

# McGILL INTERNATIONAL REVIEW



JOURNAL OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF MCGILL

VOLUME I · ISSUE I · APRIL 2011



# The Journal

The *McGill International Review* is a part of the International Relations Students' Association's (IRSAM) effort to highlight excellence in the field of International Relations at McGill. The cornerstone of IRSAM's mission is to "offer a neutral forum for university students to express their interest in international affairs." With that mission in mind, IRSAM hopes that this inaugural issue will establish an outlet for high-calibre academic discussion of international affairs. Though this publication's predecessor within IRSAM featured works by established writers and academics, this journal's purpose is to recognize quality undergraduate writing in the field. Thank you to all of the editors for their vision, hard work, and enthusiasm. We hope that this issue of the *McGill International Review* is only one of many in the years to come.

Sincerely,

**Ilana Rothkopf**

VICE-PRESIDENT, INTERNAL AFFAIRS  
IRSAM 2010-2011



# Editorial Staff

VOLUME I · ISSUE I · APRIL 2011

## **Editor-in-Chief**

RYAN HEALEY

## **Senior Editors**

DARCY DRURY

KAREN KUMAKI

YASHMI MAHAT

MARIA SURILAS

## **Junior Editors**

ALEXIA JABLONSKI

NICOLE LEONARD

J AIS MEHAJI

MELISA YORGANCIOGLU

## **Design Editor**

MICHAEL TONG

## **Editorial Consultant**

ILANA ROTHKOPF



# Table of Contents

VOLUME I · ISSUE I · APRIL 2011

**9**

**Majd Al Khaldi**

THE DILEMMA OF STATEBUILDING IN AREAS OF ETHNIC VIOLENCE:  
HOW INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO BOLSTER GEORGIA'S STATEBUILDING  
MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE RESURGENCE  
OF ETHNIC VIOLENCE SINCE 2003

**18**

**Valentin Robiliard**

THE DARFURIAN REBELLION AND THE MORAL HAZARD  
OF HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

**27**

**Vincent Di Sciullo**

GLOBALIZATION, ETHNICITY, AND POLITICS OF IDENTITY:  
QUÉBEC'S RESISTANCE TO CULTURAL HOMOGENIZATION

**35**

**Felipe Garcia-Andrade Llamas**

PATCHY POLICIES: THE CUBAN EMBARGO AND THE GAZA BLOCKADE

**43**

**Katherine Marney**

ISRAELI AND JORDANIAN WATER POLITICS AND CONFLICT:  
A CRITIQUE OF REALIST THEORY

**50**

**Our Contributors**





# Foreward

Oh, do we have an academic treat for you. I'm proud to present the first issue of the new undergraduate-run McGill International Review, dedicated to publishing undergraduate papers on topics of International Relations. We've had to assemble the whole psychoskeletal structure of a journal within a semester, replete with a gallant cast of editors and contributors. Each essay is the result of a host of labour, an initial twenty-something polished pages that we've had our editors buzzing around, waxing them epaulettes to shine nice.

I want to thank everyone who made this journal possible. This journal would not exist without IRSAM, especially Ilana Rothkopf, our veritable patron saint. Nor would it exist without the members of my editorial board, who all worked tirelessly to ensure that this journal presented only the highest quality undergraduate scholarship on International Relations, and of course, last but most crucially, our great contributors for submitting papers that have provided interesting angles and taught me not a few things.

All the best,

**Ryan Healey**

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

*McGill International Review*



# The Dilemma of Statebuilding in Areas of Ethnic Violence: How International Efforts to Bolster Georgia's Statebuilding May Have Contributed to the Resurgence of Ethnic Violence Since 2003

Majd Al Khaldi

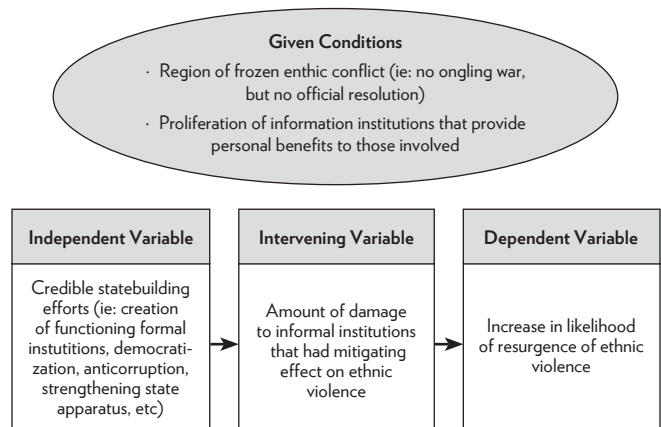
U3 · Department of Political Science · majd.alkhaldi@mail.mcgill.ca

In recent years, there has been a general consensus among scholars and policymakers alike that states with weak central governments, failing states or, at the extreme, failed states are more likely to witness ethnic violence take place within their territories. As an example of each, one need not look further than contemporary Sudan, Yugoslavia in the 1990s or Somalia in the past two decades, respectively. It is therefore no surprise that the role of the international community in such areas often includes promoting the process of statebuilding, based on the idea that countries with stronger, more democratic governments and functioning institutions are less likely to experience ethnic violence.

This paper, however, shall shed light on a negative side-effect of statebuilding that has hitherto been largely ignored; that is, in collapsed (or collapsing) states that had experienced ethnic violence in the past and in which many informal institutions exist, statebuilding can lead to an increase in the probability of ethnic violence occurring by destroying informal institutions that had a mitigating effect on ethnic violence. In such a situation, international support (economic or political) for these statebuilding efforts may have the unintended negative effect of increasing the likelihood of ethnic violence breaking out.

Using the case of Georgia and its two breakaway regions from 1990 to the present day, this paper shall demonstrate how the statebuilding efforts that have taken place in Georgia since the Rose Revolution of 2003, which included strengthening government institutions, anti-corruption campaigns and the severing of patronage networks, decreased or ended collaboration between elites who had personal interests in maintaining the fragile peace, and, by disenfranchising them, paved the way for the resurgence of ethnic violence. In this context, the international community's good intentions, which translated into financial and political support for Georgia's statebuilding efforts, may have inadvertently facilitated the re-escalation of

ethnic violence. The above ideas may be understood better if presented graphically:



It is important to note that, given the two conditions outlined above, this model does not claim that statebuilding will necessarily lead to the resurgence of ethnic violence. Rather, it implies that effective statebuilding measures will damage informal institutions and make an increase in ethnic violence more likely. The more international support these statebuilding measures have, the stronger this causality (i.e. the higher the likelihood).

Before delving into the topic, however, a few points must be made. The vast majority of academic literature available on the topic of the two unresolved ethnic conflicts in Georgia places them within the context of the larger, sub-systemic Russian-Georgian protracted conflict, or even the resurging global Russian-US rivalry. Scholars such as Per Gahrton have gone as far as labelling the region's new dynamics as 'The New Great Game,' in reference to the 19th century rivalry between Imperial Russia and the British Empire over control of the region that was known as The Great Game (Gahrton 2010, 1). The author supports most of the conclusions drawn by scholars who use system-level analyses to explain various aspects of the two ethnic conflicts, but finds that alone they provide an

incomplete picture of Georgian-Abkhaz and Georgian-South Ossetian ethnic violence. While Russia has proven to be a staunch supporter of both the Abkhaz and South Ossetian secessionist movements time and again, simply portraying Abkhaz and South Ossetian politicians and rebels as proxies of Moscow is painting a grossly incomplete image. This paper does not attempt to compete against, but rather complements these IR narratives. It seeks to clarify that in addition to the various actors' real-politik considerations in the region, there were often less visible factors at play affecting the situation on the ground.

Some academics (e.g. George 2009, 168-173) have suggested that ethnic violence resurfaced in Georgia beginning in 2003 because from 1995 until then, the Georgians were too weak relative to the Abkhaz and South Ossetians to go about reintegrating the two breakaway regions. While that was true, two points must be made. First, the Georgian state was chronically weak from 1995 - 2003 because various elites from all three sides who operated via informal channels and were personally benefiting from this state of weakness made an active effort to keep the Georgian state that weak. Saakashvili had no intention of keeping that status quo after he rose to power. Second, after November 2003, the increase in Georgia's power relative to the two breakaway provinces was the same; however ethnic violence began to take place more frequently in South Ossetia than in Abkhazia. Therefore, some factor other than Georgia's relative state capacity must account for the difference in levels of ethnic violence. As will be demonstrated later on, the author believes that this discrepancy can be accounted for by the fact that informal South Ossetian - Georgian cooperation was damaged by statebuilding more so than the same kind of informal cooperation between Abkhaz and Georgian elites.

This paper treats the ethnic conflicts of Georgia as a given, and will not dwell on the causes behind them. That being said, primordial explanations for why ethnic violence resurfaced between the Abkhaz and South Ossetians on the one hand, and Georgians on the other in the Aftermath of the Rose Revolution must be dispelled on the basis that all three ethnic groups did not suddenly experience an increase in deep-rooted ethnic hatred beginning in 2003.

## Theoretical Considerations

'Statebuilding' shall be defined broadly as: the construction of a functioning, democratic state, with effective formal institutions, rule of law and working enforcement

mechanisms based on the economic and political values of liberal Western democracies. Borrowing one more parameter from Lake (2010, 265), it can be added that statebuilding must increase the legitimacy of the state by increasing popular support for it.

Most comparative research on political institutions focuses mainly on formal rules. In many cases, however, so-called informal institutions, "ranging from bureaucratic and legislative norms to clientelism and patrimonialism can play an equally important role in shaping political behaviour and outcomes" (Helme and Letivsky 2004, 725). Informal institutions will be defined as "socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated and enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels" (Ibid, 727). To narrow this definition further, four parameters must be added that highlight what informal institutions are not:

- 1) Informal institutions are not synonymous with weak institutions. Formal institutional weakness does not necessarily imply the presence of informal institutions. Clientelism and abuses of executive authority, as an example, both depart from formal rules, but whereas the former is an informal institution, the latter is not.
- 2) Informal institutions must be distinguished from other informal behavioural regularities. Not all patterned behaviour is based on rules set by incentives or rooted in shared mutual expectations about others' behaviour. In informal institutions, the violation of tacit rules must generate some kind of punishment or external sanction. When bribery is rooted in widely shared expectations among citizens and public officials, corruption may be considered an informal institution. On the other hand, when shared expectations are not involved and the bribe is merely a reaction to low public sector wages, it may simply be described as a behavioural pattern.
- 3) Third, informal institutions should be distinguished from informal organizations. In the same way that formal organizations, such as political parties or unions, are not equivalent to formal rules, so too should informal organizations, such as mafias, be distinguished from informal institutions.
- 4) Fourth, it is crucial to differentiate between informal institutions and the more general idea of culture.



However, on September 27th, 1993, Abkhaz rebels breached the previously mentioned ceasefire agreement and took the Abkhaz capital, Sukhumi. On May 14th, 1994, all parties signed the Moscow Agreement, which was essentially another ceasefire agreement. Georgia also called for the Commonwealth of Independent States to send peacekeeping troops (all of whom ended up coming from Russia) to maintain the fragile ceasefire in Abkhazia.

As in the case of Abkhazia, war broke out in South Ossetia on January 5th, 1991. When the Soviet Union collapsed, South Ossetia had few -if any- ties to the central Georgian government in Tbilisi (George 2009, 113). Fighting raged on for months. A ceasefire agreement that was signed on June 24th, 1992, and came to be known as the Sochi Agreement brought an official end to the war (Kuznetsova 1992, 45-46).

With the signing of the Sochi and Moscow Agreements in 1992 and 1994 respectively, the two ethnic conflicts in Georgia were now frozen, in the sense that there was little to no ethnic violence in either breakaway region, but no comprehensive peace agreements were reached between Georgia on the one hand and the two breakaway regions on the other.

## **Corruption, Smuggling, Extortion and Patronage: South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Georgia After the Two Wars**

According to Closson, by the mid-1990s, the informal trade which had originated during wartime burgeoned into networks of profit, enlisting a broad spectrum of actors. Scholars have suggested that networks of profit should either eventually harden into state institutions or weaken the state as a result of the economics of deliberate violence. In the case of Georgia, the rise of what Closson calls “networks of profit” were detrimental to the process of post-war statebuilding, and led to the simultaneous delegitimization and weakening of the central government (Ibid, 179). Charles King, a renowned expert on the region, best summarizes the situation in post-war Georgia by describing it as “a dark version of Pareto efficiency,” whereby equilibrium has been reached by elites from within the various conflict actors- an equilibrium that renders the two ethnic conflicts frozen yet unresolved (King 2001, 525). King observes that such situations developed when “even after one camp has secured a partial or complete victory in the military contest [analysts posit that Abkha-

zia and South Ossetia had both successfully defeated the Georgian army], the basic networks, relationships, and informal channels... replicate themselves in new, state-like institutions in the former conflict zones” (Ibid, 528). The economic structure that developed in the region after the two wars depended on the participation of several entities in order to function, including South Ossetian traders, Russian peacekeepers, Georgian smugglers and the Georgian police... Such cooperation was taking place on multiple levels, from the highest (between the President of Georgia and the de facto presidents of Abkhazia and South Ossetia), to the lowest (petty smugglers and poor policemen).

Following the end of Georgia’s two wars with South Ossetia and Abkhazia in the early 1990s, its president, Shevardnadze, was more concerned with the country’s stability than anything else. As such, in the process of privatizing the country’s industries, he offered tax exemptions to favoured corporations, thus creating patron-client networks where they previously did not exist. By 2001, an estimated 30% to 70% of the Georgian economy was illicit (George 2009, 131). Shevardnadze had previously been Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union under Gorbachev. He was therefore able to bring the experience he had gained by rising through the former Soviet bureaucracy back with him to Georgia, where he effectively built for himself a broad base of clients. The president used personalized authority to secure allies and punish enemies, and stabilized the economy while turning a blind eye to the extensive corruption networks that were developing, so long as they did not threaten his allies’ interests or, more importantly, his grip on power.

Birch agrees and adds that, like in Georgia, elites in the two breakaway regions took advantage of the status quo stalemate to reward their support groups (Birch 1999, 528). For example, during the post-war period, the pursuit of personal interests was often intricately woven into government policy, at the expense of the Georgian state’s overall wellbeing. This was reflected in the cooperation that began to take place across ethnic divisions to maintain smuggling corridors, extortion checkpoints and illegal distribution networks both South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Examples abound. Just outside the entrance to the regional capital, Tskhinvali, the South Ossetian highway police were entrusted with the job of monitoring trade that was coming from / was on its way to Vladikavkaz, the capital of the Russian Republic of North Ossetia. Instead, however, they acted as facilitators rather than invigilators of illegal



trade along this route. Beside the same highway, markets emerged that sold licit goods such as petrol, timber, scrap iron and wheat flour, with hundreds of trucks laden with these goods coming from Russia every year (Kupatadze 2007, 50). The Ergneti smuggling market, which was located just on the de facto 'border' between Georgia and South Ossetia, on the road to Tskhinvali, offered opportunities for interethnic mixing and stability that years of confidence building measures could not deliver. Estimates of the value of smuggled goods entering Georgia through the Ergneti market alone reached US \$100 million annually (George 2009, 138).

Elites in the South Ossetian administration received major revenues from controlling this contraband trade, the road linking South Ossetia to the neighbouring city of Vladikavkaz in Russia, and the Roki mountain tunnel that links North and South Ossetia. The tunnel remains one of the few ways across the Caucasus mountain range, which extends from the Caspian Sea in the East to the Black Sea in the West. Ironically, an estimated US \$60-\$70 million in goods passed through the tunnel each year from 1995-2003, compared with an official South Ossetian budget of roughly \$1 million for the same time period. Furthermore, drugs (especially heroin) were being smuggled through both Abkhazia and South Ossetia in all directions (King 2001, 537).

In South Ossetia the illegal trade with Russia benefited all sides. The South Ossetian government applied vague "transit taxes" on various goods, while Georgian authorities, especially the interior ministry, were able to take a cut by fining truck drivers on the outskirts of Tbilisi. A Russian word was even coined to describe corrupt Georgian officials who offered valuable information and protection to smugglers: *krysha*- literally, "roof" (Kupatadze 2007, 50). The gradual increase in international humanitarian aid flowing into the region simply exacerbated the problems, by providing more fuel for the fire. Organizations were set up in Tbilisi to receive humanitarian assistance destined for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in South Ossetia. Instead, however, these organizations sold the goods for profit in local markets (King 2001, 545-546). It is partly because of these tacit agreements between South Ossetian and Georgian officials that relations between Tskhinvali and Tbilisi were generally cordial, notwithstanding the lack of a final conflict settlement. The de facto South Ossetian president, Eduard Kokoity, openly supported Eduard Shevardnadze in his bid for re-election to the Georgian presidency in early 2000 (King 2001, 546).

The general situation in Abkhazia was similar. If anything, the behaviour of Abkhaz police officials in the two districts of Abkhazia that border Georgia proper was even worse than that of the police in South Ossetia. The Abkhaz police have been noted to execute well-planned crackdowns on groups engaged in the smuggling of illegal goods to and from Georgia, not to enforce the law, but simply to eliminate the competition and maintain their monopoly on trans-border smuggling (Kukhianidze 2009, 221). In fact, Kupatadze claims former Abkhaz President Vladislav Ardzinba's clan "continues to influence smuggling within the separatist region" (2007, 51). Closson goes even further and suggests that Ardzinba's family headed the petroleum smuggling business, whereby petroleum was smuggled from Russia aboard one of Ardzinba's nephews' ships, and then taken to Georgia by another nephew's trucks.

The Abkhaz Presidential Guard and the State Security Services of Abkhazia also controlled five checkpoints and the main bridge across the Inguri river, which formed part of the de facto border between Georgia and Abkhazia. There they demanded illegal payments from freight transporters and extorted the local population. Beginning in 1995, even two of the largest Georgian insurgent groups remaining in Abkhazia, the Forest Brothers led by David Shengelia and the White Legion, headed by Zurab Samushia, had shifted their focus away from fighting as insurgents toward operating as business groups in commercial activities (Closson 2010, 186-187).

To make matters worse, the peacekeeping force that was deployed on the de facto border between Abkhazia and Georgia starting in 1994 often did not have the resources necessary to monitor, let alone interrupt smuggling across the Inguri river. Often, the poorly paid Russian peacekeepers were bribed in return for unfettered passage (Closson 2010, 185). It is reported that around 5-10% of the gasoline that entered Georgia was smuggled on trains from Russia that were actually transporting the aforementioned peacekeepers as well (Closson 2010, 185).

Perhaps most alarmingly, smugglers operating in both of the two breakaway regions also engaged in what Alexander Kupatadze termed "Radiological Smuggling," in collaboration with Georgian smugglers (Kupatadze 2007, 40). It seems that the same groups that smuggled items such as cigarettes and fuel into and out of Georgia's "grey zones" (i.e. South Ossetia and Abkhazia), sometimes also smuggled radioactive materials. By taking advantage of the debilitated border security, weakness (or sometimes com-

plcity) of law enforcement figures and corruption of public officials, these smugglers used Georgia as both a source of these materials (Georgia inherited Soviet facilities and military bases with radioactive materials in them) and as a transit country for material that was originally stolen in Russia. In fact, this smuggling business employed the services of high ranking security officials as high up as the former head of President Shevardnadze's security, as well as large business tycoons who had the contacts necessary to sell abroad. The radioactive material itself could be used in devices other than nuclear weapons to create so called 'weapons of mass disruption,' which, in the wrong hands, may prove to be powerful psychological and political weapons. For years this has been (and continues to be) a primary concern for the US and its allies, especially since evidence surfaced to suggest that Iran had attempted to purchase such radioactive materials on the black market in the late 1990s (Kupatadze 2007, 41-47).

