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Hannah Arendt and Nonviolence

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HANNAH ARENDT AND NONVIOLENCE

J'avais rêvé une république que tout le monde eût adorée. Je n'ai pu croire que les hommes fussent si féroces et si injustes.(1)

Camille Desmoulins

Hannah Arendt is one of the most prominent political theorists of the second half of the 20th century, whose work continues to wield a strong influence (on the academia and beyond) to this day. In this paper I will attempt to identify and critically examine a distinct theory or philosophy of nonviolence in Hannah Arendt's work. The article will focus on discerning various contradictions and moments of banality which limit the validity and relevance of her contribution to this field, especially in terms of the failure to fully appreciate the significance of class structure and class conflict, and the specific reverberations this has had on her theory of nonviolence. This theory of nonviolence will be examined with regards to two basic outlooks which she partly attempts to integrate into a single theoretical thread, particularly through her theory of power and her general rejection of the instrumentalist political logic.

From the general perspective I have just outlined, I analyze the connection between her theory of nonviolence and her theory of the democratic *social order* based on public freedom (including her concept of free associations or what might be termed "associative democracy", as well as deliberative/discursive democracy viewed through this prism of nonviolence, her approach to the structural factor in the functioning of social orders etc.). The second

interconnected theme I wish to explore is the role of nonviolence in her theory of democratic *social change*, particularly with regards to the question of the viability and applicability of her theories of power and political consensuality. Finally, I will try to establish whether and how these two basic perspectives consociate together in her thought, and what basic problems might be posed for nonviolence theory with regards to their pairing. In particular, I will explore how Arendt's rejection of political instrumentalism and violence interacts with the project of radical democratic social change.

INTRODUCTION

Arendt, who supported the death penalty for Eichmann for instance, was largely an advocate of pragmatic nonviolence (of a non-absolute kind), and her politics lack that "Gandhian" quality of compassion. Her political philosophy fundamentally stands in the rationalist tradition which renounces the use of emotions, or at least seeks to transform and rationalize them. For example, the American Revolution (which she herself portrayed as "the only revolution in which compassion played no role in the motivation of the actors" – 2) is portrayed as superior by Arendt largely because it is supposedly "independent" of emotional motives. Indeed, she seeks to "rescue" the rationalist core even in the act of forgiveness, a human faculty often dismissed as a "sentimentalist" or religious "prejudice". Forgiveness serves as a social corrective, for it keeps human destructive and self-destructive impulses in check. Love is substituted here for what she considers its political counterparts, solidarity and respect, "a kind of "friendship" without intimacy and without closeness." (3) Forgiveness and redemption are critically important as a way to reaffirm the role of the subjective element, maintain control of political processes and counter the prospects for violent reactivity and destructiveness. (4) In other words, Arendt focuses on nonviolence and nonviolent action as a specific manner of exerting power, or indeed, a source of power.

ARENDR'S THEORY OF POWER

No army can withstand the force of an idea whose time has come.

Victor Hugo

Max Weber perceives power straightforwardly, in terms of influence on the behavior of others. (5) Similar views are held by numerous authors, from Jouvenal through Voltaire to Sartre and C. Wright Mills. For Arendt, on the other hand, power is a social category. All power (as opposed to individual strength) is consensual simply by virtue of being social, by being based on the cooperation of

the population. (6) The participants of the social contract acquire power precisely through their commitment to mutual cooperation. Arendt's pluralist political ethics rest on the notion that benevolent or tolerant group interaction ensures greater and more sustainable power formations than those subjected to domineering and violence.

Power is "communicatively produced". Communicative action is the medium for intersubjectivity, through which individual and group realities are constructed.(7) "All political institutions are manifestations and materializations of power; they petrify and decay as soon as the living power of the people ceases to uphold them." (8) Arendt talks of Danish unarmed resistance to the Nazis as an example of "the enormous power potential inherent in nonviolent action and in resistance to an opponent possessing vastly superior means of violence." (9) Indeed, it could be argued that organized nonviolent resistance is the central social invention of the 20th century, even if its potential is yet to be fully revealed to us.

The ruling group's control rests not "on superior means of coercion as such, but on a superior organization of power." (10) Arendt established that "to equate political power with 'the organization of violence' makes sense only if one follows Marx's estimate of the state as an instrument of oppression in the hands of the ruling class." (11) In fact, we would argue, to the extent that violence is an instrument of power (rather than power itself), to the extent that coercion directly and indirectly leads to consent (either consciously or through semi- or subconscious forms of resolving "cognitive dissonance"), it can also be stated that coercion is indeed capable of creating power, though often of a less sustainable nature. It would be wrong to underestimate the role of coercion in consciousness formation and the perpetuation of consent in modern "democratic" capitalist societies. Violence can, under certain circumstances, also increase a group's power through strategic positioning towards resources and means of production broadly conceived. In any case, limitations apply to the power of "soulforce". An abstract mind-matter dualism does not apply. Still, the contingency of power preserves the possibility of freedom. Power is a relationship which cannot be permanently acquired, but has to be constantly reproduced. (12) According to Arendt, pure violence cannot secure long-term consent.

Arendtian concept of nonviolence, like some other approaches, bases itself on the power of social and economic noncooperation. (13) "It is the people's support that lends power to the institutions of a country", both in autocratic and more pluralist regimes.(14) In fact, as the experience of Eastern Europe under Stalinist "communism" indicated, overtly authoritarian systems of government might even be more vulnerable to the power of public opinion than modern "democratic" regimes, which possess stronger instruments of manipulation, accommodation and containment.

STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

The law, in its majestic equality, forbids rich and poor alike to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets and to steal their bread.

Anatole France

Assessing Arendt's theory of power, Habermas stated that "she removes politics from its relations to the economic and social environment", and that "she is unable to grasp structural violence." (15) Her approach implies a fundamental difference in meaning between so-called "passive" and active violence. From an alternative viewpoint, one of the main lessons of Marx's Capital is precisely that capitalism connotes a set of social relationships, including often "hidden" forms of exploitation and oppression, as well as the culturally condoned and legitimized forms of open repression. For all his other mistakes, Sartre was right in pointing to the reactivity of the violence of the oppressed. (16)

Analyses of power which sidetrack the structural elements that are involved can provide only limited conceptual tools required for a comprehensive and interactive theory of social change. Important factors such as habit and tradition, "fear of sanctions, moral obligation, self-interest, psychological identification with the ruler, zones of indifference and absence of self-confidence, and absence of self-confidence among subjects" etc. have been identified by Gene Sharp, the noted theorist of nonviolent action. (17) These factors also put to the test Arendt's claim that violence is only capable of destruction, but is incapable of creating power. (18) A strong case could be made for the supposition that the Arendtian consent theory of power needs to be reconceptualized in a manner closer to Sharp before it can be effectively applied to the practical political knowledge of nonviolent action. Still, the question of coercion – including unarmed coercion – has to be engaged with. To what extent and in what form can the element of coercion constitute a positive factor in the victory over the powers that be and the construction and preservation of new realities?

Her persistent resistance to the incorporation of certain elements of the Marxist perspective did not simply result in a certain underappreciation of the plebeian efforts and aspirations in the processes of change – it also severely restricted her ability to fully grasp the crucial class dynamic of actual historical conflict, and to include it integrally into the body of her theoretical work. From an epistemological viewpoint, Arendt sometimes idealistically falls in the trap of searching for foundational messages in symbolism, almost as if it often isn't a secondary (some might say "superstructural") manifestation of lived experience.

The French Revolution, although bourgeois, was integral, rich in content – the American Revolution remained more clearly restricted to formal institutional transformation, confined precisely to that liberationist “freedom from” notion, poor in social content. This is the great contradiction in Arendt’s appreciation of the American Revolution, which offered so little in terms of non-formal, substantial public freedom and authentic citizen participation. The most democratic institution of the American Revolution, the committees of correspondence (rather than the famed town hall meetings which were a different, disconnected occurrence), are hardly a parallel to the Parisian communal councils. Democracy, in its classical meaning as the “government of the people, by the people, for the people”, is the lived experience of popular agency, wide participation in public affairs (encompassing political, economic and social institutions) and cooperative distribution of power and resources.

PUBLIC FREEDOM AND THE DEMOCRATIC ORDER

(P)olitical freedom, generally speaking, means the right ‘to be a participator in government’, or it means nothing.

Hannah Arendt

(19)

The social covenant is a source of empowerment through which individuals can acquire public freedom. (20) Here, we approach the democratic socialist concept of peaceful, free associations based on voluntary, reciprocal, participatory cooperation, or self-government. This democratic order is based on constructive democratic dialogue. (21) On the one hand, the process of deliberation is conceived as a form of reciprocal “maieutics”, a quest for truth as opposed to the more intellectually (and sometimes politically) barren discursive phenomenon of debate. Additionally, however, debate (that is, the conduct of political affairs “in the form of speech and without compulsion” – 22) itself represents a democratic alternative to violent forms of conflict resolution.

Freedom, as Arendt maintains, “is participation in public affairs.” (23) In addition to invoking the participatory archetype of the Greek polis, Arendt finds the antecedents of this ideal in the councilist experiments of earlier revolutions, such as the American town meetings, the Parisian sociétés populaires 1789-1793, the sections of the Paris Commune of 1871, Russian soviets and the German Räte, the Jeffersonian plan for “elementary republics” or “counties divided into wards”, an early expression of the principle of subsidiarity. “(T)he danger was that all power had been given to the people in their private capacity, and that there was no space

established for them in their capacity of being citizens.” (24) It is for this reason that Arendt describes the council system as “the best in the revolutionary tradition”, “the always defeated but only authentic outgrowth of every revolution since the eighteenth century”. (25)

For Arendt, it is the frustration of the faculty of action, of participation and public activity, which contributes to the development of violent impulses. (26) Arendt’s vision resembles the concept of deliberative democracy, a cooperative and inclusive polity based on pluralism where deliberation acts as a source of legitimacy and social creativity. However, consensus decision-making, which has often been presented as the least violent form of public deliberation, also has to be questioned from the point of view of nonviolence theory (in addition to questions regarding its efficiency). Firstly, there is the problem of possible disruption by a minority (27), the violence of minoritarian pressures and impositions. This problem is often exacerbated by the structural implications of the consensual form of decision-making. Conversely, “tyranny of the majority” is a parallel (mostly neglected) threat, as the pressure of the presumed need and expectations that a common decision needs to be reached can lead to the minority’s self-suppression of dissenting views, leading to a false and forced perception of group monism.

In addition to the violent impacts of bureaucratized social life, Arendt also warns of a tendency of returning to tribalistic nationalisms as a reaction against the instabilities induced by modern mass societies and globalistic capitalist integrative and centralizing processes, which disempower individuals and entire social groups. (28)

Arendt, pointing to the centrality of civic duty, identifies the escape from freedom (in the sense of the escape from public responsibility) as one of the central problems of all attempts at constituting a society based on public freedom. Furthermore, introducing a concept similar to the Sartrean notion of “bad faith”, Arendt points to the fatalism of Cold War warriors (with their slogans “better dead than red” etc.), their failure to commit the existential act by choosing outside the predetermined binary militarist schema. Arendt’s reaffirmation of participatory democracy, of the power of subjectivity in history, aimed at restoring dialecticity at a moment marked by fatalistic definitions of history obsessed by the impression of predetermined linearity, or that of chaos.

The speechless, anti-political nature of violence is a particular burden on the prospects for democratic life.(29) In contrast, deliberation and dialogue are the wellsprings of public freedom.

VIOLENCE OR DEMOCRATIC SOCIAL CHANGE

... no man shall show me a Commonwealth born crooked that ever became straight.

James Harrington (30)

For Arendt, revolutions aren't simply phenomena of progression from the past, extreme elements of a certain linear historical itinerary – they constitute a historical break, an interruption in the order of events and stages of development, bringing forth a new beginning. The fact that revolutions have often been intellectually conceived in terms of restoration, a renovation of Roman republican antiquity, has little bearing on this essential understanding.

The main currents in the discussion of the causes of revolutions have firmly established the centrality of immediate material interest: they should not confine our understanding of popular motivations to this sole element. Arendt's humanistic focus on self-actualization also evokes modern countercultural theories and sensibilities. Perhaps more than any before, our time appears potentially (and partially) open to the practical explication of an Arendtian democratic project. In the absence of torrential economic crises and mass, basic material deprivation in the developed countries, this utopian vision – impossible to realize in its entirety - acquires a regenerating creative meaning.

