people's descriptions of what reconciliation was about. The progress of reconciliation – or the lack of it – was often illustrated by reference to practical examples of accomplished or ongoing work in the village. These expressions of reconciliation go beyond a mere statement of peaceful coexistence as they emphasise cooperation. This must be seen in the context of the vital importance that social networks play locally.

People almost unanimously confirmed that such unity or reconciliation had been achieved in their village.<sup>25</sup> Not one of them related this to knowing the truth about the past (as the TRC model promotes), nor

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to seeing the perpetrators punished (as the international criminal justice has it). Instead, they often repeated one single formula: 'Forgive and Forget.' Let us now look at both of them in turn.

The prevailing response to dealing with the past in terms of 'Forgive and Forget' has sometimes been put down to a specific Sierra Leonean cultural characteristic.<sup>26</sup> Many outside observers have been fascinated by the 'forgiving nature' of the local people. Dowden, for example, admits he is 'always struck by the spirit of forgiveness' and 'talent for reconciliation' at the end of African wars, including the one in Sierra Leone.<sup>27</sup> I also heard reference to the culture of forgiveness from a number of Sierra Leoneans in Freetown during my first visit in 2008. My interviewees in the villages, many of whom said they have forgiven, however never spoke of the forgiveness as a natural quality they possessed.

It is important to explore the nature of this forgiveness by looking first at an excerpt from an interview with an elder who lost his father in the war. The RUF locked him up in a house together with other villagers and set it on fire. He saw forgiveness in these terms:

Elder: *'We only accept to forgive because we have no other alternative. For the sake of peace. Like we, the old people, it was only with the help of god that we were not killed during the war. We will never forget, we are forgiving, but we are still reminded of how our homes were vandalized and how people here were injured.'*

Me: *'If you had a choice what would you like to happen to the perpetrators, what would you suggest?'*

Elder: *'We have no alternative but to leave our case to god.'*<sup>28</sup>

Two important aspects of forgiveness in post-war Sierra Leone are evident from this passage: a strong sense of pragmatism and deep religiosity. First, coming together and accepting former fighters back into a community was, to many, the only available option to secure peace for the future.<sup>29</sup> Forgiveness meant avoiding further violence. Indeed, statements such as *'we have the belief that if you punish them, they will not be happy about it and will revenge'*<sup>30</sup> were common. The second element in the Sierra Leoneans' forgiving attitudes is the strong sense

of religiosity among many sectors of society.<sup>31</sup> Sierra Leoneans often turn to religion in their responses to the experiences of the violent war and their religious beliefs undoubtedly shape their ideas of forgiveness, reconciliation and justice. In many communities, religious leaders were active in promoting reconciliation and religious spaces provided a safe space where former combatants could plead for acceptance into the community. But religion is not only a source of charity and forgiveness. God was to be, for many of my sources, also the ultimate arbitrator of justice. People often declared their forgiveness in this life together with an expectation of justice being served by god in the hereafter:

We were told that nobody should revenge. That was the first message that came to us. Everybody was made by God. And if the person knows that all that he was doing was bad, then it is left with the Almighty. But we ourselves, we were made by God, so we don't have to revenge. They [the chiefs] were just telling us – let us forget about it, let us leave everything to the Almighty to decide.<sup>32</sup>

To a certain extent, placing ultimate justice in the hands of God has to do with a history of injustice in Sierra Leone and people's inability to seek retribution and justice from the state institutions. Thus, it is not only an expression of deep religiosity but also of the prolonged failure of the state to provide people with justice, the rule of law and security. Shaw finds that many people 'located forgiveness within multiple continuing forms of structural violence in the present: powerlessness, exclusion, poverty, marginality, insecurity.<sup>33</sup> Forgiveness in this sense

does not denote the absence of culpability but rather its expansion to implicate a much broader set of actors and institutions – the failure of the state, the failure of government, the failure of the legal system, the failure of education, the failure of development, the failure of the international community.<sup>34</sup>

For this reason, Stovel warns against reinforcing a belief in ultimate justice because 'it also may lead [people] to accept lack of justice which is both their due and is needed to end impunity.<sup>35</sup> There is another way of looking at it, however, if we accept that justice can indeed have 'a supernatural dimension.'<sup>36</sup> Leaving the punishment in the hands of God and other spiritual powers means that people can concentrate on their more immediate needs to restore a functioning community,

which is paramount in an environment often characterised by scarcity of resources and high degree of mutual dependence.<sup>37</sup>

Forgiving and forgetting the war means not talking about it or seeking confessions from the perpetrators. A man in a village in Kailahun District summarised these sentiments in a proverb: *'If you've come to tell me that you killed my father, I want you to show me his grave.'*<sup>38</sup> Asking questions about the past only produces more questions and resentment, it keeps the violence in the present, which make it impossible to 'cool down' the heart and move away from the past. Shaw speaks in this context about 'social forgetting'.<sup>39</sup> She sees it as a process

different [...] from individual forgetting, in that people still have personal memories of the violence. But speaking of the violence – especially in public – was (and is) viewed as encouraging its return, calling it forth when it is still very close and might at any moment erupt again.<sup>40</sup>

"Remembering" war or the inability to "forget" was expressed as an individual rather than a community matter. More importantly, remembering it was related to present material hardship resulting from the war. Material compensation makes 'forgetting' and achieving '*kol at*' possible, or at least easier, by giving the survivors the opportunity to rebuild their life and move on:

All hearts are not equal [...] Those who had houses and those houses were burnt, even if that person may have peace of mind, at any time he or she reflects back to the past he will have no peace perhaps because that person is old now and cannot afford to put up another house. So that is the problem now.<sup>41</sup>

## Traditional Practice and Reconciliation

Rural communities in Sierra Leone use a wealth of ritual and religious practice to respond to violence, regulate and remake social relationships and restore community cohesion. Ceremonies and rituals of a great variety took place in post-war Sierra Leone.<sup>42</sup> In all the villages, people confirmed that they performed a ceremony or another coming-together event to mark the end of hostilities, promote unity in the village as well as re-establishing the broken relationship with the spiritual world. They were performed on family as well as on community level and within the community's secret societies and laid the foundation for future coexistence of the communities.<sup>43</sup> They often

shared common features and served common purposes although the specific forms and features varied from one chiefdom to the next.<sup>44</sup>

Consider this brief account of a ceremony in one of the villages:

When the war was over, we came back and offered a sacrifice of white bread [beaten flour and kola nut]. For the people that have gone to return because we were scattered. By doing that we started returning, bit by bit from different places of hiding. We offered a big sacrifice, a bull, once we returned in full. That we offered because of the bad things that went on and that we saw and also to reunite ourselves.<sup>45</sup>

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Two women in the village gave a more detailed account of this “big sacrifice:”

First during the night a “play” was performed for more harmony by the women. A dance was performed by the women. This included a prayer to the ancestors. We swore that all that brought evil to us will suffer. We asked the ancestors for protection and for nothing sinister to happen again. Also the men went to the bush to consult the spirits and then organised their own ‘play’ at night. After we did these activities, men and women separately, we came together as the whole village and made the collective sacrifice of a red bull and ate it together. It created unity and oneness.<sup>46</sup>

They later continued on the effects of the ceremony:

It has gone a long way in assisting us and in ensuring for us that something like that [war] was not going to happen again. Also for those that have gone, and for those that are not present for their safe return. It wasn’t automatic, not that after a ceremony all is done. It will come over time and we have patience. But when we see the result we believe that it comes because we performed all this. We did all these sacrificial ceremonies to live in peace and harmony until god meets us. [...] We believe that the ceremonies will help in achieving that.<sup>47</sup>

The elders emphasised another important aim of the ceremony:

... the play, in essence was to ensure that no one can hold grudge to the next person, like this person was responsible for this act or this person was responsible for this act.<sup>48</sup>

Some of the important functions of the ceremonies are evident from these short descriptions. They assist in at least four interrelated areas: restoring relationships with the spiritual world, forging com-

munity cohesion, reintegrating perpetrators and providing a symbolic closure. It is worth presenting these in more detail.

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### *Restoring Relationships with the Spiritual World*

One of the key tasks in the direct aftermath of the war was to restore relationships not only among the living but also between the living and ancestral spirits. Most communities had not been able to worship their ancestors while being on the run during the conflict, and wanted to pay their respect and announce their return through the offering of a sacrifice. My sources spoke in terms of offering the ancestors an apology or at least an explanation for their long absence. A minimal sacrifice – *'feeding of the ancestors to show that they have not been forgotten'*<sup>49</sup> – was made in all the villages I visited.

Not only had the absence of sacrifices affected the relationship with the ancestors. During the war many moral codes and taboos – such as committing incest, having intercourse in the bush, killing, etc – had been broken. Sarpong suggests that since in much of Africa moral/social codes including taboos come from God and ancestors, breaking them offends God and destroys peace. It follows from this that *'restoring peace in society is to find out what has gone wrong spiritually and through special rituals to restore the state of equilibrium.'*<sup>50</sup> All communities had made some kind of initial offering to their ancestors however, cleansing the communities of broken taboos often require more elaborate ceremonies including the offering of larger animals such as cows or goats. Not all communities have succeeded in performing such ceremonies. The need to address these outstanding rituals was frequently reiterated as their absence was felt in everyday misfortunes. My interviewees spoke about this: *'Because the bush has not been cleansed after people having intercourse there, this has led to bad harvest and to the youth dropping out of school.'*<sup>51</sup> Similarly, a very strong shared belief in the relationship between the sacrifice and improved conditions emerged from the interviews:

Immediately after the war, when we were doing farming, we were not getting good yields. Until we performed the ceremony – but the year that we performed that ceremony, up to now there is rice. We are still harvesting. Some people have even abandoned the rice. We have good yield.<sup>52</sup>

Once ceremonies are performed there is no expectation of immediate relief or improvement. However, positive developments that do

take place are perceived a result of performing them. The belief that the community will reap the fruits of its efforts results in the courage and motivation to undertake activities such as farming. In this way, performing the right ceremonies can also have a critical impact on post-war reconstruction in the villages.

### *Community Cohesion*

Apart from mending the relationship between the living and their ancestors, ceremonies also served to restore relationships among villagers and foster community cohesion. As these ceremonies are based on practices that have often taken place in villages for generations and are familiar and significant events to most participants, they serve to re-establish people's bond to the locality, foster feelings of belonging and confirm the familiar values of the community. By practising these ceremonies, the communities 'create their social and moral world anew as they re-member it through ritual.'<sup>53</sup>

It makes us remember that we did this, when our grandmothers and grandfathers usually worked with the tradition. So if we are doing the same thing we just remember our forefathers, our parents who have been doing that tradition, so [...] that is why we like it.<sup>54</sup>

They further help strengthen the relationships among individuals and families in the community. Building on Durkheim, Richards writes that 'rites, as collective actions without practical purpose, generate social solidarity through emotional entrainment.'<sup>55</sup>

During the dancing, if somebody has hurt you before, during that time you hug yourselves, you eat together and then the person that have done wrong will feel happy – that the brothers that I hurt still love me, I should come back and live with them.<sup>56</sup>

Ceremonies are also particularly powerful events that bring people together to share experience and initiate a process of social recovery. Schirch believes that 'doing something together helps them [people doing it] feel as one.'<sup>57</sup> That the 'doing something together' was an important aspect of the ceremonies is also clear from the way they were organised:

We said every household should prepare a meal, so that we could bring the food together, so that everybody could come around and lay their hands on this food. Men went out to hunt

and women collected palm oil.[...] we gathered and all the village people came together, and we decided that we should cook a very big meal to pass the ceremony for the war that had happened. [...] People came with rice, animals, so we prepared the food for the ceremony, which everybody observed and there was a happy mood.<sup>58</sup>

The contribution of food (and cooperation to catch or produce it) relates to community cohesion in the sense of creating community spirit through a joint effort. It also has the integrative aspect, often involving the settled inhabitants as well as new strangers (often fighters that had stayed behind in their former stronghold). The importance of the ceremony is underlined by the emphasis placed on communal work in the Sierra Leonean understanding of reconciliation. By accomplishing organising a ceremony the community had proven to itself that it was capable of achieving something through cooperation.