Because of the lucrative economies of stalemate, key elites on all sides saw little incentive to go beyond the parameters outlined in the ceasefire agreements that followed the two secessionist wars- they preferred not to implement a peaceful resolution to the conflict. When elites did meet to talk, they usually simply agreed on the idea that they hold more talks in the future, because so long as the sides maintained "dialogue," humanitarian aid and financial assistance would keep flowing into the region (King 2001, 548-549). It was this intricate web of relationships that developed between supposed enemies that helped control ethnic violence between 1995 and 2003. Corruption and patron-client relationships helped create a status quo equilibrium in which elites from all sides and from various areas, such as politics, law enforcement and business cooperated to maximize their own interests. In his study, Closson concluded that the networks of profit that flourished in Georgia and the two breakaway regions before the Rose Revolution did not transform and harden into formal institutions, but rather negatively affected statebuilding in Georgia. These networks impeded the creation of respected "government institutions and a regulated market economy, contributed to high levels of criminal activity perpetuated by state security services, and inhibited conflict resolution as a result of lucrative profits paid to elites" (Closson 2010, 181). Nationalist Georgian rhetoric was kept at a minimum. Likewise, Abkhaz and South Ossetian calls for separatism were mollified. Ethnic violence was kept in check as long as all elite groups were privy to the trade and were benefiting from these 'networks of profit.' As evidence for the fact that these networks had an ef-

fect on the level of violence, the author draws on George's account (2009, 139), whereby she describes that during times when elites disagreed on how to divide spoils, violence tended to escalate. For example, an outbreak of ethnic violence in Abkhazia in early 1998 has been directly linked to groups that were concerned that peace agreements would endanger their economic well-being (Ibid, 139).

## **The Rose Revolution and Saakashvili's Crackdown on Informal Institutions**

In November 2003, fraud during Georgia's parliamentary elections led to weeks of angry protests, the resignation of president Shervardnadze and the swearing in of the leader of the opposition and Shevardnadze's former pupil and Minister of Justice, Mikheil Saakashvili. At the time of what later became known as 'The Rose Revolution,' Columbia University Law School graduate Saakashvili became the youngest leader of any state in Europe. He had widespread popularity among the Georgian masses because he promised to fight corruption, reinvigorate Georgia's economy and, most importantly, reintegrate the two breakaway provinces back into Georgia. Mere days after becoming president, Saakashvili launched a three-pronged reform campaign that involved a program of anticorruption, statebuilding and democratization (George 2009, 167). He immediately began to strengthen the security forces manning the borders and to decrease the level of influence of regional politicians in both Georgia and South Ossetia (Closson 2010, 191). At the same time, he ended the Georgian Defence Ministry's sponsorship of Georgian guerrilla groups operating along the border with Abkhazia. Corrupt law enforcement officials were sacked. As a result, smuggling through Abkhazia became more chaotic and disorganised (Kupatadze 2007, 50). Saakashvili's boldest move, however, came when he attempted to forcibly close down the Ergneti market in May/June 2003. When he ordered his troops into the market, he was met by armed Ossetians who violently defended their position for six weeks, before the market was finally closed. Soon after that, traffic through the Roki tunnel on the Russian side of the border with North Ossetia was initially curbed. "All imports of petrol products were to be directed first to Tbilisi for official accounting purposes and then distributed out to the regions" (Closson 2010, 191). Saakashvili sacked over 20 top Georgian police officials for their involvement with smuggling across the de facto South Ossetian-Georgian border. Saakashvili had effectively disrupted some of the



most important cross-ethnic elite ties that were based on informal institutions. In closing down the Ergneti market he had also eliminated the primary meeting place between ethnic Ossetians and Georgians.

Saakashvili's focus returned to Abkhazia in 2005, where his Special Units' efforts to curb smuggling led to the deaths of many Georgian police officers at first, and then eventually to the deaths of Abkhaz and Georgian civilians (Ibid, 193).

Saakashvili's anticorruption reforms led to the removal of Shervardnadze-era bureaucrats who had engaged in criminal activities, the replacement of the entire traffic police force, the creation of real customs control along the borders and the rewriting (and, more importantly, reinforcement) of the tax code. While all of Saakashvili's reforms led to initial successes, there was a major negative side-effect developing.

Starting with the Rose Revolution, there was a rise in ethnic violence between the Abkhaz and Georgians on the one hand, and South Ossetians and Georgians on the other. Instances of shooting, assassination, kidnapping, mine-blasting, ambushing and robbery increased as paramilitaries defined along ethnic lines from all sides began to clash. The breakdown in community relations at Ergneti became a symbol, mirrored in the lack of negotiations between authorities in Tbilisi and Tskhinvali. The author of this paper asserts that Saakashvili's three-pronged campaign efforts disrupted many of the existent informal institutions that extended across ethnic lines. Consequently, as the relationships that were based on reciprocity and expectations of mutual benefit broke down, so too did inter-ethnic elite cooperation. Elites who from 1995 to 2003 were on supposedly opposing sides in a frozen ethnic conflict (but in reality were partners in one way or another) no longer had the opportunity to collaborate with one another as a means of maximizing their own personal utility. This translated into the removal of a major buffer against the re-escalation of ethnic conflict, as fewer and fewer elites regarded a state of peace as being more beneficial to them personally than a state of violence.

Some readers may wonder how damaging informal institutions implies an increase in the likelihood that ethnic violence will resurface. For one thing, many of the elites who were personally benefiting from the status quo before the Rose Revolution were political elites capable of mobilizing ethnic support for themselves using ethnic rhetoric.

The leaders of South Ossetia and Abkhazia both began to use nationalist ethnic rhetoric more frequently, and Saakashvili, out of fear for his legitimacy, retaliated in kind (George 2009, 173-175). In the 1990s Balkans, it was specifically this kind of Milosevic-like ethno-nationalist rhetoric that contributed to the destabilization of Yugoslavia and the rise of ethnic violence (Saideman, Fall 2010). The same kind of scenario was replicated in Georgia after the Rose Revolution, albeit on a smaller scale.

After the Rose Revolution reports of low-level clashes between Georgians and Abkhaz became steadily more frequent, and even more so between Georgians and South Ossetians. All this contributed to the beginning of an international crisis, which in August 2008 burst into full scale war when, in the middle of the night on August 7/8 Saakashvili ordered Georgia's armed forces to invade South Ossetia. The war, of course, cannot be entirely explained by the model, but the rise in ethnic violence certainly contributed to the probability of it happening. This is what was implied when the author expressed that the model presented in this paper does not seek to compete with, but rather complement system-level explanations.

## The Role of the International Community in Georgia's Statebuilding

Stewart (2009, 809) argues that in seeing the eagerness of Georgia's new leader and due to the nature of his academic and professional backgrounds, Western countries were eager to support him without fully considering the side effects that their support may create.

Between the events of the Rose Revolution in November 2003 and the presidential elections of January 2004 when he became president, Saakashvili put out calls for assistance to the Organization for Security and Cooperation of Europe (OSCE). At a donor's meeting held in the Netherlands, 6 million Euros were pledged to assist Georgia. The OSCE's support was not limited to money. In 2004, during Bulgaria's Chairmanship of the OSCE, support for democratization in Georgia was declared a priority of the OSCE's (Jawad 2008, 620), which gave Saakashvili's statebuilding efforts enormous political clout and legitimacy within Georgia. The IMF also pledged financial support for Georgia's efforts, in the amount of \$750 million.

It is the United States, however, that has been by far the strongest supporter of Georgia's statebuilding efforts. It provided almost \$1.7 billion to Georgia in aid from the

late 1990s to 2008, specifically designed to facilitate statebuilding efforts (Myers 2008). The vast majority of this financing poured into Georgia after the Rose Revolution. According to the official US Department of State Website:

*Assistance Goals:* United States Government (USG) assistance promotes consolidation and advancement of the democratic reforms undertaken since the November 2003 Rose Revolution [and] assists Georgia's integration into the Euro-Atlantic community through the implementation of free-market reforms. And among the priorities of this program is to:

- Reform, train and equip the Georgian military to meet NATO standards and to support contributions to international peacekeeping and security operations
- Improve the capacity of the Georgian Border Police and Custom Service to fight smuggling, increase revenue and improve border control
- Increase the skills of the Georgian judicial and law enforcement officials
- Enhance forensic capabilities to meet international standards
- Improve executive, parliamentary and local government capacity, transparency, accountability and citizen outreach, as well as institutional checks and balances
- Strengthen the rule of law by improving judicial independence, legal profession reform, judicial and legal education, and the criminal procedure code, and by supporting the implementation of jury trials
- Bolster political party competitiveness and promote free and fair elections
- Strengthen civil society, independent media and civic education

During a conference held at McGill University, former US ambassador to Georgia Kenneth Yalowitz insisted that it was primarily this US assistance that enabled Saakashvili to implement his statebuilding plans (Yalowitz 2010). To summarize, international assistance aimed at strengthening Saakashvili's campaigns was crucial in the destruction of critical informal institutions that had a mitigating effect on ethnic violence. Without international assistance Georgia's post-Revolution reforms would not have occurred as rapidly as they did or on the scale that they were on. The US and its European allies, by contributing their financial and political support unintentionally contributed made it more likely that ethnic violence will resurge.

## Caveats

At first glance, there seems to be a number of weaknesses with the model presented on page 2. Some of those shall be addressed here. Critics may point out that Georgia was receiving some statebuilding funding from the international community even prior to 2003. The response to that is that while that was true, the Georgian leadership's overtures and various allusions regarding its intentions to statebuild were not credible. Georgia's head of state from 1994 to 2003, Shevardnadze, was unwilling to take the necessary steps that accompanied the process of statebuilding (Jawad 2008, 620), most likely because he or his allies were complicit in many of the informal institutions that would have been targeted by reform. And, as the model suggests, internal statebuilding efforts must be credible before external support plays a role. Credibility was lacking prior to the Rose Revolution but abundant right after it. With that in mind, it must be pointed out that some of the author's colleagues have suggested making international support for statebuilding an independent variable in the model. The problem with that is that international support for statebuilding efforts alone cannot account for the destruction of informal institutions, it simply strengthens the causality between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

Another issue may be the generalizability of this model. The reader may have qualms with the presentation of only one case study in this paper. This was done for brevity's sake. The case of Georgia was used specifically because it involved not one but two ethnic conflicts. The conclusions drawn from the model can, however, be applied to other regions with similar conditions. For example, in Saddam Hussein's Iraq ethnic stability was fragile. Evidence suggests that his use of oil money and patronage networks to co-opt traditional leaders of ethnic groups (George 2009, 7) were just as important as his brutal use of repression in maintaining ethnic stability in the country. Following the US invasion in 2003, statebuilding efforts (in this case supported entirely by external actors) broke many of those patronage ties. This most likely contributed to the rise in inter-ethnic violence that ensued.

## Conclusion and Outlook

The model that was developed for this paper is obviously not foolproof. However the explanatory power afforded by it is potentially too important to ignore. In areas where ethnic conflict exists, and where inter-ethnic cooperation

through informal institutions plays a big role in mitigating ethnic violence, statebuilding measures can lead to an increase in the probability of ethnic violence occurring by destroying the aforementioned informal institutions. International support for said statebuilding efforts may, by bolstering these efforts, have the unintended negative effect of increasing the likelihood of ethnic violence breaking out.

The Western community continues to struggle with defining the ideal 'modern state' and designing programmes to achieve this state. While critical approaches have contributed significantly to understanding international practices of statebuilding, less attention has been given to understanding the effects of assisting statebuilding initiatives in countries that have unresolved ethnic strife and in which informal institutions play an important rule. If the international community wishes to maximize the positive impact of sponsoring various governments around the globe in their statebuilding efforts, then the specific context of each target state must be considered more carefully, in order to minimize the negative effects.

## Works Cited

- Birch, Julian. 1999. "Ossetiya—land of uncertain frontiers and manipulative elites." *Central Asian Survey* 18 (4): 501-534.
1996. "The Georgian/South Ossetian Territorial and Boundary Dispute," in *Transcaucasian Boundaries*, ed. John. F. R. Wright, Suzanna Goldenberg, and Richard Schofield: 151-189. New York: St. Martin's Press, p. 151-189.
- Chirikba, Vjacheslav. 1998. "The Origin of the Abkhazian People," in *The Abkhazians: A Handbook*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Closson, Stacy. 2010. "Networks of Profit in Georgia's Autonomous Regions: Challenges to Statebuilding." *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 4 (2): 179-204.
- Eisenstadt, S. N. and Louis Roniger. 1980. "Patron--Client Relations as a Model of Structuring Social Exchange." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22 (1): 42-77.
- Gahrton, Per. 2010. *Georgia: Pawn in the New Great Game*. New York: Pluto Press.
- George, Julie. 2009. *The Politics of Ethnic Separatism in Russia and Georgia*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Helme, Gretchen and Steven Letivsky. 2004. "Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics: A Research Agenda" *Perspectives on Politics* 2 (4): 725-740.
- Jawad, Pamela. 2008. "Conflict Resolution through Democracy Promotion? The Role of the OSCE in Georgia." *Democratization* 15 (3): 611-629.
- Kaufman, Stuart. 2001. *Modern Hatreds: The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Kukhianidze, Alexandre. 2009. "Corruption and Organized Crime in Georgia before and after the Rose Revolution." *Central Asian Survey* 28 (2): 215-234.
- Kupatadze, Alexander. 2007. "Radiological Smuggling and Uncontrolled Territories: The Case Of Georgia." *Global Crime* 8 (1): 40-57.
- Kuznetsova, Vera. June 26, 1992. "Shevardnadze and Yeltsin Reach Agreement on Ceasefire in South Ossetia" in *Countdown to War in Georgia: Russia's Foreign Policy and Media Coverage of the Conflict in South Ossetia and Abkhazia*. Minneapolis: East View Press.
- Lake, David. 2010. "The Practice and Theory of US Statebuilding." *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 4 (3): 257-284.
- Myers, Steven Lee. September 4 2008. <[http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20080904/news\\_1n4georgia.html](http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20080904/news_1n4georgia.html)>.
- Saideman, Stephen. Fall 2010 Lecture. Montreal: McGill University.
- Stewart, Susan. 2009. "The interplay of domestic contexts and external democracy promotion: lessons from Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus." *Democratization* 16 (4): 804-824.
- Transparency International. <<http://www.transparency.org/>>.
- United States Department of State. "Foreign Operations Appropriated Assistance: Georgia." <<http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/140638.htm>>.
- Yalowitz, Kenneth. March 25, 2010. "Russia and Georgia: Why Such a Difficult and Dangerous Relationship?" Conference hosted by McGill University.

# The Darfurian Rebellion and the Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention

Valentin Robiliard

U3 · Department of Political Science · valentin.robiliard@mail.mcgill.ca

'Never Again.' These two words have been echoing in the United Nations' halls since the day it was created. They are reiterated in its founding documents, shouted by global leaders at forums and conferences, and painted on cardboard signs in marches throughout the world. After the Holocaust and other atrocities of World War II, after the Balkans, Rwanda, Burundi or Sierra Leone, this short phrase has been the expression of a rising worldwide concern for humanitarian atrocities and the emergence of a certain norm of humanitarian military intervention.

The end of the Cold War and the amplification of ethnic violence in the 1990s led the international community to render this concern into a doctrine. U.S. President Bill Clinton declared in 1999: "If the world community has the power to stop it, we ought to stop genocide and ethnic cleansing."<sup>1</sup> In 2001, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty enunciated this doctrine to be a "Responsibility to Protect."<sup>2</sup> Three years later the UN High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change embraced the doctrine and made it a norm.<sup>3</sup> In theory then, the global community has been given the responsibility and mandate to end large-scale violence, genocide and crimes against humanity.

The 2003 outbreak of the Darfur Crisis uncovered a region that had long been ignored. As images of burnt villages, refugee camps crowded by starving children, or stories of sexually abused women flooded the Western media, appalled American, French, and Canadian citizens and non-governmental organizations started to criticize the absence of international intervention and called for a greater political will to react. How was it possible for the UN to remain still? How could the world let nearly 500,000 innocent civilians be killed and three million displaced, not even ten years after the failure to stop the Rwandan Genocide and its 800,000 victims? Many humanitarians, desolated to see that Darfur civilians did not weigh enough in the eyes of the Western leaders for them to be willing to intervene, argued that the international community was failing once more in its 'Responsibility to Protect.'

The tragedy in Darfur however is not the result of a lack of intervention, but of the prospect of more intervention (Anderson 2004; Belloni 2006; Kuperman 2006, 2008, 2009; Whitty 2008; Nzelibe 2009). In fact, some have argued that intervention, as "the norm, intended as a type of insurance policy against genocidal violence, exhibits the pathology of all insurance systems by creating moral hazard that encourages risk-taking."<sup>4</sup> Sub-state groups are encouraged to rebel, as they expect a third-party to intervene and stop genocidal retaliation from the state. However, because lack of will or logistical issues delay intervention, this retaliation cannot be stopped. The 'Responsibility to Protect' thus creates more violence than would otherwise occur had the international community not embraced the norm.

Borrowing from Alan Kuperman's moral hazard theory, this paper will argue that the 'Responsibility to Protect' doctrine is partially responsible for the outbreak of violence in Darfur since 2003. While acknowledging the role of Khartoum's leadership and the state-supported Janjaweed militias in the tragedy, it will survey the responsibility of actors that are often disregarded in the Western media – the Darfurian rebel forces. Militarily inferior, and aware of the probability of an extremely violent retaliation from the government of Sudan, the rebels nonetheless launched a suicidal uprising. Said uprising was meant to provoke state retaliation, causing a humanitarian catastrophe that would acquire international attention and intervention, ultimately fulfilling the rebels' political objectives.<sup>5</sup>

After laying the theoretical framework developed by Kuperman on the moral hazard of humanitarian intervention, this paper will examine the theory on the Darfur Crisis and attempt to explain why Darfur rebel groups have launched attacks on the Sudanese state despite the extremely low chances of success and the tremendous human costs entailed by this rebellion. In a third section, this paper will offer some policy recommendations, both addressing the ongoing Darfur Crisis and urging a certain rethinking of the 'Responsibility to Protect' doctrine.

## Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis Development

In “Suicidal Rebellions and the Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention,” Kuperman argues that the emerging ‘Responsibility to Protect’ norm has been responsible for the escalation of genocidal violence. In the demonstration of his theory, Kuperman works backwards. Questioning the causes of violence at its motive cause, he finds that ethnic rebellions have very often been responsible for violence as they generally lead to aggressive retaliation from the attacked state. He then asks why sub-state groups rebel, and offers the different alternatives and rationales that would lead them to rebel. Refuting four of the five plausible explanations to rebellion, he argues that outside intervention, as an insurance against violent retaliation, encourages the risky behavior of rebellion – a phenomenon known as moral hazard. He concludes by asserting that the emerging ‘Responsibility to Protect’ norm has deepened the security guarantee of intervention and amplified the incident of moral hazard. This section will work through the reasoning in detail.

Despite popular belief and conflicting with the portrayal of genocidal violence in the Western media, literature on ethnic conflict and group claim-making finds that large-scale violence, although carried out by the state, is very often provoked by a minority group. In the game of ethnic bargaining, minorities constantly make claims to the majority state. Depending on the state’s response, the availability of democratic processes to the realization of their claims, the signals sent by the state, or the chances of successful insurrection, these groups may decide to challenge the state authority into launching a rebellion. “The majority [the state] moves next and can either challenge the minority – large-scale violence – or back down.”<sup>6</sup> Harff and Gurr (1988) have identified forty-four incidents of genocidal or politicide violence between 1943 and 1987<sup>7</sup> and found that “at least 30 of the 44 cases (68%) exhibit the phenomenon in which rebels provoke their own group’s demise by violently challenging the state’s authority.”<sup>8</sup> While we may deplore the mass killings of civilians carried out by the state, we must understand that the carnage is often a rational “calculated military response to the unique challenges posed by guerrilla warfare rather than simply the consequence of racist hatred, frustration or military indiscipline.”<sup>9</sup>

Scholars have offered various explanations for sub-state group rebellions, analyzing the types of claims minori-

ties make and tying the intensity of these claims to the necessity of a rebellion. Davies (1971) asserted that it was relative deprivation – a gap between what people want and what they actually have – that triggered frustrations leading to rebellion.<sup>10</sup> Gurr (1970) argued that the political opportunity for success and the ability for the group to mobilize were also important.<sup>11</sup> Whether victim of discrimination, deprivation, or oppression, minorities sometimes see rebellions as windows of opportunities to change the status quo and achieve better lives for their ethnic kin. However, the literature fell short of explaining why some rebel groups, conscious of the massive violent retaliation that could result from rebellion, still choose insurgency over any other means towards equal treatment, state control, autonomy or secession. While the minority might be politically or economically weakened by the majority government in the current circumstances, its leadership is aware that state retaliation in the form of genocidal violence will only make the group worse off, making rebellion a suicidal venture.