Arendt utilizes the existence of human agency as an argument in favor of the possibility of nonviolence. In particular, she made a contribution to a redefinition of revolution, or the foundational act, as a phenomenon which can be conceived outside the domain of violence. According to Arendt, Marx also stressed the importance of systemic contradictions over the role of violence in deep historical change.⁽³¹⁾ Additionally, she claims that “violence, contrary to what its prophets try to tell us, is more the weapon of reform than of revolution.”⁽³²⁾

The archetypal association of chaos with radical social change, or what Camille Desmoulins dubbed “torrent révolutionnaire”, was historically reinforced by its often criminal arbitrariness: “...the Reign of Terror eventually spelled the exact opposite of true liberation and true equality; it equalized because it left all inhabitants equally without the protecting mask of legal personality.”⁽³³⁾ According to Arendt, the task of republican foundation is incompatible with a grave curtailment of civil rights. Equally important, this foundation depends on the constitution of definite new laws and institutions.⁽³⁴⁾ Arendt criticizes this “revolutionary process which had become a law unto itself”⁽³⁵⁾ – the turbulences of power struggles pushed the process far outside of the boundaries of conscious (let alone rational or reasonable) subjective control. The basis of Arendt's constitutionalist argumentation lies in the understanding that strong new

organs of authority, capable of modulating the interactive relationship between permanence and change, have to be established. This is the link connecting her two differing notions of the political – the first being revolutionary politics as the politics of the historical break, while the second is conceived as a standardized, highly regulated political process once the basic framework has been cemented. She is interested in the problem of securing the necessary internal dynamic capable of maintaining popular participation and progressive social innovation. Much of her analysis in *On Revolution* is centrally concerned with the search for the “revolutionary absolute”, the bedrock or “perpetuum mobile” of political life. This “revolutionary perplexity” is the question of rooting revolutionary dynamism into the very political structure of the new order. (36)

Arendt accords the social question with that crucial destructive function in the revolutionary process, almost as if radical equality did not constitute the necessary precondition for positive freedom. True, there is a clear antagonizing component in the demand for substantive equality, and there is often a paradoxical twist to the plebeian self-preservation, for its elemental force challenges reason and can bring existential peril precisely when it most strongly seeks to defy it. On pain of death, the revolutionary social contract must not fall into the trap of corporatism. The vengeance of the oppressed will result in their own downfall. “*He who lives by the sword, shall perish by the sword*”, and the ancient cycle reasserts itself. But the struggle of the Sans-Culottes, in all social revolutions - if moderated by reason and a wider civic republican project – remains the closest approximation to the guarantee of direct democratic self-determination, the destruction of domination *en general*. A progressive synthesis should be sought. Thomas Paine powerfully expressed this humanitarian democratic sentiment in his speech to the Convent, opposing the death penalty to Louis XVI.: “My language has always been that of liberty *and* humanity, and I know that nothing so exalts a nation as the union of these two principles, under all circumstances.(...) If, on my return to America, I should employ myself on a history of the French Revolution, I had rather record a thousand errors on the side of mercy, than be obliged to tell one act of severe justice.” (37)

Arendt’s understanding of the boundaries of “mechanical” class solidarity in particular, its tendency towards uniformity based on the lowest common material denominator, is a useful reminder of the need for greater political sophistication in the founding of a new Republic. The struggle for legitimacy in particular is the great test of all revolutions (considering the pluri-centered nature of power), and it is crucial for the avoidance of violence. In turn, the avoidance of violence is also crucial for the preservation and expansion of legitimacy, not solely with regards to possible allies or opponents - it is often critical for the internal cohesion, motivation and resolve of dissenters themselves. Apart from political, cultural and moral or ideological considerations, the

paralyzation of normal life patterns and the concomitant insecurity can diminish the population's willingness to fight. Other usual side-effects of violence such as the centralist implications of military organization, or the extractive bureaucratic economy which supports the militarist system, as well as hatred and intolerance, sexism, etc. also diminish the prospects for the construction of a peaceful and democratic society. "(T)he practice of violence, like all action, changes the world, but the most probable change is to a more violent world." (38)

The critical task for revolutionaries and reformers is to act as catalysts in the disintegration of consent for *status quo*, and to initiate the creation of counter-hegemony through a new alternative worldview built on elements of both continuity and discontinuity with the locally embedded cultural heritage (or *civiltá* in Gramscian terms) and a system of rebellious alliances. This "historical bloc" has to involve various social currents. Whether conceived as a united front or a "progressive alliance" (39), such a strategy requires an effort for respectful mutual conduct - both strategies exclude suppression of the autonomy of these allied groups, and the violent control of particular social characteristics of the allied participants in the process of change.

Nonetheless, although pluralism often ensures greater long-term stability and sustainability of power, it is also important to notice not only the possibility of constructing power through the subordination of the masses or their integration with a certain political project, but also certain benefits of relative cohesion and unity on crucial issues. Although the process of change often requires highly flexible compromises, especially in non-radicalized situations, the ideal of social partnership is threatened when differences in "subjective" and "objective" social interests bring to question the very existence of compatible solutions. Just as pluralism needed for the construction of a system of alliances poses serious problems to the necessary cohesion and coordination of the movement for change, this need for organizational cohesion and coordination poses the question of centralism, both in the movement and the new order, challenging the ideal of participatory public freedom and nonviolent social relations.

Arendt points to the totalitarian implications of Rousseau's "*volonté générale*", evocative of "*raison d'état*" in its unanimity and uniformity, which was effectively introduced by the French Jacobins as a "forced cohesion" (an approach also capable of easily integrating Rousseau's concept of internal self-policing of "particularistic" interests). She sensibly understood this uniformity could potentially lead towards an acceptance of revolutionary terror and towards a forceful collectivist position which negates the possible compatibility of public and private, general and particular, leading to a "terror of virtue". In response to this emphasis on merciless "justice", Arendt (despite her usual distrust of emotions in politics) posits that "compassion will transcend (virtue – D.J.) by

stating in complete and even naïve sincerity that it is easier to suffer than to see others suffer.”(40) She was right to point towards the hypocrisy of righteousness in those grandiose ideologies which undervalue the actual experiences of individuals, threading over sentient human beings in their pursuit of Virtue. “Par pitié, par amour pour l’humanité, soyez inhumaines!” (41) She strongly depicts the tragic destructive and auto-destructive implications of political fanaticism, paranoia, policing of oneself and others. Popular mobilization is no guarantee for progressive politics. There is, however, a clear difference between the tyranny of public opinion and the majoritarian implications of the ideal of public freedom, particularly outside of the context of isonomy (a system where no one rules). Arendt’s account of totalitarianism, however, often focused on the theory of psychological alienation and the crises of identity of the masses, the “loneliness of crowds”, without carefully examining the internal systemic contradictions often seen to give rise to totalitarian formations.

It should perhaps be mentioned how Arendt notices the conservative stabilizing function of post-WWI constitutionalism, pointing to the formalistic adoption of the constitutional concept which began to be used “as if a constitution was a pudding to be made by a recipe.” (42) She does not, however, openly identify the element of conservative stabilization in the preservation of American post-revolutionary minority privileges and minority rule. In addition to non-formalized differences in power and status, the constitution of the citizen as an entity in possession of legally defined rights also serves as a classification for the exclusion of non-citizens, yesterday slaves, today immigrants (and partly prisoners). This reality subverts the supposed meaning of “universal and inalienable” human rights (provided “by virtue of birth” alone). Arendt is correct in pointing to the uselessness of endearing proclamations which haven’t been incorporated into the body of positive law, but what is the point in using this finding (which pertains to all existing social orders) as a theoretical stick specifically against the French revolutionary tradition? This mainstream tune helps to reinforce the myth of America’s positive democratic exceptionalism.

In fact, Arendt’s admiration of the pluralist component in American revolutionary thought and practice partly functions as a misplaced imposition of modern political sensibilities onto a different historical context of an anti-monarchic American national liberation struggle led by a (relatively) socio-economically homogenous national elite. Her limited definition of the realm of politics prevents her from clearly differentiating between juxtaposed political conceptions. On the one hand, a truly democratic united front which transcends corporatist illusions (with their exclusivist identifications and conclusions, including peasant and workers’ economic particularism), yet bases itself on the political leadership and the historical claim of the oppressed and the have-nots. On the other, unprincipled class collaboration, which does not challenge the elite privileges and

the undemocratic distribution of wealth and power. Naturally, however, these are strategic ideal-types, and cannot be applied to the same extent and in the same manner regardless of concrete circumstances.

These differing conceptions of democratic politics do not necessarily precondition the level of violence. Paradoxically, however, with all its inherent brutality, it is the civil war component in radical social change, with its explicit class dynamic, which has enriched the French and European republican tradition. American national unification against foreign control, and the concomitant nationalist class collaboration, represent an important factor in the multi-causal process of US historical development which has contributed to the particularly strong entrenchment of plutocracy, and the erosion of egalitarian democratic values in the American society. Republican institutional oversight, very valuable as it is, nonetheless reveals its secondary position in the face of capitalist class power, as (to give an example) the similar nature of the covert British MI5 and MI6 on the one side, and the formally more public and democratically controlled FBI, CIA and NSA on the other, poignantly illustrates. None of this is intended to negate the importance and value of formal checks and balances, and of political pluralism – only to illustrate their limits and contradictions, which tend to remain hidden when the corrosive influence of anti-democratic privileged power is overlooked, and social reality is approached outside of the context of class interests and class politics. Lucidly, Arendt reminds that “only power arrests power.” (43) But here again, her omission is at least as important as what she actually does say, and she does not address the questions of collusion of formally separate branches around shared interests, and whether the separation of political institutional powers can defend the population against control and organized structural violence of special interest organizations (economic organizations, employers’ associations, political parties etc.) and their networks. The “let’s all get together” ideology of social partnership is a poor response to the existence of social antagonisms. The veneer of “rational impartiality” is often implied in this type of deliberative processes. Arendt acknowledges the centrality of self-interest in history, but fails to draw out the necessary conclusions out of this. Privilege will not simply “self-abolish” itself, and this realization has definite repercussions on strategies for change. Reformist strategies will certainly remain important elements of serious movements for change (sometimes in the form of “transitional demands” and “non-reformist reforms”), yet long-term power equilibriums in cases of struggle between systemic opponents remain unrealistic. Opportunities for the re-consolidation of the elite’s power are quickly seized upon. Similarly, the self-preservation of the political “vanguard” as an organizational force also tended to become more important than the preservation of original reformist and revolutionary goals, which were distorted and manipulated according to the interests of the new elites.

To summarize with regards to her central views on nonviolent resistance, the use of violence often leads to a loss of public legitimacy. In the longer run, violence diminishes the power of those who use it.(44) Arendt calls this the “backlash phenomenon”, a strategic category also known as “jiu-jitsu” in the theory of nonviolent resistance. This term serves to denote a process in which violence backfires as it induces resentment and moral outrage, usually of third parties, but often also including elements within the same party that used violence. However, Arendt might be overestimating the effectiveness of asymmetrical warfare when she speaks of “a complete reversal in the relationship between power and violence.” (45) We should note in this context that the Arendtian requirement of consent applies to the state machinery and military as well. Arendt mentions the importance of (partial) military defection from its former functions if the revolutionary process is to have a serious chance for success. (46) It would have been interesting had she attempted to develop this type of practical observations more thoroughly. Unfortunately, her analysis of the phenomenon of consent remains on a very high level of abstraction.

THE CRITIQUE OF POLITICAL INSTRUMENTALISM

Good political life – i.e. participatory deliberative democracy - is an end in itself. (47) Arendt challenged the instrumentalist ethos of modern revolutions and modern thought, she “recalled the proverb that the only way to fight a dragon is to become a dragon oneself, and doubted whether the price was worth paying.” (48) She was adamant about the need to consistently oppose alienating, instrumentalist logic, which she identifies in the focus on goals in general. Keenly aware of the phenomenon she dubbed “the idiocy of technocracy”, her concern with alienation largely centered on the civilization’s fabrication of war (in modern US this takes place in the form of what she described as “the military-industrial-labor complex”), which has come to dominate over humankind and its future prospects.

The uncertainty of the final outcome of political struggles, according to Arendt, also leads to the primacy of means over the contingency of ends. For her, “violence can remain rational only if it pursues short-term goals (...) (T)he danger of violence, even if it moves consciously in a non-extremist framework of short-term goals, will always be that the means overwhelm the end. If goals are not achieved rapidly, the result will be not merely defeat but the introduction of the practice of violence into the whole body politic.” (49) This has been the unfortunate trajectory of many revolutions so far.

Let us put aside the paradox that she dismisses nonviolence *per se* (as a wide-ranging system of morality, an ethics), and perceives it more as a tool in the processes of constituting and perpetuating an order based on public freedom. The

rejection of goal-oriented perspectives is actually misleading, since the relationship between ends and means isn't a one-dimensional process. "Arendt fails to see that while ends, or norms, may lead us into violence, they can also restrain us from violence." (50) A dialectical approach is indispensable. The ends also shape the means, and the means are impoverished when the outcomes are forgotten. By "subsuming strategic action under instrumental action" (51), she neglected the importance of direction and effectiveness in political action. Her own academic identity, which partly remained reminiscent of Karl Mannheim's ideal of the free-floating intellectual, was an impediment to the development of such a strategic outlook.

CONCLUSION

Arendt's concept of public freedom rests on the nonviolent social covenant and participatory deliberation, which are perceived as the basis of authentic sustainable power. Her understanding of genuine, deep change is predicated on the development of democratic discursive space and political institutions capable of providing these participative processes with an ordered historical durability. However, the categorical rejection of instrumentalist logic, with its concomitant neglect of strategic considerations, left important questions unanswered. These include the issue of the form and extent of nonviolent coercion, the problem of basing counter-hegemonic work on new, truly nonviolent structural solutions which would transcend the dominant contemporary doctrine of "social partnership", the questions regarding the synthesis of tolerant pluralism and political cohesion, democratic participation and effective organizational coordination etc. Nonetheless, her work provides one of the early theoretical underpinnings for an explicit concept of nonviolent change and a nonviolent social order.

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- 24) *On Revolution*, p.256.
- 25) *On Violence*, p. 22.
- 26) "To expect people, who have not the slightest notion of what the res publica, the public thing, is, to behave nonviolently and argue rationally in matters of interest is neither realistic nor reasonable.(...) the greater the bureaucratization of public life, the greater will be the attraction of violence." (*Ibid.*, pp.78-80).
- 27) Alan McCluskey, *Consensus building and verbal desperados*, 1999 – www.connected.org/govern/consensus, Retrieved January 3rd, 2007.
- 28) Extending her model of the social contract to the field of international affairs, Arendt, speaking of "*the bankruptcy of the nation state and its concept of sovereignty*" (*On Violence*, p.6), implies that the birth of international political sovereignty might serve as a remedy for international wars. She does not explore the issue of civil wars and their origins, and she argues that the path towards establishing global institutions should focus on *internationalist* rather than *supernational* approaches and solutions. (Hannah Arendt, *Thoughts on Politics and Revolution*, in *Crises of the Republic*, Harvest Books, 1972, p.230) She does not address the contradictions in building new global institutions on the

basis of the existing, intergovernmental, national frameworks, nor does she address the fact transnational approaches have often been more conducive to the establishment of new types of relationships, as the independent UN activities (that are not directly based on its member states) illustrate.