On a more symbolic level, the actual sharing of food is in itself understood as a gesture of reconciliation:<sup>59</sup> *'Dipping your hands into the same bowl'* symbolises *'togetherness'*.<sup>60</sup> This seems to be a common understanding across the country: *'How can we show that it is finished? When we all sit down and eat together. That eating shows that the ex-combatants have been forgiven.'*<sup>61</sup>

### *Ex-Combatant Reintegration*

The ceremonies were also important avenues for reintegration and acceptance of former fighters. In one village in the Kailahun District where people who fled during the war found upon their return ex-RUF fighters living in their village, a group of elders explained at some length how the ceremony had been a symbolic expression of both groups that they were ready to live in peace together:

We did it because we felt that even those that remained here (ex-combatants) and those who came (the original inhabitants that had fled), if we don't do it we would just be sitting and nobody would care for each other. [...] If we had failed, those that had come want to revive the ceremonies and the ones that remained would have said no, it would show that there was not going to be any peace. But when we came we told them, we don't know exactly what happened, is it that



our ancestors were mad over us, is that why these things were happening? When we came we had to do it. And when we did it, we were together [...] there is reconciliation taking place in the community.<sup>62</sup>

Publicly confessing or explaining one's deeds does not seem to have been part of the local ceremonies. Most commonly, returning ex-combatants first turned to the chief and the elders to gain permission to re-settle in the community. The chief would then plead for acceptance by the community on the ex-combatants' behalf, often during a ceremony, and acceptance would be sealed by asking ancestors for forgiveness for all the bad that was done. Coming together to perform the ceremony was an expression of the desired reconciliation by all participants. The fact that a ceremony was organised and the community participated showed an intention, a desire for a peaceful and better future. It provided a platform to acknowledge some of the wrongs committed and to accept the ex-combatants without explicitly referring to their deeds. According to an NGO worker, being an active part of ceremonies by contributing or undergoing cleansings that the community is expecting go a long way in showing that you want to fit back in:

If you want to stay in the community you have to go through those rituals. You see out there, they have no other alternative. All have committed a lot of atrocities in the community, if people say this is what you have to do to stay with us in our community, they have no way out, but to go through it or live on their own. It is a demand from the community.<sup>63</sup>

Understandably, many villagers shared a feeling of discomfort and fear of the ex-combatants. But also the hesitation on the side of the ex-combatants to approach fellow community members may have sometimes been caused by fear of being rebutted. By taking part in the ceremony they could show that they had changed their ways. As one RUF ex-combatant in Kailahun explained: ‘

[...] of course, it was good. Before the ceremony we had the fear people would point fingers at us and say that we are not part of the community. But after the ceremony they saw that we are really seeking for peace and after the ceremony it was good and nobody pointed a finger at me. And there was peace after this time.<sup>64</sup>

This is not to say that a ceremony can magically produce reconcil-

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iation. Understandably, the acceptance and reintegration of ex-combatants (especially adult ones) is a much more complex and delicate process in which a ceremony can only play a part.

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### *Closure*

Much has been written about Sierra Leonean communities preferring to leave the past behind and to 'Forgive and Forget' rather than publicly recounting episodes of war violence.<sup>65</sup> The ceremonies assisted in the process of social forgetting by symbolically drawing a line in the sand. The following statement is illustrative:

So if we have come and we have performed the ceremony like that, to say let us experience reconciliation among ourselves. So that one is over and we do not see the need to accuse anyone and say "you did this, you did this."<sup>66</sup>

Sometimes such closures were formalised during the ceremony by installing bylaws that banned people from pointing fingers at anyone in relation to whatever happened during the war or using terms such as 'ex-combatant' or 'rebel' at all. Performing the ceremony could thus be seen as representing a symbolic break with the past. The war was to be left behind and the focus should be on making a better future.

### **Conclusion**

Reconciliation is a long and complex process. It is not automatic or straightforward and there is no single way of bringing communities together after a violent conflict. In Sierra Leone, the government and the international donor community focused their efforts and funds on pursuing the judicial (through the Special Court) and truth-seeking (through the TRC) processes. Little attention was given to exploring and supporting other processes that would reflect local priorities and conciliatory needs. Outside of official mechanisms, people in villages across the country employed a wealth of local practices of reintegration, reconciliation and healing. These included ceremonies and other forms of ritual, often improvised and adapted versions of established practice, the meanings of which were familiar to those participating in them. These were an important resource in people's efforts to remake

social relationships and restore community cohesion in the direct aftermath of the war.

First, they served the aim of facilitating community cohesion and ex-combatant reintegration. Secondly, just as they support togetherness among the living, they also foster the restoration of relationships with the spiritual world and thus ensure the support of ancestors. It is through this symbolic reconnection with the ancestral spirits that the past and present are re-linked after the war and a better future is envisaged. This makes these ceremonies an important part of post-war reconciliation efforts. Lastly, ceremonies were sometimes perceived as a particular moment in time when reconciliation had been declared and jointly endorsed. While representing the beginning of a long process rather than an achieved end state of reconciliation, they provided a symbolic closure, a break with the past.

The major obstacles for communities to perform the ceremonies were of a practical nature. In most communities people blamed lack of money, but others pointed to the permanent loss of the unique knowledge that disappeared with the death of specialists in the war. The war has caused major damage to many sacred places, including ancestral shrines. But there certainly are more factors at play that explain why in some communities ceremonies took place while in others people only lamented their absence and loss. There seems to be a relationship between the declared unity in the village and performing ceremonies. In one village in Luawa chiefdom, people proudly stated that despite the lack of money and food, everyone was encouraged to contribute at least a cup of rice and young men were sent to hunt for animals to carry out the sacrifice and cook a joint meal: *'We have done a small ceremony but we have a plan to do the proper one, and whatever happens we must do it, so that we can continue to experience peace and unity among us.'*<sup>67</sup> Contrarily, in a village in the Sanda Magbolonthor chiefdom, the chief told me: *'Money is not sufficient to perform the required sacrifices. Not much has been performed, nothing at all in fact. It is better to do nothing than to do it half-heartedly.'*<sup>68</sup> In the latter, my field notes also describe a prevailing heavy atmosphere of frustration and anger combined with despair and general destitution much unlike any other community I visited during my fieldwork. This suggests that the ability to perform any of the traditional ceremonies, instead of just bringing about unity

and reconciliation could in fact already be an expression of the capacity of the community to come together for a joint goal.

Given the prominent role traditional chiefly authorities and elders play in most of the established processes of dispute resolution and reconciliation, the quality of leadership in adapting these mechanisms to dealing with the post-war challenges seems critical. This, however, also usually meant that this reconciliation happened on 'old terms' – with the pre-war social order with its injustices and marginalisation of certain groups largely restored. In this respect, there is space where outside assistance could be fruitfully used. But this can hardly be done without increased sensitivity and understanding of the local conciliatory needs and preferences.

It makes sense to the local communities to use what they 'know' to face the challenges presented by the need to foster coexistence after the war. The communities have shown strong resilience and the ability to restore relationships and reintegrate those who have harmed them, among other things through means of local traditional practice. But it must also be emphasised that the ceremonies and other local practices of social recovery are not an easily transferable, universal formula for assisting the achievement of reconciliation in all the communities across the country. The situation in the villages that this paper focused on is very different from that in towns. Some of the most affected groups such as amputees and the war wounded, many of whom stay in specially constructed settlements usually outside major towns, are often disconnected from their home communities and their social and spiritual networks that provide the background for the traditional practice. In my conversations in an amputee and war wounded settlement outside Port Loko, people saw little value in performing any ceremonies to help them deal with their ordeals.

It would be a mistake to present the traditional reconciliation and cleansing ceremonies as a panacea for fostering a successful reconciliation process. They, after all, are also part of the damaged social fabric and not a static tool ready to be used in mending broken relationships and safeguarding unity and social renewal. But they are also rooted in the local communities' history, as well as their understanding of what reconciliation means, and have shown a high degree of adaptability to the contemporary needs of combatant reintegration and rebuilding relationships after the war. Overlooking them or barely instrumen-

talising them to turn them into an accessory of the externally-driven peacebuilding processes would therefore be just as flawed.



*Katerina  
Werkman*

KATERINA WERKMAN is affiliated to the Department of International Relations and European Studies (Czech Version) at Metropolitan University Prague and may be reached at: *katka.werkman@gmail.com*

## Notes

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- 19 Lomé Peace Agreement (1999), Art.xxvi.
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- 21 Boersch-Supan (2009), p.13, cf. Shaw (2005), 'Rethinking Truth and Reconciliation Commissions. Lessons from Sierra Leone', Special Report 130, United States Institute of Peace. Available online at: <<http://www.usip.org/files/resources/sr130.pdf>> (Accessed 08 October 2010).
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- mony of interests or of equal relationship among its members. Indeed, the present author as well as other researchers found abundant evidence that there persists discrimination against former combatants, which is often expressed in covert and subtle ways. Further, chiefs and male elders are in a dominant social position to youth and women. See Kateřina Werkman, 'Seeking Community Reconciliation through Traditional Practice. The Sierra Leonean Experience,' PhD diss., Univerzita Karlova, 2012; Stovel (2006), Boersch-Supan (2009).
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- 29 This view was also often presented to the communities by the country's government and by the local traditional authorities. There was a very strong appeal by the government to the nation to accept the ex-combatants and 'Forgive and Forget'. Several people even today refer to the president's post-war message.
- 30 Interview 32.
- 31 According to statistics, Sierra Leoneans are about 77 % Muslim, 21 % Christian and 1 % traditional/animist. Most Sierra Leoneans also practice animist beliefs along their Muslim or Christian faiths, belong to the local secret societies and take part in diverse ritual practice. See Shaw (2009).
- 32 Focus Group 20.
- 33 Shaw (2009), p. 222.
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- 35 Stovel (2006), p. 71.
- 36 Victor Igreja, 'The Monkeys' Sworn Oath. Cultures of Engagement for Reconciliation and Healing in the Aftermath of the Civil War in Mozambique', PhD diss., Leiden University, 2007, p. 370.
- 37 Idem., pp.369-370.
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- 39 Shaw (2005), p. 9.
- 40 Idem.
- 41 Focus Group 21
- 42 Cf. Shaw (2005), Stovel (2008), Utas (2009), Stark (2006).
- 43 Secret societies are sodalities widespread among the inhabitants of Sierra Leone as well as other societies of the Upper Guinea Coast of West Africa. The most common secret societies in Sierra Leone are Bondo (in the south it is usually called Sande) for women and Poro for men. Secret societies mediate and control the power of the supernatural – the world of ancestors and spirits, so that they work in favour of the community. The societies also serve as educational institutions that supervise the rites of passage of young girls and boys into adulthood. Production of 'fully socialized human beings' is one of the main purposes of the societies.

- 44 The ceremonial acts such as reconciliation and cleansing rituals or pouring of libations have their roots in the traditional belief systems, which share some important similarities among the different ethnic groups in the country. Fundamental to these beliefs is the belief in the supernatural. This has three main elements. The first is the belief in a supreme being. Second is the belief in spirits or natural divinities that mainly reside in the 'bush' and can be either good or bad. Third is belief in the spirits of the ancestors who continue to influence the day-to-day affairs of the living. For more detail see: Manifesto 99 (2002), Alie (2008).
- 45 Focus Group 5.
- 46 Interview 16.
- 47 Idem.
- 48 Interview 15.
- 49 Interview 5.
- 50 Peter Sarpong (1988), *African Theology: A Simple Description*, Ghana: Cabo Publications, p. 360 cited in: Susan M. Cutter, 'Grassroots perspectives of peace building in Sierra Leone 1991-2006', PhD diss., 2009, Coventry University, p. 45.
- 51 Focus Group 13.
- 52 Focus Group 23.
- 53 Rosalind Shaw (2002), *Memories of the Slave Trade: Ritual and the Historical Imagination in Sierra Leone*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 268.
- 54 Focus Group 25.
- 55 Paul Richards (2006), 'An Accidental Sect: How War Made Belief in Sierra Leone,' *Review of African Political Economy*, 33:110, p. 652.
- 56 Focus Group 15.
- 57 Lisa Schirch (2005), *Ritual and Symbol in Peacebuilding*, Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, p. 139 cited in: Ezechiel Sentama, 'Peacebuilding in Post-Genocide Rwanda: The Role of Cooperatives in the Restoration of Interpersonal Relationships.' PhD diss., Gothenburg University, 2009, p. 53.
- 58 Focus Group 3.
- 59 cf. Lindsay Stark (2006), 'Cleansing the Wounds of War: an Examination of Traditional Healing, Psychosocial Health and Reintegration in Sierra Leone,' *Intervention*, 4:3, pp. 206-218.
- 60 Focus Group 27.
- 61 Interview 3.
- 62 Focus group 27.
- 63 Expert Interview 13.
- 64 Interview 41.
- 65 See Werkman (2012), Shaw (2005) and (2007), Kellsall (2005), Stovel (2006).
- 66 Focus Group 28.
- 67 Interview 48.
- 68 Focus Group 12.