In the setting of ethnic bargaining, the minority leadership evaluates the costs, benefits and risks of each strategy by carefully analyzing the environment and the signals it receives from other actors. Misinterpreting these signals can lead the group into a detrimental course. Given the tremendous costs of rebellion, leaders must thus be very meticulous in decoding the environment surrounding them. Kuperman argues that there are four explanations for rebel groups to defy the deterrent threat from the state, or rather, four assessments that rebels use to consider the benefits of rebellion as offsetting its costs, thus engaging in revolt.

First, there could be a gap between the state’s threats of retaliation and the rebel leadership’s perception of these threats. If the state is willing to pursue genocidal violence as punishment to rebellion, but fails to clearly communicate these threats, rebel groups will not expect their rebellion to trigger large-scale violence. However, this hypothesis does not explain the perpetuation of violence in the face of retaliation. This yields the first hypothesis:

*H1: If the minority leadership fails to perceive the credible threat by the state to retaliate, it will not see insurgency as suicidal and will engage in rebellion.*

Second, the state could fail to communicate credible reassurances, so that rebel groups would expect genocidal violence no matter what. If it expects the state to inevitably



launch large-scale violence against its group's civilians, the rebel leadership will assess it has nothing to lose in launching rebellion, even if the uprising fails. The second hypothesis is thus:

*H2: If the rebels expect victimization anyway, they will have nothing to lose in rebelling and will thus launch an insurgency.*

Third, the insurgent group could legitimately expect a successful outcome to its uprising, without outside intervention. Here, the rebel leadership could very well perceive the threats of retaliation from the state or its reassurances, and understand that rebellion incurs significant human costs, yet it could find these costs worth paying in the event of a victorious (and unassisted) insurgency. This yields the third hypothesis:

*H3: If the insurgents expect victory at a tolerable cost without outside intervention, they will be willing to engage in rebellion.*

Fourth, "it is the prospect of humanitarian intervention – moral hazard – that leads rebels to expect their armed challenge to succeed at tolerable cost."<sup>12</sup> State retaliation as punishment to rebellion could trigger a worldwide concern for the lives of the group's civilians, leading to humanitarian military intervention against the oppressive state, and thus success of the rebels' objectives. This gives the fourth hypothesis:

*H4: The minority group leadership will engage in rebellion if it expects outside intervention to enable victory at a tolerable cost.*

Finally, the null hypothesis suggests that rebel groups do not behave rationally so that it should not be expected of them to pursue strategies that will maximize their utility:

*H5: The rebels do not behave as unitary rational actors.*

Kuperman puts forward the fourth hypothesis, stating that it is the dynamics of and discourse on humanitarian intervention that play as the exogenous variable to the insurgents' decision to rebel. It is thus important to look more closely at this phenomenon of moral hazard. "Moral hazards occur when insured parties engage in activities that increase their chance of being victimized by the risk against which they are insured. In other words, moral hazard refers to the tendency of people with insurance

to change their behavior in a way that increases claims against the insurance company."<sup>13</sup> For example, the unemployed receiving government financial assistance (employment insurance) may sometimes behave irresponsibly and choose to live off government welfare instead of looking for employment. Similarly, car theft insurance may inspire some to park their cars in unsafe neighborhoods at night. Recently, when the U.S. government bailed out numerous failing banks, it indirectly encouraged these institutions to adopt the same irresponsible behaviors that led them to near bankruptcy. Humanitarian intervention is no stranger to moral hazard: the international community, as "the third party (principal) provides a security guarantee (contract) to a domestic minority (agent) who wants protection from genocide, civil war, or other bad outcome."<sup>14</sup> As such, it "fosters rebellion by lowering its expected costs and raising its likelihood of success."<sup>15</sup>

Timothy Crawford (2006) distinguished four types of moral hazards tied to humanitarian intervention. First, if a third party has made a specific threat of intervention in a particular country, rebellion is said to be caused by an acute moral hazard. Second, a long history of intervention in a specific country would be the source of a chronic moral hazard. Third, moral hazard is said to be contagious if intervention in support of rebels in one state spurred rebellion in a neighboring state (or region). Finally, moral hazard is pervasive when an emerging norm of humanitarian intervention inadvertently encourages rebellions more broadly.<sup>16</sup>

This first part has laid the theoretical framework on the moral hazard of humanitarian intervention. The second part will now test the theory and hypotheses on the Darfur Crisis.

## Empirical Testing, Understanding the Darfurian Rebellion

This section will now assess the exportability of Kuperman's theory from the Balkans to the Darfurian upheaval. Before testing each of the five explanations for the deterrence failure represented by rebellion, it is necessary to evaluate if the framework actually allows these hypotheses to be tested. In other words, were the Darfurian rebels really the first ones to take up arms, so that genocidal violence was only a state retaliatory response?

Darfur is populated by two main groups: the 'Arabs,' pas-

toralist nomadic herdsman, and the 'Africans,' subsistence farmers. The two have been fighting over land and resources for decades. When the current President General Omar al-Bashir and the National Islamic Front seized power in 1989, a certain discourse on the superiority of the Arab ethnicity arose and 'African' communities became the target of a series of discriminatory policies. With Africans constituting 80% of the population, Darfur was quickly left out of the government agenda and neglected to the point that Khartoum's investment in the region became nonexistent. "During the 1990s, the African Darfurians grew frustrated by political marginalization and government support for the Arabs. The 'blacks' complained about the central government's lack of interest in building and repairing roads and financing local schools and hospitals."<sup>17</sup> These frustrations were expressed in May 2000 in *The Black Book: Imbalance of Power and Wealth in Sudan*, "a thoroughly documented catalogue of the hardships Darfur had endured at the hands of the government of Khartoum."<sup>18</sup>

Politically and economically weakened, Darfur was however not the target of full-scale violence from Khartoum. In fact, before 2003, despite some "endemic low-level violence between Darfur's farmers and herders [...] and a few attacks by government-sponsored Arab militias on African villages, [there had been] no large-scale government-militias campaign."<sup>19</sup> The Darfuri rebels, organized as the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) or the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), were thus the first ones to take arms: "In February 2003, [they] killed 200 soldiers in Golu, in Western Darfur. More spectacularly, in April 2003, both rebel groups attacked two army outposts in central and southern Darfur, killing dozens of soldiers, destroying several fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters, and capturing a base commander. Over the next four months, the rebels killed hundreds more soldiers in three attacks on north Darfur."<sup>20</sup>

In the early days of the rebellion, Khartoum attempted to negotiate with the insurgents. Peace talks proving unsuccessful, the government of Sudan engaged in a large counter-insurgency campaign in June 2003. Genocidal violence was thus in fact the state's retaliatory response to the rebels' challenge to authority. The hypotheses proposed in part one can then be put to test in trying to explain the suicidal venture that was this rebellion.

It is hard to believe the Darfuri rebels were not aware of the threat of state retaliation. In fact, the Sudanese gov-

ernment had overtly communicated its willingness to fight back if its authority was to be challenged. When trying to negotiate with the rebels, the government gave a ten-day ultimatum to surrender or suffer the consequences of rebellion: the threat was given that "If dialogue does not work in Darfur, the Army can solve the situation in twenty-four hours."<sup>21</sup> After the massacre of nearly two million South Sudanese in the North-South civil war, no one could question the credibility of these threats. Local tribes, sharing a history of suffering from the government-backed militias, were "hesitant to take action that might exacerbate their suffering. They had bitter recent experience of how any action, however small, could escalate."<sup>22</sup> The first hypothesis fails then to inform the rebels' decision-making process.

The second hypothesis, that the insurgents were expecting victimization anyway so that they had nothing to lose by rebelling, is also not convincing. It is true the region was not free from violence and insecurity prior to rebellion. However, things were far from genocidal violence. If Khartoum had used the Janjaweed militias as proxies in the past, it was only to take down insurgencies, never to target civilians. Concerns over a probable genocide plan against the 'Africans' were only expressed by the rebel leadership - "the government is planning to crush our people. What can we do?" said Ahmad Abdel Shafi, the SLA's first coordinator.<sup>23</sup> The African populace, however, not seeing violence as reaching genocidal levels, "refused to support mobilization for a rebellion" for years.<sup>24</sup> The term 'genocide' was then clearly used as a rebel strategy to gain moral and financial support. These rebels however undeniably knew that things would get much worse if they launched a rebellion. There is thus no evidence to support the second hypothesis as an explanation to the uprising.

At the eve of their insurgency, the rebels incontestably knew that they had no chance of triumphing over Khartoum on their own. Although trying to reorganize themselves, they remained relatively weak, facing both a strong state and a multitude of merciless Arab militias in the region. They had witnessed twenty years of struggle for recognition by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) against Khartoum and the state's ability to take down the Southern (and better-armed) rebels. Furthermore, timing did not work in their favor, as Khartoum was engaged in a peace process with the South and could thus redeploy its troops in Darfur if needed.<sup>25</sup> The third hypothesis, that the rebels could expect victory at a tolerable cost without outside intervention, fails then also at explaining rebellion.

If the rebels knew they had no chance of military victory, if they understood state retaliation was inevitable, and if they were aware retaliation would be more violent than anything their people had ever endured, then rebellion could eventually be seen as irrational (null hypothesis) or the result of Kuperman's moral hazard of humanitarian intervention (hypothesis four). "A possible explanation based on irrationality would be that the 'blacks' reached such levels of frustration as a consequence of marginalization that they decided to rebel, without considering the likely costs associated with that course of action."<sup>26</sup> According to Kelly Whitty (2008), there are grounds on which to question the unitary rational nature of the Darfurian rebel leadership.<sup>27</sup> For example, there was little cohesion among the leadership: Not only were rebels divided between the SLM/A, the JEM, and others, but even within the SLM/A – the strongest and most active group – there were serious disagreements among the decision-makers.

Throughout the conflict, rebels would disagree about whom to put forward as their spokesperson, or the leadership would sign and then withdraw from peace deals because it lacked support from the rebel factions on the ground. "In 2006, Sudan's government signed a US-brokered peace agreement, but two of the three main rebel factions refused to join because they demanded additional concessions."<sup>28</sup> This confusion within the rebels' leadership suggests a lack of unified decisions based on shared preferences, which are dynamics necessary for the rebellion to be considered a rational strategic venture. The null hypothesis is thus a plausible explanation to rebellion, and it will have to be tested against Kuperman's hypothesis on the moral hazard of humanitarian intervention.

"Although non-strategic factors affected the rebels, their most fateful actions are better explained by strategic calculation."<sup>29</sup> In fact, although the dynamics within the decision-making stratum of the rebel groups seemed to suggest a certain irrationality of its leaders, one will appreciate the strategic calculations of the rebel leadership and understand the rationality of its actions once one endeavors to consider the perverse effects that the prospect of humanitarian intervention could have had on the rebels' decision-making process. "According to moral hazard theory, the rebel groups take offensive actions against the state to provoke violent retaliation on the civilian population in order to attract international attention and eventually intervention of some sort in their support."<sup>30</sup> In line with Crawford's four types of moral hazard, the rebels had legitimate reasons to expect an outside intervention if

large-scale violence was to erupt.

First and foremost, the international community had just intervened in Southern Sudan. After years of civil war, the international community, led by United States, intervened to stop the humanitarian crisis and pressure Khartoum to share power and wealth with the southern rebels. The 2005 Peace Agreement eventually fulfilled the rebels' agenda, granting them autonomy, a share of the oil revenues, and the promise of a referendum on secession. This triggered a phenomenon of contagious moral hazard, as the Darfurian militants could hope to "emulate the southern strategy of attracting humanitarian intervention to gain a share of power and wealth."<sup>31</sup>

Second, as mentioned earlier, the 'Responsibility to Protect' doctrine had become law in the international community, it was deeply rooted in its moral principles and had been publicly embraced by all prominent global leaders. "Many of the SLA/M leaders were university-educated, making it reasonable to assume that they were at least peripherally aware of the international discourse on intervention in states where gross violations of human rights took place."<sup>32</sup> After a series of high-profile humanitarian military interventions in the 1990s (Northern and Southern Iraq, Bosnia, Somalia, Zaire, Liberia or Kosovo), there was no reason to believe Darfur would not appear on the agenda for military intervention in the event of large-scale violence. In fact, rebel leaders would constantly make parallels to humanitarian intervention precedents, wanting things done "like in Bosnia" or Kosovo.<sup>33</sup> A phenomenon of pervasive moral hazard is thus observable.

However, there is no evidence to support the phenomena of acute and chronic moral hazard. In fact, there was, prior to rebellion, no direct threat of intervention targeting Khartoum, nor did Sudan have a particularly long history of outside intervention. Nonetheless, following the first waves of state violent retaliation, "there was a gradual escalation of intervention in Darfur starting with humanitarian aid in 2003 and peacekeepers in 2004; and persistent calls by Western states and non-governmental organizations for greater intervention in Darfur,"<sup>34</sup> suggesting that acute and chronic moral hazards did come into play later on in the conflict.

Darfurian rebels, then, had every reason to believe the international community would intervene if the state were to engage in a massive violent retaliation to rebellion. The concern was thus to send out the right signals in order



to garner the sympathy of the international community. Note for example that the rebels always targeted government installations, never the Arab militias or their civilian support base, therefore appearing as the victims of violence and not the perpetrator of atrocities against civilians. Western media, portraying the rebels as freedom fighters, triggered wide waves of support in the West for these 'heroes.' Yet these 'heroes' let their villages burn and their people die. In fact, the more images of suffering and death there were, the more sympathy in the West there was and the greater the pressure for intervention. As such, the rebels "have been very content to sit back, let the village burnings go on, let the killing go on, because the more international pressure that's brought to bear on Khartoum, the stronger their position grows."<sup>35</sup> Convinced that the international community would intervene, the rebels almost encouraged their civilian support base to take the beating – the SLA told the populace: "Hey, don't give up. The U.S. and England will come here and occupy this country and they will give you everything and take off the Arabs from Sudan."<sup>36</sup> The rebels' reluctance to explore peace deals with Khartoum also suggests an effort to make the crisis last, eventually obtaining greater intervention in the future. In 2003, the SLM abandoned peace talks. In 2004, both rebel groups refused to attend peace talks. In 2005, the rebels made unrealistic claims putting the peace process to a halt. In 2006, when the SLA/M signed the Darfur Peace Agreement, two internal rebel factions continued to fight, "not by irrationality, but by [the] strategic assessment that [they] could hold out for greater intervention."<sup>37</sup>

The first three hypotheses fail to explain the insurgents' decision to rebel. After having challenged the null hypothesis against Kuperman's theory on the moral hazard of humanitarian intervention, it is hard to believe the rebels acted irrationally, as the decisions they took were the results of highly strategic calculations. Judging from the series of provocations, the violations of ceasefires and the marketing of their rebellion, it is clear that the rebels sought to have the eyes of the international community on the humanitarian catastrophe carried out by the state, eventually triggering outside intervention. The fourth hypothesis, on the moral hazard of humanitarian intervention, is thus the most convincing in explaining rebellion.

## Research Findings, Implications and Policy Recommendations

Explaining rebellion in Bosnia and Kosovo, Kuperman's

theory on the moral hazard of humanitarian intervention can also explain the Darfurian puzzle: despite their military inferiority and aware of the massive campaign of violence the Sudanese state would engage in as punishment to rebellion, the Darfurian rebels launched an insurgency against the government in Khartoum. The idea was to provoke retaliation against their own people, triggering a humanitarian catastrophe that would make the news in the West, ultimately causing the international community to intervene and thus fulfill the rebels' political objectives.

Citizens and non-governmental organizations in the West ought then to be careful when articulating their concerns for the lives of the civilians in Darfur, or when advancing plans for military intervention. In fact, the emerging norm which dictates that the international community is justified in intervening militarily to prevent human rights violations when a state is unable or unwilling to protect its own citizens has had perverse effects on state and sub-state actors, paradoxically creating more violence than expected. Misunderstanding the dynamics that led to the conflict in the first place and this phenomenon of moral hazard can lead one to pursue policies that would be counter-productive or harmful. This third section will highlight the complexity of preventing moral hazard in the international realm. It will also offer some policy recommendations that could help reduce the incidence of moral hazard. In Darfur, it is essential to show that the international community will not reward the irresponsible behavior of rebellion, while more broadly, it is necessary to rethink the 'Responsibility to Protect' doctrine.

In "Principal-Agent Problems in Humanitarian Intervention: Moral Hazards, Adverse Selection, and the Commitment Dilemma," Robert W. Rauchhaus (2009) offers a clear picture of the complexity of dealing with moral hazard in the anarchic international system. While "in the insurance industry and many of the other domains explored by economists, principals have a variety of pricing mechanisms – premiums, deductible, and co-payments – to prevent or punish bad behavior, in international politics [...] third parties often lack effective instruments for preventing or punishing bad behavior."<sup>38</sup> While an insurance company can tackle moral hazard with the legal tools it is given in the domestic realm (courts, binding arbitration, special clauses, etc), the anarchical nature of the international system and the absence of an external binding enforcement mechanism renders impossible the prevention of free-riding and the punishment of fraud. Countries considering humanitarian intervention are thus confronted

by a commitment dilemma: “If a third party credibly commits to intervening in a dispute, the domestic minority may take advantage of the situation and engage in provocative or risky behavior. In contrast, if a third party avoids credibly committing to intervention, then the government may discount the warnings as merely bluffing or cheap talk, and continue engaging in violence.”<sup>39</sup> If the ‘Responsibility to Protect’ doctrine, as a security guarantee, offers incentives for minorities to rebel, then should we nullify this security guarantee? But if we do, are we allowing a humanitarian crisis as we disengage from the conflict?

The international community is facing this dilemma in Darfur. Intervening would absolve the rebels of their responsibility and strengthen their legitimacy and their cause, rewarding them for the humanitarian catastrophe they have indirectly provoked. Yet disengaging would leave millions of innocent civilians at the mercy of violence. In choosing to intervene, one must thus distinguish the militants from the civilians and design a strategy that will save civilian lives without strengthening the rebels. Costantino Pischedda (2007) in “A plan for military intervention in Darfur” suggests an intervening force of about 30,000 personnel that would focus on the protection of refugee camps, the prevention of their militarization, and the protection of humanitarian aid delivery.<sup>40</sup> By screening the populations at the entrance of the camps, rebel forces would not be able to make these camps their bases or benefit from the food, medicine, vehicles and communication equipment provided by the humanitarian aid. “[Because] Khartoum wants the ‘blacks’ to ‘behave’ rather than to exterminate them, the government would not be interested in attacking camps inhabited by unarmed elements. The intervention may actually be seen in a positive light by Khartoum, as it would reduce the negative publicity associated with the violence on IDPs [Internally Displaced Persons], while depriving the rebels of important resources.”<sup>41</sup> While the rebels will most likely oppose this type of intervention, if successful it will prove to be an efficient solution to the ongoing dilemma. The humanitarian catastrophe will be addressed, yet the intervention will not reward the irresponsible behavior of rebellion and will not register a precedent encouraging other rebellions in the future.