- 29) “Where violence rules absolutely, as for instance in concentration camps of totalitarian regimes, not only laws – *les lois se taisent*, as the French Revolution phrased it – but everything and everybody must fall silent.” (*On Revolution*, p.9).
- 30) James Harrington, *The Commonwealth of Oceana*, 1656, in Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution*, p.206.
- 31) *On Violence*, p.11.
- 32) *On Revolution*, p.79.
- 33) *Ibid.*, p.98.
- 34) “The experiences of the French Revolution with a people thrown into a ‘state of nature’ left no doubt that the multiplied strength of a multitude could burst forth, under the pressure of misfortune, with a violence which no institutionalized and controlled power could withstand. But these experiences also taught that, contrary to all theories, no such multiplication would ever give birth to power, that strength and violence in their pre-political state were abortive.” (*Ibid.*, p.173.)
- 35) *Ibid.*, p.175.
- 36) Writing on the American Senate and the Supreme Court, she stated: “The question is only whether that which made for stability and answered so well the early modern preoccupation with permanence was enough to preserve the spirit which had become manifest during the Revolution itself. Obviously this was not the case.” (*Ibid.*, p.223).
- 37) Thomas Paine, *Collected Writings, Shall Louis XVI. Have Respite?, Speech in the Convention*, January 19, 1793, The Library of America, 1995, p.389.
- 38) *On Violence*, p.80.
- 39) For a modern example of this approach, see Harry Targ, *Advancing the Progressive Majority: The Socialist Contribution* – www.cc-ds.org/discussion/advancing_progressive_majority.html, Retrieved January 4th 2007.
- 40) *On Revolution*, p.76.
- 41) *Ibid.*, p.79.
- 42) Arthur Young in J.M. Thomson, *Robespierre*, Oxford, 1939, p. 489 in Hannah Arendt, *ibid.*, p.135.
- 43) Hannah Arendt, *ibid.*, p. 142.
- 44) *On Violence*, p.53.
- 45) *Ibid.*, p.10.
- 46) *On Revolution*, pp. 106-107.
- 47) Jürgen Habermas, *op.cit.*, p.77.
- 48) Margaret Canovan, *Hannah Arendt: A Reinterpretation of Her Political Thought*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1992, p.167.
- 49) *On Violence*, p. 79.

- 50) Roger W. Smith, *Redemption and Politics*, Political Science Quarterly, 86/2, June 1971, p. 223.
- 51) Jürgen Habermas, *op.cit.*, p.84.

Conflict Transformation in Greek-Turkish Relations: Between Belligerent Nationalism and Conciliatory Europeanization

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Abstract

From the perspective of conflict analysis and resolution and of peace studies, this paper examines the changing bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey as an illustrative case of conflict transformation. The changes in Greek-Turkish relations are analyzed against the historical backdrop of how belligerent ethno-nationalist conditioned cultures, perceptions and foreign policy approaches have functioned in inter-state and inter-societal interactions between the neighboring countries. The analysis proceeds by examining the currently evolving and deepening paradigm shifts in the foreign policy approaches and political cultures of the respective countries. Moreover, it looks at the catalytic influence of the European Union framework in enhancing and empowering conciliatory bilateral relations in the Eastern Mediterranean. The gradual transition of Greek-Turkish relations from their traditionally belligerent nationalist orientation to a more post-nationalist, peace-engendering European orientation is assessed in terms of its likely impact on the peaceful resolution of issues that remain outstanding in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Introduction: Historical Background to Greek-Turkish Relations

The founding of the Greek and the Turkish nation-states in 1827 and 1923 respectively was accompanied by a rigidly ethnocentric view of identity, historiography, political culture, social morphology, territoriality and state power. This was an approach to governance constructed and codified by the rampant nationalism of 19th century Europe (Alter, 1994; Anderson, 1995). Elaborated through the nationalist mindset, the sacralization, and hence mystification, of the nation-state through references to a sense of distinctive and exclusive destiny, supreme calling, invincibility, moral rightness, and the right to employ violence in the name of *the nation* have set the stage for modernity's ambiguous and conflict-reddened history, of which Greece and Turkey have been an integral part.

While both the nation-state of the Republic of Greece and nation-state of Republic of Turkey share the common legacy of having been established through violent struggle against the Ottoman Empire, their respective ethnocentric nationalisms have constructed master narratives in which one saw the other as the perpetual and invariable national enemy (Anastasiou, 2008a; Özkirimli and Sofos, 2008). This was facilitated by the fact that the founders of the Greek Republic associated national freedom with their violent struggle against the Turks through a perspective that conflated Ottomans with Turks. It was also facilitated by the fact that the founders of the Turkish Republic associated their national freedom with violent struggle against the Greeks, whose army, among others, had occupied parts of Asia Minor during and after World War I. Thus, at their very advent, the Greek nationalist narrative had associated Greek national freedom with bloody battles against Turks, and the Turkish nationalist narrative had associated Turkish national freedom with bloody battles against Greeks.

In its further historical consolidation, Greek nationalism has projected on all Turks an absolutist image of "the enemy" by constructing a historiography that suppressed historical eras of peaceful coexistence and selectively highlighted conflict and struggle.

The latter referenced the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans in 1453 A.D.; the four hundred years of Ottoman rule over the Greek people; the massacres of Greeks during the 1821 revolution; the Asia Minor catastrophe of 1922, with massive killings and expulsion of Greeks; the 1955 expulsion of Greeks from Turkey; the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974, displacing 200,000 Greek Cypriots and gaining control of 37% of the Republic of Cyprus; and Turkish territorial claims in the Aegean.

On the other hand, in consolidating its own narrative, Turkish nationalism had projected on all Greeks an absolutist image of "the enemy" by also constructing a historiography that suppressed historical eras of peaceful coexistence and selectively highlighted conflict and struggle. The latter, in complete contrast to the Greek narrative, referenced the killings and final eradication of Turkish Muslim inhabitants from the Greek mainland during the Greek war of independence; the flooding into the Turkish mainland of Turkish refugees from the Balkan wars of 1912-13 (that doubled the population of Istanbul), as they fled from the advancing armies of Greece, Serbia and Montenegro fighting against the Ottomans; the massacres and devastation left behind by the eastward advancement of the Greek army into the Turkish hinterland in 1922, following the end of World War I; the 1960s Akritas Plan, developed by Greek Cypriot nationalists, which spoke of

enforcing the union of Cyprus and Greece and, if need be, annihilating the Turkish Cypriot population; and the killings of Turkish Cypriots in Cyprus during the 1960s.

Typical of nationalist world views and the constructed historiographies that underpin them, both Greek and Turkish master narratives have been conditioned by violent conflict and thus forged by narcissistic patterns of selective memory, half-truths, victimization and the transposition of pain, loss and suffering specific to certain historical events to perpetual justifiers of animosity, grievances and belligerent approaches toward the other (Anastasiou, 2008c). The respective ethnocentric narratives thus inevitably sustained and perpetuated a belligerent ethno-polarizing relationship between Greeks and Turks, even beyond the original historical events that gave rise to the respective nationalisms.

As the nationalist mind prevailed in the political world of each of the neighboring countries, elaborating a constructed historiography around the primacy of revolutions, war and conflict with the “enemy other,” historical periods of peaceful coexistence were suppressed and eliminated from the collective memory of each nation. For example, the period of rapprochement in the 1930s between Greece and Turkey, initiated under premierships of Venizelos and Atatürk respectively, was altogether forgotten and excluded from any political and historical discourse in the public realm on Greek-Turkish relations. It took more than seven decades before Greeks and Turks started to rediscover and acknowledge that in both the pre- and post- nation-state era, contrary to the nationalist narratives, there have been historical periods of peaceful coexistence and widespread ethnically mixed living of Greeks and Turks throughout the Balkan and Eastern Mediterranean regions.

The historical impact of the overriding nationalisms conditioning Greek-Turkish relations, that tended to trump all other factors, was that the preservation of divergent memories and grievances over old conflicts fused with, and created of new ones, accumulating into a complex and burdensome mountain of unresolved problems.

Against this backdrop, issues that otherwise would be manageable had the tendency to escalate to near-war episodes, as was the case with the mainly media induced crisis over the uninhabited islet of Imnia-Kardak in 1996. Simultaneously, new opportunities for cooperation and mutual benefits went unnoticed as they were neither attended nor sought.

The fact that Greece and Turkey have been NATO allies since 1952 did little to curb their belligerent nationalism toward each other. It merely constrained the tension between them and, on numerous occasions, averted all-out war, as the USA repeatedly intervened to keep the Greek-Turkish link within NATO from breaking. On the other hand, throughout the cold war, the fiercely anti-communist orientation of the American-backed governments of Greece and Turkey led them to support the most extreme rightwing nationalists among their respective ethnic counterparts in Cyprus. This strategy empowered the most militant right-wing nationalist in each of the Cypriot communities who were already pitted against each other as fierce enemies. As a consequence, this anti-communist Greek and Turkish strategy escalated ethno-nationalist tension

in Cyprus, culminating in a decade of inter-ethnic bloodshed, a bloody Athens-led coup d'état, followed by an overpowering and devastating Turkish invasion that forcefully partitioned the island in the summer of 1974 (Anastasiou, 2008a, Stern, 1977). These events radicalized the alienation between Greece and Turkey as it fed and reinforced the belligerent ethnocentrism of their respective nationalist narratives that set the stage for the conflict in the first place, bringing the neighbor countries, once again, to the brink of war.

Nationalism always superseded the fight for or against communism, and historically outlived the rift between right-wing and left-wing ideologies (Pfaff, 1993). Common cause against communism during the cold war era did little to deter Greece's and Turkey's ethnocentric nationalisms and the conflict-oriented predisposition their respective narratives sustained toward each other. Indicative of this fact are the innumerable times the two countries faced near-war crises, ranging from their antagonism over Cyprus throughout the 1960s, and the 1970s, to the escalating dispute over oil drilling rights in 1987, to the conflict over territorial claims over rock islets in 1996. Historically, Greece and Turkey pursued and perceived their fight against communism via NATO as formal, circumstantial and strategic in nature. However, under the conditioning affect of nationalism, Greece and Turkey pursued and perceived the antagonism between them as substantive, diachronic and perpetual in nature.

The latter orientation persisted even after the cold-war era came to an end. Problems centering on the eastern part of the Aegean Sea, particularly along the Greek-Turkish border, entailed a complex of unresolved interrelated issues. They included disputes over the boundaries of territorial waters, the delimitation of the continental shelf, air space, the status of certain coastal islands in regard to militarization, the line of the flight information region (FIR), and the ownership of certain rock islets. Strategies by one side to counteract the strategies of the other have metastasized over time into substantive issues that started to traverse sovereignty rights—a process that deepened and complicated the issues dividing the neighbor countries. As each dispute that emerged in Greek-Turkish relations was contextualized within the adversarial predisposition of each country's ethnocentric nationalism, Greece and Turkey tended to always end up with conflicting interpretations of past treaties, conflicting perceptions of historical rights, claims and truths, and conflicting concepts of justice and fairness (Gündüz, 2001; Triantaphyllou, 2001).

As an anomalous factor in Greek-Turkish relations, the Cyprus problem continued to persist with little progress on substantive issues. Until 2000, the Cyprus problem either exacerbated tension and/or severely constrained the possibility of positive change in Greek-Turkish relations.

A further issue of contention centered on the status and treatment of the Greek minority in Turkey and the status and treatment of the Turkish minority in Greece. Mutual accusation on the mistreatment of minorities added to the mix of unresolved problems that burdened and complicated Greek-Turkish relations. That the issue of minorities posed a significant human rights challenge was only acknowledged and addressed by the two countries belatedly, well after

2000, as European requirements started to weigh heavier on the region and on Turkey in particular.

For decades, Greece and Turkey perceived, contextualized and interpreted all of the above-mentioned issues from the narcissistic perspective of their respective nationalist master narratives, which sustained a polarized, zero-sum outlook on the relationship between the neighboring countries. Under the conditioning impact of ethnocentric nationalism the array of problems dividing Greece and Turkey could in no way be approached as challenges to be transcended or problems to be resolved through mutual engagement. Rather, they were simply and always approached as issues to be unilaterally addresses through one's instruments of state power, in a manner that secured one's national gain to the loss and detriment of the other. From the perspective of this mindset the prospect of any resolution was thus *a priori* precluded, and herein laid the impasse, and dangers, of the belligerent and polarizing nationalist worldviews that have historically shaped and informed the respective national cultures of Greece and Turkey. Until the late 1990s, any enlightened advancements that either Greece or Turkey claimed to have achieved since their establishment as nation-states have fallen short of superseding their rivalry, precisely because of the overarching impact of nationalism on their bilateral relations.

Realist theory versus Europeanization

Though rarely explicated, the so called "realist theory" of international relations, is a historical by-product of multiple nationalisms competing around exiting and/or projected nation-states. The ensuing power configurations and the violent conflicts that competing nationalisms generated and sustained throughout modernity have established the framework for world politics throughout the 20th century and thereafter—a framework that under conditions of postmodern globalization is emerging as increasingly problematic and unsustainable. Realist theory asserts that nation-states are the primary and sovereign actors in the world political system which by nature is anarchic and in which nation-states pursue their self-interest through the preservation and/or expansion of their power.