# The “Marine” Factor

## What the Lепенisation of French Politics Really Means

*Barthélemy Courmont*

Marine Le Pen, president of the French extreme-right party Front National, emerged on the political scene as not only the daughter and heir to Jean-Marie Le Pen, but a smarter and more seductive leader than her father. Her rise – just a few months before the 2012 French presidential elections – and impressive results in the first round signal that she is likely to play a significant role in French politics and change the traditional political chessboard. In this light, the concept of the “Lепенisation of minds,” formulated several years ago to describe the impact of the far-right party on politicians and public debates, becomes more relevant, with Le Pen’s ability to win over and convince voters going far beyond the ranks of her traditional supporters. What might be the long-term consequences of this “Marine factor”? Is the extreme Right, once demonised, becoming a “normal” political presence? And how might this affect other political forces? This article examines what may be the future direction of French politics under the growing influence of the “new look” extreme-right party.

*Keywords: France, elections, Marine Le Pen, Jean-Marie Le Pen Lепенisation, Nicolas Sarkozy, populism, extreme right*

### Introduction

When he shocked the nation and discounted all surveys pointing in the opposite direction by reaching the second round of the 2002 French presidential election – having eliminated Socialist PM Lionel Jospin – Jean-Marie Le Pen certainly enjoyed the most exciting and successful



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moment of his political career.<sup>1</sup> But he also knew that he did not stand a chance of becoming France's new head of state. Indeed, his opponent, Jacques Chirac soundly defeated him two weeks later and assured his own re-election. With less than 18% of the vote (a similar result to his first-round score of 16.9%) to Chirac's improbable 82.1%, Le Pen, the leader of Front National, the extreme-right party he founded in 1972, revealed his limits. Although his first-round result was legitimately considered a political earthquake – especially for the Socialist Party, which could not reach the second round just five years after a notable victory in the 1997 legislative elections – it also proved the inability of Front National to win an election and lead the country and marked the start of the slow decline of the far-right party.

The 2007 presidential elections confirmed Le Pen's difficulties in appearing as a credible alternative to what he constantly described as 'the establishment' although he remained under very close watch during the campaign, mostly because of his previous performance.<sup>2</sup> With support barely over 10%, Le Pen saw his worst results in two decades and was knocked out of the first round, quickly overcome by Nicolas Sarkozy (31%) and Ségolène Royal (26%). He finished in fourth position, far behind the centre candidate François Bayrou (18.5%). Having lost at least one million supporters between 2002 and 2007, most of whom had rallied behind Sarkozy,<sup>3</sup> Le Pen was no longer the exuberant political leader he once was, but an old and tired man when he conceded that he would never run for president again. To many observers, Front National seemed to be in a moribund state when its historic leader announced his retirement after more than 50 years in the political arena. This feeling was reinforced with the designation of his daughter Marine as his successor. Seen as too young, too soft, not legitimate and embodying a nepotism which attracted criticism even from within Front National ranks, Marine Le Pen's ability to rekindle the party she officially became president of in January 2011, was at first poorly evaluated.<sup>4</sup> Her spectacular rise both within the party and at national level proved the contrary.<sup>5</sup>

Less than two months later, Le Pen was officially elected president of Front National and stunned pollsters by recording 23% of the vote in a hypothetical presidential first round - well above the best figures her father had achieved and virtually eliminating either the Socialist candidate or then president Sarkozy depending on the polls.<sup>6</sup> But

those opinion polls had proved wrong on many – if not all – past occasions. In addition, all candidates were still not officially known, and Le Pen appeared to be the only one confident she would be running in the election, her first major test at that stage.<sup>7</sup> However, repeated polls giving her around 20% of potential voters – coupled with the difficulties faced by Sarkozy – clearly indicated an unexpected renewal of the extreme-right party. Marine Le Pen was in a position to claim justifiably that history was repeating: she had hopes of reaching the second round of the presidential election in 2012, just ten years after her father’s performance.<sup>8</sup>

The official result of the first round of the 2012 election was both a defeat and a victory for Marine Le Pen. Coming in third, she did not manage to relive her father’s performance and finished far behind Sarkozy and François Hollande, who eventually won the second round to become France’s first Socialist president since François Mitterrand. Nevertheless, with a result close to 18%, Le Pen both outscored her father and attracted more votes than any extreme-right party candidate in a presidential election in France’s history.<sup>9</sup> While her father totalled 4 804 713 votes in 2002, Marine Le Pen reached an incredible 6 421 426. She could claim a serious victory based on her ability to raise the number of supporters of the extreme-right movement.

It is not just that Le Pen seems capable of hanging onto the support of the traditional far-right voters who loyally followed her father for several decades. Her aptitude for expanding the nationalist movement’s influence and spreading its ideas – with success never known by her father – is as impressive as it is alarming for her opponents. But how far can she go? At present, and as the results of the 2012 presidential election have proved, the chances of a Front National candidate winning a major election still seem extremely slim, and most observers would simply reject this as nonsense based on the precedent of the “Republican front” that secured Chirac’s re-election in 2002 when he benefited from the support of not just his partisans, but also the entire Left seeking to avoid a hypothetical Le Pen success. Even her ability to reach the second round remains debatable. As for the risk of the Republican front not being reproduced in a future major election, recent statements by François Fillon, the former prime minister under Sarkozy, suggest that this is confined to local elections: the Republican blockade will likely stay the norm at national level, especially when

it comes to the presidential ballot. Marine Le Pen knows this reality better than anyone. Therefore, the meaning of the “Lepenisation” of French politics lies in the “Marine” factor and her ability to transform what lately has become an old-fashioned and outdated extreme-right movement into a respectable but still radical political party.<sup>10</sup> Is she making these efforts to enable her to win a future presidential election? Not necessarily. In parallel with her own real ambitions, she clearly aims to pursue her father’s long-time battle: spreading the ideas of the extreme-right across the political classes and, if possible, the population. With her natural talent and a favourable political context, she might reach what always remained an inaccessible summit for the elder Le Pen: turning the party into an accepted and, by extension, respected political force.<sup>11</sup>

### The Emancipation of “Daddy’s Girl”

Since she officially became president of Front National at the Tours congress on 16 January 2011 with 67.65% of the vote,<sup>12</sup> Marine Le Pen has initiated a comprehensive makeover of her father’s political party, confirmed in the first-round results of the 2012 presidential election, and emerged as an unexpectedly mighty political figure.<sup>13</sup> But what is behind what some may see as the fast and striking emancipation of a one-time “Daddy’s girl?”<sup>14</sup>

Le Pen’s rise within Front National has been particularly impressive since it was certainly not as easy as it may seem and her name may at first suggest. On 05 May 2002, the day of her father’s defeat in the second round of the presidential election, Le Pen made a noted appearance in a TV debate, revealing publicly for the first time her abilities as a political leader. A month later, she reached the second round of a legislative election in Lens in northern France and then managed to take away more than 32% of the vote in a second-round showdown eventually won by a Socialist candidate. This significant result did not, however, score her any credit with party delegates, who voted her out of an important position on the central committee at a congress in Nice in April 2003. Totally overlooking what might be seen as clear party disapproval, and showing obvious signs of nepotism, her father chose her as the party’s new vice-president the next day. What appears to have been his last political fight – against his own supporters – was

an extremely risky manoeuvre that could potentially have accelerated a split in Front National, then already quite divided, and shown the impossibility of the extreme-right party staying united and surviving its founder's retirement.<sup>15</sup>

This was not enough to discourage the young lawyer, who since her early years had faced various problems linked to her father's notoriety, from bullies at school to attempts on her life back in the 1970s.<sup>16</sup> Being raised as the youngest daughter of an extreme-right leader surely helped to build the toughness she proved once launched on the political arena. As soon as she took control of the party, Marine Le Pen imposed her own style against all odds, as she later claimed in her autobiography.<sup>17</sup>

This new style at first surprised most observers, but it was driven right from the start by a clear strategy. While preparing for the 2012 presidential election, Le Pen shocked supporters by adopting a "Gaullist" position totally different from the one embodied by her father: Jean-Marie Le Pen may be one of the only contemporary French politicians – along with far-left radicals – who never claimed the Charles De Gaulle legacy. In her own words, Marine Le Pen solemnly believed that 'in the Fifth Republic, a presidential election is about a person's relationship with the country.' Her father, an Algerian war veteran and a lively opponent of De Gaulle in the 1960s, probably dreamt on several occasions of this 'relationship,' but never expressed such views, which would likely have alienated him from the most radical elements of his movement. But Marine did not seem to be tempted by the extreme Far Right. She calculated shrewdly that the most radical Front National voters would likely maintain their support for her in the absence of any substantial rival. This left her to focus on expanding her audience in more pragmatist spheres, which had always been resistant to the neo-fascist image of the extreme-right party.<sup>18</sup> During the 2011 May Day rally in front of the Jeanne-d'Arc statue – used by her father during the 1980s as an icon to defend French heritage – she made sure that extremist factions of the party such as skinheads were kept out.

The younger Le Pen has also punished those who appear to be the most conservative and extremist members of her party. Alexandre Gabriac, a young member of regional parliament, was summarily banned from Front National in May 2011 after being photographed giving the Nazi salute.<sup>19</sup> More interesting than the ban itself, however, was the

*Barthélémy  
Courmont*

fact that the party's new president took this decision alone and against the wishes of Jean-Marie Le Pen. She also investigated the case of Yvan Benedetti, one of the biggest supporters of Bruno Gollnisch (Gabriac too was in his camp), who had been her greatest rival at the Tours congress. Benedetti was blamed for an interview he gave in which he publicly admitted to being anti-Semitic. He maintains, however, that he was punished for his engagement by Gollnisch, and he is probably right to some extent. But potential opponents within the party like Gollnisch are not Le Pen's biggest threat. She is far more concerned with the Front National image than her father was, and major mistakes like those by Gabriac and Benedetti are therefore immediately sanctioned and used to convince a broader audience that the makeover of the party is a reality. Gollnisch, who declined an offer to be the party's vice-president after Marine Le Pen's victory, once faced charges himself after allegedly denying Nazi war crimes in an October 2004 press conference. He is generally perceived as more conservative and right-wing than the Front National president.

The differences inside the party are not, then, the biggest concern for Le Pen, and cannot be compared with the split the French extreme-right underwent in the late 1990s when Bruno Mégret left Jean-Marie Le Pen's party to start his own movement.<sup>20</sup> Marine Le Pen does not just want to clean out the top ranks of the party her father founded: she also believes she has a unique opportunity to establish a fresh new image for Front National. When she publicly stated that 'the [Nazi] camps were the height of barbarity,' she not only challenged one of her father's most controversial and criticised statements of the mid-1980s, but at the same time "un-demonised" Front National in the eyes of many analysts.<sup>21</sup> Her strategy insists that Front National cannot be considered racist and anti-Semitic if it wants to gain wider support and acceptance, and she will not hesitate to sacrifice those who continue to dispute her vision. Several party members besides Gabriac and Benedetti have been censured at different levels for their 'lack of discipline', according to Steeve Briois, the secretary-general of Front National. This is a clear message to anyone tempted to be insubordinate, and a totally new dynamic not just within the party, but also outside it since legal attacks have multiplied against those who criticise her actions and statements without showing proof or respect.<sup>22</sup> This tactic

of taking the offensive also radically differs from the approach her father maintained. Outspoken as he was, Jean-Marie Le Pen constantly faced accusations about his statements, but he rarely struck back and sued his opponents. Playing the role of the victim, he preferred to take a defensive stance, and his daughter has proven to be more reactive on this count.