But a lot of damage has already been done in Darfur, and although the intervention mentioned above would certainly alleviate much of the suffering, it does not absolve the international community from seriously questioning the norm that has indirectly contributed to the carnage. It

is in fact necessary to rethink the ‘Responsibility to Protect’ doctrine so as to decrease the incidence of moral hazard in the future. Kuperman in “Rethinking the Responsibility to Protect” proposes five reforms of intervention policy that could help reduce moral hazard and thus genocidal violence.

First, “the international community should refuse to intervene in any way – diplomatic, economic, or military – to help sub-state rebels unless state retaliation is grossly disproportionate.”<sup>42</sup> Making such a statement should discourage both provocations by sub-state actors and disproportionate retaliation by the state in the event of a rebellion. Various issues remain however. The international community yet has to agree on what constitutes a disproportionate retaliation. Moral hazard also fails to be clearly addressed, as sub-state actors might harden their rebellion in an attempt to provoke even greater retaliation. But more importantly, the phenomenon of moral hazard could also affect the state: because the international community sets a threshold, the state is given the reassurance that it can engage in retaliation without having its sovereignty disputed, as long as it does not cross said threshold.

Second, as suggested by Pischedda, interveners should, when delivering humanitarian aid (food, water, medical supplies, etc), “do so in ways that minimize the benefits to rebels.”<sup>43</sup> In an attempt to prevent refugee camps from becoming safe-havens for the militants, interveners should escort humanitarian aid convoys and police the camps. This recommendation is promising, and appears to be easily implementable. However, rebel groups have no interest in bettering the lives of their civilians, as they struggle to spread the most images of suffering. As such, as Pischedda suggests, rebel groups will gladly attack the aid convoys, and escorting these convoys will require heavy military capabilities. Intervenors might also have to resort to bribes for them to be able to reach the refugee camps, which would significantly strengthen the rebels’ financial and military resources.

Third, “the international community should expand substantial resources to persuade states to address the legitimate grievances of non-violent domestic groups.”<sup>44</sup> Instead of punishing states when it is too late, because they have retaliated when violently challenged, the international community should encourage them to address the non-violent claims of minorities, for example through more democratic processes. This could be done through socialization or conditionality, but remains very idealistic.

Fourth, “the international community should not apply coercive leverage to compel a state to hand over territory or authority to a domestic opposition, unless it first deploys a robust peacekeeping force to defend against the potential violent backlash.”<sup>45</sup> Siding with the domestic opposition, without first ensuring the international community is willing to intervene and has the military capacity to do so, could backfire and lead to state to further retaliate against the civilians.

Finally, “interveners should avoid falsely claiming humanitarian motives for interventions that are driven primarily by other objectives, such as securing resources, fighting terrorism, or preventing nuclear proliferation.”<sup>46</sup> Although claiming to be driven by charitable purposes when intervening abroad may be a better strategy in an effort to gain popular support, it undeniably creates precedents for which other rebel groups could then point to in an attempt to obtain humanitarian military intervention. As we have seen in the debate unfolding over Iraq however, it is hard to expect countries to behave in perfect honesty and constantly claim the exact motives and objectives that bring them to intervene.

While imperfect, these reforms could, if considered by policy-makers, contribute to a certain rethinking of the ‘Responsibility to Protect’ doctrine, in an effort to reduce the incidence of moral hazard in the future.

## Conclusion

The ‘Responsibility to Protect’ doctrine has been enthusiastically received by the global civil society. Challenging the Westphalian tradition by arguing that sovereignty is neither absolute nor an entitlement of statehood, but rather, a privilege that states may earn only by protecting their people, the doctrine has obligated the international community to intervene, militarily if necessary, to protect the at-risk populations.<sup>47</sup> For non-governmental organizations and human rights activists, this is a great innovation that will assist the international community in tackling the challenges of the post-Cold War world. But the ‘Responsibility to Protect’ could very well be the cause of these challenges: as a security guarantee against genocidal violence, the norm has the perverse effect to encourage risk-taking and eventually rebellion by sub-state actors, exhibiting the pathology of moral hazard carried by all insurance systems. As the case of Darfur confirms, the dynamics of and discourse on humanitarian intervention have had an impact on the decision-making process

groups and rebel forces, encouraging them to engage in the suicidal venture of rebellion in the hope of creating a humanitarian catastrophe that will acquire international attention and intervention. It is therefore urgent for the international community to rethink its rhetoric and the ‘Responsibility to Protect’ doctrine. In an effort to reduce the incidence of moral hazard, it is necessary in Darfur to show that if we are to intervene to address the humanitarian crisis, we will not reward the rebels’ irresponsible behavior. More broadly, policy-makers must consider reforming the doctrine to redefine the ethics driving intervention, tackle the phenomenon of moral hazard, and solve rather than cause challenges in the future.

---

<sup>1</sup> President Bill Clinton, interview by Wolf Blitzer. 1999. Late Edition, CNN. Web. 23 November 2010.

<sup>2</sup> International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. 2001. The Responsibility to Protect. Web. 23 November 2010.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. 2004. A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility. Web. 23 November 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Kuperman, Alan J. 2006. “Suicidal Rebellions and the Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention” in Crawford, Timothy W. and Kuperman, Alan J. (Ed.) *Gambling on Humanitarian Intervention: Moral Hazard, Rebellion and Civil War*. Abingdon: Routledge. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Whitty, Kelly. 2008. “Darfuri Rebel Leaders and the Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention”. *Paterson Review* 9: 19-34, 20.

<sup>6</sup> Jenne, Erin. 2004. “A Bargaining Theory of Minority Demands: Explaining the Dog that Didn’t Bite in 1990s Yugoslavia”. *International Studies Quarterly* 48(4): 729-754, 734. Harff, Barbara, and Gurr, Ted Robert. 1988. “Toward Empirical Theory of Genocides and Politicides: Identification and Measurement of Cases since 1945”. *International Studies Quarterly* 32(3): 359-371.

<sup>7</sup> Kuperman in Crawford and Kuperman 2006, 3.

<sup>8</sup> Pischedda, Costantino. 2007. “A plan for military intervention in Darfur”. *African Security Review* 16(4): 80-96, 84.

<sup>9</sup> Davies, J. C. 1971. “Toward a Theory of Revolution” in Davies, J.C. (Ed.) *When Men Revolt and Why*. New York: Free Press.

<sup>10</sup> Gurr, Ted Robert. 1970. *Why Men Rebel*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

<sup>11</sup> Kuperman, Alan J. 2008. “The Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention: Lessons from the Balkans”. *International Studies Quarterly* 52: 49-80, 55.

<sup>12</sup> Rauchhaus, Robert W. 2009. “Principal-Agent Problems in Humanitarian Intervention: Moral Hazards, Adverse Selection, and the Commitment Dilemma”. *International Studies Quarterly* 53: 871-884, 874.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 872.

<sup>14</sup> Kuperman, Alan J. 2009a. “Rethinking the Responsibility to Protect”. *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations* Winter/Spring 2009: 19-29, 22.

<sup>15</sup> Crawford, Timothy W. 2006. “Moral Hazard, Intervention and Internal War: A Conceptual Analysis” in Crawford and Kuperman 2006.

<sup>16</sup> Pischedda 2007, 82.

<sup>17</sup> Belloni, Roberto. 2006. “The Tragedy of Darfur and the Limits of the ‘Responsibility to Protect’”. *Ethnopolitics* 5(4): 327-346, 333.

<sup>18</sup> Pischedda 2007, 84.

<sup>19</sup> Kuperman, Alan J. 2009b. “Darfur: Strategic Victimhood Strikes Again?” *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 4(3): 281-303, 285.

<sup>20</sup> Prunier, Gérard. 2008. *Darfur: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Genocide* (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed). Ithaca,

NY: Cornell University Press. 93.

<sup>21</sup> Flint, Julie, and De Waal, Alex. 2005. *Darfur: A Short History of a Long War*. African Arguments. London: Zed Books. 72.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, 70.

<sup>23</sup> Kuperman 2009b, 288.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 290.

<sup>25</sup> Pischedda 2007, 85.

<sup>26</sup> Whitty, Kelly. 2008. 26. Note that although Whitty questions the rebels' rationality, she endorses moral hazard as the ultimate explanation to rebellion.

<sup>27</sup> Kuperman 2009a, 24.

<sup>28</sup> Kuperman 2009b, 296.

<sup>29</sup> Pischedda 2007, 85.

<sup>30</sup> Kuperman 2009a, 24.

<sup>31</sup> Whitty 2008, 29.

<sup>32</sup> De Waal, Alex. 2007. "Darfur's Deadline: The Final Days of the Abuja Peace Process" in De Waal, Alex (Ed.) *War in Darfur and the Search for Peace*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 276.

<sup>33</sup> Kuperman 2009b, 297.

<sup>34</sup> US State Department Official quoted in Anderson, Scott. 2004. "How did Darfur Happen". *New York Times Magazine*, 17 October 2004. Web. 26 November 2010.

<sup>35</sup> Ahmed Angabo Ahmed, Sudanese government commissioner for the town of Kas, quoted in Anderson 2004.

<sup>36</sup> Kuperman 2009b, 296.

<sup>37</sup> Rauchhaus 2009, 879.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, 879.

<sup>39</sup> Pischedda 2007, 86.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, 89.

<sup>41</sup> Kuperman 2009a, 26.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, 27.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, 27.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid*, 27.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*, 27.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, 19.

Harff, Barbara, and Gurr, Ted Robert. 1988. "Toward Empirical Theory of Genocides and Politicides: Identification and Measurement of Cases since 1945." *International Studies Quarterly* 32(3): 359-371.

International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. 2001. "The Responsibility to Protect." Web. 23 November 2010.

Jenne, Erin. 2004. "A Bargaining Theory of Minority Demands: Explaining the Dog that Didn't Bite in 1990s Yugoslavia." *International Studies Quarterly* 48(4): 729-754.

Kuperman, Alan J. 2006. "Suicidal Rebellions and the Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention" in Crawford, Timothy W. and Kuperman, Alan J. (Ed.) *Gambling on Humanitarian Intervention: Moral Hazard, Rebellion and Civil War*. Abingdon: Routledge.

2008. "The Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention: Lessons from the Balkans." *International Studies Quarterly* 52: 49-80.

2009a. "Rethinking the Responsibility to Protect." *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations* Winter/Spring 2009: 19-29.

2009b. "Darfur: Strategic Victimhood Strikes Again?" *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 4(3): 281-303.

Pischedda, Costantino. 2007. "A plan for military intervention in Darfur." *African Security Review* 16(4): 80-96.

President Bill Clinton, interview by Wolf Blitzer. 1999. *Late Edition*, CNN. Web. 23 November 2010.

Prunier, Gérard. 2008. *Darfur: A 21st Century Genocide* (3rd Ed). Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Rauchhaus, Robert W. 2009. "Principal-Agent Problems in Humanitarian Intervention: Moral Hazards, Adverse Selection, and the Commitment Dilemma". *International Studies Quarterly* 53: 871-884.

United Nations, High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. 2004. *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*. Web. 23 November 2010.

Whitty, Kelly. 2008. "Darfurian Rebel Leaders and the Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention". *Paterson Review* 9: 19-34.

## Works Cited

Anderson, Scott. 2004. "How did Darfur Happen." *New York Times Magazine*, 17 October 2004. Web. 26 November 2010.

Belloni, Roberto. 2006. "The Tragedy of Darfur and the Limits of the 'Responsibility to Protect'." *Ethnopolitics* 5(4): 327-346.

Crawford, Timothy W. 2006. "Moral Hazard, Intervention and Internal War: A Conceptual Analysis" in Crawford, Timothy W. and Kuperman, Alan J. (Ed.) *Gambling on Humanitarian Intervention: Moral Hazard, Rebellion and Civil War*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Davies, J. C. 1971. "Toward a Theory of Revolution" in Davies, J.C. (Ed.) *When Men Revolt and Why*. New York: Free Press.

De Waal, Alex. 2007. "Darfur's Deadline: The Final Days of the Abuja Peace Process" in De Waal, Alex (Ed.) *War in Darfur and the Search for Peace*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Flint, Julie, and De Waal, Alex. 2005. *Darfur: A Short History of a Long War*. African Arguments. London: Zed Books.

Gurr, Ted Robert. 1970. *Why Men Rebel*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.



# Globalization, Ethnicity, and Politics of Identity: Québec's Resistance to Cultural Homogenization

Vincent Di Sciullo

U3 · Department of Political Science · vincent.disciullo@mail.mcgill.ca

Can local politics effectively oppose the cultural influences of globalization? Due to the vast power discrepancies between local governments and supranational institutions, it is often held that the actions of local politics cannot determine how the dynamics of globalization will influence society. Consequently, it is perceived that the forces of globalization hold direct consequences on a nation's cultural identity. It will be argued that the emphasis on the effects of globalization on culture may not be warranted. On the contrary, the case of Québec demonstrates that local politics can effectively resist the cultural influences of globalization.

There is a tension concerning language use between the processes of globalization and local politics. This is attributed to the dominance of the English language within the international economic system and the importance of English in conducting international affairs. In this sense, it is proposed that language laws in Québec effectively opposed the increasing level of Anglicization in the targeted segments of society. Furthermore, it is suggested that more emphasis should be placed on analyzing politicians' adoption of anti-globalizationist discourse to accede to power, rather than focusing on the direct influence of globalization on culture. If constituents demonstrate an opposition to globalization, then politicians have an incentive to engage in politics of identity. Finally, the emergence of the new economy has compelled politicians in Québec to adapt their language policy orientation. It will be shown that a focus on neoliberalism in the world market since the late 1980s has shifted the political discourse of Québec's language policies from protectionism to economic development.

First, it is important to define globalization within the framework of this paper. Scholarly literature on the topic is inundated with diverse applications and analyses of globalization. At its most basic level, globalization is simply "a set of processes having many facets."<sup>1</sup> However, this definition does not emphasize the particular processes of interest within the concept globalization; it leaves the framework of globalization too open-ended to draw con-

clusions. Therefore, for the purpose of this paper, globalization is grounded in the processes of rapid technological and economic change, which result in increased communication and integration amongst societies. In turn, these processes have a protracted effect on cultural identity, which may result in political backlash or restructuring.

Politics of identity emerge in the context of globalization when a group feels that their identity is threatened by the dominance of the international status quo. In this sense, the effects of globalization on culture are perceived as the consequence of rapid advances in technology, which lead to a great reduction in the cost of communication and production and the accentuated spread of cultural products. However, competitive countries exploit the appropriate means to determine "global brands," thus establishing dominant cultural influences on a global scale. As noted by Mark Brawley in *The Politics of Globalization*, "a common observation is that cultural homogenization seems to be taking place."<sup>2</sup>

## English and the Post-WWII Economic Order

Politics of identity derived from the processes of globalization are often couched in linguistic divisions. In a great number of cases this is attributable to the dominance of the English language in international relations after World War Two. Robert W. Cox in his article "Global Restructuring: Making Sense of the Changing International Political Economy," provides an understanding of the historical process that established English as the international mode of communication.

As highlighted by Cox, the beginning of America's contemporary global economic dominance is linked to the establishment of the Bretton Woods system. The Bretton Woods regime was the initial model for creating economic linkages between cosigning states and also for facilitating the spread of American hegemony. As noted by Cox, "...the Bretton Woods system attempted to strike a balance between a liberal world market and domestic responsibilities of states."<sup>3</sup> States seeking to participate in the Amer-

can-led economic system would be required to re-shape their domestic institutions to be compatible to those of the United States. It is important to note that the Bretton Woods system is a marker for the contemporary prominence of the English language in international affairs.

The creation of an international economic system resulted in legitimizing the role of international institutions as essential administrators in the functions of the monetary regime. States that had signed the Bretton Woods accord had lost a significant amount of their power as autonomous sovereign entities; their economic welfare became dependent on the proper functioning of the international economic system. As the international system evolved, additional institutions were created and the power of the system over its participants increased accordingly. Cox explains that “states became accountable to agencies of an international economic order—the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)—in regard to trade liberalization, exchange-rate stability and convertibility.”<sup>4</sup>

The post-war order established by the United States was effective in managing and promoting the economic growth of its participants during the 50s and early 60s. This is largely attributable to the war and arms production that occurred in the global economy during this period. However, as noted by Cox, a crisis emerged in 1968-1975, which revealed the reality of the top-down management of the global order by the United States:

During this period, the balanced compromise of Bretton Woods shifted towards subordination of domestic economies to the perceived exigencies of a global economy. States willy-nilly became more effectively accountable to a nebulous personified as the global economy; and they were constrained to mystify this external accountability in the eyes and ears of their own publics through the new vocabulary of globalization, interdependence, and competitiveness.<sup>5</sup>

## Ethnicity, Globalization, and Local Politics

Examining the establishment of the international economic order highlights the importance of supranational institutions in relation to the domestic spheres of states. International economic institutions hold a vertical power relationship with governments-- they are not accountable

to any electoral body. Therefore, the development of the international economic system has induced increasing levels of influence upon the population of states through economic regulation. Selma K. Sonntag, in *The Local Politics of Global English*, examines the influence of English on the populations of the United States, France, India, South Africa, and Nepal. Sonntag believes that the relationship between language and global politics is an essential dynamic of globalization. As argued by Sonntag:

The linguistic dimension of globalization is the ideal focus for an attempt to understand the relation between politics and culture... For language, as is widely acknowledged, is both a cultural marker and a means of communication. Embedded in language use is information about status and identity, as well as cold economic calculations based on efficiency and opportunity. The politics of global English are the politics of globalization, both economic and cultural.<sup>6</sup>

There are many ways that globalizing processes can influence a group’s perceived identity. One such example is how integrated economic systems have an effect on the transmission of cultural products. However, as demonstrated by Brawley:

[A]fter reviewing these possible linkages, we need to turn to a second way in which the politics of identity get intertwined with issues about globalization: as a tactical or strategic maneuver by political entrepreneurs.<sup>7</sup>

In this case, if there is a significant group that opposes globalization within a society, then politicians have an incentive to engage in identity politics. In turn, identity politics can be identified as a determining factor of whether globalization processes further penetrate a society, or are contained by political backlash.

In “Wider Horizons with Larger Details,” Cesare Poppi examines the relation between ethnicity and globalization. Poppi purports that “globalization must be understood as the condition whereby localizing strategies become systematically connected to global concerns.”<sup>8</sup> In this sense, what is assuming a greater role in political rhetoric is the tendency to emphasize “locality” and “difference.” However, these notions are also congruent with the structur-

ing of global relations of institutional communication and legitimization.<sup>9</sup> The interesting contrast highlighted by Poppi is that within societies, groups seek to either redefine their identity in accordance with globalization or they attempt to make identity claims in opposition to globalization.

The concept of ethnicity includes identification by language, race, kin and religion.<sup>10</sup> Each aspect of ethnic identification relates to how individuals identify themselves relative to their social context. In this respect, Poppi reveals the fact that numerous political theorists have focused on language as one of the pillars of ethnic struggle relative to the processes of globalization. This is a phenomenon that is readily observable in Europe and North America. Poppi argues that:

[L]anguage is the most 'abstract' expression of cultural identity. It is a form that can express many content, and one that can retain its exchange value as a marker of cultural distinctiveness even when its import in terms of use-value is the same as that expressed by the majority language.<sup>11</sup>

In this sense, it is because the processes of globalization are inducing a homogenization of most cultural aspects that language remains such a central issue of differentiation. As purported by Poppi:

[A] theory of ethnicity must account for this beyond the simple recognition of a subjective 'choice': it has, in other words, to trace the emergence of 'difference' (and difference as the 'becoming focused' of certain 'markers') as part of the historical obliteration of diversity.<sup>12</sup>

For Poppi, the contemporary situation of globalization resides in the transformation of the idea of global diversity into cultural differences. Poppi maintains that "globalization provides the context for the systematic articulation of differences. As it moves on, the differential traits of a given cultural formation are made commensurable, and their difference can be made to appear as a determination of the ethnic subject."<sup>13</sup> Therefore, politics of identity represent a central tool in the mobilization of cultural groups in order to commensurate their differences with the global political and economic systems. Language is an aspect of ethnicity that is more resilient to the processes of cultural

homogenization induced by globalization. Furthermore, it is also one of the best-suited instruments for politicians to establish how the processes of globalization are threatening a group's identity.