A crucial fact that is often evaded is that the realist theory of international relations, and the anarchic world order on which it is premised, holds true to the degree that nation-states continue to think and behave nationalistically, hence narcissistically toward each other. In this perspective, an equally crucial fact that is also overlooked is that to the degree to which nation-states think and behave in ways that supersede the narcissism of nationalism the world ceases to be anarchic and precariously perilous. The most notable example of the latter is clearly the EU. The process of European integration achieved through the post-nationalist concept of shared sovereignty, and the institutionalized democratic management of inter-state and inter-societal relationships and of trans-national phenomena has moved Europe from being the most anarchic and unprecedentedly violent region in the world to the most stable, democratic and peaceful region in the world (Anastasiou, 2008d; Leonard, 2005; Rifkin, 2004). The distinctiveness of the process of European integration lay in extending democracy beyond the nation-state, institutionally linking democracy and peacebuilding in a manner that gradually deconstructed that adversarial nature of

nationalism, and in establishing an inter-national and trans-national regime of human rights and the rule of law that situates nation-states within a regional system of democratic and legal accountability.

In this perspective, Europeanization emerged as a “force for good” which profoundly impacted the political values and behavior of the EU’s member countries as well as its peripheral countries (Anastasiou, 2008d; Commission from the Commission, 2005). To the degree that Greece and Turkey came within the orbit of the EU, they too, became exposed to the transformative influence of the EU’s democratizing and peace-enhancing soft power. To what degree Greek policy toward Turkey and Turkish policy toward Greece have changed, and what obstacles and setback have beleaguered Greek-Turkish relations over the last decade are clearly issues that continue to be debated. However, what is beyond debate is that overall, Greek-Turkish relations within the broader EU process have undergone a significant shift away from belligerent nationalism and toward more Europeanizing conciliatory approaches, even to the point of disclosing notable signs of a paradigm shift (Aksu, 2004; Grigoriadis, 2008a; Ker-Lindsay, 2007).

The Thaw

From conflict escalation, to humanitarian Assistance, to first steps at rapprochement

Even though Greece and Turkey had sporadic diplomatic contacts over the years, it was not until the late 1990’s that they engaged in any serious efforts at rapprochement in a manner that rendered progress in bilateral relations sustainable and consequential for the future of the Greek and Turkish people. Against the shocking backdrop of the Balkan wars in Greece and Turkey’s back yard, which brought to sharp relief the destructiveness of belligerent nationalism, a small number of political leaders and intellectuals in both Greece and Turkey began to call for the historical urgency to modifying the hitherto premise of Greek-Turkish relations (Gundogdu, March 2001).

The process of Greek-Turkish rapprochement commenced in the summer of 1999 when the Turkish Foreign Minister Ismail Çem communicated with his counter part George Papandreou in search for ways to improve relationships between the two countries (Greek-Turkish Forum, 2002). Papandreou, who also had been keen in improving Greek-Turkish relations reciprocated swiftly and proactively. But while the two ministers were in the process of exchanging ideas a sequence of significant events took place: two devastating earthquakes struck northwestern Turkey in August 1999 killing over 30,000 people, followed by a less destructive earthquake in central Greece in September. Hugely tragic, the earthquakes struck a sensitive cord among the peoples of the traditionally enemy countries. Seeing in their respective media the losses and damage that the other had suffered, first the Greeks and then the Turks were moved to offering assistance to their neighboring society. In view of the magnitude of the devastation of the Turkish earthquakes, the Greek response was both massive and spontaneous, mobilizing government agencies, municipalities, NGOs and citizens.

The strong sense of family, and the heightened sensitivity to the plight of children and the elderly, prevalent in both Greek and Turkish cultures, was catalytic in moving public opinion in each society toward identifying with the suffering of the other, so much so that during the period of this unfolding tragedy public sentiment transcended the hitherto commonplace perception that “the other” was simply the enemy. In the midst of tragedy “the other” was also seen as human, with frailties, needs and hopes similar to one’s own. As a consequence, humanitarian aid poured out in multiple forms through both government and civil society initiatives.

These mutual acts of humanity had an enormous, subsequent impact on Greek and Turkish public opinion, as the highly profiled engagement in each other’s suffering induced the first meltdown of the nationalist stereotypes that had long dominated each country’s political culture—stereotypes that traditionally determined the modus operandi of each country toward the other, sustaining adversarial relationships that rendered the solution of bilateral problems untenable. In contrast to the usual enemy images, the press in the two countries was highlighted with words such as “neighbor,” and “true friend.” The Greek response to the earthquake in particular received broad coverage in the Turkish press. Headlines in newspapers ranged from “Friendship Time,” to “Friendly Hands in Black Days,” to “A Great Support Organization - Five Greek Municipalities say there is no flag or ideology in humanitarian aid,” and to “Help Flows in from Neighbors - Russia first, Greece the most.”

In the context of this momentary lull in adversarial attitudes, foreign ministers Çem and Papandreou seized the opportunity to launch a set of rapprochement initiatives with the intention of progressively instating medium and long term structural ties between their countries. Unlike many international offers of humanitarian assistance that remain politically inconsequential, Çem and Papandreou sought to complement the mutual relief efforts with an array of bilateral agreements for cooperation, thus giving rise to what has since been referred to as *earthquake diplomacy* (Heil, 2000).

By the end of 1999 another major event reinforced Greek-Turkish rapprochement. At the December Helsinki Summit of the European Union (EU), Greece lifted its objection to Turkey’s candidacy for future membership. The Greek initiative broke a vicious cycle of stalemates and crises that had haunted the relationship between the neighbor countries. For years Greece obstructed Turkey’s progress toward the EU arguing that Turkey’s secessionist intransigence over Cyprus, its continuing occupation of the northern part of the island, its massive human rights violations against Greek Cypriots, as well as its territorial claims and incursions into the Aegean disqualified her from acquiring EU-candidacy status, as its behavior was contrary to the Union’s fundamental values.

Against the backdrop of its longstanding demand for recognition of the breakaway “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus” and its military posturing in the region, Turkey hardened its position over Cyprus, especially after the EU rejected its bid for candidacy during the Luxemburg summit of 1997. Particularly throughout the 1990’s Turkey’s hard-line approach was premised on its regional security interests, its defense of the Turkish Cypriots as a minority that suffered in the hands of the Greek Cypriot majority, on its objection to the Greek/Greek-Cypriot

Joint Defense Dogma and the related Greek Cypriot attempts to install in southern Cyprus the Russian S-300 missiles, and the unilateral Greek Cypriot efforts toward EU membership of the Republic of Cyprus at the exclusion of Turkish Cypriot wishes and participation. Turkey accused Greece of bad faith, of systematically undermining Turkish national interests and thus eroding any prospects for progress on the Cyprus problem. By late 1997, estrangement between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots and between Greece and Turkey had reached dangerous levels, with a regional arms race under way and with Turkey threatening to annex northern Cyprus, turning it to a Turkish province, if the Greek Cypriots, heading the Republic of Cyprus, proceeded unilaterally to join the EU.

The first sign of change in this dangerous trend was evidenced in 1998 when Greek Prime Minister Simitis convinced Greek Cypriot President Clerides not to install the S-300 missiles on Cyprus but store them, instead, on the island of Crete in southern Greece. Furthermore, in the context of broader EU deliberations, Greece and Turkey reached an agreement by which Greece would not obstruct EU funding to Turkey in exchange of Turkey dropping its objection to the Greek Cypriots' endeavors to accede to EU.

The big breakthrough however came at the Helsinki Summit in December 1999, a few months after the summer earthquakes, when the EU, with the consent of Greece, accepted Turkey as a candidate state for future membership. Initiated by the Simitis government, this historic change in Greek foreign policy was made possible following a struggle within the ruling party of The Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) between the old guard of staunch nationalists and the more European-minded post-nationalist, the chief proponents of which were Prime Minister Costas Simitis and Foreign Minister George Papandreou.

Greek-Turkish rapprochement through low-level politics

The Helsinki summit decision to accept Turkey's EU candidacy and the softening of public opinion resulting from humanitarian exchanges during the earthquakes provided foreign ministers Papandreou and Çem a unique context for translating their vision of improving bilateral relations into action. Under their joint leadership, the ministries of foreign affairs of the neighboring countries began to work together, at low profile, on specific issues that were deemed cooperatively manageable, while being fully aware that outstanding national issues, like the Cyprus problem and the Aegean disputes, remained at an impasse. Formal bilateral agreements were eventually signed in a number of areas of mutual interest and benefit. These included a series of provisions for cooperation in: tourism and economic development; combating terrorism, organized crime, illicit drug trafficking and illegal immigration; environmental protection; economic cooperation; and cultural cooperation.

By February 2000, nine agreements were signed between Turkey and Greece. Others followed, soon totaling seventeen bilateral agreements. Within the broader EU framework, the commencement in 1999 of this confidence-building process between Greece and Turkey, referred to as *low-level politics*, marked a small but vital step in positively modifying Greek-Turkish relations (Gundogdu, 2001; Papandreou, January 2000). Low-level politics signaled the

beginning of a modest conflict-transforming, even peace-building, process that disclosed the historical possibility of changing interstate and inter-societal relationships between the traditionally enemy countries.

In contrast to the “realist theory” of international relations, the basic assumption behind low-level politics is that while high-level issues, under the circumstance of protracted historical rivalry, cannot provide a basis for rapprochement and cooperation, low-level issues, particularly non-controversial ones, may furnish a starting point. The idea is that while two rivals may be incapable of forging agreements and cooperation on matters of high national priority, they may be able to see eye-to-eye on matters of lesser significance, or even on issues that may be altogether neutral with respect to the unapproachable, longstanding divisive issues. Engaging each other through a process of dialogue, exploration, and the development of mutually agreed-upon strategies for cooperation on secondary issues constitutes a relatively low-risk task. However, in embryonic form it may include the conditions for taking greater steps and greater risks in the future. Thereby, achieving multiple agreements through low-level politics has the potential of creating a sample culture of cooperation and promise that may in turn catalytically evolve and fertilizing the broader public culture of politics for greater yield.

The words of the Turkish Foreign Minister following the first low-level bilateral agreements with his Greek counterpart are to the point. “Our countries,” stated Çem, have been engaged in a constructive process... to create a synergy in several fields such as tourism, environment, economic cooperation, culture, regional cooperation, and fight against terrorism and related issues... . This pattern of cooperation proved that with necessary willpower both countries can establish a close working relationship (Greek-Turkish Forum, 2002).

Success in low-level politics demonstrates in small but clear examples the viability of non-adversarial, post-nationalist approaches to inter-state and inter-societal relationships. In and of themselves, the cumulative effects of low-level politics leading to concrete outcomes may not amount to much. But in the broader context of socio-political change they may have potentially significant effects. In the process, low-level politics give policy leaders the otherwise barred opportunity to become directly acquainted and familiar with their counterparts from the enemy camp, to work systematically together, deepen understanding of each other, become jointly focused and creative, share successes, and learn the merits and prospects of consensus-based cooperation. Rendering this process publicly visible in the two societies introduces the public to the actual and potential mutual benefits from sustaining a culture and practice of inter-state cooperation.

Viewed from the prism of on-going rapprochement in low-level politics, what historically have been protracted and intractable differences may appear in a new light, giving rise to a new understanding of old problems. Generating positive change in the relationship between the two sides through the cumulative impact of low-level politics may, in effect, help change the intractability of high-level issues by modifying the perspectives from which each side addresses

them. As Fisher and Ury (1991) asserted, “positions on difficult problems may be changed only as the relationship between the disputants begins to change, giving rise to new understanding and insight into each other’s fears and concerns.” This was precisely the approach pursued by the pioneering efforts of Çem and Papandreou. Papandreou clearly explicated this principle: “We have started a confidence-building measures procedure. I hope that in this way we will create the right psychology, the right atmosphere, and the right approach towards each other. Only in this way can we solve our more difficult problems” (Greek-Turkish Forum, 2002).

The work of Çem and Papandreou signaled the first significant effort by the political leadership of Turkey and Greece in almost half a century to move Greek-Turkish relations beyond the adversarial modality of nationalist politics (Gundogdu, 2001). Without recourse to hyped publicity and lofty declarations, the effort ushered into the politics of both societies a new approach to building cooperation, albeit around matters and issues of secondary importance. It added a significant dimension to the post-Helsinki era of Greek-Turkish rapprochement, which became increasingly noticed by its sharp contrast to the adversarial, nationalist cultures that had historically dominated Greek-Turkish relations (Gundogdu, 2001; Papandreou, January 2000). In its essence, the rapprochement process of low-level politics helped the two countries gradually move away from their unilateral preoccupation with abstractly elaborated and held “national rights,” typical of nationalist approaches, to a concern with the pursuit of practical bilateral solutions around mutual opportunities, tangible benefits and relationship building.

In time, the process of low-level politics yielded both practical results as well as novel historical facts that reflected the broader vision of the initiators of rapprochement, namely, a tangible demonstration that Turks and Greeks could work together on specific social, cultural, and economic issues, even though outstanding differences on key political and national issues still prevailed.