Marine Le Pen has certainly defined her own style, and although ultimately this does not seem to be enough to make her an electoral threat, it is contributing significantly to the new image of Front National she wants to promote. As the left-wing newspaper *Libération* once noted, she is undoubtedly different from her father, and that makes her far more dangerous. British newspaper, *The Guardian*, crowned Marine Le Pen simply ‘the most dangerous woman in France.’<sup>23</sup>

### A “Normalised” Political Party

One of Marine Le Pen’s biggest contributions to Front National over the years – most significantly since she launched a political career in her father’s footsteps in the mid-1990s and multiplied her media appearances<sup>24</sup> – has been her constant efforts to “normalise” its image.<sup>25</sup> As early as 2000, she became the president of *Génération Le Pen*, an association close to the party whose aim was ‘un-demonising Front National.’<sup>26</sup> Her clear intention was to transform a political force into a “normal” political party, and her more recent statements confirm that she still considers this mission a priority.<sup>27</sup>

The problem has been that Jean-Marie Le Pen’s legacy is extremely sensitive on this point, and the ideological influences of the party he founded, along with its messages, have worked to marginalise the whole movement.<sup>28</sup> Most of the elder Le Pen’s political career was based on his reputation for making repeated inflammatory if not downright offensive statements.<sup>29</sup> Although this strategy certainly served his anti-establishment image, and the stance of the rebel party seduced fringe groups in the population,<sup>30</sup> it also limited the capacity to attract more voters. For the vast majority of French people, Jean-Marie Le Pen’s provocateur stance was proof of his lack of policy arguments. Various interviews he gave to the media between the two rounds of the 2002 presidential election revealed his inability to propose decent

reforms, and he was chided and mocked on many occasions by various politicians (including Nicolas Sarkozy, as early as in the 1990s) for barking loudly, but not being able to lead the country properly.

Unlike her father, Marine Le Pen is quite comfortable talking about economics, and although her economic policy – which may be summarised as leaving the EU and abandoning the euro – is driven more by populism than any clear agenda,<sup>31</sup> she does manage to explain her exit strategy by pointing out the risks related to globalisation.<sup>32</sup> Her arguments remain controversial, but do not differ much from those advocated by a significant portion of Union for a Popular Movement (UPM) voters as well as some of its members. At the same time, she sounds versed enough in the social implications of globalisation to compete with anti-globalisation movements coming from the Left.<sup>33</sup> The rejection of the Lisbon Treaty after the 2005 referendum – while due to a variety of reasons – and widespread opposition to the euro prove how popular these positions can be.<sup>34</sup> Even so, in a rare analysis of Le Pen's political programme published outside France, UK expert Charles Grant pointed out that 'she has nothing to say about global governance, or what to do about transnational threats such as organised crime, climate change, proliferation or international terrorism.'<sup>35</sup> In that respect, the focus on the euro a few months before the presidential election clearly had the effect of hiding the lack of analysis she might be able to offer in other fields.

Opting for a populist stance rather than technical analysis, Le Pen believes that France needs to re-examine its membership of the European Union and NATO, and it should not make a dogma out of free trade. These views have had a significant impact on voters to the point that some UK-based journalists have wondered whether France has found its own Margaret Thatcher.<sup>36</sup> But more important than being the "new Iron Lady," Marine Le Pen sounds 'like a typical European leftist when she complains that NATO has subordinated French foreign policy to US imperialism, or when she points that many more people have died in Iraq since 2003 than in America on 9/11.'<sup>37</sup> More recently, she criticised what she saw as the pro-American stance taken by President Hollande on the Syrian issue, referring to France as 'the mistress of the United States.'<sup>38</sup>

Le Pen is also constantly formulating short statements that address what she believes to be the "new image" of her party. This is particularly noteworthy when it comes to economic and social issues. When she



claims that Barack Obama is further to the right than she is, and when she pretends to share a similar approach to the Socialists on social issues while being ‘neither on the Right nor on the Left,’ she puts her political engagement ahead of political parties, and seeks to end Front National’s identification as an extreme-right movement. Aware of her contribution to her party’s image, she even told British journalists that ‘there is a normalisation of our movement that is incarnated by my personality. The effect has contributed to making our analyses more credible.’<sup>39</sup> The pugnacity of her insistence on an anti-euro policy has certainly brought her some credibility, if not support, at international level given the current difficult situation within the Eurozone.

Marine Le Pen’s other secret weapon is her power to appeal to intellectuals and blue-collar workers at the same time.<sup>40</sup> Before the 2012 presidential election, several opinion polls indicated that she was by far the most popular potential candidate with working-class voters although the results ultimately proved Hollande and Melenchon’s success in this category. This is not a fundamentally new development for Front National, but rather the enhancing of an old dynamic with new potential to attract voters. Jean-Marie Le Pen previously benefited from massive support from these spheres, but Marine is also welcomed by some journalists and intellectuals who in the past refused to interview her father and now keenly entertain the idea that Front National should not be disregarded. The case of Robert Ménard, the founder and former secretary-general of Reporters sans frontières (Reporters without Borders) – who became famous for his opposition to the holding of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing – stands out. In a controversial book titled *Vive Le Pen* published on 21 April 2011 (exactly 11 years after the shock of the first-round presidential election), the journalist took to the defence of Front National voters.<sup>41</sup> He also criticised the way that Front National was constantly being pilloried by the media, arguing that it should be accepted as a normal political party. Seizing on a unique opportunity, the president of Front National publicly welcomed the book’s publication and during a rally on 01 May 2011 defended Ménard against those who vigorously attacked his positions.

Louis Aliot, who is at once the vice-president of the extreme-right party, head of Front National-affiliated think tank *Idées Nation (Ideas Nation)* and Marine Le Pen’s partner in private life, claimed at the start of the 2012 campaign that Front National was receiving increas-

ing support from various intellectuals and policymakers who believed the party had changed and become respectable. Whether they did this openly (the most significant instance being lawyer Gilbert Collard, who eventually became a member of parliament on the Front National ticket on 17 June 2012) or not, the majority of those who approached Front National argued that they were neither fascist nor racist. In fact, the number of high-profile names, whether politicians, intellectuals or popular figures, who align with Front National remains far more meagre than Aliot suggests. But what was once a complete taboo is no longer off limits.

Marine Le Pen has also succeeded, as has been noted, in cleaning up the anti-Semitic image of Front National, and so won significant praise from various intellectuals. Under her supervision, the party publicly sanctioned activists such as Christian Bouchet, once a strong Marine Le Pen supporter and now accused of being anti-Zionist and pro-Iranian. The president of Front National was even invited by a journalist to appear on Jewish radio (Radio J), generating friction within the Jewish community about whether or not she could be trusted. Her ability to disrupt the anti-Semitic image of the party has probably been one of her biggest successes and certainly something her father would never have been capable of achieving.<sup>42</sup>

Although she is somehow quickly demolishing what he took five decades to build, Jean-Marie Le Pen has every reason to be proud of his youngest daughter. As he revealed after letting go of the party command, 'she is able to lead the party while looking outwards and making ideas accessible and appealing.'<sup>43</sup> In other words, she can be either Le Pen or Marine depending on her needs. But she can also be both of them at the same time. The two Le Pens disagree on some issues, and their styles are far from comparable, but Marine's strength has been her capacity to combine the supporters her father slowly built up with a new wave of activists who are attracted by the idea of a "Bleue Marine" coalition. The latter could cover a much larger audience than Front National ever was capable of.

## The Growing Appeal of the Far-Right

The fear of another "21 April" has driven both political strategies and the positions of the major parties over the past decade. The Social-

ists have pointed out the risks that differences among left voters could lead to fratricidal splits and weaken chances of qualifying for the second round of national elections. They need to decide whether the best strategy is to represent left-wing (including far-left) voters or attract centrists, who have emerged as a strong political force. Hollande notably faced the same dilemma back in the 2012 presidential campaign under pressure from the success of Jean-Luc Mélenchon's far-left movement. At that time, Mélenchon's immediate unconditional support after the first round proved crucial to the Socialist candidate's ability to unify forces on the Left. This gave Hollande the chance to expand his audience towards the centre.

On the other hand, the Right underwent a major transformation after Chirac's re-election in 2002, leading to the prompt creation of a new party called Union for a Popular Movement. This heterogeneous party initially aimed to represent all the different sensibilities among right-wing voters – excluding those on the extreme right – in order to guarantee entry into the second round in any circumstances. This strategy was immediately revealed in the legislative election after Chirac's return, and it showed its relevance. Making good use of the new party, Nicolas Sarkozy achieved peak success by regrouping centrists and a portion of voters who previously supported Le Pen, but were seduced in 2007 by the UMP candidate and the possibility of seeing ideas transformed into action. Jean-Marie Le Pen's failure in his final presidential campaign was a direct consequence of this expansion of UMP and its appeal to the Right.

The proximity between the ideas of Marine Le Pen and those of a significant UMP faction remains problematic given her ability to broaden her group of supporters. According to several polls, up to 45% of Sarkozy's followers like her ideas. Once elected, Sarkozy quickly disappointed the far-right voters who had abandoned an old and waning Le Pen to join Sarkozy's majority, but soon criticised the French president's security and immigration policies and his image. More importantly, they blamed Sarkozy for supporting the euro at any cost, maintaining that the European currency is responsible for the deteriorating social situation. As noted, this position makes Marine the number one choice for working-class voters who do not believe promises from the Left and blame Sarkozy for the increased cost of living since he came to power.

Before the 2012 election, Marine Le Pen maintained that – in contrast with the situation in 2007 – Front National supporters were now so disappointed with Sarkozy that faced with the choice, many would even elect a Socialist over him this time.<sup>44</sup> In the circumstances, her strategy was to present herself as the best candidate to prevent the Socialists' return; the most efficient way to do this was to challenge Sarkozy on the platform he was elected on in 2007 while at the same time exposing disharmony within UMP. The greater the divisions in the French president's party, the more Le Pen would succeed in enlarging her audience. On this point, immigration policy was her most powerful weapon, and she ran her campaign on the issue long before the names of other presidential candidates were even known.

On 30 May 2011, the Front National leader sent a challenging letter to all 577 French MPs, in which she called for a public debate on dual citizenship.<sup>45</sup> Marine Le Pen believed (and still maintains) that this status – established in France since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – should be debated if not totally abolished. Most observers put the number of dual citizens in France between four and five million (there is no official data on the topic). Front National has contested these figures, arguing that the number of French citizens who also hold Algerian citizenship alone comes to between four and five million.<sup>46</sup>

Immigration expert Patrick Weil, author of *Etre français. Les quatre piliers de la nationalité* (*Being French: The Four Pillars of Nationality*), reminds us that historically the Far Right has always criticised dual citizenship.<sup>47</sup> But this time, Le Pen's party was not isolated on the issue since Droite populaire (The "Popular Right") – a right-wing movement iDroump – reacted quickly to Marine Le Pen's move and claimed responsibility for the debate. Three MPs from this movement, Lionnel Luca, Jean-Paul Garraud and Philippe Meunier, were invited to the Elysée Palace a day after receiving Le Pen's letter – a sign Le Pen's call had directly swayed the Elysée agenda. Henri Guaino, one of Nicolas Sarkozy's closest aides, also maintained that the topic of dual citizenship should at least be debated, echoing the wishes of both the Front National president and Droite populaire members. The newspaper *Le Monde* reported on the similarity between the arguments of Marine Le Pen and those of Droite populaire, calling this troubling. So too was a parliamentary report by UMP's Claude Goasguen which suggested that new French citizens should give up their original citizenship.<sup>48</sup> The Pa-

risian MP was finally forced to withdraw his support after a push from his party's secretary-general, Jean-François Copé amid political crisis. More worrying was probably the impact that *Droite populaire* had on Sarkozy's choices. During the presidential campaign, this met the even stronger influence of one of Sarkozy's most prominent campaign advisors, Patrick Buisson, originally a far-right hard-liner, who shaped most of the UMP candidate's tough stance on citizenship and immigration policy in the spring of 2012.