Norman Fairclough in *Language and Globalization* approaches the issue of globalization with a particular emphasis on discourse and cultural political economy. Within this framework, Fairclough makes three opening remarks about how language is perceived in the processes of globalizations:

First, the modes of integration observed in the processes of globalization depend upon forms of communication, which are specifically tailored to trans-national and inter-regional relations, including trans-national media such as CNN, and websites of international organizations like the European Union and the United Nations.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, the different forms of integration include exchanges of cultural discourses. As will be discussed further, the neoliberal economic discourse is an example of an ideology that has spread as a consequence of globalization, and holds policy prescriptions: an open market economy with minimal interference by government.

Second, Fairclough highlights the distinction between the processes and tendencies of globalization and discourses of globalization by stating that:

[W]e cannot get away from the fact that although 'globalization' is a set of changes which are actually happening in the world, it is also a word which has quite recently become quite prominent in the ways such changes are represented.<sup>15</sup>

In this sense, it is important to consider the difference between what language is used to describe globalization, as well as the cultural relevance that language holds to particular groups.

Finally, Fairclough emphasizes that it is also essential to account for the relationship between the processes of globalization and the context in which discourses of globalization arise. Discourses of globalization cannot be seen as independent occurrences of the international trends of globalization. Moreover, as noted by Fairclough, discourses about globalization "can under certain conditions also contribute to creating and shaping actual processes of globalization."<sup>16</sup>

The framework presented by Fairclough illuminates the centrality of identity to how ethnic groups will engage in globalization. Furthermore, it reinforces the idea that language holds real value within politics and can be the cause of a divided society. Québec is an exemplary case of how politics of identity emerge through language use. Moreover, the case of Québec demonstrates the progression of a linguistic divide from a simple debate to the codification of language laws. In turn, as highlighted by Brawley:

The French-English conflict plays out primarily in Québec, but has important ramifications for political identity within the country as a whole... When we turn to the phenomenon of globalization, we immediately think of English... Language use, therefore, becomes a battleground for those wishing to resist globalization via the politics of identity.<sup>17</sup>

## Quebec's Resistance to Globalization

Michel de Coster in “Les enjeux des conflits linguistiques” provides an important synthesis of how the French language has been a central political and cultural issue in Belgium, Switzerland, and Canada. An important theme in de Coster’s analysis is that at the outset of a language debate, the issue is necessarily underlined by economic grievances. However, the recurrent use of discourses tying economic systems to linguistic choice inevitably opens a space for political backlash. Therefore, a rationalist understanding would point to the politician’s incentive to make politics of identity central to the national debate, since it is an uncontested mobilizing force.

The first *Révolution tranquille* is generally seen as the contemporary marker for the politicization of the language divide in Québec. De Coster specifies that Jean Lesage, head of the Liberal Party that acceded to power in 1960, was the initiator of the *Révolution tranquille*. Lesage’s political agenda was framed around the internal divisions in Québec espousing a desire to push back the Anglicization of the province. Moreover, it was a decisive attempt to orient public policies within Québec, as well as Canada, to equalize employment discrepancies between Francophone and Anglophone communities. It was perceived that the economic and financial prowess of Anglophones in Canada was limiting the job-recruitment possibilities for French-speaking Canadians, including access to higher-paid managerial positions.<sup>18</sup> Effectively, from 1960 onwards policy prescriptions to protect the French language

within Québec supplanted the political discourse of economic grievances felt by French-Canadians with a focus on ethnic identity.

Language within Québec assumed unequivocal symbolic value, and became the center of political conflicts between the French and English communities. Particularly within the city of Montréal, political discourse was continually seeking to affirm linguistic primacy. The rhetoric tensions engendered by politics of identity produced various quarrels over the naming of streets, squares, and buildings. A particular debate engaged in by nationalists, related to the future naming of an important hotel in Montreal—the Queen Elizabeth for Anglophones and the Château Maisonneuve for Francophones—represents some of the issues that became exacerbated by local medias.<sup>19</sup> Effectively, the discourses concerning the “language divide” within Montreal manifested themselves in the debate over regulation of the language used in public and commercial signs.

Marcel Martel and Martin Pâquet discuss the various issues concerning politics of identity in Canada and Québec in *Langue et politique au Canada et au Québec*. They highlight that during the 1960s the Canadian federal government had to increasingly address societal pressures arising from Québec. The francophone discourse was becoming more influential in the context of the socio-economic disparity attributed to English-language dominance of the economy. Inevitably, how the federal government responded to these pressures supplanted the political salience of the language discourse within Québec. In 1969, French was introduced as the second official language and quelled the fear of ethnic homogenization.<sup>20</sup>

Ottawa’s solution to the widening language divide was to promote national unity through institutional bilingualism. Pierre Elliott Trudeau was the prime minister at the time when Canada adopted the Official Languages Act. Martel and Pâquet note that the scope of Trudeau’s decision aimed at making language an individual choice that would be considered separate from cultural heritage.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, regardless of where they are located in Canada, the multiple levels of the federal government would be required to provide services in both French and English.

According to Martel and Pâquet, the Francophone reaction to the adoption of French as a second official language varied. The unilingual French-speaking population in Québec equated the new language law with a legal tool destined to protect English within the province. However,



people managing minority-group relations within federal institutions were quite favourable of the new law, since it provided much needed accessibility. There was a general reluctance, however, to accept the law as permanent, since it had not been enshrined in the constitution. There was a fear that an anti-bilingual party could easily attain a majority of seats within parliament and simply abolish the new law or render it powerless.

The goal of the first *Révolution tranquille* was primarily to communicate the increasing seclusion felt by French-Canadians with respect to the growing economic imbalance between French and English communities. However, it was not until 1977 that a resurgence of the *Révolution tranquille* would emerge in the form of the infamous charter of the French language: Bill 101. As highlighted by de Coster, the essential motivation behind these laws was to ensure that the political ground that had been gained since the 1960s would not be lost. In the preamble to the passing of the bill it was argued that the incorrect use of the French language in conjunction with the French-English divide, in both economic and social realms, was responsible for the inferior position of the French language within Canada.<sup>22</sup>

An important focus was placed on the immigrant population of Canada that had arrived since the end of the Second World War. Since English was the primary language within the workplace, immigrants speaking neither official language would be most likely be directed towards learning English over French. However, the crux of the argumentation behind Bill 101 put the focus embedding the French language within Québec. First, the French language was seen as poorly taught and poorly spoken. Second, due to its scholastic weaknesses, it was considered incapable of competing in the economic system.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, the establishment of a linguistically oriented policy to define the nature of the French language within Québec was pursued. Bill 101 effectively laid the groundwork for the justification of adopting institutional arrangements that essentially focused on a question of Québec national identity within Canada.

Bill 101 can be interpreted as a response to the Official Languages Act, which made both French and English the official languages of Canada. It rejected the notion of a provincial model that was based on stabilizing inter-linguistic relations for one that sought to renew the primacy of French as the common language spoken within Québec. Bill 101, in its original form, held various propositions to

penetrate existing social infrastructures. It made French the official language of the legal system, public administration, and education in Québec. De Coster highlights the most radical of these changes concerning the language of education, the use of language in a working environment, and the use of language in public spaces.

As noted by de Coster, in regards to schooling, the strategic framework that had been laid out in the 1960s by the *Révolution tranquille* foreshadowed the legislative form that a charter of the French language would assume.<sup>24</sup> Bill 101 decreed the language of education within schools in Québec to be French. It exempted students who had already begun their education in English, as well as students who have parents that had previously attended an English school within Québec.

Beyond the education system, the workplace was equally transformed in line with Bill 101's linguistic socialization. Prior to Bill 101, the use of French within an enterprise was on a voluntary basis. The application of Bill 101 took on a more coercive stance, since a radical change was sought in terms of how French was used within the realm of affairs in Québec. In order to reflect the priority given to the French language, any enterprise that had fifty or more employees was forced to have a French language program for all non-French speaking employees.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, all documents that were produced for in-office or public use had to be produced in French and a committee was formed in order to oversee the proper application of the new laws within enterprises.

The third transformative facet of Bill 101 as outlined by de Coster, is the strict framework provided for naming conventions of public places. The Commission de Toponymie of Québec was established in order to regulate the application of the new language conventions. The conventions apply to street names, squares, historical sites, and other spaces in order to convey the centrality of the French language in Québec's national identity. As mentioned by de Coster, although the revolution in the 1960s belonged primarily to the struggle for socio-economic emancipation, the new revolutionary wave undertaken in 1977 gave greater weight to its concerns for French identity.<sup>26</sup> This became accessible in light of the importance attributed to language and culture in earlier periods.

Although it is hard to assess the qualitative impacts that Bill 101 has brought to the rest of Canada, within Québec there are some measurable changes that reflect the stated

goals of the French language charter. In 1996 census data reported that 62% of Canadian citizens living in Quebec stated that they were bilingual, compared to only 33% in 1971.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, the socio-economic reorientation undertaken since the Révolution tranquille has drastically changed the number of francophone employees within the workplace. As highlighted by de Coster, in the greater region of Montreal, which holds 75% of Anglophones that live in Quebec, the mother tongue of 88.2% of employees is French and French has become the most spoken language within the workplace.

Additionally, as is seen in Table 1, the language adopted by immigrants took a significant shift as a result of the increasing entrenchment of the French language within institutions, which were molding employment and schooling within urban centers. Comparing the periods before and after 1960, one observes that the impact of the Révolution tranquille was monumental. The adoption of Bill 101 effectively resisted the influence of the processes of globalization by giving priority to the French language in critical aspects of society.

**Table 1: Language adopted by immigrants in Quebec relative to period**

| Year      | French (%) | English (%) |
|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Pre-1960  | 21         | 79          |
| 1960-1970 | 36         | 64          |
| 1971-1975 | 47         | 53          |
| 1976-1980 | 61         | 39          |
| 1981-1986 | 54         | 46          |

Source: Bureau de la statistique, Démographie québécoise, Québec, Éditeur officiel, 1987, table 9-2, p. 322.

## Quebec and the Changing International Economy

Since the 1980s there has been a qualitative shift in the international economy, which has placed greater importance on the flow of financial exchanges between states. Scholars associate this trend with the emergence of the international neoliberal economic order, which has directed governments to reduce their control over the domestic market in order to provide corporations greater accessibility to the international market. In this sense, there has been an attempt “to alter the legislative landscape in countries around the globe in order to accommodate glo-

balization, and to promote financialization of economic activities for short-term gains at the expense of long-term growth and development.”<sup>28</sup> In Québec, this has resulted in a shift of the political discourse concerning globalization to focus on exporting cultural products rather than protecting language rights.

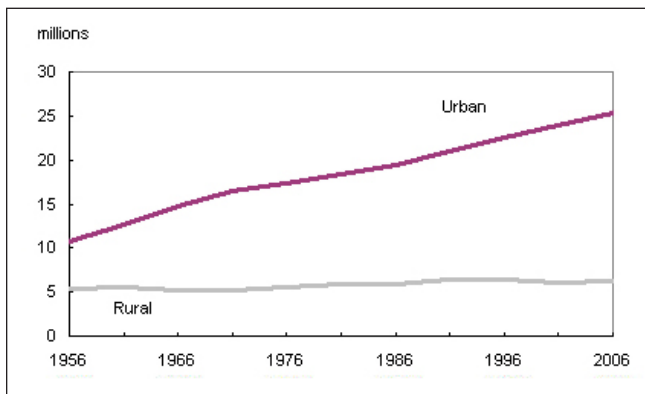
In “From protector to producer: the role of the State in the discursive shift from minority rights to economic development,” Emanuel de Silva and Monica Heller elaborate on the notion that Québec has had to adapt its approach to safeguarding Francophone communities in light of the changing international economic system. In this view, the consequence of political discourse and language laws during the 1960s and 70s led to the emergence of an economic crisis in the rural populations of Québec. The increasing use of French within the working environment of urban centers has resulted in the urbanization of the labor force from the homogenous segments of rural Québec.<sup>29</sup> Competing interests within Québec between minority rights and international economic competitiveness, in the neoliberal sense, have resulted in the establishment of a national program to bolster community economic development. As argued by de Silva and Heller:

“The neoliberal state’s focus on individual employability was curtailed by shared interests in the maintenance of francophone collective identity, harnessing an economic development discourse to an older one of community reproduction, in which the community in question was understood to be precisely the rural, homogenous communities in economic crisis. The question for the state has therefore become one of how to help those communities enter the globalized new economy.”<sup>30</sup>

There is a semblance of continuance in the policy orientation being adopted by politicians, however, the reality of Québec’s stagnant rural population have shifted the discourse away from rights and towards access to the international market. Census data provided by Statistics Canada demonstrates that the new globalized economy has induced urbanization across Canada (see Figure 1).

This trend, demonstrating steady increasing urbanization, is particularly important for Québec, since nationalist politicians in the province have built their campaigns on the basis of championing minority rights within Canada since the 1960s. The approach to counter the economic

**Figure 1: The new globalized economy has induced urbanization across Canada**



Source: "Canada at a Glance 2009." Statistics Canada.

crisis in rural Québec has been to focus on language not only for its symbolic value, but also as a skill to develop a targeted and exportable industry. As illustrated by de Silva and Heller, "...the Canadian government in its Action Plan for Official Languages (2003) invested \$20 million (CDN) to create a language industry association to coordinate the industry of translators, interpreters, etc., and to promote Canadian language products and services around the world."<sup>31</sup>

Since the global economy has ascribed greater importance to the ability of firms to generate capital (as opposed to states) the focus of the political discourse within Québec has undergone a qualitative shift towards the exportation of language skills and cultural products. In this sense, although the focus of the discourse has changed from the protection of language rights to economic development, language has remained the central device for politicians to accrue political capital through politics of identity.

## Conclusion

The central goal of this paper has been to ascertain whether or not local politics can effectively oppose the cultural influences of globalization. This question arises in light of the frequently observed power differential between international economic institutions and sovereign states. It is unquestionable that the processes of globalization have induced a vertical power relationship between unelected supranational entities and governments. These entities have power over the populations of countries because of their management of the international economy. Thus, the relationship between states and international institutions

has required governments to act according to the fluctuations of the international economic system. Consequently, the processes of globalization are conducive to cultural homogenization. Using the case of Québec, however, this paper has argued that it is possible for local politics to generate a discourse that effectively resists the cultural domination resulting from globalization.

First, the notion of globalization in relation to the emergence of politics of identity has been presented. The argument focused on the fact that the processes of globalization can challenge the identity of certain groups by excluding them from participating in the international market. The political salience of ethnic identity provides an opportunity for politicians to frame discourses along anti-globalization lines.

Second, this paper explains the historical process that entrenched English as the dominant language of international affairs. The establishment of the Bretton Woods regime after World War Two by the United States is identified as the contemporary marker for the emergence of the global economy. Moreover, the evolution of the international economic system has been conducive to an increasing power differential between supranational institutions and their participants.

Third, the case of Québec's resistance to the increasing Anglicization of its population has been described in detail. The socio-economic discrepancies between Francophone and Anglophone communities are related to the emergence of politics of identity. It has also been observed that there was a shift in this discourse towards a more identity-based rhetoric with the adoption of Bill 101. However, Bill 101 did achieve the original goal of the Révolution tranquille: an important increase in the use of French within enterprises.

Finally, although the case of Québec has shown that it is possible to resist the influences of globalization on culture, the new economy of the international system has put a focus on the adoption of neoliberal economic policies. Therefore, this paper argues that Québec has had to change its approach towards the global economy by shifting its political discourse and policy prescriptions from minority rights to the exportation of language skills and cultural goods. This implies that the reality of the new international economy, in comparison to that of the 1960s, is making the nationalist discourse in Québec increasingly difficult to maintain. Although the language divide

remains present and politically salient within Canada, the qualitative shift observed within Québec suggests that it may not be sustainable in the long run.

---

<sup>1</sup> Mark R. Brawley. .. *The Politics of Globalization: gaining perspective, assessing consequences*. Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2003, 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>3</sup> Robert W. Cox. "Global Restructuring: making sense of the changing international political economy." In *Political Economy and the Changing Global Order* by Richard Stubbs and Geoffrey R. D. Underhill. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, 45.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Selma K. Sonntag. *The Local Politics of Global English: case studies in linguistic globalization*. Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2003, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Brawley, *The Politics of Globalization*, 159.

<sup>8</sup> Cesare Poppi. "Wider Horizons With Larger Details: subjectivity, ethnicity and globalization." In *The Limits of Globalization: cases and arguments* by Alan Scott. London: Routledge, 1997, 285.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Stephen Saideman, "International Relations of Ethnic Conflict" (lecture, McGill University, Montreal, Qc., September 3, 2010).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 291

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 298.

<sup>14</sup> Fairclough, Norman. *Language and globalization*. London: Routledge, 2006, 3.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Brawley, *The Politics of Globalization*, 165.

<sup>18</sup> Michel de Coster. "La reconnaissance d'une nation québécoise." In *Les enjeux des conflits linguistiques: le français à l'épreuve des modèles belge, Suisse et canadien*. Paris: Harmattan, 2007, 138.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 139.

<sup>20</sup> Marcel Martel and Martin Pâquet. *Langue et politique au Canada et au Québec: une synthèse historique*. Montréal: Boréal, 2010, 179.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 172.

<sup>22</sup> de Coster, *Les enjeux des conflits linguistiques*, 141

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 142

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

<sup>27</sup> Alain G. Gagnon. "Les relations entre le Québec et les francophones hors Québec." In *Le français au Québec. 400 ans d'histoire et de vie*. Québec: Fides, 2003, 345.

<sup>28</sup> Fasenfest, David. "Neoliberalism, Globalization, and the Capitalist World Order." *Critical Sociology* 36, no. 12 (2010): 630.

<sup>29</sup> De Silva, Emanuel, and Monica Heller. "From Protector to Producer: the role of the state in the discursive shift from minority rights to economic development." *Lang Policy* 8 (2009): 97.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> De Silva and Heller, "From Protector to Producer: the role of the state in the discursive shift from minority rights to economic development," 110.

Brawley, Mark R. *The Politics of Globalization: gaining perspective, assessing consequences*. Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2003.

"Canada at a Glance 2009." Statistics Canada. Web. 16 November 2010.

De Coster, Michel. "La reconnaissance d'une nation québécoise." In *Les enjeux des conflits linguistiques: le français à l'épreuve des modèles belge, Suisse et canadien*. Paris: Harmattan, 2007. 137-150.

Cox, Robert W. "Global Restructuring: making sense of the changing international political economy." In *Political Economy and the Changing Global Order* by Richard Stubbs and Geoffrey R. D. Underhill. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994. 45-59.

De Silva, Emanuel, and Monica Heller. "From Protector to Producer: the role of the state in the discursive shift from minority rights to economic development." *Lang Policy* 8 (2009): 95-116.

Fairclough, Norman. *Language and Globalization*. London: Routledge, 2006.

Fasenfest, David. "Neoliberalism, Globalization, and the Capitalist World Order." *Critical Sociology* 36, no. 12 (2010): 627-631.

Gagnon, Alain G. "Les relations entre le Québec et les francophones hors Québec." In *Le français au Québec: 400 ans d'histoire et de vie*. Québec: Fides, 2003, 343-347.

Martel, Marcel, and Martin Pâquet. *Langue et politique au Canada et au Québec: une synthèse historique*. Montreal: Boréal, 2010.

Poppi, Cesare. "Wider Horizons With Larger Details: subjectivity, ethnicity and globalization." In *The Limits of Globalization: cases and arguments* by Alan Scott. London: Routledge, 1997. 284-305.