Of crucial significance is also the fact that Papandreou and Çem sought to institutionalize the rapprochement effort, so as to dissociate it from their own particular personal initiatives, thus providing continuity through a structured process in which others may subsequently participate in promoting rapprochement between the Greek and Turkish people. It was thus not surprising that when the New Democracy party subsequently came to power in Greece, winning two consecutive elections in 2004 and 2007, and the Justice and Development Party came to power in Turkey, also winning two consecutive elections in 2002 and 2007, Greek-Turkish rapprochement continued and deepened. The process was particularly empowered and enhanced as the common EU framework began to increase its catalytic effect on Greek-Turkish relations through the process of enlargement in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Challenges and learning from the EU: from nationalism to post-nationalism

It ought to be emphasized that the nationalist foreign policy instruments that prevailed in old Europe included propaganda, coercive tactics, isolation, power plays, threats, and a readiness to resort to the use of force in the name of *the nation* (Goff, et al, 2001). In the process of building the EU, such instruments of foreign policy have been considerably demoted, abandoned

altogether, and in many respects even deemed illegitimate and illegal. The old nationalistically conditioned foreign policy approaches have been replaced by the prioritization of on-going negotiations, process politics, consensus building, reciprocity, participation, inclusiveness, mutuality and joint inter- and trans- national institution building (Peterson & Bomber, 1999; Reid, 2005; Rifkin, 2004). As such, this historic paradigm shift underpins the complex process that transformed Europe from the world's deadliest and war-ravaged region to the world's most peaceful, stable, cooperative and democratic consortium of countries.

The impact of the EU as a peacebuilding system, particularly through the process of enlargement, has been generally acknowledged (Anastasiou, 2008d; Coppieters et al, 2004; Diez et al, 2008). Even though there are varying opinions as to how exactly and to what extent the EU process has improved Greek-Turkish relations, there is considerable consensus that overall the EU has had a formidable influence on reframing the interactions between the long-standing enemy neighbors (Grigoriadis, 2008b; Ker-Lindsay, 2007; Loizides, December 2002; Rumelili, 2004). While it may be difficult to establish a direct causal link between the EU and changing Greek-Turkish relations, it can be argued that over the last decade changes in each country's approaches, policies and attitudes toward the other began to reflect key elements of European political culture and norms, especially as the enlargement instruments of conditionality, communication and consolidation were brought to bear on the Eastern Mediterranean.

At the historic Helsinki Summit, the European Council asserted that candidate states "must share the values and objectives of the EU as set out in the Treaties" (Presidency Conclusions: Helsinki European Council, 10-11 December 1999). Since the acceptance of Turkey as an EU candidate in 1999 and the commencement of accession negotiations in 2005, Greek-Turkish relations have been contextualized within the EU edifice. Inasmuch as Greece has been an EU member state and Turkey an acceding state, the EU, directly and indirectly has functioned as a third factor that transcended the traditionally conflicted Greek-Turkish relations. The post-nationalist, conflict-preventive and peace-building procedures, laws and institutions of the EU at national, sub-national and transnational levels have both confronted and counterbalanced the adversarial, nationalist approaches, which traditionally conditioned interactions between Greece and Turkey and between Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

In essence, the Helsinki decision introduced a new framework of actual and potential relationship changes between Greece, Turkey, as well as between Greek and Turkish Cypriots that rendered increasingly ambiguous and blurred the traditional clear-cut conflict lines that polarized Greek and Turks into presumed permanent enemies. For Turkey, Greece could no longer be just the traditional enemy, as it was the geographically closest EU member state with which Turkey was expected to cooperate while on its long road to European integration. Furthermore, within the EU system, the Turkish view of the Republic of Cyprus as the enemy of the Turkish Cypriots was now skewed by the fact that the Republic of Cyprus was also a co-candidate for EU membership.

Within the EU framework, Greece and Turkey could not be merely each other's traditional enemy, but also each other's European partner, bound together by their EU responsibilities and

privileges. This general framework was maintained despite the continuing impasse over Cyprus, and despite Turkey's domestic constitutional crisis of 2008 and its EU-related setbacks due to its reluctance since 2004 to extend the Ankara Protocol to include the Republic of Cyprus as a new member state.

It must be stressed that in both Greece's policy shift toward Turkey and the commencement of Greek-Turkish bilateral low-level politics, the EU furnished the broadest and strongest institutional framework for engendering, empowering, and legitimizing non-bellicose foreign policy approaches, entailing conflict resolution and rapprochement strategies in the interest of peacebuilding.

Within the major political parties of both Greece and Turkey (PASOK and New Democracy in Greece and the Justice and Development Party and Republican Party in Turkey), Europeanization introduced a novel form of political dialogue, including polarizations, between the nationalists of the hitherto establishment and the Euro-reformers that started to emerge as a new voice in public culture. Even though the major parties in each country continued to compete against each other for national ascendancy on the domestic front, they all encountered the challenges of Europeanization, leading the reformers in each of the major parties to gradual ideological and policy adjustments in the face of intraparty tensions with the old nationalist guard.

The significance of this intraparty process was that it started to brake the monolith of ethnocentric nationalism in both countries—a monolith that for decades had constricted and suppressed democracy, abhorred ethno-cultural diversity, bred and sustained a fundamental mistrust of “the foreigners,” asserted an absolutist concept of national sovereignty and rightness, and cultivated a readiness for confrontation, even violent conflict, on the presumption of national loyalty and interest.

More significantly, the EU furnished a post-nationalist paradigm that Euro-reformers within the major parties adopted in initiating and expanding Greek-Turkish rapprochement, and which the Greek and Turkish governments felt increasingly compelled to follow since 1999. Particularly through their on-going contacts with EU institutions and processes, the Euro-reformers within the major parties of Greece and Turkey became increasingly conscious of the fact that in an era of globalization and economic interdependence, policy approaches driven by ethnocentric nationalism were inappropriate and incapable of addressing the current and future challenges facing Greek and Turkish society. Moreover, it became increasingly apparent that the traditionally bellicose predisposition of nationalism, that readily polarizes the world into circumstantial allies and permanent enemies, could neither serve the national interest nor provide sustainable security for one's country. This view was enhanced among the rising Euro-reformers especially after the Balkan wars of the 1990s and the 1996 near-war incident between Greece and Turkey over the tiny uninhabited islets of Imnia-Kardak, both of which brought to sharp focus the grave dangers in continuing their foreign policy approaches from the traditional perspective of belligerent ethnocentric nationalism.

At both the formal and cultural levels, Greece, having been a full EU member, has always been ahead of Turkey on the trajectory of Europeanizing reforms. But both countries, particularly at the leadership level, have been compelled to encounter and adjust to the post-nationalist norms, practices and approaches of the EU. Over the last ten years, Greece's foreign relations attitudes and approaches became embedded in and consciously modeled after European political values. Along with acceptance of multicultural principles of governance and internationalization of the economy, Greece's Euro-reformers promoted the idea that the traditional policy of deterrence toward Turkey was no longer sufficient; it needed to be supplemented with a proactive policy of rapprochement founded on new, reality-based assumptions that were free from both nationalist myths and outdated events. The challenge the Euro-reformers accepted and brought forward was to forge a new approach that was free from the facts of the distant past and the stereotypical perceptions they gave rise to, and more grounded on the facts of the present and the likely future promises they held.

Greece's progress toward a more open approach to Turkey, entailing increasing engagement in search for solutions and common interests, is integral to socio-economic and political changes, associated in great measure with the general process of Europeanization that has extended and deepened EU institutions, law, democracy, and political culture within as well as between EU states and societies (Keridis, 2001). As Greece became increasingly embedded in the EU, participating in the union's poly-ethnic decision-making institutions, the political leadership of Greece, began to adopt perspectives and foreign policy approaches that gradually moved away from traditional mono-ethnic nationalism, in favor of more inclusive, synthetic and sophisticated approaches that sought to positively modify inter-national relationship rather than to unilaterally assert and project national power as the primary mode of conduct toward other nations.

On the other hand, Turkey went through, and continues to go through, its internal struggle in regard to its identity, policy approaches toward Greece, Cyprus and the region, and its strategies for enhancing its European aspirations. Since 1999, Euro-reformers incessantly prodded their affiliates and colleagues both inside and outside the government to assume a more European approach to both domestic problems and foreign affairs. Many in Turkey have been echoing the EU's conditionality requirements for accession, frequently challenging the old Turkish political establishment to face up to the fact that Turkey cannot realistically expect an open path toward the EU unless it generates the political will to evolve beyond its traditional top-down statist approach to governance, to curb the dominant role of the military, deepen democracy, bolster human rights, and seek conciliatory resolutions to outstanding regional problems, particularly in regard to Cyprus and the outstanding Aegean disputes with Greece.

The rise to power of the Justice and Development Party since 2002, with its enactment of the unprecedented array of EU-related reform legislation and its abandonment of Turkey's secessionist approach to the Cyprus problem, was in great part the net outcome of Europeanizing agents within Turkey, who saw the EU as the historical lever for moving the nationalist conditioned monolith of the Turkish state toward increasing democratization.

In the eyes of Euro-reformers in both Greece and Turkey, the traditional association of national economic interest, foreign policy, national security and the functions of the state with ethnocentric nationalism was deemed erroneous. Nationalism's belligerent predisposition, with its populist agitation politics, was not only ill founded according to the Euro-reformers but offered no basis for a viable future. Over time, the Euro-reformers started to re-conceptualize democracy, economic wellbeing, the function of the state, national security and national interest in general, in terms of a vision of regional wellbeing, peace and stability, where rigorous diplomacy, multilateral and bilateral engagement of neighboring countries, at both the national and civil society levels, and finally socio-economic and political integration within the EU were slowly prioritized over and above the adversarial zero-sum approaches of ethnocentric nationalism.

As early as 2000 Greek foreign minister George Papandreou asserted that one of the challenge for Greece centered on redefining Greek identity at a deeper level, extending and opening it up to the multicultural setting of Europe, the Balkans, and the Eastern Mediterranean in particular (Papandreou, January 2000). Four years later, Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan publicly declared that a Turkish citizen could call himself a Kurd if he so wished. The implication was that it was fully legitimate for a citizen to be both a Turk *and* a Kurd—a statement that marked a significant deviation from Turkey's traditional mono-ethnic nationalism, opening up and accepting a more multifaceted and multiethnic concept of identity. While these reframed understandings of national identity aroused the reaction of nationalists, they signified a process of Europeanizing change in the interest of cultural diversity, inclusiveness and peaceful coexistence.

Overall, the Euro-reformers aspired to supersede the ethnocentric nationalist mode of governance by the pursuit of rational fiscal management of the national economy; deepening human rights; developing a foreign policy of engagement focused on the practical resolution of problems in the interest of regional stabilization, conciliation and peace; and the commitment to relationship building with neighboring countries as a perpetual endeavor through the quest for, and pursuit of, collaborative opportunities for mutual benefit.

More importantly, the Euro-reformers exhibited a tacit paradigm shift in regard to the traditional view of national sovereignty—the cornerstone of modernity's construction of the nation-state. They gradually realized that barricading national sovereignty within the narcissistic confines of ethnocentric nationalism is not only fundamentally out of step with the times but potentially contrary to the national interest, and, under certain conditions, even conducive to conflict escalation and outright war. The unilateralism and the “realist theory” of international relations that naturally flow out of the absolutism of the nationalist concept of sovereignty fundamentally fails to grasp the synthetic nature of globalizing technological, economic and political phenomena. Euro-reformers saw the latter as constituting post-modern conditions that strongly challenge the classical concept of the nation-state, compelling the nation-state to resort to fundamental modifications and adjustment if it is to be relevant and viable for the future sustenance of society (Keridis, 2001).

The implication regarding a changed approach to national sovereignty is clearly the apogee of the challenge that post-nationalist Europeanization posed to the Eastern Mediterranean neighbors. Its essence lays in the realization that in reframing the place and function of nation-states, national sovereignty needed to become embedded, shared and pooled in sustainable and constructive international relationships, and in common institutions conducive to non-belligerent conflict-resolution and the multilateral democratic management of common global challenges and opportunities.

Under the gradual but persistent influence of the above-mentioned Europeanizing paradigm shifts two significant and novel policy orientations crystallized in the Eastern Mediterranean. The first was that Greece modified its foreign policy approach from isolating and obstructing to supporting and even advocating Turkey's European aspirations (Anastasiou, 2008b; Grigoriadis, 2008a). The second was that Turkey, while becoming increasingly open toward Greece, changed its policy approach to Cyprus from its decade-long push for ethnic secession and recognition of the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" to acceptance and pursuit of an inter-ethnic, bi-zonal, bi-communal federation—a change that led Turkey to prod and support the Turkish Cypriots in voting "yes" for the Annan Plan in the 2004 Cyprus referendum. Both of these changes are indicative of the direct and indirect influences of Europeanization, disclosing gradual movement away from belligerent ethnocentric nationalism and toward post-nationalist conciliatory politics. In both Greece and Turkey, these paradigm shifts that led to these unprecedented changes in foreign policy approaches greatly dismayed the hard-line nationalist. However, they maintained open the path toward conflict transformation, on-going rapprochement and European-oriented reform. This is affirmed by the fact that over recent years, high-level diplomats from Greece and Turkey have abandoned to a substantive measure the bellicose language of past nationalisms when addressing their neighboring country.

Bilateral civil Society engagements as a function of conflict transformation

The emerging Europeanizing trends in Greek-Turkish relations gave rise to numerous events and phenomena that started to modify the hitherto ethno-nationalist landscape of the public political cultures of Greece and Turkey. With increasing frequency since the earthquakes of 1999, Greek and Turkish citizens began to see in their respective media—which themselves underwent diversification and liberalization—their political leaders engaged in cross-border meetings, in negotiations, in joint public appearances, and in signing treaties, with the Greek and Turkish flags flying side by side. Even purely symbolic gestures helped usher into public culture the evolving rapprochement in Greek-Turkish relations. One highlight came in 2001, when through the initiative of the Turkish government Turkey and Greece made a surprising move in the sporting world as they made a joint bid to host the soccer games of *Euro 2008* (BBC, 9 May 2001). Another one came three year later, during the run-up of 2004 Olympics, when Greek and Turkey became official signatory to the "Olympic Truce," an initiative of the Greek government, revitalizing the 3,000-year-old tradition of ceasing hostilities during the Olympic Games.