Behind the dual citizenship issue, the appeal of far-right beliefs and their impact on the direction of the UMP government raised concerns among UMP leaders. Nathalie Kosciusko-Morizet, then environment minister and recently the runner-up in the 2014 mayoral election in Paris, warned her party members not to be seduced by Marine Le Pen's charms, claiming that the new Le Pen was only a softer version of her father and propagating the very same ideas. Kosciusko-Morizet, who authored the book *Le front antinational (The Anti-national Front)*, which strongly criticises Front National, and later had an important role as a spokesperson in Sarkozy's campaign, responded to the attacks on dual citizenship, arguing that a person cannot abandon their native citizenship.<sup>49</sup> Several high-ranked government members, including Yves Jégo<sup>50</sup> and Eric Besson, then respectively the minister of industry and a former minister of immigration, followed suit, while others chose to stay silent. UMP was undoubtedly sharply divided on the issue, and once Sarkozy officially became a candidate for a second term, he was called on to clarify his position before the presidential election lest he appear schizophrenic or, worse, like he had been lured into taking an extreme-right position to ensure his re-election.<sup>51</sup> In that vein, a provocative piece titled 'Nicolas Le Pen' in the *Wall Street Journal Europe* in March 2012 attacked the French president's stance on immigration after he publicly announced his wish to review France's position in the Schengen zone if he was re-elected.<sup>52</sup>

Under the sway of Patrick Buisson during the re-election campaign, Nicolas Sarkozy tried to woo Marine Le Pen's supporters in the first round, coating his electoral platform with a distinct far-right finish. He proposed halving the number of legal immigrants allowed into the country every year and threatened to pull out of the Schengen free-travel zone unless Europe's outer borders were more tightly guarded.<sup>53</sup> He met with sharp criticism not only from the Left, but also from Marine

Le Pen, who claimed several times that the incumbent president was a liar whose record after five years at the country's helm proved his inability to arrive at an immigration policy that the extreme-right party would endorse. The debate over whether Sarkozy had become tougher than Le Pen on immigration grew prominent to the point that it poisoned the whole campaign, eclipsing other, arguably more important issues such as the economy and high unemployment.

The outcomes of the first-round election – from Marine Le Pen's success to the collapse of the centre – pushed the UMP candidate to take an even more radical approach. Trying to woo Front National voters between the two presidential election rounds, Nicolas Sarkozy spoke of Marine Le Pen as 'legitimate' and 'compatible with the Republic.'<sup>54</sup> He was condemned across various media,<sup>55</sup> while some top UMP leaders, such as former prime minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin urged the President to pay more attention to the 'humanists' within UMP.<sup>56</sup> Sarkozy's former minister of sports Chantal Jouanno admitted that though she would support the UMP candidate in the second round, she was extremely concerned by attempts to lure Le Pen supporters.

Sarkozy eventually failed in his re-election bid though he still finished with a respectable 48.4% – less than 1.5 million votes behind Hollande and a far better result than all polls had predicted. This score was largely explained by the support he gained from Marine Le Pen voters.<sup>57</sup> One of the most important lessons of the election was, thus, that Front National's success does not solely lie in the results themselves, but in the party's omnipresence during the campaign and especially between the two rounds.

But for UMP, the "Marine problem" did not end with the 2012 presidential election. The legislative election a few weeks later was even more crucial as local-level alliances with Front National proved decisive for holding onto a majority seriously challenged after Hollande's victory. Some Droite populaire members such as Christian Vanneste called for local allegiances with the far-right party against the Left. Faced with the loss of the legislative election, UMP co-founder Thierry Mariani evaluated the situation, concluding that 'opting to the right was not the reason for the defeat'<sup>58</sup> and suggesting further moves in that direction in the future.<sup>59</sup> For some observers, such a spectacular U-turn (if taken) after years of demonising Front National, along with

the losses in the 2012 presidential and legislative elections, could spell the end of UMP and its break-up into several smaller entities to the right of the political spectrum. On his blog, former prime minister Dominique de Villepin (2005-2007), a one-time candidate for the 2012 presidential election (he exited the race after failing to secure the mandatory 500 official endorsements needed for candidacy) wrote that ‘UMP looks more and more like this party [that] we could say...asks good questions, but gives the wrong answers.’ This was an allusion to what he saw as the Lepenisation of the party he had left some months earlier to create a political force of his own. It was a view shared by Yves Jégo.<sup>60</sup>

The legislative election of 10 and 17 June 2012 drove home UMP’s difficulties in reaching a clear and unanimous strategy on Front National. Though UMP was convincingly defeated, with the Socialist Party giving Hollande an absolute majority, it was mostly UMP’s stance on alliances with Front National that posed a serious dilemma for the former majority party. This was certainly not helped by Marine Le Pen, who used the election as a chance to claim parliamentary seats for her party – for the first time since the 1986 election apart from a few isolated cases that were quickly overturned.<sup>61</sup> By forming a *Bleue Marine* coalition (an allusion to the navy blue colour usually used to depict Front National’s results in the media as well as an obvious play on her first name), and capitalising on divisions among UMP leaders, she managed to win over several UMP candidates who had been tempted by alliances against the Left. Most candidates, however, rejected what has often been described as a ‘pact with the devil.’ Still, considering Jean-François Copé’s struggle to rally his troops – and the adoption of a controversial “ni-ni” (neither-nor) approach, which meant no alliance with Front National, but at the same time no alliance against it – several cases revealed the cracks inside UMP. Most ridiculous was certainly the situation of Nadine Morano, a former minister under Sarkozy, who, in the lead-up to a difficult second round in her district, was the victim of a prankster who called her mobile phone pretending to be Front National Vice-President Louis Aliot. Broadcast on the Sud-Radio radio station, the conversation became a national sensation and was catastrophic for Morano, who had praised Marine Le Pen for her talents and admitted to sharing a lot with the extreme Right, before adding that her biggest fear was ‘seeing [her] country turn into a new Lebanon,’ a reference

to Hollande's wish to allow foreign citizens to vote in local elections. Morano was ultimately defeated a few days later, but no sanction was taken against her at the level of UMP's leadership.

More recently, former prime minister François Fillon, an official rival to Jean-François Copé within UMP, has criticised the "ni-ni" approach by flagging the option in some circumstances of supporting a Front National candidate over the Socialist competitor in a local election second round; even if there is no UMP candidate in the race. The receptiveness to this position across the ranks of Front National – and also in Droite forte (The "Strong Right"), the most important and most right-wing movement in UMP, which inherited Sarkozy's November 2012 election strategy and calls for dialogue with Front National) - contrasts with the moderate Right's traditional refusal to consider cooperation. It also marks a stark difference from the era of Jean-Marie Le Pen's defamatory counter-attacks, which served to isolate the extreme-right party and shrink its chances of winning an election.<sup>62</sup> More generally, the divisions among Droite forte, Droite populaire, Droite sociale (The "Social Right") and Droite humaniste (The "Humanist Right") have reached a new level with several media sources reporting that the levee has broken between UMP and Front National just as Marine Le Pen predicted.<sup>63</sup> In the wake of the election, UMP needs to take a less ambiguous position regarding Front National, opting either for a clear alliance comparable to those seen in several other European countries over the last few years, or complete rejection of any dialogue and compromise with the extreme Right. Either way, and considering the divisions, this decision will have a crucial impact on the party's future, and at the same time, be of benefit to Front National, which will either be accepted as a respectable party, or gain support from new sympathisers.<sup>64</sup>

The fact is that the mainstreaming of Front National goes way beyond the positions expressed by some UMP members, whether or not they are isolated. According to a poll conducted by TNS Sofres on 31 May 2012, between the time of the presidential and the legislative elections, 51% of respondents considered Front National to be a 'normal party' (of whom 24% said it was 'totally normal' and 27% 'quite normal'), while only 42% did not see the party as a 'normal one'.<sup>65</sup> In another BVA survey on 12 September 2013, as many as 72% of UMP supporters claimed that they viewed Front National a 'normal party.' This figure puts UMP in an



extremely delicate position that not only harms its standing in local and national elections, but threatens its very existence. It also shows a radical change of public opinion about a party that until recently was considered untouchable.

*Barthélémy  
Courmont*

### **Conclusion: A Marinisation of Front National, Or the Lepenisation of French Politics?**

While the rapid rise of the current president of Front National may seem surprising, this is because one crucial question remains unsolved: what is Marine Le Pen's purpose considering that she will probably never get the support of the majority of voters and win a national election?<sup>66</sup> The answer lies in the phenomenon of "Marinisation," which could replace "Lepenisation," with far more effective results for the extreme Right.

Certainly, Marine Le Pen's "new look" Front National does not have much in common with her father's party when it comes to its public image despite the fact that its ideas and agenda remain largely unchanged.<sup>67</sup> She understands, however, how important image is in contemporary politics and how decisive some symbols can be for lending brand new legitimacy to a party. On this point, we may consider that she has already succeeded well beyond her father's expectations, turning a once untouchable, fascist-like movement into a respectable political party.

In parallel, Marine Le Pen has not only maintained her father's legacy of offering an anti-establishment alternative, but continues to grow this profile in spheres where Front National was never considered a credible voice. When she compares herself to British Prime Minister David Cameron<sup>68</sup> or refers to Joseph Stiglitz to justify her immigration policy, her aim is clearly to suggest an alternative way based not just on constant and in some ways irrational denunciation of goings-on under various governments of past decades – as was her father's custom – but on proposing solutions which sometimes appear no more radical than those from other parties. In this respect, *Droite forte* has been her best ally since the positions of this UMP arm are sometimes further to the right than those of Front National.

The biggest consequence of the Lepenisation of French politics, therefore, does not lie in the likelihood – still limited – that Front Na-

tional will reach the second round of a major election and claim power at national level. It is more about the impact on other parties, most notably UMP. Marine Le Pen's touch now appears more visible to the point that UMP's *raison d'être* appears determined by its stance on the Far Right. Un-demonising Front National's ideas seems an easier goal than un-demonising the party itself. Marine Le Pen understands this better than her father ever did, and this is certainly the key to her success.

The current political context is also clearly serving the younger Le Pen's strategy and boosting her credibility. Recent scandals involving allegations of sexual assaults by public figures – names range from former IMF director Socialist Dominique Strauss-Kahn to state Secretary of Public Affairs Georges Tron (UMP), who quit his position within François Fillon's government in late May 2011 – along with accusations by former minister of education Luc Ferry of participation in orgies, have fed Front National's constant arraignments of the establishment. Marine Le Pen was one of the first French politicians to castigate Strauss-Kahn after his arrest in New York, and she played a significant role in disgracing Tron. This position of defender of a more "moral" political class is a legacy of her father, but Le Pen senior was never in a position to claim to embody a "cleaner" generation of leaders. Although twice divorced, Marine Le Pen has more credibility as a figure of public decency, which will surely support her image in confronting the various scandals that undermine both the Socialist Party and UMP. Fighting corruption has also been one of the main platforms she has used to draw more supporters, and she can still exploit the fact that Front National representatives have never held any important position, unlike all the other significant political parties. Alongside the economic turmoil within the Eurozone, which has affirmed Marine Le Pen's arguments for an anti-euro policy, this has meant that Front National is now considerably more popular than ever before.

The question remains, however, whether the "Marine factor" will be a long-term phenomenon, or it will be obscured by a "Marine effect" which shows its limits and, depending on political measures like electoral system reforms, may be nothing but a 'paper tiger'.<sup>69</sup> The 2014 mayoral and European elections, and of course, the 2017 presidential and legislative ballot, will bring vital answers. However, in the lead-up to these important political events, Marine Le Pen has already succeeded beyond her expectations by turning Front National into the centre

of all attention and a reference point for all political parties – whether they are tempted by its ideas or terrified by the prospect of another 21 April – as well as ‘the hottest political party in the country.’<sup>70</sup> Having slowly transformed her party’s image, she has now become a factor that can influence France’s positions on major domestic and foreign issues.<sup>71</sup> In this way, Marine Le Pen is not only shaping the political debate in France, but also potentially preparing the political agenda for at least the next five years. As political expert Sylvain Crépon has pointed out, with Marine Le Pen, ‘the Lепенisation of minds is really beginning,’<sup>72</sup> and it is still difficult to evaluate its long-term impact. This will surely depend on several factors: First, of course, there are the actions of President François Hollande, and how they are perceived by the public. Second, there is the ability of UMP leaders to prevent their party from imploding. Finally, we have Marine Le Pen’s capacity to take the un-demonising of Front National even further by attracting notable new members and reaching the level of Hollande’s main opponent.<sup>73</sup> If her successes were unexpectedly great under UMP leadership, then the stakes appear even bigger under a Socialist government. As sociologist Alain Mergier has observed, ‘Front National is no longer at the margins of politics, it is becoming its centre.’<sup>74</sup> Reaching the centre and inevitably becoming a catalyst of French political life – once impossible dreams for Jean-Marie Le Pen – seem to have become the reality for his daughter’s party. This is a new paradigm in French politics.