Saideman, Stephen. "International Relations of Ethnic Conflict." Political Science course: POLI 442. McGill University, Montreal, QC, September 3, 2010.

Sonntag, Selma K. *The Local Politics of Global English: case studies in linguistic globalization*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2003.

## Works Cited

Appelbaum, Richard P., and William I. Robinson. *Critical Globalization Studies*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

# Patchy Policies: The Cuban Embargo and the Gaza Blockade

Felipe Garcia-Andrade Llamas

U2 · Department of Political Science · felipe.garcia-andrade@mail.mcgill.ca

Although geographic, economic, and ideological distinctions exist between the Gaza Strip and Cuba, both territories share a common policy imposed on them by Israel and the U.S: enduring economic sanctions in the form of an embargo for Cuba and a blockade for Gaza aimed at deposing the incumbent regimes by creating economic hardship. The aim of this research paper is to provide an explanation on why the policies of blockade in Gaza and embargo in Cuba have failed to weaken and/or oust the regimes. Despite numerous differences between both territories, the outcome delivered by the sanctions has been equal: they have failed to weaken and/or oust the target states.

This essay will begin with a brief introduction on the Gaza Strip and Cuba, covering the alleged reasons by the sanctioning states on the target ones and the characteristics of both the blockade and the embargo. Three arguments will be presented to answer the above-stated question that will disclose why the embargo and the blockade have failed to weaken and overthrow the regimes. They will show that the sanctions have failed because the Hamas and Cuban regimes have exploited the sanctioning policies through a process of delegitimization. First, the incumbent regimes have explained to their peoples that the country's economic problems are a result of the sanctions, that Hamas and Cuba have found alternative channels to obtain resources, and finally that there have been enduring international efforts to further delegitimize the sanctions.

## The Gaza Strip

The Gaza Strip, one of the most densely populated territories, lies on the Eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, bordering Egypt on the southwest and Israel on the south, east and north. It was under foreign administration – Egyptian then Israeli – from 1948 until 1994 when it came under the direction of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) until 2006. The Strip is currently under Hamas rule. Hamas was founded in the late 1980s during the First Intifada. During the Second Intifada, it emerged as the most active actor against Israel, employing such methods as suicide bombings. In February 2005 the Israeli government voted on a unilateral disengagement from the Gaza

Strip. By September 2005 all Israel Defense Forces (IDF) personnel left while Israeli citizens were evicted. In January 2006 a Palestinian legislative election was held, in an electoral victory for Hamas, which were described by human rights organizations as free and fair.

Preceding the blockade was a series of economic sanctions imposed against the Palestinian Authority by Israel and the Quartet on the Middle East, which comprised of the U.S., Russia, the United Nations (UN), and the European Union (EU) as a result of Hamas's 2006 electoral victory. The purpose of the sanctions was to force Hamas to "...satisfy the three conditions imposed by Israel and other countries: to recognize Israel's permanent right to exist, to forswear violence and to accept the validity of previous Palestinian-Israeli agreements, which are based on the concept of a two-state solution as the foundation stone for a peace treaty."<sup>1</sup> The sanctions consisted in withholding tax revenues collected in the Palestinian territories by Israel, U.S. banking restrictions, interrupting international aid to the Palestinian National Authority and restrictions by Israel of movement of goods within the Palestinian territories and outside of it. However, in June 2007 Hamas expelled Fatah from Gaza by force, effectively taking absolute political control. Consequently, Israel and the U.S. reestablished relations with the West Bank Fatah-run government while augmenting sanctions on the Hamas-controlled territory of Gaza by imposing a near-total economic blockade.

The purpose of the Israeli blockade has been to remove Hamas from office. To achieve this end, the Israeli administration has sought to prevent Hamas from effectively ruling by denying them access to resources while asphyxiating all economic activity, in the hope that it will lead to social and political upheaval. Nonetheless, the result has been the reverse: Hamas has been isolated, has unjustly annulled elections enabling it to further entrench its power while gaining popularity as a resilient movement against the Israeli occupation. Carol Migdalovitz unambiguously describes the objectives and outcome of the blockade as a "...tight land, sea and air blockade on the Gaza Strip...With the blockade, Israel...hoped to turn Gazans against Hamas by contrasting Hamas rule with the better life of the Pal-



estinians in the West Bank. Instead, the blockade isolated the territory and helped strengthen Hamas's control."<sup>2</sup>

## The Republic of Cuba

Cuba, strategically located in the Caribbean with a population of 11 million, has been governed by a socialist totalitarian regime led by Fidel Castro since revolutionary triumph in 1959. The U.S. imposed-embargo was enacted partially in October 1960, and strengthened in February 1962. The imposition of the embargo was a result of two policies adopted by Castro: 1) the nationalization of assets and properties owned by US corporations and citizens, and 2) the alignment of Cuba with the Soviet Union. Moreover, the embargo was codified into law with the enactment of the Cuban Democratic Act in 1992 and further strengthened with the Helms-Burton Act.

The underlying principle of the embargo – as in Gaza – was to overthrow Fidel Castro's regime. Sussane Gratius accurately summarizes US policy since Castro's rise to power: "Since the sixties, US policy towards Cuba has had two aims: 1) to cause the fall of Fidel Castro's regime, 2) to establish a liberal democracy and a market economy on the island."<sup>3</sup> In order to achieve these two goals, successive US governments have used an arsenal of instruments including diplomatic pressure and isolation, fostering opposition movements within Cuba, sponsoring violent anti-Castro movements such as Alpha 66 and the suspension of diplomatic relations. However, the American "economic and financial embargo...continues to be the key part of its policy towards its neighboring country."<sup>4</sup> The objective of the sanctions – again, as in Gaza – was to deny the Cuban regime of effective rule by preventing them access to resources, which would erode regimes legitimacy, provoking an economic crisis followed by a social upheaval. Former Deputy Under-Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Lester D. Mallory pertinently defines the embargo's objective:

Most Cubans support Castro.... the only foreseeable means to alienate internal support is by creating disillusionment and discouragement based on lack of satisfaction and economical difficulties... We should immediately use any possible measure to.... cause hunger, desperation and the overthrow of the Government.<sup>5</sup>

As observed, Cuba and Gaza share, despite distinctions

in the technicalities of the policies and deep political and geographic differences, an identical burden with an equal objective: foreign economic sanctions intended to depose the ruling regimes. In the section below I will argue how the policies have failed to weaken and oust the incumbent regimes.

First, the blockade and embargo have failed due to the internal delegitimization campaigns promoted by the target regimes against the sanctions. These campaigns insist that the country's economic woes are a result of the sanctions. This victimized rhetoric on the country's economic problems and the inability to deliver the population has resulted in increased political support for the regimes rather than turning the populations against the incumbent regimes as sanctioning states had intended. In Cuba, according to Cuban Foreign Affairs minister Bruno Rodriguez "the direct economic damage inflicted on the Cuban people by the implementation of the blockade over the last 50 years amounts to more than \$751 billion dollars."<sup>6</sup> This economic damage has been caused by the loss of earnings due to the obstacles to the development of services and exports, restrictions on Cuban purchases in the United States, the limitation imposed on the growth of the national production of goods and services (limited access to technologies), denial of Cuba's access to international credit and to integration in international financial regulations, exclusion of third-nation ships from U.S. ports, and the U.S. travel ban.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, although the Cuban regime has been credited with having been able to establish a nation-wide free healthcare service, there are medical shortages which Cuban authorities blame on the embargo by using propaganda billboards in highly congested areas stating: "12 hours of blockade are equivalent to all the necessary insulin for the country's sixty-four thousand patients."<sup>8</sup>

Also, a "brain drain" has been emphasized by the Cuban leadership due in part to the Cuban Adjustment Act (CAA) of 1996 – first implemented in 1966 – which is "a special procedure under which Cuban natives or citizens...get a green card permanent residence if they have been present in the United States for at least 1 year, they have been admitted or paroled and they are admissible as immigrants."<sup>9</sup> The CAA, essentially known as the "wet foot, dry foot policy" allows Cubans reaching U.S. soil, but not water to obtain the treasured green card. This policy has had a double effect. First and foremost, it has "encouraged" Cubans to migrate, mainly illegally, by speed- and homemade boats allowing many Cubans to prosper in the U.S., but has also

resulted in thousands dying in the strait of Florida. Secondly, it has given Fidel Castro another pretext to attack the embargo by attributing blame on the death and flight of Cubans: “The government of the United States should repeal the murderous Cuban Adjustment Act, which has cost the lives of so many women, children, old people and other citizens of Cuba, and continues to do so.”<sup>10</sup> The Castro regime, in a biased fashion and through state-run media, exploits the humane and economic losses that the migration causes as a result of the CAA in turn gaining sympathy and undermining the embargo. Moreover, although the state provides each Cuban with a monthly food staple at an artificially low price, food is expensive due to a shortage in supply. Jorge Dominguez cogently articulates the ineffectiveness of the embargo and its effect on food:

“Most helpful to Cuban hardliners has been the so-called Cuban Democracy Act... The acts only significant measure has been to mandate penalties on U.S. firms whose third country subsidiaries trade with Cuba... Since that trade was mostly in foodstuffs, Cuban leaders now find it easier to blame food shortages on Washington.”<sup>11</sup>

These negative consequences affecting the Cuban people have allowed the brilliant orator of Fidel Castro, for over 50 years in Cuba’s state-run media, to blame the U.S. for the economic woes: “I want to remind you... of a basic ethical principal related to Cuba: any injustice, any crime in whatever time has no excuse to go on. The cruel blockade (embargo) against the Cuban people costs lives, costs suffering.”<sup>12</sup> Thus the Cuban population has been the primary victim while the regime has benefitted politically by using the embargo as a holistic justification for the country’s woes. A report to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate explicitly described the futile outcome of the embargo:

According to several analysts, the complete ban on U.S. trade and financial transactions with Cuba from the 1960s to the present allowed the Castro government to use the external threat posed by the United States to win additional popular support. In addition, as a visible symbol of U.S. hostility, the sanctions made it possible for Castro to justify building a large military and establishing tight political controls on Cuban society.<sup>13</sup>

Similarly, in Gaza, the blockade imposed by Israel “has ‘locked in’ 1.5 million people...triggering a protracted human dignity crisis with negative humanitarian consequences.”<sup>14</sup> Gaza experiences a collective punishment which has negatively affected in all aspects of livelihood: over 40 percent of Gaza’s workforce is unemployed, approximately 75 percent of Gaza’s population is food insecure and some 90 percent of the population experiences scheduled electricity cuts.<sup>15</sup> For instance, the livelihoods of many Gazans has been severely affected as a result of the 3-mile limit, who has seen how their fishing catch dropped from 3,650 metric tonnes in 1999 to 1,525 metric tonnes in 2009, while figures indicated that during 2010 the decline in fishing catch would continue.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the blockade has resulted in the near total collapse of Gaza’s private sector. About 95 percent of industrial establishments (3,750) have either been forced to close or were destroyed over the past four years, resulting in a loss of 100,000 to 120,000 jobs.<sup>17</sup> The Gaza population, like the Cuban, has been the principal casualty of the economic hardship inflicted by the blockade, resulting in increased support for the Gaza regime and augmented criticism of Israel. Despite this, Hamas does not enjoy full support of the population. As Dr. Ivan Eland, Director of Defense Policy Studies at the Cato Institute, rightly says:

“Overall, the blockade helped Hamas... (because) people anywhere tend to rally around their government when they are under military or economic attack... (And) Gazans resent the attempt at strangulation and provide greater support to Hamas... further radicalized... against Israel.”<sup>18</sup>

Despite dreadful living conditions, 37 percent seeking immigration from Gaza, and the lack of economic resources by the government, PSR Ramallah statistics illustrate that Dr. Eland’s claim holds value: a recent “positive evaluation of the performance of the Ismail Haniyeh government reaches 36 percent while if elections were held today, Haniyeh would receive up to 36 percent of the vote.”<sup>19</sup> Additionally, as a result of isolation and the direct effects of the blockade on the people, Hamas has further consolidated its power by clamping down on media-sources and thus consolidated power in turn censoring any criticism and only projecting the economic woes caused by the blockade. For instance, circulation of the Al-Hayat al-Jadida, Al-Ayyam, and Al-Quds newspapers was prevented from entering by the Gaza police.<sup>20</sup> Daniel Byman is very explicit in saying that:

“the siege has failed at another level: it has not weakened Hamas... Today, Hamas has an unquestioned – and, in the eyes of most Gazans, largely legitimate – monopoly on the use of force and its political clout among Palestinians has grown at the expense of Fatah.”<sup>21</sup>

The embargo and the blockade have brought economic hardship to the people of Gaza and Cuba by collectively punishing them with economic sanctions that have allowed the regimes to politically consolidate. Rather than causing a popular backlash on the incumbent regimes, the sanctions have instead earned them popularity for resisting and allowing them to have a “rally-around-the-flag” effect.

A second reason why economic sanctions have not succeeded in weakening or ousting the Hamas and Castro regimes is that both parties have found alternative channels to obtain resources. Israel and the U.S. expected the collapse of the targeted regimes by economically asphyxiating them, resulting in their inability to acquire the resources to fulfill their agendas, mainly providing for their populations. However, the sanctions did not contain strict mechanisms that could prevent Hamas and Cuba from obtaining resources through alternative channels. For instance, U.S. policy since the Cuban revolution has aimed to unsuccessfully eliminate Castro by closing its market to the U.S. only to see the Soviet Union counterbalance U.S. policies. For example, “President Eisenhower went on to cut the Cuban sugar quota on 6 July 1960 in an open and deliberate attempt to undermine Castro’s power. But the Soviet Union...stepped into the breach.”<sup>22</sup>

From the early 1960s to the late 1980s, Cuba found in the Soviet Union a lucrative commercial partner and a long-term ally. Mark Katz highlights this relationship patently stating “the complete embargo by the U.S. of all trade with Cuba was offset by large-scale Soviet economic assistance.”<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, the Soviet Union served as an economic and military sponsor of the Cuban regime by establishing a reciprocal commercial exchange of goods produced in Cuba to the Soviet Union, mainly sugar, and the Soviet Union provided the island with military equipment, consumer goods and many oil derivatives that the US refused to exchange. Huberman and Sweezy elaborate on this commercial exchange by explaining the rationale behind it:

...Cuba is a low-cost producer of sugar, perhaps the lowest-cost producer in the world...The Soviet Union is a low cost producer of the things Cuba is most in need of: oil, trucks and jeeps, tractors, machinery etc....It follows that... the Soviet Union can reduce the average cost of its sugar consumption by exchanging what Cuba needs for Cuban sugar...<sup>24</sup>

Despite the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, Cuba was able to weather the disintegration of its main patron and continue to offset the embargo through non-American channels. Ironically, during the decade of the 1990’s Cuba opened its borders to inflows of capital deriving mainly from Europe that were channeled to the rise of the tourist industry providing the Cuban regime with a new source of income. In 2000, with the rise of Hugo Chavez and Venezuela’s energetic power, Cuba saw the rise of what would become its principal commercial patron in exchange for its qualified human capital. Thus, the outcome of the flourished Cuban-Venezuelan relations took the form of the “oil-for-doctors” relations, allowing Cuba to offset the absence of the Soviet Union and the embargo:

...Caracas provided the critical lifeline in the energy field: Venezuelan oil reenergized vital sectors of the island’s economy, ending the enervating blackouts of the Special Period. Economic growth had reached 11.8 percent by 2005 and has remained at a respectable level since...According to direct agreements between Havana and Caracas, Cuba receives 90,000 barrels of oil a day largely in exchange for over 30,000 doctors and medical personnel and specialists in fields such as education and sports.<sup>25</sup>

The Hamas regime, considering the economic difficulty of earning an income caused by the inability to engage in private and external economic activity as a result of the air, land and sea restrictions and the drastic reduction of international aid also pursued alternative resource channels. By preventing the arrival of merchant ships and aircraft, a new source of income has emerged in the development and taxing of the “tunnel trade.” Hundreds of tunnels, running mainly between Gaza and Egypt, not only employ about 40,000 people but also, the tunnel trade is estimated to have earned Hamas up to \$200 million in taxes.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, due to the inability of merchants to engage in official commercial exchanges and the unwillingness of the Quartet countries to economically engage the Gaza administra-



tion, Hamas has sought to strengthen its financial standing by, paradoxically, acquiring more funds externally. To appeal to foreign actors for economic support, Hamas has attracted financial donations by means of its reputation as a charity – Dawa activity.<sup>27</sup> Hamas receives funding from a variety of external actors, including Iran, Palestinian expatriates, private benefactors in Saudi Arabia, charities and associations operating in the Palestinian territories and communities in Europe and North America as well as other Arab states. A significant portion of funds derives from the Gulf States, primarily Saudi Arabian sources amounting to a total value of \$12 million a year.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, according to Matthew Levitt, Hamas, based on Israeli and Canadian intelligence, receives between \$3 and \$18 million a year from Iran.<sup>29</sup> Also, through organizations such as The Palestine Relief and Development Fund (Interpal) in Great Britain, The Holyland Foundation (HLF) in the U.S., the Al Aqsa Foundation in Germany, Holland, Belgium and Denmark and the Comité de Bienfaisance et Solidarité avec la Palestine in France, Hamas has been able to obtain more funds.<sup>30</sup>

Additionally, countries friendly to Hamas such as Syria provide its leadership with refuge for its militants, and space to train combatants and organize its financial and military strategies. Lastly, funds transferred to the Palestinian Authority are channeled through specific semi-institutions in Gaza with no direct connections to Hamas that benefit the people in Gaza. Institutions of this kind include: the Coastal Municipal Water Utility, an independent water utility responsible for managing all water and wastewater systems in Gaza that has received over \$60 million in funding for projects and institutional development; the NGO Development Center a Palestinian NGO that manages and allocates \$28 million in grants to NGOs, with at least 40 percent of NDC's funding going to Gaza; the Municipal Development and Lending Fund (MDLF), an autonomous public institution managing \$115 million and with 40 percent of its programs in Gaza, was established to support municipalities in fulfilling their mandate as front line service providers by financing infrastructure investments, costs for critical services for the public and provides technical assistance to municipalities to improve their management.<sup>31</sup> Also, the United Nations, through the United Nations Reliefs Work Agency, funds numerous social projects. Paradoxically, another source of income for the people of Gaza has been the payment of salaries for certain public-sectors employees not to work (for the Hamas government) by the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank.<sup>32</sup>

Gaza and Cuba have confronted, and continue to confront, numerous obstacles to finance government expenditures as a result of the economic sanctions. However, with diverging and innovative financing strategies they have been able to offset the sanctioning policies to a high degree by obtaining alternative resources mainly from external actors. This has allowed both regimes to evade the full impact of the economic sanctions and not face any significant domestic threat by receiving external aid thus enabling the Gaza and Cuban administrations to reasonably advance their agendas and consolidate their grip on power.

Lastly, both the embargo and the blockade have failed to weaken or oust the regimes as a result of international campaigns pursued by the Gaza and Cuban regimes. These campaigns have been centered on direct and indirect effects of the economic sanctions and have been beneficial to the Castro and Hamas governments by diverting attention from their domestic problems and instead have provided them with greater legitimacy to their claims against the blockade and the embargo. For instance, since 1992 and promoted by the Cuban government, the UN General Assembly holds an annual resolution calling for the United States to lift the longstanding economic embargo. The outcome on each vote has been an overwhelming diplomatic victory for the Cuban government. First, since 1992, no more than four countries have supported the resolution – this year only the U.S. and Israel voted against it.<sup>33</sup> On the contrary, the Castro dictatorship has seen every year an increasing amount of countries voting in favor of the embargo's lift with 59 on the first resolution and 187 this past year. The UN resolution has allowed Castro and his government to draw attention to the futility of the embargo and to highlight the negative effects of the embargo.