Within the broader public political culture of the two countries, new post-nationalist images and symbols began to assume their place next to, in competition with, and in contradiction to, the all too familiar nationalism that had traditionally conditioned the politics of Greek-Turkish relations—a trend that finally broke the presumed monolith of ethnocentrism.

Non-state actors such as market and civil society agents also began to gradually participate in and contribute to conflict-transforming Europeanizing trends, thus adding, complementing and reinforcing government initiated rapprochement. Within the framework of bilateral agreements for economic cooperation, Greek and Turkish private businesses began to step forward with several cross-border investment and trade initiatives, the level of which has been constantly rising (Aksu, 2004). A steady increase in reciprocal tourism has reflected the gradual erosion of past apprehensions and the increasing comfortableness Greeks and Turks are beginning to feel about visiting each other's country, coming in direct touch with the neighboring people and their culture.

Academic exchanges and joint research projects have also added to the general rapprochement efforts. For example, the Istanbul Policy Center located at Sabanci University has undertaken a number of more academic projects focusing on conflict resolution challenges in Greek-Turkish relations. The center has worked in concert with the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, a Greek think tank that aims at developing civil societal ties between the two nations.

Adding to the mix of rapprochement phenomena, Greek and Turkish journalists have been organizing joint media events, including national panel discussions involving political leaders, academics and journalists from both sides of the ethno-national divide. On some occasions these inter-ethnic encounters were broadcasted simultaneously in the two countries.

Changing trends in Greek-Turkish relations have also been marked the twinning of Greek and Turkish towns and by cross-border rapprochement events jointly organized by Greek and Turkish municipalities and communities living in close proximity along the Greek-Turkish sea border.

Another highlight has been the organized visits of Greeks to their ancestral homes and towns in Turkey, and of Turks to their ancestral homes and town in Greece, whose families were forced to massively relocated in the 1920s by the decision of the then Greek and Turkish governments—a practice that has since been established as illegal and a violation of human rights.

Over the last decade there has been a rise in joint efforts by Greek and Turkish NGOs undertaking numerous cooperative rapprochement projects. EU facilitation and funding has also prompted and empowered civil society rapprochement between Greek and Turks. Since 2004, the Delegation of the European Commission to Turkey has been sponsoring the Civil Society Dialogue (Delegation of the European Commission to Turkey, 2008). Its budget of €21.5 million has, among other things, funded many different Turkish-Greek cultural initiatives by NGOs and other civil society agents, including the Youth Association for the Habitat and Agenda 21, and the

Istanbul Foundation for Culture and the Arts. One of the efforts funded by the EU was the Turkish-Greek Civil Dialogue project. Implemented by the Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe (AEGEE), it aimed to establish dialogue and encourage partnership projects between young people in Greece and Turkey (Turkish-Greek Civil Dialogue, 2001-2004). 2008 was the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, during which the EU promoted several programs and events designed to further inter-ethnic dialogue on an array of themes, including the treatment of minorities in Turkey, and to build bridges of communication between Greek and Turkish people (Delegation of the European Commission to Turkey, 2008).

A steadily increasing number of cultural and artistic exchanges between the neighboring countries, including joint performances and cross-border public concerts by nationally renowned singers, have fostered openness toward the many common sentiments in Greek and Turkish music and has engaged the entertainment industry in cross-border initiatives, rendering practical and tangible the mutual benefits of such peace-enhancing cooperative ventures.

Certain film and television productions introduced courageous new genres in which Greek and Turkish themes and perspectives were reflected and explored in search for authenticity and understanding of both the complexities and renewed possibilities in Greek-Turkish relations. Such films started to reflect a reframed, non-belligerent and more existential approach to Greek and Turkish themes, depicting poly-ethnic perspectives of Greek-Turkish relations, forgotten eras of peaceful symbiosis, and the realization that that in both peace and conflict the histories and lives of the two peoples are intimately interwoven. The novelty of these films was marked by an effort to both understand the alienation of past conflicts and to help re-humanizing the image of the other. A prime example was the film *Politiki Kouzina* (entitled in English as *A Touch of Spice*) which came out in theatres in 2003. In 2005, Turkish Kanal D television began airing *Yabancı Damat* (entitled in English *The Foreign Groom* or *Love's Frontiers*). A highly rated television series, the film focused on a romance between a Turkish woman and a Greek man, and the challenges they faced in overcoming family prejudices and resolving their cultural differences. The enormous popularity of the above-mentioned films was indicative of the significant role of film media in fostering inter-cultural reflexivity, a prerequisite for positive change. In an article entitled "Aegean Peoples Begin to Share Stories Again," Bruce Clark of the *International Herald Tribune* aptly noted that "films, novels and songs articulate truths of which politicians or soldiers cannot easily speak. While the business of presidents and generals is to draw lines and enforce them, art can deal with ambivalence, worlds that overlap and boundaries that blur." (Clark, 10 December 2003).

Inter-societal rapprochement has brought forward the increasing acknowledgement that despite their conflict and cultural differences, Turks and Greeks, at the human level, also share certain common characteristics such as food, music, folklore and even common words in their languages—historical facts that have been suppressed and denied by the respective nationalisms for several decades. Knowledge of cultural similarities and overlaps was hitherto narrowly restricted to a handful of academic specialist, mostly non-Greek and non-Turkish. However, increasing contact and interaction resulting from sustained rapprochement has gradually exposed the two peoples to

new understandings of their differences and to a variety of common features in their cultural heritage—a heritage that was inevitable forged by their mixed coexistence in the Eastern Mediterranean region of the Ottoman Empire from the 16th century until their ethnic segregation with the advent of the nation-state and its accompanied ethno-nationalist worldview (Anastasiou, 2008a; Özkirimli and Sofos, 2008).

By focusing on shared and overlapping characteristics, it may be possible that both Greeks and Turks begin to recognize that the “other” is not in fact as unqualifiedly different, sinister and dark as the old nationalist stereotypes suggest. Public opinion data collected by studies, such as the one conducted by Ali Çarkoglu and Kemal Kirisci from the Turkish public, attest to the increasing awareness of cultural overlaps, in parallel with past trends of continuing alienation and suspicion. In the Greek press, articles with titles such as “Turks enjoy themselves like Greeks” reflect the same developments toward inter-cultural re-familiarization (Kathimerini, 28 January 2008).

Deepening and Widening Rapprochement

Rapprochement economics: finding common cause in common interest

Between 1999 and 2008, one of the most tangible aspects of changing Greek-Turkish relations occurred in the area of economic cooperation and trade in particular. As both the cause and byproduct of foreign policy shifts in the interest of rapprochement, the series of joint strategic decisions pursued by Greece and Turkey have elaborated a political framework conducive to cross-border projects, rising bilateral trade, reciprocal investments and joint ventures. In turn, these efforts deepened inter-state and inter-societal confidence, offered tangible samples of the benefits of post-nationalist approaches and provided a path for transcending the decades-long impasse of the adversarial nationalist paradigm of foreign relations. In all these ways, Greece and Turkey emulated the European model by deliberately linking together their national economic interests within a political framework of inter-state and inter-societal cooperation—a process that is not only conflict-preventive but one that has the propensity of transposing national economic interest from a factor of likely rivalry and even conflict to one of peacebuilding and mutually amplifying benefits.

Cross-border economic pact

One of the most ambitious projects, that in essence institutionalized long-term Greek-Turkish rapprochement, was the 2004 launching of the first cross-border economic pact between Greece and Turkey that instated of a common economic-growth infrastructure. Backed by the EU, the pact was of utmost significance for Greek-Turkish rapprochement.

Worth €66 million, €35 million of which were disbursed by the EU, Greece and Turkey partnered in a project that not only fostered mutual economic growth and integration but also a foundation conducive to regional normalization, peace and stability.

Announcing the endorsement of the pact by Brussels, the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs explained that the project, which geographically spanned more than 17 percent of Greece and 8

percent of Turkey, was aimed at “creating conditions for economic growth and employment through business cooperation between Greece and Turkey.” The objective of the project also included “improvement of the quality of life, protection of the environment and the preservation of cultural heritage.” Greek Finance Minister Nikos Christodoulakis declared that “for the first time, Greece and Turkey are embarking on a joint endeavor to implement infrastructure in sectors including tourism, communications, and transport.” He explained that “this will give impetus to joint economic cooperation, which is to the benefit of both countries” (Demiris, 2004).

Despite the fact that outstanding bilateral problems over the Aegean still remained, such a project had the affect of decompressing unresolved border issues that in the mid 1990s brought the neighboring countries to the brink of war. The political commitment and sizable economic investment by the EU, Greece and Turkey, conjoining the national economic interests of the neighboring countries in this cross-border infrastructure rendered disputes such as the one over the uninhabited islet of Imnia-Kardak appear clearly irrational and counterproductive.

Greek-Turkish rapprochement after the Cyprus referendum of 2004

Despite the failure to solve the Cyprus problem in 2004 (an effort that both Greece and Turkey supported) Greece and Turkey continued to improve their bilateral relations. For both countries this was a conscious national policy decision, albeit undeclared.

Prior to the 2004 referendum and European membership of Cyprus, the Cyprus problem led the way in conditioning Greek-Turkish relations. It was generally understood that a continuing unresolved Cyprus problem imposed stringent limitations and a major obstacle to the degree to which Greek-Turkish relations could be normalized. However, with the European integration of the Island, even with the problem remaining unresolved, the process of improving of Greek-Turkish relations surpassed and superseded the Cyprus issue. Whereas prior to the 2004 referendum and accession of Cyprus to the EU, Greek-Turkish relations followed behind the Cyprus problem, thereafter, progress in Greek-Turkish relations took the lead, moving ahead of the Cyprus problem (Anastasiou, 2008b).

Attesting to this fact was the Greek government’s full alignment with the EU in maintaining and supporting Turkey’s European orientation, even in the face of specific objections by the Papadopoulos government of the Greek-Cypriot-led Republic of Cyprus. As it was the Greek Cypriots that voted against the 2004 UN peace plan, the UN placed the responsibility for the failed effort on the shoulders of the Greek Cypriot leadership. Had Greece responded nationalistically, it would have fully backed the Papadopoulos government, obstruct Turkey’s European aspirations and recycle the old absolutist polarization between Greeks and Turks. Greece however chose not to do so. Based always on the EU principle of conditionality, Greece’s support of Turkey thus began to surpass the Cyprus problem, despite some political rhetoric to the contrary. Given the failed effort to resolve the Cyprus problem in 2004, placing Greek-Turkish rapprochement ahead of the Cyprus issue may eventually transform the historical role of the respective motherlands from contributors to inter-ethnic polarization in Cyprus to catalysts

for a final Cyprus settlement, similar to the role that Ireland and Britain played in the final settlement of the Northern Irish conflict.

Overall, it gradually became clear that it was in the mutual benefit of Greece and Turkey to continue emulating the EU model in their bilateral relations. This trend was reinforced in October 2005 when the EU Summit approved the commencement of accession negotiations by which Turkey's future became more firmly anchored to the path of Europeanization.

Continuing bilateral relations in areas of mutual economic interests

Despite the stalemate over the Cyprus throughout 2004-2008, mainly due to the Papadopoulos administration, and despite the escalating constitutional crisis that shook Turkey's national politics, Greek-Turkish trade and investment continued to increase.

In May 2006, the National Bank of Greece, the biggest financial institution in the region, purchased 46 percent of Istanbul-based Finansbank's common shares as well as 100 percent of its preferred shares from the Fiba Holding Group for \$2.774 billion. Halkbank, the largest branch network in Turkey signed a contract worth 2.5 €million for the purchase of office chairs from The Chair Company, a subsidiary of Greek-listed Sato Group in Turkey. In the first two months of 2006, Greek exports to the EU rose 10.4 percent, while exports to Turkey increased by 4 percent compared to the same period a year earlier, ranking Turkey as Greece's fourth trade partner (News Bulletin, April 4, 2006). Turkish businesses opened in new shopping centers in Athens, while a rising number of young Greek professionals were now working in Turkey. By 2007 the neighboring countries announced the founding of a Greek-Turkish Business Council, a move reflective of both the political will and intention to institutionalize on-going economic cooperation.

Greek-Turkish rapprochement reached new heights in November 2007, when the Greek Prime Minister Costas Karamalis and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan inaugurated the opening of the natural gas pipeline, a cooperative project that was agreed in 2004. The pipeline was designed to carry Azerbaijani natural gas from the Shah Sea to European markets, constituting an integral part of the EU's policy of diversifying and decentralizing its energy sources. Appearing in front of a giant banner depicting a handshake sleeved with the Greek and Turkish flags, the Prime Ministers of Turkey and Greece underscored the significance of the project for all concerned. The event, which was celebrated on the northern Greek-Turkish border, was seen as yet another major step in transforming Greek-Turkish relations in the interest of peace, cooperation and shared national interests (Carassava, 2007; Hellenic Journal, December 12, 2007; The New Anatolian, November 19, 2007).

Greek-Turkish Military Cooperation

As a rule, military issues are hypersensitive, particularly when they pertain to long-standing rivals with disputes that, among other matters, have a bearing on sovereignty involving land, sea and airspace, especially against the backdrop of a historical legacy of respective nationalist

narratives that for decades have stereotypically identify the other as the perpetual national enemy.