BARTHÉLÉMY COURMANT is Professor of Political Science at Hallym University (Chuncheon, Korea) and affiliated to the Paris-based Institute of International and Strategic Relations (IRIS). He can be reached at: [info@cejiss.org](mailto:info@cejiss.org).

## Notes

- 1 See François Dufay and Charles Jaigu (2002), ‘Le Pen: histoire d’une revanche,’ *Le Point*, 25 April 2002. Available at: <http://www.lepoint.fr/archives/article.php/62394>
- 2 Le Pen’s 2007 presidential campaign is described in detail in Marc Fauchoux and Christophe Forcari (2007), *Le Pen. Le dernier combat*, Paris: Editions Jacob-Duvernet. See also Bernard Mathias (2007), ‘Le Pen, un pro-

- vocateur en politique (1984-2002),’ *Vingtième Siècle*, 2007/1 no.93, pp. 37-45.
- 3 See Nonna Mayer (2007), ‘Comment Nicolas Sarkozy a rétréci l’électorat Le Pen,’ *Revue française de science politique*, 2007/3 vol. 57, pp. 429-445.
- 4 Some experts such as Jean-Yves Camus believed that while Marine Le Pen fared far better in the opinion polls than her father ever had, her support was limited if concerning. See ‘Marine Le Pen et le FN iniquètent à raison L’UMP,’ *AFP*, 12 December 2010.
- 5 ‘The Rise of Marine Le Pen’ (2011), *The Economist*, 09 March 2011.
- 6 The most cited poll appeared in the newspaper *Le Parisien*. See ‘Sondage - Présidentielle : Marine Le Pen en tête au premier tour’ (2011), *Le Parisien*, 08 March 2011. See also Sophia Bouderbala (2011), ‘French Far Right Spooks Rivals in Vote Poll,’ *AFP*, 09 March 2011.
- 7 Various candidates were later declared officially; they included Eva Joly of the Greens and Jean-Luc Mélenchon, the far-left candidate. Socialist representative François Hollande was named after a two-round primary held from 09 to 16 October 2011. Of the right and centre-right candidates, François Bayrou (MoDem) announced his intention to run a third time – after competing in 2002 and 2007 - in December 2011 while Nicolas Sarkozy (UMP) officially entered the race on 15 February 2012.
- 8 Some analysts went so far as to suggest that Marine Le Pen could win the presidential election and speculated on the consequences. See the political fiction of Frédéric Deslauriers (2011), *Les deux-cents jours de Marine Le Pen*, Paris: Plon. See also Stéphane Bieganski (2011), *Marine Le Pen. Celle qui fait trembler la République!*, Paris: QI Design.
- 9 For an account of the French Far Right, see James Shields (2007), *The Extreme Right in France: from Pétain to Le Pen*, New York: Routledge.
- 10 For an historical perspective, see Jean-Marc Simon (2011), *Marine Le Pen, au nom du père*, Paris: Editions Jacob-Duvernet.
- 11 The concept of the “Lepenisation of minds” has been highlighted and debated on various occasions, notably after Jean-Marie Le Pen’s electoral successes in an effort to explain new racist and populist tendencies and their impact on French society. It was first formulated by former (Socialist) minister of justice Robert Badinter. See Michel Soudais (2011), ‘Badinter contre Badinter,’ *Politis*, 02 October 2011. Available at: <<http://www.politis.fr/Badinter-contre-Badinter,15418.html>>. For more information about the concept, see Pierre Tevanian and Sylvie Tissot (2002), *Dictionnaire de la lepénisation des esprits*, Paris: Esprit frappeur and Pierre Tevanian and Sylvie Tissot (2006), ‘La lepénisation des esprits: Éléments pour une grille d’analyse du racisme en France,’ *La Pensée*, no. 345, pp. 47-56.
- 12 ‘Marine Le Pen élue présidente du Front national avec 67,65 % des voix’ (2011), *AFP*, 16 January 2011. Before this election, several journalists showed interest in the emergence of the new far-right leader. See, for instance, Steven Erlanger, ‘Child of France’s Far Right Prepares to Be Its Leader,’ *The New York Times*, May 21 2010 and Robert Marquand, ‘France’s National Front: Will Marine Le Pen Take the Reins?’, *The Christian Science Monitor*, June 25, 2010.
- 13 See Bernard-Henri Lévy (2010), ‘Maintenant, Marine Le Pen,’ *Le Point*, 29

- March 2010.
- 14 For a good recent account, see Patrice Machuret (2011), *Dans la peau de Marine Le Pen*, Paris : Seuil.
  - 15 See 'Marine Le Pen à la conquête du Front National' (2010), *Le Parisien*, 04 September 2010. Available at: <<http://www.leparisien.fr/politique/marine-le-pen-a-la-conquete-du-front-national-04-09-2010-1055321.php>>
  - 16 For a portrait of Marine Le Pen, see Caroline Fourest and Fiammetta Venner (2011), *Marine Le Pen*, Paris: Grasset.
  - 17 Marine Le Pen (2011), *A contre flots*, Paris: Editions Jacques Grancher.
  - 18 Caroline Monnot and Abel Mestre (2011), *Le Système Le Pen: Enquête sur les réseaux du Front National*, Paris: Denoël.
  - 19 'Alexandre Gabriac 'sera exclu''(2011), *Le nouvel observateur*, 25 March 2011. Available at: <<http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/actualite/politique/20110325.OBS0274/alexandre-gabriac-sera-exclu.html>>
  - 20 See Paul Hainsworth (2000), 'The Front National: From Ascendancy to Fragmentation on the French Extreme Right', in Paul Hainsworth, Paul (ed.) (2000), *The Politics of the Extreme Right: From the Margins to the Mainstream*, Pinter/ Continuum, pp. 18-32.
  - 21 Quoted in 'Marine Le Pen: 'Les camps Nazis sont le summum de la barbarie''(2011), *L'Express.fr*, 03 February 2011. Available at: [http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/politique/marine-le-pen-les-camps-nazis-sont-le-summum-de-la-barbarie\\_958673.html](http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/politique/marine-le-pen-les-camps-nazis-sont-le-summum-de-la-barbarie_958673.html)
  - 22 Targets include several authors and analysts who published recent works about Le Pen as well as various newspapers and magazines. See 'Marine le Pen ou la politique du prétoire' (2011), *L'Express*, 11 June 2011.
  - 23 Russel Shorto (2011), 'Marine Le Pen: Is This the Most Dangerous Woman in France?' *The Guardian*, 26 June 2011.
  - 24 For an account of the media coverage of Marine Le Pen in the media, see Julie Boudillon (2005), 'Une femme d'extrême droite dans les médias. Le cas de Marine Le Pen,' *Mots. Les langages du politique*, 2005/2, no. 78.
  - 25 Laszlo Liskkai (2010), *Marine Le Pen, un nouveau Front National?*, Paris: Favre.
  - 26 See 'Le Pen, quoi de neuf ? Marine!' (2003), *Le nouvel observateur*, 17 April 2003. See also Michèle Cotta (2010), 'La dédramatisation du Front National,' *Le nouvel économiste.fr*, 10 December 2010. Available at: <<http://www.le-nouveleconomiste.fr/la-dediabolisation-du-front-national-7246/>>
  - 27 Le Pen has stated notably that Front National is 'neither on the Right, nor on the Left.' Quoted in 'Marine Le Pen, la présidentielle et le brin de muguet' (2011), *Le Point*, 01 February 2011.
  - 28 For an account of Front National's ideology, see Peter Davies (1999), *The National Front in France: Ideology, Discourse and Power*, New York: Routledge; and Edward G. DeClair (1999), *Politics on the Fringe: The People, Policies, and Organization of the French National Front*, Duke University Press.
  - 29 For a comprehensive analysis of Le Pen's rhetoric, see Virginie Wathier et al. (1998), *Le Pen, les mots. Analyse d'un discours d'extrême droite*, Paris: La Découverte.
  - 30 See, for instance, Pierre Bréchon and Subrata Kumar Mitra, 'The National

- Front in France. The Emergence of an Extreme Right Protest Movement' (1992), *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 25, no.1, pp. 63-82.
- 31 On this issue, see Mathieu von Rohr (2011), 'Marine Le Pen's Populism for the Masses (Part 2: The Divide Between the Governing and the Governed),' *Der Spiegel*, 07 July 2011.
- 32 For an overview of Marine Le Pen's French franc policy and Euro exit strategy, see Willy Legrand (2011), 'Marine Le Pen pour le retour du franc français,' *Nations presse.info*, 14 February 2011. Available at: <<http://www.nationspresse.info/?p=123251>>
- 33 Andrea Bambino (2010), 'Marine Le Pen veut investir le terrain économique pour être crédible,' *AFP*, 09 December 2010. It is important to note that Front National's interest in globalisation arose quite late and after the party had already achieved some political success with a programme focused mainly on immigration. In his 1985 policies, for instance, Jean-Marie Le Pen did not refer to any risks of globalisation. It was only in the early 1990s, and particularly after the publication of Bruno Mégret's *La Flamme les voies de la Renaissance*, that the term "mondialisation" appeared in Front National's literature and a sustained campaign against globalisation began. For an account of Front National's anti-globalisation stance, see Harvey G. Simmons (n.d.), 'The French and European Extreme Right and Globalization.' Available at: <<http://home.alphalink.com.au/~radnat/theories-right/theory3.html>>
- 34 On Front National and populism, see Annie Collovald (2004), *Le "populisme du FN", un dangereux contresens*, Broissieux: Le Croquant.
- 35 Charles Grant (2011), 'Marine Le Pen and the Rise of Populism,' *Center for European Reform*, 20 July 2011. Available at: <<http://centreforeuropeanreform.blogspot.com/2011/07/marine-le-pen-and-rise-of-populism.html>>
- 36 Linda Palermo (2011), 'Marine Le Pen: Has France Found Its Own Thatcher?,' *The First Post*, 09 March 2011. Available at: <<http://www.thefirstpost.co.uk/76102,news-comment,news-politics,does-france-see-its-own-thatcher-in-marine-le-pen-france-presidential-elections#ixzz1ZhR39gCv>>
- 37 Alan Johnson (2011), "Morosité" and Marine Le Pen,' *World Affairs Journal*, 14 March 2011. Available at: <[http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/new/blogs/johnson/Morosit\\_and\\_Marine\\_Le\\_Pen](http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/new/blogs/johnson/Morosit_and_Marine_Le_Pen)>
- 38 Quoted in Abel Mestre (2013), 'Marine Le Pen à Marseille: 'La France est la maîtresse des Etats-Unis'', *Le Monde*, 15 September 2013.
- 39 Quoted in Kim Willsher (2011), 'Marine Le Pen: Is the 'Devil's Daughter' Right?' 25 September 2011 Available at: <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/8786459/Marine-Le-Pen-Is-the-devils-daughter-right.html>>
- 40 In contrast, the success of Front National with working class people was one of Jean-Marie Le Pen's biggest triumphs, particularly after the collapse of the French Communist Party in the second half of the 1980s. A significant number of former members joined the far-right party. See David Bell and Byron Criddle (1989), 'Review Article: The Decline of the French Communist Party,' *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 19, no.4, pp. 515-536.
- 41 Robert Ménard and Emmanuelle Duverger (2011), *Vive Le Pen!*, Paris: Mor-