The Elian Gonzalez case presented another diplomatic victory that united Cubans and strengthened the position of the regime while diverting attention from Cubans' continued deprivation of basic freedoms. On November 25, 1999, Elian, a five-year-old Cuban boy, reached Florida shores on an inner tube, following a ship-wreck in which his mother perished in the open seas. Immediately, Elián became a rallying symbol for Miami Cubans, a large number of whom mounted a major campaign to retain the boy in the United States under the custody of relatives. The reaction in Cuba was rapid and furious. Led personally by Fidel Castro, and the Unión de Jóvenes Comunistas (UJC), a nation-wide well-orchestrated campaign to rally Cubans was put in motion in support of Elián's return to

his father who had stayed on the island. Huge mass mobilizations now became part of routine life in Cuba and in June 2000 Elian returned. The importance of the campaign for bolstering Castro's regime was significant. As described by Mauricio Font:

The campaign to gain custody of Elián as well as its outcome turned out to be a major political success for Castro personally and for his regime. The mobilizations rallied many Cubans around their national leader, once again. The outcome confirmed the regime's claims to legality, and authorities basked in their ability to "protect a Cuban child against injustice."<sup>34</sup>

In Gaza, the blockade has been enacted for over four years causing great peril to the people of Gaza. Consequently, in recent years, humanitarian aid groups have sent aid ships and activists to Gaza to lessen the suffering of Gazans fearing possible reprisal by Israeli authorities. The Freedom Flotilla is a very but particularly instructive example, which Hamas strongly supported. Prior to the assault the Flotilla suffered, Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh said, "the meaning of the flotilla is that the entire world opposes the siege on the Gaza Strip, and if Israel behaves like pirates and sea-terrorists – we will win."<sup>35</sup> Meanwhile, Israel acknowledged the campaign in favor of the Flotilla with Foreign Affairs Minister Avigdor Lieberman saying, "the aid convoy is violent propaganda against Israel..."<sup>36</sup> The outcome of the Flotilla resulted, according to Haniyeh's calculation, in an Israeli assault and a diplomatic and rhetorical victory for Hamas. The assault by Israeli commandos resulted in the death of nine Turkish citizens and one Turkish-American, benefiting Hamas politically as a result of widespread international condemnations to the assault that delegitimized the blockade.

The international condemnation of the Israeli raid on the flotilla was possibly unprecedented in its severity... One of the beneficiaries of the raid will be Hamas. The main perception after the raid was that the blockade policy had failed and could not be continued, so any easing of the blockade will be seen as a victory for Hamas in its confrontation with Israel.<sup>37</sup>

The Freedom Flotilla event represented a victory for Hamas by reflecting the failure of the blockade and divert-

ing attention from Hamas' internal authoritarian tendencies allowing Hamas to escape greater scrutiny. Interestingly, Israel agreed to ease the blockade a month after the attack. It lifted its ban on most consumer goods despite maintaining restrictions on many construction materials and "dual use" items.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, the Hamas regime has seen an indirect benefit from the international campaign that has emerged with diverging actors denouncing the illegality of the blockade. For instance, the U.N. Human Rights Chief, Navi Pillay, stated that the Gaza blockade is illegal because it amounts to collective punishment of civilians, which is prohibited under the Geneva Conventions and cited the conventions' requirement that "no protected person may be punished for an offense he or she has not personally committed. Collective penalties and likewise all measures of intimidation or of terrorism are prohibited."<sup>39</sup> Moreover, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), a traditionally neutral organization, declared that:

"the whole of Gaza's civilian population is being punished for acts for which they bear no responsibility. The closure therefore constitutes a collective punishment imposed in clear violation of Israel's obligations under international humanitarian law."<sup>40</sup> These aforementioned non-orchestrated declarations have indirectly aided Hamas at discrediting the blockade.

## Implications & Conclusion

Researchers at the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington, D.C. recently released the third edition of their highly regarded book-length study on economic sanctions, examining over 170 cases in the last century. Their main conclusion: sanctions have accomplished their proclaimed objective in only about a third of all cases – and most of those involved goals far more modest than regime change.<sup>41</sup> With this evidence, what is the purpose of maintaining policies that have proven unsuccessful? There is a growing international consensus on the futility of the embargo and the blockade and the economic hardship they have fostered while simultaneously reaping political benefits to the incumbent governments. Consequently, the U.S. and Israeli government must revise their policies, which have delegitimized the U.S. and Israel while legitimizing the oppressive Hamas and Castro leaderships. The embargo and the blockade have served as a scapegoat for Hamas and Castro who employ them as an

excuse for their own failings. In Cuba, almost fifty years of embargo and Castro rule uphold the urgent necessity to repeal the embargo. The embargo has shielded the island from democratic and market economy forces, which could eventually be embraced by the Cuban people in an embargo-free scenario and increase domestic demand for regime change. Although the recent Republican victory in the legislative election and the highly influential Cuban-American community will not facilitate further openings towards Cuba by President Obama, U.S. politicians must struggle to repeal the embargo.<sup>42</sup> Allowing American tourists and companies will not only aid Cubans but will also benefit the U.S. politically and economically. Trends among Cuban-Americans seem to be shifting as reflected by a poll of Cuban-Americans in Florida's Miami-Dade County that found that 55 percent of the respondents were in favor of lifting the embargo. In Gaza, described by conservative British PM David Cameron as a "prison camp", Israel must repeal the near-total blockade, which has dehumanized Gazans while harnessing Hamas greater power and legitimacy. Israel must focus on achieving a higher degree of security rather than overthrowing Hamas. To do so Israel and its allies must engage Hamas, as Dr. Larbi Sadiki says by "investing more soft power in Gaza to lure Gazans and Hamas to the negotiating table, and unburdening Israel and Egypt of their dehumanizing tactics."<sup>43</sup> Israel must also find a mechanism by which to ensure that arms imports do not rearm Hamas without inflicting extreme humanitarian damage.

This essay has emphasized that the embargo and the blockade have failed at weakening and/or ousting the Hamas and Castro regimes, but rather have instead bolstered the leadership's legitimacy and allowed them to thus consolidate power. The ruling elites have countered the rationale for the imposition of economic sanctions by emphasizing the detrimental socioeconomic effects of the policies on ordinary Cubans and Gazans, have found alternative sources of income through patron-client relationships with other countries and actors, and have carried out international efforts to further undermine the legitimacy of the policies.

<sup>1</sup> Steven Erlanger.

<sup>2</sup> Carol Migdalovitz, p. 1

<sup>3</sup> Susanne Gratius, p. 9

<sup>4</sup> Susanne Gratius p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Salim Lamrani

<sup>6</sup> Granma Newspaper

<sup>7</sup> W. T. Whitney Jr.

<sup>8</sup> Una de Cal y otra de arena de Obama <http://hablemosdeeso.wordpress.com/tag/internacional/>

.com/tag/internacional/

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

<sup>10</sup> Fidel Castro Speech at the decoration ceremony for the mothers and wives of the five Heroes of the Republic of Cuba

<sup>11</sup> Jorge I. Domínguez p. 103

<sup>12</sup> Reuters

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> UN Special Focus August 2009 p. 2

<sup>15</sup> UN Special Focus August 2009 p. 3-4

<sup>16</sup> UN Special Focus August 2010 p. 24

<sup>17</sup> Sara Roy p.123

<sup>18</sup> Ivan Eland

<sup>19</sup> PSR Survey Research Unit

<sup>20</sup> Committee to Protect Journalists

<sup>21</sup> Daniel Byman p. 52

<sup>22</sup> Peter Shearman p. 9

<sup>23</sup> Mark Katz p. 101

<sup>24</sup> Huberman and Sweezy in Kosmas Tsokhas p. 323

<sup>25</sup> Max Azicri p. 99-100

<sup>26</sup> Daniel Byman p. 53

<sup>27</sup> Globalsecurity.org; <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/hamas-funds.htm>

<sup>28</sup> Israel Security Sources.

<sup>29</sup> Matthew Levitt p. 4

<sup>30</sup> Israel Security Sources

<sup>31</sup> International Conference In Support Of The Palestinian Economy For The Reconstruction Of Gaza p. 13-15

<sup>32</sup> Sara Roy p. 125

<sup>33</sup> Neil MacFarquhar

<sup>34</sup> Mauricio Font p. 48

<sup>35</sup> Haaretz.com

<sup>36</sup> Haaretz.com

<sup>37</sup> Ben Smith and Arabella Thorp p. 12

<sup>38</sup> The Guardian

<sup>39</sup> Fox News

<sup>40</sup> BBC

<sup>41</sup> Vince Beiser

<sup>42</sup> Foreign Policy

<sup>43</sup> Larbi Sadiki

## Works Cited

Azicri, Max. The Castro-Chavez Alliance. *Latin American Perspective*, Issue 164, Vol. 36 No. 1, January 2009 99-110.

Beiser, Vince. Is the Gaza Blockade Backfiring. June 2010. (Web) Accessed: November 11, 2010.

Committee to Protect Journalists. "CPJ urges Gaza to allow entry of newspapers." July 2010. (Web) Accessed: November 12, 2010.

Domínguez, I. Jorge (1993). "The Secrets of Castro's Staying Power." *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 2 pp. 97-107. (Web) Accessed: November 6, 2010.

Eland, Ivan. "Ending the Gaza Blockade Might Help Israel as Much as Gaza." *The Independent Institute*. July 2010. (Web) Accessed: November 9, 2010.

Erlanger, Steven (2006). "Hamas Leader Faults Israeli Sanction Plan." *The New York Times*. (Web) Accessed: November 7, 2010.

- Font, Mauricio (2008). *Cuba and Castro: Beyond the "Battle of Ideas" in Changing Cuba/Changing World*. The Cuba Project: Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies.
- Fox News. "U.N. Human Rights Chief: Israel's Blockade of Gaza Strip Is Illegal." (Web) Accessed: November 10, 2010.
- Gratius, Susanne (October 2005). Helping Castro? "EU and US policies towards Cuba." *Fundacion para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Dialogo Exterior (FRIDE)*.
- Israel Security Sources. "The Financial Sources of the Hamas Terror Organization." July 2003. (Web) Accessed: November 8, 2010.
- Katz, N. Mark. *The Soviet-Cuban Connection. International Security*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Summer, 1983), pp. 88-112.
- Levitt, Matthew. *Iran: Foremost State Sponsor of Terror*. The Washington Institute of Near East Policy. February 2005.
- MacFarquhar, Neil. "Assembly Again Urges U.S. to Lift Cuba Embargo." *The New York Times*. October 2010. (Web) Accessed: November 12, 2010.
- Migdalovitz, Carol (June 2010). "Israel's Blockade of Gaza and the Mavi Marmara Incident." *Congressional Research Service*. (Web) Accessed: November 8, 2010
- PSR Survey Research Unit. "Palestinian Public Opinion Poll No (37) between 30 September - October, 2 2010." October 24, 2010. (Web) Accessed: November 9, 2010.
- Reuters. "Fidel Castro says U.S. embargo against Cuba must go." April 2009. (Web) Accessed: November 29, 2010.
- Roy, Sara. *Gaza: Treading on Shards on Midnight on the Mavi Marmara* ed. by Moustafa Bayoumi. Haymarket Books 2010.
- Sadiki, Larbi. *Colossus: The Giant Gaza Prison*. Al Jazeera. November 2010. (Web) Accessed: November 5, 2010.
- Shearman, Peter. *The Soviet Union and Cuba*. Royal Institute of International Affairs 1987.
- Sherwood, Harriet. "Israel eases Gaza blockade." *The Guardian*. July 5, 2010. (Web) Accessed: November 7, 2010.
- Smith, Ben and Thorp, Arabella. "The Gaza flotilla attack and its aftermath." *House of Commons Library*. 8 July 2010. (Web) Accessed: November 11, 2010.
- Speech given by Dr. Fidel Castro Ruz, President of the Republic of Cuba. Karl Marx Theater, March 8, 2002. (Web) Accessed: November 17, 2010.
- Tsokas, Kosmas. "The Political Economy of Cuban Dependence on the Soviet Union." *Theory and Society* Volume 9, Number 2, 319-362.
- The World Bank Group. *Fund Channeling Options for Early Recovery and Beyond: The World Bank Perspective*. March 2009.
- "Una de Cal y otra de arena de Obama." April 2009. (Web) Accessed: November 16, 2010.
- United States General Accounting Office. "Economic Sanctions: Effectiveness as Tools of Foreign Policy." *Report to the Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate*. February 1992. (Web) Accessed: November 9, 2010.
- United Nations: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Occupied Palestinian Territory (August 2009). "Locked In: The Humanitarian Impact of Two Years of Blockade on the Gaza Strip." (Web). Accessed: November 12, 2010.
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. "Green Card for a Cuban Native or Citizen." (Web). Accessed: November 13, 2010.

# Israeli and Jordanian Water Politics and Conflict: A Critique of Realist Theory

Katherine Marney

U2 · Faculty of Political Science · kvmarney@gmail.com

The 1994 Israel-Jordan Treaty of Peace provides a clear challenge to the Realist theories of water as a scarce resource leading to a zero-sum game and ultimately, interstate conflict. A number of factors should have provoked conflict over water between Israel and Jordan. Instead, these two countries came to sign a viable peace treaty addressing substantive issues that included water allocation and distribution. This treaty is an appropriate case to critique the realist prediction of water scarcity and power calculations breeding interstate conflict. In this paper, I will critique the realist theory on two accounts. First, the importance of the historical precedent of cooperation between Israel and Jordan must be noted. Secondly, on whether water was the primary national interest, beyond all others, for the two countries. Indeed, water policy between the two countries could have been subject to other wider domestic and regional forces that affect the possibility for conflict or cooperation.

This paper will be organized as follows. It provides a background on water supply and its importance to Israel and Jordan. It then explains the realist theory for resource conflict and applies these arguments to the case of Israel and Jordan. Following this background, the paper moves onto the critiques. I will argue that despite conditions between Israel and Jordan supporting the realist argument for resource conflict, this narrow view negates wider historical patterns and political issues for the two countries, and subsequently reduces the explanatory value of the realist account.

## The Water Situation in Jordan and Israel

The Jordan River basin comprising the Yarmouk and Jordan rivers is a small, but crucial source of water for Israel and Jordan. This basin provides between 1200-1800 million cubic meters (mcm) of water annually, or to put it in perspective, less than 2% of the total water flow from the Nile and 1% of the Congo.<sup>1</sup> That said, both states are dependent on the river basin, with the Jordan River providing 75% of Jordan's water supply and 60% of Israel's.<sup>2</sup> The agricultural sectors are the dominant consumers of water

resources for both countries. Of Jordan's total demand of 740 mcm, agriculture utilized 520 mcm or close to 70% of total demand in 1990. Similarly, agriculture consumed 1250 mcm of Israel's total demand of 2100-2200 mcm or close to 67% in the same year. Yet, renewable supplies failed to meet growing demand and both countries faced deficits in water supply. In 1990, Jordanian supply reached 720 mcm equating to a shortfall of 20 mcm; Israel faced a shortfall of 150 mcm with supply reaching 1950 mcm. It should be noted that although Israel faced greater deficits, Jordan experienced higher rates of population growth, greater variability in supply and had lower absolute supply and supply per capita. These water deficits contributed to the overexploitation of domestic sources by both sides with each exceeding the sustainable level by between 15%-20% and lowering water tables.<sup>3</sup> However, the issues directly related to the allocation, quality, and management of water between Israel and Jordan were resolved in Article 6 and its annexes of the 1994 Peace Treaty.

Before the 1994 treaty, the most substantive example of Israeli-Jordanian conflict over water cooperation occurred with the American-negotiated Johnson Plan in 1953. The Johnson Plan derived from UNRWA's "Main Plan" established water allocation quotas for the countries in the Jordan Basin. The two states never officially signed the agreement. The plan failed as political factors impeded its success. Among the most salient was the official state-of-war existing between the two countries after the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. For Jordan to sign an agreement with Israel would signify officially recognizing Israeli statehood. The rise of the Pan-Arabist movement, following Nasser's assumption of power in Egypt the year before, further pressured this decision. Jordan would have considered its relationship with other Arab states compromised by signing the agreement. Moreover, suspicions that the United States used the Johnson Plan as a guise to gain Arab cooperation with Israel precluded cooperation on water issues.<sup>4</sup> Israel and Jordan continued to tacitly follow the regulations outlined in the Johnson Plan with the help of American aid and other inducements. In the absence of an officially recognized agreement, there were disputes that



could be used by realists to link water issues to interstate conflict. One example is a chain of events linking a dispute over the 1963 Arab-led water diversion plan and the outbreak of the June 1967 War.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, Jordanian troops mobilized along the shared border after accusing Israel of diverting water from the East Ghor Canal in 1979.<sup>6</sup>

The 1994 treaty between Israel and Jordan ended the forty-year long state-of-war between the two states. Yet, as shown in the previous paragraph, relations between the two countries were certainly less contentious than relations between Israel and its regional neighbors. The treaty addressed water issues in Article 6 with four key specifications: i) agreement on the need to develop and maintain new water sources to increase the quantity of water available; ii) to prevent contamination of water resources and protect water quality; iii) mutual assistance to prevent shortages through allocation and sharing during the winter and summer months; and iv) to establish a Joint Water Committee (JWC) to increase the flow of information and promote joint research and development between Jordan and Israel. This agreement was depicted as being derived from mutualism without asymmetrically benefitting one party and as a bilateral institutional framework on which to base other riparian reconciliation in the region.<sup>7</sup>

## The Realist Argument

The realist argument begins with the premise that resources become securitized or a military aim when they come to define the power of a country. According to this argument, water can be treated in this way because it provides a source of economic and political strength for countries. Wolf argues that water as a resource shares its most “contentious characteristics” with other resources.<sup>8</sup> Yet water unlike oil, has no clear substitutes and is difficult to redistribute, making it a valid concern in security calculations. Within this framework, water is an essential resource with many crosscutting influences that prompt states to maximize its use. Thus, when water reaches a point of relative scarcity and states reach a “water barrier,” conflict is likely to erupt between states competing over water resources.<sup>9</sup>

Authors give four distinct criteria for determining the likelihood of conflict over water.<sup>10</sup> Firstly, the degree of water scarcity between the two countries and within each country can increase tensions. The root of this scarcity can be from environmental changes or technical and actual/perceived political issues called “blockages.” Political factors

are especially polemic because, while they increase scarcity, they can also raise perceptions of threat to national interest that can lead to conflict. Secondly, the nature of the interests involved for each state. This can include how states utilize water in their economies and politically, their shared dependence on a single water source and the extent of their shared interests. Thirdly, authors point out the relative riparian position of basin states or the geographic location of the state and access to the river.

Accordingly, upstream states have greater “riparian power” to control river flow than downstream states.<sup>11</sup> For Naff and Matson, this concept of riparian power can be linked to broader realist conceptions of internal and external state power and the ability of one state to project power to shape the actions of the other, such as through access to water. According to Gleick, a fourth criterion is the availability of alternative sources or technology to reduce scarcity, such as desalination, improved irrigation, water purification, or more efficient water use. As a general hypothesis, conflict potential is highest with increased scarcity (with few alternatives) with high water-related interests and similar relative riparian power between the two states.

## Conflict between Israel and Jordan over Water?

Realists demonstrate that the prevailing conditions and power dynamics between Israel and Jordan before the 1994 peace agreement should have culminated in conflict. First, in terms of water supply, each state faced high water scarcity in relation to the size of the shared Jordan River basin and each country’s dependence on the river for water. Each state relied on inefficient, low quality domestic sources of water and these situations were greatly exacerbated by a series of droughts and crop failures between 1988 and 1993. Moreover, given the importance of water to agriculture, which is the principal industry in the Jordanian and Israeli economies, increased scarcity should breed competition and conflict over water. At the time, the increased scarcity was certainly exacerbated by population growth, development, climate change and hydroelectric dependence.<sup>12</sup> This point satisfies one criterion that determines the likelihood of conflict.