Despite this problematic background, the rapprochement process initiated in 1999 and the successive achievements of low-level politics have created the preconditions and climate for Greece and Turkey to deepen and extend bilateral rapprochement by forging cooperative ventures even in the contentious domain of military matters.

Even before economic cooperation and trade reached observable high points, one of the first steps that Greece and Turkey took pertaining to military issues came in 2001, when they agreed to suspend their annual military exercises in and around Cyprus. These were exercises that each country had been traditionally conducting jointly with the military forces of their Cypriot ethnic counterpart, raising tension in the region each time the war games were enacted.

For years the Greek Cypriots conducted annual war drills jointly with Greece code-named “Nikiforos” and “Toxotis” respectively. Integral to the broader Joint Defense Dogma, the exercises followed the scenario of countering the Turkish occupation of northern Cyprus and the threat posed by the presence of 40,000 Turkish troops on the Island. The annual Nikiforos–Toxotis military exercises took place in parallel to the equally high-profile “Taurus” military drill on the Turkish side, involving Turkish troops and the Turkish Cypriot Security Forces. The projection of power, mainly from the Turkish army, intended to communicate the Turkish side’s capacity to counter any threat to the breakaway state of the “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.” The show of force by both sides, which consistently reflected Turkish superiority in air power, always precipitated into an annual escalation of tension, often reaching dangerous limits. By agreement, Greece and Turkey terminated this practice in 2001 in an effort to support the ongoing, UN-led negotiations for a Cyprus settlement.

It is noteworthy that as Greek-Turkish rapprochement deepened through an array of low-level agreements, rising trade, joint ventures and cross-border projects, Greece refused to follow hard-line, Greek Cypriot President Papadopoulos when in October 2005 attempted to revive the joint Nikiforos-Toxotis military exercises. By prioritizing Greek-Turkish rapprochement, in which Greece had become politically and economically invested, the Greek government refused to follow Papadopoulos’s ethno-nationalist driven agendas of military posturing. By so doing, Greece averted conflict escalation, even in the face of the continuing presence of the Turkish army in northern Cyprus, which the Greek side and the international community deemed illegal and extraneous to a Cyprus settlement. The Greek government risked taking a non-belligerent approach toward Turkey against the backdrop of Turkey’s support of the 2004 Annan Plan which provided for the progressive demilitarization of Cyprus—the plan that the Greek Cypriots rejected in the referendum.

If rapprochement continues to deepen, it may be possible for Greece and Turkey to reach a point where they jointly and cooperatively assume serious initiatives for resolving the Cyprus problem. In his comparative study Byrne (2007) is correct to indicating that while close cooperation

between the UK and Ireland was a vital factor in resolving the Northern Irish problem, a similar type of cooperation between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus is missing.

Nevertheless, by averting conflict escalation over Cyprus—one of the most contentious issues in Greek-Turkish relations—Greece kept the path open toward further constructive bilateral options. Already in 2004 Greece and Turkey had signed an agreement for the removal of mines along the Greek-Turkish land border. Under Canadian supervision, the demining process marked a further step toward bilateral trust, normalization and peacebuilding.

Certainly, while all of the abovementioned moves toward deepening rapprochement had a formidable affect on improving Greek-Turkish relations they did not automatically eradicate outstanding bilateral problems. Greece and Turkey continued to remain entangled over unresolved issues such as the boundaries of territorial waters, the delimitation of the continental shelf, the right or not of Greece to militarize certain Greek islands close to Turkey, the legitimacy or not of Turkish claims over certain islands, and the dispute over the flight information region (FIR) pertinent to air corridors in the southern Aegean.

In regard to the latter, Greece continued to accuse Turkey for violations of its air space in the Aegean, while Turkey continued to question Greece's jurisdiction over the air corridors in question. While the frequency by which Turkish fighter planes flew over the Aegean Sea steadily declined with rising Greek-Turkish rapprochement, they did not altogether cease. Mock dog fights between Greek and Turkish fighters continued, always at the risk of a conflict-escalating incident. In 2006, such an incident occurred when a Greek and Turkish F-16 fighter jets collided in mid air, resulting in the death of the Greek pilot (BBC, 23 May 2006).

Luckily, the Greek and Turkish governments cooperatively contained the political impact of the incident. It ought to be stressed however that had this incident occurred prior to the commencement of Greek-Turkish rapprochement, while the respective nationalist approaches prevailing, it could have easily led to a major crisis, not excluding military confrontations with unforeseen consequences. By 2006, when the jets collided, Greece and Turkey already had in place an institutionalized rapprochement framework that included a series of successful bilateral agreements, exchanges and projects. This fact acted as a significant deterrent to conflict escalation, as it prevented the traditional ethnocentric nationalism and its "realist" theory of international relations have the final word. Having experienced the benefits of post-nationalist Europeanizing approaches, gradually leading them to mutually recognize, by contrast, the dangers of belligerent nationalism, Greece and Turkey managed to contain and finally end the crisis by jointly declaring that, while regrettable, the incident will not deter the two countries from continuing to improve their relations. Moreover, they agreed to establish a hotline between their air forces and armies to avert similar incidents in the future.

Having defused the collision incident and having been strengthened by the successful completion in 2007 of the joint pipeline project, Greece and Turkey proceeded even further in their rapprochement initiatives by announcing a new agreement on a package of confidence-building

measures through military cooperation. The agreement entailed expanding high-level exchange visits at the Greek-Turkish border, conducting joint missions in NATO and overseas peacekeeping, as well as establishing a joint all-branch military unit to manage natural disaster relief and humanitarian assistance.

Cross visits: Historic Meeting of Premiers

The rapprochement process reached a symbolic zenith in January 2007, when Greek Prime Minister Karamanlis traveled to Turkey for an official high-level visit. The historic significance of the event is underscored by the fact that the last Greek premier to visit Turkey was in 1959.

Following talks with Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan, Karamanlis called for the “full normalization of Greek-Turkish relations,” stressing that this was “the only road toward essential progress that will allow us to exploit future opportunities within a European framework” (Altan, 2008). In their joint public appearances and press conferences the two leaders, while exuding an air of hope and optimism, did not shy away from acknowledging the existence of problems that await resolution. Karamanlis pressed Turkish authorities to improve the rights for Greeks living in Turkey, primarily by reopening the Halki Orthodox Seminary off Istanbul. Erdogan, with whom Karamanlis developed a close personal relationship, noted that Turkey was working on a solution for reopening the seminary but also stressed that Athens must do more to protect the Turkish minority living in northern Greece, stressing that improving the situation of minorities in both countries “would boost the bridge of friendship between our countries” (Altan, 2008). The Greek premier urged Turkey to normalize its relationship to Cyprus as required of an EU candidate member, while the Turkish premier focused on the need for fresh negotiations on Cyprus, as expected by the UN and EU, while calling for “a period of cooperation and solidarity in the Aegean” (Altan, 2008).

The visit of the Greek premier to Turkey was more symbolic than substantive. Its significance however lay in the fact that it focused public opinion on the on-going process of Greek-Turkish rapprochement, on the now public and official commitment of the neighboring countries to jointly work toward peaceful and mutually beneficial resolutions of their remaining bilateral problems.

Conclusion

The facts and patterns of Greek-Turkish bilateral engagements between 1999 and 2008 clearly suggest that the policies and behavior of the neighboring countries towards each other are no longer confined to the traditional ethnocentrism and belligerency of the master narratives of their respective nationalist legacies. Certainly, ethnocentric approaches to national and international issues still persists in both Greece and Turkey, with constituencies at all levels of society that, contrary to Europeanization, are still operating within the zero-sum modalities of confrontational nationalist zealotry. However, within the broader process of EU integration, the changes in the political thinking of the Greek and Turkish governments, the new cooperative bilateral structures that have been established and the rising cross-societal initiatives of the private sector and civil society have created a positive dynamic that has moved the two countries towards post-

nationalist, problem-solving and conciliatory foreign policy approaches. The new era of rapprochement has been marked by the significant fact that Greece and Turkey learned to live with ambiguity, while forging and implementing constructive bilateral policies in the direction of cooperation and even reconciliation. While much work still lies ahead, the overall constructive experiences and mutual benefits of Greek-Turkish rapprochement have demonstrated that the process in question is far more promising and sustainable in serving the national economic, cultural and security interests of Greece and of Turkey than nationalist approaches ever will, particularly in an era of globalization. From this perspective, the prospects for a positive future ought not to be sought around the axis of Greece versus Turkey but of old Greece and old Turkey versus New Greece and New Turkey.

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The Violence within Non-Violence

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The Violence within Non-Violence

Arun Gandhi's Story

In his keynote lecture on the Gandhi tradition of non-violence at the 21st annual conference of the Concerned Philosophers for Peace*, Arun Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi and former director of the M.K. Gandhi Institute for Non-Violence, relates the following story:

Arun, then sixteen years old, was asked by his father to take him by car to a meeting. During his father's participation in the meeting, Arun was to go to the nearby town, buy groceries the family needed, and bring the car to the garage. At five in the afternoon Arun was supposed to be back, to pick up his father, and drive him home.

The boy fulfilled his duties, and since there were time and money left, he went to the cinema into a John Wayne double feature. He was so mesmerized by it that he forgot time. Much too late he hurried out of the cinema. When he arrived to pick up his father, it was one hour past the appointment. His father had grown very worried by then. Arun explained that the garage had not gotten the car ready in time. He did not know that his father had called the garage to find out about his son's whereabouts. Arun's father reacted to the lie as follows:

He told his son that he, the father, must have done something wrong in bringing up his son, so that his son would lie to him; and that he would not let his son drive him home, but walk all the

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way and think about what he had done wrong in bringing up his son. Arun implored his father to go by car with him, but his father did as he had said. It was a five hour walk. Arun drove behind his father at walking pace until, late at night, they got home.

Arun Gandhi said that after this he never again lied to his father. “That is non-violent parenting!” he concluded.

The Story's Lessons

It would have been interesting to hear what Arun Gandhi's father found out during his walk and whether he ever told his son. But the story had ended there. The audience was obviously supposed to get the lesson without further information. A lesson on non-violent parenting. So the parenting was finished when the walk was finished, and the son was supposed to have gotten the father's lesson by then.

What was the lesson? Arun Gandhi was not explicit about the message sent, and the messages received by his - predominantly western - audience may vary. The following view is also meant to invite others, especially from non western cultural backgrounds.

The aim of the parenting probably was to teach the son that he should not lie when he had wronged his father. And the boy should be guided towards a better behaviour non-violently. A “violent” parental response might have been to get angry and punish him, so that fear for further punishment would stop the son from lying again. What did stop him from lying again instead? What might Arun have felt when crawling along for hours, with his father doing a late, long and exhausting penitence and reflection walk in front of the car, because Arun had lied? Guilt and shame? Arun Gandhi did not comment on his feelings in that situation, but they must have been painful, since the boy beseeched his father to go by car. The lesson that did the job may have been: *Do not lie to your father when you have wronged him. Your father will chastise himself for being a deficient parent, and that will be because of you.* That would be a lesson on the son's faults, not on the father's. And the boy got the message alright: from then on he avoided another five hour misery.

And the lesson for the audience? *Non-violence is to react to offenders so anger-free, so self chastising, so exceedingly good, that the offender will feel bad and never do it again.* Make your reaction a lesson in morality. Be so terribly good that the other will feel terribly bad.

There is something terrible within this non-violence. What is it?

Emotional Violence

I do not wish to argue that there was nothing caring in the father's reaction. In this and other non-violent parenting stories Arun Gandhi tells, it is impressive how much time parents in the Gandhi family invested to instruct their children, on occasions that would not cause much parental

investment in Western culture. And the father convincingly adhered in his own behaviour to the morals he expected the son to adopt: when confronted with a son who lied instead of taking responsibility for something he had done wrong, Arun's father thought of something he might have done wrong himself and drew the conclusions without delay.

My point is that, beside the caring aspects, there was also a violent facet in the father's reaction, something emotionally abusive. Arun Gandhi's father, apparently so non-violent that he was unable to utter a spontaneous anger when wronged, turned his anger against himself, chastising himself with a five hours walk after a long day, and exhibited his suffering to his son. Even though the official message was that it was the father who had wronged the son, bringing him up somehow badly, and that he had to do penitence in meditating about it, the father's self-punishment did punish the son, emotionally, not bodily (if we let aside the fact, that the boy drove until near midnight). But since the punishment was disguised in self critique, the father's slate stayed clean - he stayed the good one - while the son felt the worse: a terribly bad boy with a terribly good father.

One might object that Arun's father did not ask the son to drive behind him and witness his suffering. Indeed, with a mature and independent counterpart, namely one who is able to take responsibility for his own behaviour and feelings but not for the behaviour and feelings of others, the lesson would not have worked. Such a person's answer could have been: "I am very sorry I disappointed you, I will think about why I did it, and we can talk about it (I take responsibility for that). And I am not responsible for any suffering you add by punishing yourself for my behaviour. Well, I am driving home now, do you come?" A five hour walk then would somehow have lost its grandiosity. And it would not have been much of a lesson anymore. But from a boy of sixteen, such a reaction cannot be expected. Children love their parents in a far too dependent way. In that sense children are not entirely responsible for their feelings: in part their parents are. That is why parenting can be emotionally violent.

We do not know whether Arun Gandhi's father really tried to see his own faults when walking home, or whether he was busy with non-violent parenting. But what could he have seen, had he turned his meditation indeed onto where he himself as a parent might be deficient or even violent?