- dicus.
- 42 Peggy Hollinger (2011), 'French Far-right Seeks to Change Image,' *The Financial Times*, 09 February 2011.
  - 43 Quoted in 'Jean-Marie Le Pen: 'Marine est née pour être un chef',' (2011), *Le Parisien*, 16 January 2011. Available at: <<http://www.leparisien.fr/politique/jean-marie-le-pen-marine-est-nee-pour-etre-un-chef-16-01-2011-1229247.php>>
  - 44 The results proved Le Pen partly wrong: the majority of her supporters voted for Sarkozy in the second round although she announced that she would not personally endorse either remaining candidate.
  - 45 Two months later - on 14 July, France's national day - she also published an article on the same theme on the *Le Monde* website. Marine Le Pen (2011), 'La double nationalité heurte la majorité des Français,' 14 July 2011. Available at: <[http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2011/07/14/la-double-nationalite-heurte-la-majorite-des-francais\\_1548853\\_3232.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2011/07/14/la-double-nationalite-heurte-la-majorite-des-francais_1548853_3232.html)>
  - 46 See Ségolène Gros de Larquier (2011), 'Marine Le Pen voit double,' *Le Point.fr*, 21 February 2011. Available at: <[http://www.lepoint.fr/politique/marine-le-pen-voit-double-21-02-2011-1298032\\_20.php](http://www.lepoint.fr/politique/marine-le-pen-voit-double-21-02-2011-1298032_20.php)>
  - 47 Patrick Weil (2008), *How to Be French, Nationality in the Making* (trans. Catherine Porter), Durham: Duke University Press.
  - 48 Quoted in 'Claude Goasguen veut limiter la binationalité' (2011), *Le nouvel observateur*, 09 May 2011. Available at: <<http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/actualite/politique/20110509.OBS2655/claude-goasguen-veut-limiter-la-binationalite.html>>
  - 49 Nathalie Kosciusko-Morizet (2011), *Le front antinational*, Paris: Editions du Moment.
  - 50 'RSA: Yves Jégo (PR) dénonce une 'lepénisation' de l'UMP,' *Le Parisien*, 12 May 2011. Available at: <<http://www.leparisien.fr/flash-actualite-politique/rsa-yves-jego-pr-denonce-une-lepenisation-de-l-ump-12-05-2011-1446638.php>>
  - 51 Several observers warned that by taking far-right positions on immigration and citizenship, Sarkozy might be jeopardising the values of UMP. See Arnaud Leparmentier (2010), 'Sarkozy fait perdre à la droite républicaine ses valeurs' (2010), an interview with Patrick Weil, *Le Monde*, 03 August 2010. In this interview and elsewhere, Weil stressed what he called the 'extremisation' of Sarkozy, referring to the latter's efforts to attract Front National voters.
  - 52 'Nicolas Le Pen' (2012), *Wall Street Journal Europe*, 13 March 2012.
  - 53 Gabrielle Parussini (2012), 'French Rivals Woo Right's Votes,' *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 April 2012.
  - 54 Quoted in Lionel Bonaventure (2012), 'Sarkozy, poursuivant sa campagne tambour battant, juge Le Pen 'légitime,'" *AFP*, 24 April 2012.
  - 55 See, for example, 'Sarkozy, un candidat qui joue avec le Front'(2012), *Libération*, 24 April 2012. The sharpest and, to some extent, most germane criticism, however, appeared in a *Le Monde* editorial which charged that Nicolas Sarkozy 'has adopted the language, the rhetoric and in consequence the ideas, or more precisely, the obsessions of Madame Le Pen', 'Sarkozy et

- le FN: La fin ne justifie pas tous les moyens', *Le Monde*, 25 April 2012. See also Bruce Crumley (2012), 'A Dangerous Game: Why Sarkozy's Bid for Far-Right Votes May Backfire', *Time*, 26 April 2012 Available at: <<http://world.time.com/2012/04/26/a-dangerous-game-why-sarkozys-bid-for-far-right-votes-may-backfire/>>
- 56 Jean-Pierre Raffarin was prime minister during Jacques Chirac's second term from 2002 to 2005. He was replaced by Dominique de Villepin after the victory of the "no" campaign in the referendum on ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon.
- 57 Nicolas Sarkozy benefited in the second round from the support of more than 70% of Marine Le Pen's voters to achieve this result unequalled by any candidate in the Fifth Republic.
- 58 Quoted in Alexandre Lemarié (2012), 'La droitisation de l'UMP n'est pas la cause de la défaite', selon la Droite populaire,' *Le Monde*, 19 June 2012.
- 59 See 'La Droite populaire pose la question des alliances entre UMP et FN' (2012), *L'express.fr*, 19 June 2012.
- 60 Ibid. Yves Jégo officially left UMP after making a statement on its "Lepenisation." After the legislative election, Jégo called for 'alliances on the right to address the threat of Front National,' quoted in Colombe Dabas (2012), 'Jégo: 'Une droite plurielle pour répondre à la menace FN,' *L'express.fr*, 20 June 2012.
- 61 Front National gained two extremely symbolic seats with the election of Gilbert Collard, a declared "Marinist" though not a Front National member, and the victory of 22-year-old Marion Maréchal-Le Pen, Marine's niece and Jean-Marie's grand-daughter. Maréchal-Le Pen became the youngest MP and her image helped boost the party's strategy of building ties with far-right parties in other EU countries, especially Vlaams Belang in Belgium. The success of Jacques Bompard, a former Front National member, can be added to this short but historically significant list. Before the election, Maréchal-Le Pen's profile especially drew media attention. See, for instance, Bruce Crumley (2012), 'Meet French Candidate Marion Maréchal-Le Pen: Third-Generation Extreme-Right Militant,' *Time*, 04 June 2012; Angelique Chrisafis (2012), 'Le Pen Again: New Face of French Far Right Has Familiar Surname,' *The Guardian*, 04 June 2012; Kim Willsher (2012), 'French Parliamentary Elections: Marion Le Pen Hoping to Continue the Front National Dynasty,' *The Daily Telegraph*, 03 June 2012; and Chloé Woitier (2012), 'Marion, le nouveau visage du clan Le Pen,' *Le Figaro*, 25 April 2012.
- 62 See Jocelyn A. J. Evans and Gilles Ivaldi (2005), 'An Extremist Autarky: The Systemic Separation of the French Extreme Right', *South European Society and Politics*, Vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 351-366.
- 63 For a good account of the diversity within UMP, see 'A l'UMP, la 'droitisation' en procès?' (2012), *L'express.fr*, 19 June 2012.
- 64 The poor performance of Droite populaire, which had fewer than 43 of its members re-elected in the 2012 legislative election, may add to the success of the Bleue Marine coalition. See Matthieu Deprieck (2012), 'La droite de l'UMP sort affaiblie des législatives,' *L'express*, 19 June 2012.
- 65 'Le FN est un parti 'comme les autres' pour la moitié des Français' (2012),



- Lexpress.fr*, 01 June 2012. Available at: <[http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/politique/le-fn-est-un-parti-comme-les-autres-pour-la-moitie-des-francais\\_1121426.html#xtor=AL-447](http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/politique/le-fn-est-un-parti-comme-les-autres-pour-la-moitie-des-francais_1121426.html#xtor=AL-447)>
- 66 Le Pen's defeat to a Socialist candidate in the second round of the legislative election in Hénin-Beaumont (in northern France), while by an extremely narrow margin, underscored her difficulties in winning a two-round election even at a local level.
- 67 'France's Extreme-Right Makeover' (2011) *Newsweek*, 20 February 2011.
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- 73 After the legislative election, Marine Le Pen officially made 're-composing the right around Front National' a priority. See Abel Mestre (2012), 'Marine Le Pen mise sur une 'recomposition autour du FN',' *Le Monde.fr*, 18 June 2012.
- 74 Quoted in Alain Mergier (2013), 'Le FN n'est plus à la marge du politique, il en devient le centre', interview with François Fressoz, *Le Monde*, 17 September 2013. Mergier is an expert on current issues in working class life.

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# Book Reviews

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Gamal Abdel Nasser , Egypt's Liberation: The Philosophy of the Revolution, Publisher: G. O. Printing Offices, ISBN: 7247-1958-30000

# Egypt's Liberation

## The Philosophy of the Revolution

*Reviewed by Lucie Švejdová*

Every revolution unleashes forces beyond the control even of those who stand responsible of pulling the trigger. Analogous with Clausewitz's "fog-o-war," the evolution and outcome of a particular revolution is blurred by the chaos it inevitably instils. To manipulate and navigate such forces so that the aimed goals of its initiators are ultimately met is an art itself for there is no rule guaranteeing victory for the instigators. Even the architects of the revolution may be swept away by the strength of its momentum. Developments of the recent Arab Revolutions, the hasty rise and swift fall of the Moslem Brotherhood in Egypt and the Iran-orchestrated uprisings of Shia groups in Bahrain serve as examples.

Stirring up street violence and social unrest is one of an array of tools in the hands of those seeking power transitions. Although revolution may be a genuine expression of protest against authoritative and oppressive governments, various actors may seize the opportunity to fill power vacuums amid turmoil.

To navigate the forces of revolution to one's political ends by manipulating both a state's populous and the international audience is a strategy of power transition that characterises three revolutions in the history of modern Egypt: 1952, 2011 and 2013.

The Philosophy of the Revolution is an account on the Egyptian Revolution of 1952, (the 23 July Revolution) written by its master-mind, Gamal Abdel-Nasser. Like other propaganda, the flow of this work is

predictable; it is clearly designed for the purpose of influence its audience immortalising its author and legitimising his actions.

Nasser's seemingly "candid" account is but a piece of puzzle in his da'awa (indoctrination) of Pan-Arabism, a propaganda policy aimed at reshaping Egyptian society and reinforcing the dictator's power-position. It is impossible to ignore the multitude of blatant hints suggesting that, likewise, the Marxist revolution in Russia was just one step on the path leading towards the ultimate triumph of communism, so the Egyptian revolution is the cornerstone of the Pan-Arab supremacy which is, according to Nasser, bound to ensue.

The book recognises individual stages of the revolutionary process. The first part is dedicated to the so-called 'seeds of revolution' and their origin. Nasser claims that the 23 July Revolution was a result of failures of those that preceded it, such as Omar Makram's movement for the appointment of Mohammed Ali as Viceroy of Egypt and the 1919 Revolution. Since previous revolutions did not manage to fulfil the intended aspirations of the Egyptian people – self-determination, independence and a sovereign government free of imperialistic influence – the desire to fulfil these nationalistic ambitions remained under the surface waiting to erupt again to realise 'that long-cherished hope.'

In the second part, Nasser reflects on the aftermath of the revolution that succeeded in overthrowing the "corrupt" government and describes a phase of the second – social revolution that follows. Nasser claims that there are always two revolutions. The first is a political 'revolution of all' against the enemy of which primary aim is to topple the regime. The second revolution is social, in which those who succeed to seize the power face challenges stemming from disintegration of values, disruption of principles, discord, suspicion and the perversion of egoism. In this social revolution, the new regime needs to overcome disunity of its nation and reinforce its power-position by winning the "hearts and minds" of the masses.

Nasser admits that it would have been easy at that time of the revolution or after to destroy any opposition by a use of brute force thus striking terror in the hearts of many of refractory elements and forcing them to 'curb their passions.' However, he was also well aware that in order to win both revolutions, political and social, he needed to maximise popular support and avoid a boomerang effect that would have followed after brutal crackdown.

The final part, unsurprisingly, calls for Arab unity. Nasser appeals to Arab unity based on common history, religion and geopolitics and emphasises that unity is a key to the Arab domination. The three sources of the Arab/Egyptian power are recognised: 1) Arab nations in the Middle East are claimed to be homogenous; 2) geopolitics, primarily strategic location of Egypt forming a land bridge from Northern Africa to the Middle East; 3) the possession and control over oil. Except the claimed homogeneity of Arab nations, the two remaining sources of power are still relevant today. In fact, they form a particularly volatile combination that renders the region a powder-keg, ready to explode.

The account of the philosophy of revolution is an unambiguous work of Pan-Arab propaganda and it is therefore soaked in idealism and the call for Arab unity and mobilisation against both “near enemies,” – the corrupted regimes in Arab lands – and the far enemy—the colonial powers. Nevertheless, this work presents a unique opportunity to glimpse into a master-mind who managed to emerge victorious amid the revolutionary turmoil and who succeeded to win both battles – to overthrow the old regime and to conquer and entrance the minds of the Egyptian street.

The context of the recent Arab revolutions made the work not only relevant but almost obligatory to read for it is often the understanding the past that makes us capable of comprehending the present. This unique account carries pieces of puzzle to the mystery of our own times since it may contribute to our understanding of the ever-relevant phenomenon of a revolution (not only) in the Arab world, its forces and contagion – a problematic that skyrocketed after the outbreak of the Arab Spring.

Revolution is a weapon beyond control of those who design it. Once triggered, it lives its own life. In order to fully comprehend events such as the so-called “Arab Spring,” events that have reshaped the political map of the Middle East, it is essential to unravel the mystery of the forces of a revolution. Only once we fully comprehend the mechanism of a revolution, its origins and development, we may objectively analyse the outcome and will not be easily manipulated by those who seize the opportunity amid chaos.

# British Foreign Policy

*Reviewed by Andrei Babadac*

This work summarises the key elements of the British foreign policy making to date and, at the same time, deploys solid historical references, making a thorough introduction to the key actors and elements that shape it. This work is merely an introduction to the complexity of the mechanisms that put together make the contemporary British foreign policy. It aims to answer questions such as: who makes the foreign policy and what is the role of the British identity, at the same time addressing issues such as ethics, defence and economics.