For both countries, other water-related enter into their political calculations. Beyond the immediate economic considerations on Israel’s national interest, agricultural activity figures prominently in Zionist ideology.

Water takes on a symbolic significance within this Israeli nationalist discourse due its use in agriculture.<sup>13</sup> In addition, Wolf argues that water is crucial to Israel for strategic purposes. Water was a necessity for irrigation and hydropower in the establishment of Israeli towns and settlements. It took on strategic importance as Israel sought to develop and defend of borders and its peripheral areas.<sup>14</sup> Water as a resource is thus intimately connected to Israeli national interest and power. For Jordan as well, water relates to two issues of primary concerns, sustainable development and political stability. Arguably, water does not take on the same strategic value for Jordan as Israel.

On the third point, Israel's geographic location as the "upstream" country puts it in a powerful position. Israel's greater riparian power gives it leverage against Jordan, as a "weaker", downstream country), enabling it to control the quantity and quality of the flow. That said, Jordan would likely perceive any disruption of flow or "blockage" by Israel as inflammatory.

There are few alternatives or substitutes for water in either country, which further increases the chances of armed conflict. Each country relies heavily on the Jordan River for the majority of its water resources and is forced to overexploit its own domestic resources to meet its needs. The possibility for improvements of desalinization or irrigation technology could potentially alleviate some of the burden, but are too high cost on the scale needed to be efficient.<sup>15</sup> If we accept the realist hypothesis regarding water conflict, the Jordan-Israel case should have erupted into conflict. Yet, history reminds us that they instead cooperated to sign a peace treaty in 1994.

## Resource Non-Conflict

Before critiquing the realist argument, it is important to understand an alternative argument that explains or can be used to predict non-conflict within the realist framework. Naff and Matson do not dismiss the possibility for cooperation, but instead suggest that if there are high shared interests between both countries--that is, if water is so essential in highly charged situations--it will not always culminate in conflict.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, if a state's political or economic interests are perceived as "fostered" by other actors, participants will move towards non-conflict.<sup>17</sup> One state must be the dominant actor in terms of relative interests, power and riparian position for this to occur. These explanations are inextricably linked to calculations of power in which water is an essential determi-

nant. According to the argument, Israel was the dominant power in the relationship where there was a high degree of shared interests between the two actors and this precluded conflict.

Naff and Matson's theory is valuable as it can be used to explain, within a realist framework, how two states can rest in non-conflict. Yet, I would argue that this theory remains weak because it assumes preeminence of riparian or water-related interests over other interests. Furthermore, it relies on power relations between the two countries as the key determinant of policy. This aspect of the theory comes into critical question as it negates the role and importance of the weaker state in affecting the situation. For example, after a closer study of the negotiation process, it emerges that it was in fact Jordan who pursued water cooperation and therefore, non-conflict. Haddadin, the senior negotiator for the Jordanian delegation during the peace process, highlights Jordan's insistence on addressing water issues, while Israel sought to focus more on electricity and environmental issues. Jordan had greater interests in increased water supply compared to Israel during this period, due to the water shortage and domestic/regional issues it faced.<sup>18</sup> In this case, the weaker riparian power addressed water issues and shifted the relationship from one of possible conflict to non-conflict and cooperation.

The authors also highlight three determinants that can complicate moving from this state of conflict or non-conflict to cooperation over water disputes. These determinants include:

- 1) Water's cross-cutting nature and purposes in many different spheres;
- 2) Water being used as a weapon, a symbol and ideological tool domestically and internationally; and
- 3) Water's relationship to wider issues and conflicts (such as the Arab-Israeli conflict).<sup>19</sup>

Within the authors' framework, other issues limit cooperation between the two countries, rather than relative power. To the extent Naff and Matson address non-conflict, despite rising scarcity at the time, they argue it occurs due to rising Israeli riparian power vis-à-vis Jordan. Having considered how the realists address water related conflict, non-conflict and cooperation, I will now turn to critiquing the argument.

## Critiques of Realism

### Historical Perspectives

The first point of contention in the realist argument is its inability to explain the historical precedent of tacit cooperation between Israel and Jordan on issues of high and low politics, including water. Israel and Jordan were often called the “best of enemies” whereby, despite being in a formal state of war, they continued to maintain functional ties. Garfinkle notes that cooperative day-to-day relations have emerged from the needs of living in a small area with a shared border and multiple, overlapping interests.<sup>20</sup> Areas of cooperation include: agriculture, pest control, pollution control, intelligence, navigation, air traffic control, mining, banking and commerce, and scientific exchange on water conservation and allocation.

Specifically on water issues, we observe a largely cooperative relationship that serves the interests of both countries. As discussed previously, the Johnson Plan (1953) remained a tacit agreement between the two countries on water allocation between 1953 and 1967. The East Ghor Canal and National Carrier projects (1965) represent the clearest examples of cooperation where each country referenced the Johnson plan and the interests of the other in the construction of these projects.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, diplomatic meetings at high and low levels on water issues took place in 1970-71 and 1976. In 1985, the states established an agenda for future negotiations on issues such as administration of the West Bank, control over Jerusalem, settlement building in the West Bank, final status for the Palestinians and water administration. Contacts were mixed into the Gulf War Era as regional and domestic politics became the primary concern for both countries. Israel’s relative economic and military power and Jordan’s relative weakness bred a level of public hostility, suspicion and caution of threat between the two countries.<sup>22</sup>

It is notable that from 1985 to 1993, when water scarcity rose and realists predicted a water conflict between Israel and Jordan, the states maintained functional ties and dialogue. Although the conditions at the time were ripe, the countries were not driven to conflict. This result is contrary to the realist prediction that high scarcity, high political and economic interests, and similar riparian power between the two countries would lead to such a conflict. Therefore, we can firstly critique the realist account on the basis that it overlooks previous repeated patterns of engagement between the countries when predicting con-

flict. Closer consideration of these patterns in the Jordanian/Israeli case reveals a longer history of tacit cooperation over a multitude of issues and interests, rather than a conflict over a single issue. Wolf supports this critique by arguing that water resources were not a factor in strategic, spatial, or territorial terms in any previous wars between Israel and Jordan, or in the context of the wider Arab-Israel Conflict.<sup>23</sup> This critique raises questions over whether water can be considered a primary interest for either country; I will now address this question at greater length.

### Water in the Domestic/Regional Context

The realist argument posits that water scarcity will culminate in conflict driven by competition over the resource. In doing so, the realist argument elevates water to be a state’s primary interest and relegates other issues to lesser importance, such as regional security, regime stability and issues of domestic politics. I will instead argue that these issues are factors that are important drivers of policy in the place of water issues in some cases.

Realists posit that if cooperation occurs (because it is a primary interest) water will form the basis of a wider peace.<sup>24</sup> We can question the viability of the argument by considering the content of the peace treaty. The main body of the peace treaty addresses broader issues of normalization of political relations. Water issues were negotiated under Annex 6 with other issues of low politics. This is not to deny the importance of water as an issue, but it does raise questions over water’s relative importance as a national interest in relation to other issues. To resolve these questions we must consider domestic/regional events and interests, which affect water policy.

### Jordan

It is widely argued that in the case of Jordan, the most prominent interest related to its domestic policy and policy vis-à-vis Israel was its treatment of the Palestinians. Between 1948 and 1988, uncertainty over Palestinian statehood and state responsibility of the Palestinians dominated Israeli/Jordanian relations. At the same time, prior to at least 1988, questions over who claimed sovereignty over the West Bank and ultimately, representation of the West Bank Palestinians, further deepened competition between the Jordanian Monarchy and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). In the Israel-Jordan-PLO triangle, Israel tended to support the Jordanian Monarchy. Israel’s own antagonistic relationship with the PLO drove

this policy. I would argue that the issue of the Palestinians superseded water issues in domestic politics and its importance to higher level Jordanian/Israeli diplomacy.

Palestinians or so-called “West Bank Jordanians” comprise over half of the Jordanian population. In the interest of regime stability, the Monarchy maintained (and continues to maintain) a steady balance between representing the interests of this group and favoring the East Bank Jordanians who form the core of regime support. This balance entailed on the one hand, claiming a degree of economic and political responsibility over the West Bank and its people, supporting Palestinian nationalism, and refusing formal negotiations and peace with Israel. While on the other hand, it entailed relying on low-level patronage and preferential parliamentary and economic laws to appease the “East-Bank Jordanians.”<sup>25</sup> A clear break in this policy occurred in 1988 when King Hussein renounced control over the West Bank. The monarchy introduced the policy in the hopes of promoting internal stability by insulating the monarchy from the Intifada uprising and establishing a new image of “Jordan for the Jordanians.”<sup>26</sup> Water can be linked to issues of economic prosperity, sustainable development, and internal stability, which are important concerns of the Monarchy. Yet, I would argue that internal political dynamics and their implications on regime stability to the Jordanian Monarchy were of greater concern and surpass water as a primary interest. The limited and tightly controlled political liberalization led by the monarchy that was taking place during the same period further supports this point.<sup>27</sup>

## Israel

To view water as the primary concern for conflict negates Israel’s wider security interests and domestic interests. Firstly, within Israeli nationalist (Zionist) discourse, water becomes connected with agriculture, taking on great symbolic value, and comes to be part of the wider drive for territorial expansion. Water as well becomes a tool for projecting internal and external state power to achieve aims connected to the wider conflict.<sup>28</sup> In this way, water takes on a greater significance as part of a wider agenda. For example, we can highlight Israeli policy towards the Palestinians with its deep domestic and regional significance as one that takes precedent over issues of water. Israel can limit Palestinian access to water to disrupt agricultural production or lower standards of living, while at the same time supplying a disproportionately high amount to Israelis.<sup>29</sup> It appears that it is water’s connec-

tion with this broader conflict that causes it be perceived as a primary interest.

It could be argued that Israel did not perceive water to be one of its primary interests in terms of its relations with Jordan because it had not reached its “water barrier.” For example, during the peace negotiations, energy and environmental interests were treated as equally important as water in Israel’s negotiating platform. This could be because Israel faced a lower relative scarcity of water compared to Jordan. As discussed previously, although Israel faced a higher absolute shortfall, it faced fewer pressures on this shortfall compared to Jordan. In addition, as an upstream country, Israel had greater control over the flow, quality and quantity of water resource compared to Jordan.

Lastly, Israel’s own interest in putting pressure on the PLO, as well as the combined Intifada leadership provided strong motivation for supporting the Jordanian Monarchy at the time. Garfinkle underlines the degree of coordination between Israel and Jordan during the Intifada period (1987-1992). These actions were taken to politically isolate and economically squeeze the Intifada leadership to weaken their efforts.<sup>30</sup> These activities took place during the same period as the realist predicted conflict between Israel and Jordan and show the importance of other interests in the relations between these two states.

## Regional Forces

Authors highlight other regional forces that combined to increase Israeli and Jordanian receptiveness towards cooperation. It is beyond the scope of this paper to fully explain the significance of each event; however, it does allow us to appreciate the limits of the narrow realist view. Three systemic events are highlighted as significant: the end of the Cold War, the Gulf War and the signing of the Madrid and Oslo agreements.

Dolyatar and Gray argue that the end of Cold War affected regional politics by ending the competition between superpowers that previously polarized the region. In the new environment States could instead move toward multilateral negotiations.<sup>31</sup> Garfinkle highlights the significance of Jordan’s support of Iraq during the Gulf War in increasing Israel’s perception of threat. Israel would come to reassess its relationship with Jordan due to this involvement.<sup>32</sup> A belligerent Iraq and the possibility of a consolidated Palestinian State caused Israel to value the Jordanian rela-



tionship as a buffer against these threats.

Lastly, Lukacs emphasizes the importance of the Madrid agreement and Oslo Accord I & II accords in (partially) settling issues of boundaries, legal status and governance between the Israelis and Palestinians. This ultimately solved the question surrounding the Palestinians between Israel and Jordan. These events removed the taboo on Arab states of negotiating directly with Israel.<sup>33</sup> This taboo developed following the 1948 War and affected previous efforts such as the Johnson Plan, from seeing success. Jordan's position to that point was to support a full Israeli withdrawal and the formation of a Palestinian state. The formal agreements between Israel and the PLO "legitimized the idea" that separate peace with Israel was not "treason."<sup>34</sup>

In addition, authors point to greater environmental awareness and a desire for sustainability within Israel and Jordan, as well as greater recognition of the economic benefits from cooperation, in explaining the lack of conflict.<sup>35</sup> Factors at the time such as a series of droughts and bad harvests and increased water scarcity were said to drive these ideological changes. These examples of regional forces affecting Israeli-Jordanian relations at the time highlight that water was not the primary interest between the two countries. Selby contends that water conflict and cooperation is not reducible to a set of universal assumptions and requires analysts to account for wider historical precedents, regional/domestic structures, struggles and forces.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, an analysis of the Jordanian/Israeli case supports this assertion.

## Conclusion

I have presented the realist argument for resource conflict by applying it to the case of Israel and Jordan, but I ultimately questioned the viability of this theory. The realist argument presents four conditions that could increase the possibility of a water-related conflict. This theory was then applied to the case of Israel and Jordan. Although the theory predicted a water conflict, this did not happen. I argued that the realist account overlooks substantive issues that precluded conflict and contributed to cooperation in 1994 and that this weakens its explanatory power. Firstly, it overlooks the historical precedent of Israeli-Jordanian cooperation on issues of low and high politics. Secondly, it overstates the importance of water as the central interest in Israel and Jordan's foreign and domestic policies. In doing so, it negates the wider regional context affecting

the likelihood of conflict over water. Water issues must be placed within a wider context by recognizing historical, regional, domestic, symbolic and other forces and how they interact to promote conflict or cooperation on water. Further research on other riparian conflicts such as in the Tigris/Euphrates Basin between Iraq and Syria and Indus Basin between India and Pakistan should be pursued to further support or challenge this argument.

---

<sup>1</sup> Lowi, *Water and Power*, 1993.

<sup>2</sup> Lindholm, *Water and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 1995.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Stevens, *Jordan River Partition*, 1965.

<sup>5</sup> Wolf, *Hydropolitics along the Jordan River*, 1995 p.51

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* p. 56

<sup>7</sup> Selby, *Power & Politics in the Middle East*, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Wolf, *Hydropolitics along the Jordan River*, 1995:89

<sup>9</sup> Gleick, *Water and Conflict*, 1993: 90

<sup>10</sup> Naff and Matson, *Water in the Middle East*, 1984 and Gleick, *Water and Conflict*, 1993.

<sup>11</sup> Naff and Matson, *Water in the Middle East*, 1984.

<sup>12</sup> Gleick, *Water and Conflict*, 1993.

<sup>13</sup> Wolf, *Hydropolitics along the Jordan River*, 1995.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Frey and Naff, *Water: An Emerging Issue in the Middle East? 1985*

<sup>16</sup> Naff and Matson, *Water in the Middle East*, 1984.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*: 72

<sup>18</sup> Haddadin, *Water in the Middle East Peace Process*, 2002,

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Adam Garfinkle, *Israel and Jordan in the Shadow of War*, 1992.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Wolf, *Hydrostrategic Territory in the Jordan Basin*, 2000.

<sup>24</sup> Gleick *Water and Conflict*, 1993.

<sup>25</sup> Brand, *Palestinians and Jordanians: A Crisis of Identity*, 1995.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Robinson, *Defensive Democratization in Jordan*, 1998.

<sup>28</sup> Selby, *Power & Politics in the Middle East*, 2003.

<sup>29</sup> Selby, *Dressing up domination*, 2002

<sup>30</sup> Garfinkle, *Israel and Jordan in the Shadow of War*, 1992.

<sup>31</sup> Dolatyar and Gray, *Water Politics in the Middle East*, 2000.

<sup>32</sup> Garfinkle, *Israel and Jordan in the Shadow of War*, 1992.

<sup>33</sup> Lukacs, *Israel, Jordan and the Peace Process*, 1999: 187

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*: 196

<sup>35</sup> Dolatyar and Gray, *Water Politics in the Middle East*, 2000

<sup>36</sup> Selby, *Power & Politics in the Middle East*, 2003: 64.

## Works Cited

Allan, J. A. *Water, Peace and the Middle East: Negotiation Resources in the Jordan Basin*. New York: Tauris Academic Studies. 1996.

Brand, Laurie. "Palestinians and Jordanians: A Crisis of Identity" in *Journal of Palestine Studies* vol. 24: 4 (Summer, 1995): Web. March 15, 2010

Dolatyar, Mostafa and Tim S. Gray. *Water Politics in the Middle East*. New York: St. Martin's Press INC. 2000.

"Dressing up domination as 'cooperation': the case of Israeli-Palestinian



water relations.” *Review of International Studies* 29 (Summer, 2001):121-138 Web. March 11, 2010.

Frey, Frederick and Thomas Naff. Water: An Emerging Issue in the Middle East?” in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 482: 65 (1985) March 11, 2010.

Garfinkle, Adam. *Israel and Jordan in the Shadow of War*. New York: St. Martins Press. 1992.

Gleick, Peter H. “Water and Conflict: Fresh Water Resources and International Security” *International Security*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Summer, 1993), pp. 79-112. Web. March 8, 2010

Haddadin, Munther J. “Water in the Middle East Peace Process” in *The Geographical Journal*, 168: 4 (2002): 324-340. Web March 15, 2010.

*Hydropolitics along the Jordan River*. USA: United Nations University Press, 1995

Lindholm, Helena. “Water and the Arab-Israeli Conflict” in *Hydropolitics: Conflicts over Water as a Development Constraint* by Leif Ohlsson. London, UK: Zed Books, 1995.

Lowi, Miriam R. Water and Power: *The Politics of a scarce resource in the Jordan River Basin*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Lukacs, Yehuda. *Israel, Jordan and the Peace Process*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1999.

Naff, Thomas and Matson, Ruth C. *Water in the Middle East: Conflict or Cooperation?* London: Westview Press, 1984.

Robinson, Glenn E. *Defensive Democratization in Jordan*. International Journal of Middle East Studies. 30: 3 (August, 1998): 387-410 Web March 8, 2010.

Selby, Jan. *Water. Power & Politics in the Middle East: The Other Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. New York: IB Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2003.

Stevens, Georgiana G. *Jordan River Partition*. USA: Hoover Institute Studies, 1965

Wolf, Aaron T. “Hydrostrategic Territory in the Jordan Basin: Water, War and the Arab-Israeli Peace Negotiations” in *Water in the Middle East: A geography of Peace* by Hussein A. Amery and Aaron Wolf. Austin: The University of Texas Press. 2000.

# Our Contributors

**MAJD AL KHALDI** is a U3 Honours Political Science & Economics student. When not balancing budgets as the Arts Undergraduate Society's Vice President Finance, he may be caught taking photos around Montreal or playing drop-in soccer. Majd was born in pre-war Abkhazia and became familiar with how informal institutions work while interning in Syria this past summer.

**VINCENT DI SCIULLO** was born and raised in Montreal, Quebec, and is fluent in English, French, and Italian. He started his Bachelors of Arts degree at McGill in 2007 after having studied abroad at the Canadian College in Italy for a year. Vincent's undergraduate program consists of a Honours Political Science major and a Philosophy minor. His academic areas of interest are international relations, security studies and foreign policy analysis.

**FELIPE GARCIA-ANDRADE** is a natural from Madrid, Spain. He lived in Havana, Cuba for nine years and then attended high school in Port Hope, Ontario. After taking a gap year he joined McGill University where he is currently doing an undergraduate program that consists of a double major in Political Science and International Development with a minor in Political Economy. His academic areas of interest are comparative economic development, foreign policy analysis and international relations.

**KATHERINE MARNEY** graduated this year with Honours in Political Science and a major in Economics. She is currently working on a project establishing microenterprises and promoting technology use in rural Peruvian schools.

**VALENTIN ROBILIARD** is in his third year at McGill, completing a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, with a minor in International Development Studies. He is particularly interested in the ethics and politics of humanitarian intervention.

**Cover photo courtesy of:**

EN.ACADEMIC.RU