Gaskarth's understanding of British foreign policy embraces a new perspective on a topic that is no longer in vogue of many analysts of international relations. Not only does he argue over the continued importance of the role played by the UK, but makes a statement of the importance of the Western world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century despite the rise of the emerging powers. The recent events in the War on Terrorism, the financial crisis and the coalition interventions in the Middle East does, of course, demonstrate that Britain still plays a role, but perhaps not a leading one? One of the important features throughout the book is the approach to the role of the governments in world politics and how these addressed the changes brought about in recent decades. Great respect is given to the role of the government as part of international mechanisms and how it can cooperate and be part of collective action schemes. The second chapter sets out the most important actors in developing British foreign policy, providing food for thought and a thorough examination of the public policy and the external foreign policy environment.

The next chapter deal with the mechanisms that create British foreign policy, presenting Britain as an international actor, giving the

reader a comprehensive image based on first hand materials as well as interviews. It provides a balanced approach and introduces the broader debate on how policy making gravitates around several experimental models – the comparison unfortunate as these were initially created to explain policy-making in the us. Gaskarth tries to establish his own model by introducing two conceptions and blending them. Chapters four and five go beyond this setting and debate Britain itself as an international actor from historic, economic, social and geographical perspectives.

The following three chapters go further into the debate of the debate of the British foreign policy-making, examining the ethical, military and economic agendas. An interesting assumption is that foreign policy decisions produce ethical consequences and how they shaped the decisions in cases such as the military intervention in Iraq. These analyse wide subjects and are analytically limited to emphasising the importance of Britain's involvement in the world, which is affected by negative phenomena related to such insecurities and omitted from decision-making procedures. The all-encompassing topic of human security is convincingly criticised and revised, similarly to the challenge posed by maintaining an inviolability of science as the field of study.

Gaskarth presents some critical arguments and theories using a very wide range of sources, which vary from scientific and academic studies to military reports. The book does not lack historical evidence, as he spends a substantial amount of time explaining the roots of British foreign policy. Regarding the audience for whom this book can be both useful and interesting, it should be noted that the historical backgrounds that are represented in the majority of articles give the opportunity to understand the situation for any reader, even if they have little exposure to the role of Britain in the World.



Edited by Jeffrey T. Checkel and Peter J. Katzenstein. *European Identity*  
New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009, ISBN: 9780521709538

# European Identity

*Reviewed by Sophia Alifirova*

This edited volume considers why ‘various forces and claims are [...] fragmenting the possibility of one European identity even as the European economic integration has proceeded faster and further than anyone expected’ (p. 2). It evaluates the situational nature of identity and attempts to answer the question of whether a common European identity may be developed in light of strong challenges? In the introduction, Checkel and Katzenstein summarise the theoretical background of European identity studies and situate their work in the wider literature, considering neo-functionalism, the transactionalist theory of the flow of information, goods and services, and historical institutionalism, among other theories, for comparative purposes. While weighing the benefits of these approaches, the editors acknowledge that the literature diminishes the importance of politics and politicisation; it is this theoretical gap that the volume aims to fill.

Proposing a multidisciplinary approach, the work is divided into three parts. Part I, ‘Identity as a Project,’ analyses the role of EU institutions and elites. Political theorist Castiglione argues that ‘the construction of European political identity does not necessarily rest on a definite conception of what it is to be European’ (p. 29). He considers the transformation of the conception of political identification with one’s own community and the mixed nature of the EU as a multilevel structure. In ‘Experimental Identities (after Maastricht),’ Holmes suggests that there is ‘a fundamental change in the underlying dynamics of identity formation’ in Europe (p. 52). He argues that post-Maastricht, EU citizens are burdened with the need to negotiate the political meanings of a pluralist Europe. Concluding this section, Chapter 4 by Me-

drano considers the emergence of the public sphere in the identity formation project and the breakdown of the permissive consensus which had previously prevailed among the European public.

Opening the second section, 'Identity as a process,' historian Case considers events and ideas which have blurred the boundaries between the national and supranational conceptions of European identity and analyses the notion of 'false oppositions,' especially as they relate to the differences between the conception of European identity in the "East" and the "West" (p. 111). Fligstein suggests that a common European identity is likely to emerge among people who have the opportunity to regularly interact with others from European countries with whom they may have a basis for solidarity; he concludes, however, that even among those with increased opportunities for interaction, 'there is little evidence for an outpouring of sentiment among the citizens of Europe supporting a European nation' (p. 154). Chapter 7 analyses how migration in Europe is influencing identity formation in a territorial and a structural economic sense. Favell considers the importance of the migration of non-Europeans to Europe, the process of intra-European "elite" migration, and the ambiguous movement of East-West migrants.

The final section of the volume, 'Identity in Context,' opens with Kaelble's work on the politicisation of the EU since the 1980s in which he states that 'politicisation has had a strong impact on identification with the EU since the 1980s. It explains why public debate about identification with Europe and the EU has become more vivid [...]' (p. 211). Chapter 9 summarises the major arguments outlined in the volume and provides some final thoughts on the subject. In it, Checkel and Katzenstein argue that a 'politically looser and more encompassing Europe' is rising in place of a receding Western Europe centred on the EU (p. 213). Contemporary 'debates over the EU and its constitutionalisation increasingly intersect with other arenas of identity construction, such as professional networks, transnational religion, [and] everyday individual practices [...]' (p. 214). The editors conclude by pointing out that there currently exists a multitude of European identities, which can no longer be studied simply through the analysis of institutions and their effects on identity nor can they be fully understood by examining nationalist movements as separate from the institutions. Instead, these dynamics must be connected through multidisciplinary research, for which this volume aims to create a foundation.

Overall, *European Identity* succeeds in achieving its stated goal of '[relying] on multiple disciplinary traditions to offer fresh perspectives, raise new questions, and develop unexpected insights on "who we are" in today's Europe' (p. 19). The volume successfully elaborates on the historical institutionalist theory; it also establishes clear and concise arguments. The multidisciplinary approach works well in allowing the contributors to emphasise separate yet connected ideas. By considering European identity from the lenses of history, sociology, and anthropology, the authors are able to point out various dimensions which influence both the project and the process of identity formation. As well, the division of the volume into three sections serves the purpose of elaborating on the subject more fully. Approaching it as a project, a process, and in context, the authors are able to identify multiple angles of analysis and points of contention present. Finally, the chapters are organised in a clear and cohesive manner, each emphasising a specific aspect of European identity formation while collaborating in a larger argumentative framework.

Nevertheless, the volume has several contextual and structural limitations. Firstly, key terms such as "identity," "project," and "process" are only briefly mentioned in the introduction, leaving their definition to the conclusion and forcing the reader to closely analyse each contributing chapter in order to define them. The term "identity" remains a vague catch-phrase throughout the volume, failing to be clearly defined in either civic and/or ethnic terms. Without a clear definition set out by the editors, it is difficult to know what contributors mean when using the term. The key concepts of a "project" and a "process," around which the volume is structured, are also not clearly defined until the first paragraph of the conclusion. Throughout, these are brought up; however, it is often unclear what each author means when using the terms without an initial definition. As an introduction to the field of European identity studies and a basis for future research, the volume would be significantly enhanced by clearly defined terms.

Secondly, the structure of the volume sometimes impedes the reader's understanding. Chapter 1 is unnecessarily dense. The editors introduce the larger theoretical field, highlight the processes of politicisation and Europeanisation, outline their own arguments, and situate the volume within the broader literature in less than thirty pages. For those new to the field or unfamiliar with the theories, the brief discussion of each sub-section is insufficient to grasp the nature of the

debate. A better organisation of the material into two chapters, with one introducing the main arguments and contributions of the volume and the second outlining the theoretical background, would have been more appropriate for a book which aims to develop a basis for further research.

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Despite these minor issues, Checkel and Katzenstein, along with the other contributors, successfully present the key issues of identity formation in Europe and provide valuable insights as a basis for further work.

Colin McInnes and Kelley Lee, *Global Health and International Relations*, Cambridge: Polity Press 2012, ISBN: 9780745649450

# Global Health and International Relations

*Reviewed by Emel Elif Tugdar*

Health is traditionally perceived as a domestic issue in politics. With the globalisation and increasing interdependence of states, health has become an important foreign policy and diplomatic concern that has implications for security, economics and international development. In recent years, the world has witnessed an increasing interaction between international relations and health due to the reasons such as involvement of intergovernmental organisations, impact of the transnational epidemics, and the problem of access to drug treatment for poor populations as part of human rights. Thus, because of its social and economic effects as well as its geopolitical and security implications, health has become a major factor in international relations. The recognition of health as an important issue in global politics requires greater policy coherence both domestically and internationally.

*Global Health and International Relations* by McInnes and Lee mainly argues that achieving this coherence requires better understanding of the relation between health and International Relations. It examines the topic of health from an International Relations perspective as opposed to the majority of related works on health, which have treated the issue as part of domestic politics and public policy. Thus, the authors of the book fill a gap in literature with their research by exploring not only the issue of health, but also the importance of its place in International Relations. They question whether the emergence of health onto the agenda of International Relations serves for any purpose from a social constructivist perspective (p. 24).

It is possible to divide the book into six sections based on specific thematics, with Chapter One acting as an introduction to the global health issue with a broad discussion of the topic. Chapter Two is where the authors explain the emergence of health as an agenda in International Relations. Chapter Three is an illustration of the health issue as part of foreign policy and the importance of global health diplomacy. Chapter 4 focuses on the global health from an International Political Economy perspective. Chapter Five examines the global health governance as a concept and discusses its pros and cons whereas the Sixth Chapter primarily focuses on the security dimension of the health issue in International Relations. The conclusion chapter offers a summary, comparison and evaluation of the analysis made.

McInnes and Lee question why the health as a subject could not have been incorporated into the discipline of International Relations by claiming that health has been ignored by the discipline. By taking a social constructivist stand, McInnes and Lee suggest that health was ignored because the interests of the states were not created in a way that would allow them to engage with this question (p. 30). The health issue has traditionally been left as a competence of the states that could not be interfered by the others. However, globalisation had impacted the perception of health as well and explaining the globalisation of the issue requires taking a step away from traditional rationalist theories and taking a more reflectivist position. The authors argue that the relationship between global health and International Relations is not a natural response of the states to an evolving circumstance, but the relationship itself is something that has been constructed in a particular way, resulting in an emphasis on certain issues rather than others. Thus, according to McInnes and Lee, a useful question would be “why” instead of “what” (p. 159).

The framing of the health issue can be in the form of political economy, security or foreign policy. These frameworks comprise set of values that shape the articulation of ideas, interests and institutions and even the definition of global health. Consequently, these frameworks construct the attitude of the states towards the global health and explain the relationship between health and International Relations.

Much of the book is devoted to assisting readers understand these frameworks. However, the difference between the concept of global health and international health is not defined properly. The authors

refuse to use the term “international health” unlike previous works in literature, but ignore the fact that the readers may not get the difference. Relatedly, the improper identification of the “frameworks” creates a theoretical obstacle for the analysis. Why political economy, security and foreign policy are used as frameworks that construct the idea of global health is not explained thoroughly. Thus, a better analysis would be discussing whether other frameworks such as gender and development could be included for a better analysis.

Another theoretical shortcoming is the lack of discussion about the reason of focusing solely on social constructivism. What are the advantages of looking from a reflectivist perspective compared to other theories of IR? Although, the authors keep away from rationalist explanations, they still focus on the individual Western states and their behaviours on health issues.

The discussion of global health governance in the Chapter Five may not satisfy the reader as it fails to explain the place of developing and underdeveloped countries in the global governance. Furthermore, there is lack of discussion about to what extent the global governance of health can be effective and how. Thus, global governance of health is presented as the Western governance of health in the book in which neither the place of non-Western states nor its effectiveness is clear.

Despite these shortcomings, the *Global Health and International Relations* is a significant contribution to the literature on health and International Relations. McInnes and Lee fill a gap in the literature by presenting the issue from a social constructivist perspective. The analysis illustrates how the normative frameworks construct the issue of health in IR as well. Despite the traditional rationalist perspectives, the book shows that these frameworks construct the attitude of the states towards the health and explain the place of health in International Relations.