John Wayne

Arun Gandhi's story gives a clue to what Arun unconsciously may have missed in his father's parenting style, that made him misbehave. It was probably not by chance that Arun's initial lapse was induced by a John Wayne movie.** Why was this obedient, dutiful son attracted and fascinated by a figure like John Wayne to such an extent that he let his father down? John Wayne - his screen persona at the time (around 1950), when he had recently performed several of his

*** * I am thankful to Peter Kreisz for drawing my attention on this nexus.

most famous western films - could stand for what Arun missed in his father. Whatever the exact contents of that double feature were, John Wayne's image would rather be that of man who gets angry when wronged. He punishes the offender, not himself. He even uses his fists, instead of keeping a clean slate at any rate. He would probably set direct and palpable boundaries to a misbehaving son instead of manipulating him into a change of behaviour by inducing shame and guilt. And whenever others would dare to behave violently towards his children, they could be sure to be protected, if necessary by violence. Without wanting to make up John Wayne as a parenting ideal: Some of this could be a relief for a teenage son!

If we thus understand Arun's initial lapse as an unconscious rebellion against his father's parenting manner, and perhaps against the family's non-violence tradition, we can understand his second lapse: Arun was not able to tell the truth, when he finally met his father. He unconsciously shielded him instead of confronting him with a genuine fascination for something so much in opposition to the family's truth and values.

Mahatma Gandhi

Arun Gandhi's father was Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi's son. Did his notion of non-violent parenting come from his own father? And does Arun Gandhi truly administer the legacy of his famous ancestor in telling such a model story? I will not discuss these questions here conclusively. Mohandas Gandhi's concept of non-violence has been criticised (Gelderloos, 2007; Nanda, 1985), but surely the present critique of Arun Gandhi's notion of non-violent parenting cannot be applied to the political non-violence concept of Mohandas Gandhi. When chastising himself with fasting to coerce the British Empire, Gandhi did not act as a parent to his dependent child, but as a representative of a suppressed people towards the suppressor. The power asymmetry was inverse. Exhibition of self-induced suffering then aims at intensifying the conflict tension in order to compel a dominant opponent to negotiate structural change (Dudouet, 2008).

Nevertheless the family's non-violence tradition did influence the relation between Arun and his father. According to Mohandas Gandhi's own reminiscences (cited in Erikson, 1978), he was possessed by a wish for absolute moral impeccability already as a boy. He could not endure admonishment, especially when it was justified. And he learned early the power to change, or even redeem, the dominant other by being impeccable himself. He learned it in the relation to his own father, Karamchand Gandhi: according to the psychoanalyst Erikson (1978), a key experience for the boy was, when he moved his usually irascible father to loving tears by handing in a written confession of misconduct with a wish for punishment and a request that his father above all should not punish himself for it. Erikson's suggestion that Gandhi's non-violent struggle against the British rule was a transmitted involvement in a difficult father-son relationship seems plausible.

The mentioned misconduct incidentally consisted in pilfering a bit of gold from his brother to pay back a debt, a debt *of the brother*. When he became a father himself, Gandhi expected

highest moral standards from his own sons. In a letter to Manilal, Arun's father, he sets the age of twelve as the definite endpoint of amusement and urges his son to make incessant conscientious efforts (cited in Erikson, 1978). Under such moral demands, a fascination for John Wayne and a spontaneous anger with a lying child could find only hidden places. As far as we know there was no room for an expression of happiness about the son's safe return either. The need to instantly and efficiently instruct an aberrant child prevailed.

The Systemic View: Too good is bad

Systemic thinking in the tradition of Gregory Bateson, Virginia Satir and others (König & Vollmer, 1993; von Schlippe & Schweitzer, 2000; Franke, 2004) implies the principle of all-inclusiveness. In a healthy system every part has a proper place in the whole, a place to exist. Something suppressed or disowned instead is likely to take a malignant turn and to find evil ways to express itself. Persons who are angry but never express it authentically might get a headache or other conversion symptoms. Disadvantaged parts of society tend to become violent against themselves or others. In a saintly kinship group a bad seed is likely to exist. Systemic family therapists are acquainted with the pattern of children unconsciously taking over unacknowledged feelings of their parents (Ulsamer, 1999). People unable to defend themselves sometimes literally attract aggression from outside, a possible issue in mobbing cases (Hugo-Becker & Becker, 2004). The tendency of the dominant parts of a system most often is to intensify the exclusion and oppression of evil parts. All-inclusiveness means to acknowledge as significant and integrate difficult parts of a whole.

Non-violence adherents are likely to step into the trap - if it is not a fundamental heraclitean dilemma - of entailing destructivity when seeking blamelessness. That applies especially for the principled, rather than pragmatic (Sharp 2005), branch of the non-violence movement, to which Gandhi's *satyagraha* concept belongs. The demand of principled non-violence is not only to act and speak but to think and feel non-violently: "The nonviolent resister not only refuses to shoot his opponent but he also refuses to hate him" (King, 1984, p. 103). Unfortunately that cannot be achieved by pure decision and will. Humans tend to be humans, not saints. The more non-violence devotees suppress or deny feelings and impulses that are incompatible with their commitment, the more they are likely to exhibit hidden and indirect forms of violence: manipulation, passive aggression, conceit, emotional abuse, self-righteousness, ruthlessness against oneself, control, conversion symptoms, perfectionism, narrowness, victim posture, pride, dogmatism etc.. Those who cannot love themselves with their flaws are bound to hate the flawed other.

On the continuous path of (inter)personal maturation there is no sustainable bypass around disowned unpeaceful feelings. But we have an option to meet our shadow (Jung, 1933), the "other" within ourselves (Bar On, 2008). The more we acknowledge it as belonging, the less destructively it will express itself. We can face up to it and may discover needs behind and virtues inside it. But we will not stay innocent in the process. May be the John Waynes among us

are not so bad. A John Wayne hidden in a Gandhi might come out worse. Non-violence has got to make its peace with violence to become peaceful.

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The United Nations' Peace Observation Mission and The First Liberian Civil War

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The United Nations' Peace Observation Mission and The First Liberian Civil War

INTRODUCTION

The post-Cold War era has witnessed a precipitous increase in the number of civil wars across the globe—Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. For example, by the end of 2007, 26 civil wars had occurred in various countries.¹ Significantly, these conflicts posed major challenges to global peace and security. One of the conundrums has been the flow of refugees and the resultant impact on the social and other services of the “host states.” Particularly, in the African region where most of the states are trapped by the malaise of the crises of social and economic underdevelopment, “host countries” usually lack the requisite resources to deal effectively with such an influx. Consequently, the resource deficit lacuna often generates tensions and conflicts between the locals in the “host countries,” on the one hand, and the refugees, on the other hand. In many cases, these conflicts have escalated and threatened to expand into much larger sub-regional or regional conflagrations.

Given these realities, the United Nations has increasingly assumed the role of what Yilmez (2005:14) calls “the pre-eminent third party intervener.” That is, because among third parties, the UN has a special place due to its mission of being the “grand guardian” of international peace and security (Yilmez, 2005: 14). Thus parties in conflict oftentimes expect more from the UN than any other third party that may have an incentive to exploit their issue (Yilmez, 2005: 14).

Against this background, the primary purpose of this article is to assess the dynamics of the UN's peace observation mission, and their resultant impact on the creation of propitious conditions for the resolution of the first Liberian civil war. In other words, did the UN's intervention in the conflict through the use of the peace observation variant of peacekeeping help to create a conducive atmosphere for the undertaking of the requisite peacemaking activities that were indispensable to the resolution of the war? Additionally, as a derivative, the article draws some lessons from the UN's peace observation mission, especially their utility for conflict management in Africa.

THEORETICAL ISSUES

Literature Review

Since peace observation is a form of military intervention, it is important to locate the phenomenon within the broader scholarly literature on both intervention (military), and its specific peacekeeping genre. However, given the fact that the scholarly literature on intervention and peacekeeping is voluminous, it is not possible to undertake a comprehensive literature review in this article. Instead, I will examine few of the studies that have been done on traditional military intervention, humanitarian intervention, and classical peacekeeping. Then, I will locate the peace observation model within the literature on intervention (military) and peacekeeping by mapping out its major contours.

Intervention (Military)

Drawing from the scholarly literature, there are two major genres of intervention (military): traditional intervention and "humanitarian intervention." In the case of the former, Rosenau (1969:150) defines it as "[state] behavior that is both 'convention-breaking' and 'authority-oriented' in nature. 'Convention-breaking' implies change in the normal pattern of behavior between the intervening state and the target state. The change in behavior on the part of the intervener must be intended to affect the authority structure of the target in some way." As for the latter, "humanitarian intervention," Holzgrefe(2003:18) conceptualizes it as "the threat or use of force across state borders by a state (or group of states) aimed at preventing or ending widespread and grave violations of fundamental rights of individuals other than its own citizens, without the permission of the state within whose territory force is applied."

Ramsbatham et al (2008) traced the origins of "humanitarian intervention" to former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's admonition to the international community to develop new international norms ostensibly designed to militate against the carnage, especially the wanton killing of civilians in various armed conflicts. At the core of "humanitarian intervention" is what Ramsbatham et al (2008:283) call "just intervention." Drawing from the "Just War Doctrine," "just intervention" is premised on the postulation that the international community has a moral right to intervene in a state for the purpose of either suppressing or ending violent repression and vitriolic human rights abuses.

Finnemore (2000:3) contends that "humanitarian intervention" is not some single isolated impulse nor does it consistently produce identical effects. Thus, she suggests that "humanitarian intervention" by itself never provides a satisfactory explanation of intervention. As an analytic

solution, she suggests that in order for “humanitarian intervention” to be properly analyzed, it must be placed within the broader crucible of norms and values.

Using the American intervention (traditional military) in Iraq as a case study, Kurth (2005) posits that the military intervention has contributed to the dwindling propensity of the international community to undertake “humanitarian interventions.” He observes that the American military action reflects the difficulty that attends the debate in the international community concerning the designation of a particular intervention as a “humanitarian one. Accordingly, he suggests that regional organizations now provides the best option for undertaking “humanitarian interventions” because they are not constrained by the “big power squabbles” that are commonplace in the United Nations.

Peacekeeping

There are two major models of peacekeeping: Classical and “robust or the new.” However, for our purpose, we will focus on the former. Rotberg (2000:1) postulates that the central purpose of classical peacekeeping is to “prevent people from killing other people.” Operationally, according to Rotberg (2000), the classical peacekeeping model is only appropriate to use when the warring parties have agreed to a ceasefire. This is because in the absence of the cessation of hostilities, the peacekeepers would be unable to perform their functions.

Treading on the same path, Bennett and Oliver (2002) argue that in classical peacekeeping or the military interposition model, an intervener, an external third party—country or countries, international organizations—may intervene either in an international or domestic war. The primary objective, however, is not to defeat an aggressor but to prevent fighting, act as buffer, keep order or maintain a ceasefire (Bennett and Oliver, 2002:156). Also, peacekeeping forces are generally instructed to use their weapons in self-defense (Bennett and Oliver, 2002: 156).

Ziring and Riggs (2005) draw an important distinction between the military interposition model or classical peacekeeping and peace observation. Under the military interposition of classical peacekeeping model, the peacekeepers are normally armed, while in the peace observation variant, the peacekeepers are not armed (Ziring and Riggs, 2005: 214). Accordingly, given their military posture, the principal function of the peacekeepers under the peace observation model observe is to report breaches of a ceasefire agreement.

The Peace Observation Model

Based on the nature of the UN’s intervention in the first Liberian civil war, the peace observation model provides the appropriate framework for examining the action. Drawing from the literature, the peace observation model is a specimen of both “humanitarian intervention” and classical peacekeeping. It is based on several pillars. First, a third party usually an international organization—the United Nations, regional or sub-regional—intervenes in either an international or civil conflict. Often, the observation mission is composed of military, police and civilian personnel.

Second, the intervention takes place either with the consent of one or more of the parties to the conflict. In other words, the intervention is predicated upon the willingness of one or both or all of the belligerents in the conflict, rather than an imposition by the intervener. The rationale is

that the “consent” proviso is indispensable to the garnering of the cooperation of the conflicting parties.

Third, a ceasefire is a *sine qua non* for the intervention. That is, the belligerents must cease all hostilities either temporarily or permanently prior to the deployment of the peace observation mission. This is necessary because a ceasefire is the epicenter of peace observation. In other words, the observation is only relevant, when there is a ceasefire to monitor.

Fourth, peace observation entails the undertaking of various interrelated low level military and other activities such as the monitoring of human rights abuses. The crux of the military activities is the patrolling, monitoring and supervision of a ceasefire—what Mats Berdal aptly refers to as “the passive observation of truce and ceasefire agreements” (Berdal, 1993: 43). The ultimate objective is to create an enabling environment for the undertaking of peacemaking activities, by deterring and discouraging the belligerents from violating the ceasefire agreement (Sandifer, 1967:1527).

THE FIRST LIBERIA CIVIL WAR: AN OVERVIEW

The first Liberian civil war was the outcome of the perennial and chronic failure of the Liberian state to cater to the needs of the majority of the country’s people. During the settler phase of the Liberian state (1847-1926), the indigenes representing sixteen ethnic groups and the overwhelming majority of the population, were marginalized by the small Americo-Liberian settler stock consisting of repatriates from the United States. For example, the 1847 constitution, which served as the fulcrum of the polity, denied citizenship to the members of the various indigenous ethnic groups for about one hundred years. The rationale was couched in the insidious “superior-inferior myth” that has its antecedent in slavery and its racist ideology. In other words, the settlers or the “Americo-Liberians,” who were previously subjected to the vagaries of slavery and its associated dehumanizing dynamics in the United States based on the racist mythology about their inferiority, used a variation of this ideology to discriminate against the members of Liberia’s various indigenous ethnic groups. As George Brown notes, “[the settlers had] a slave psychology” (Brown, 1941: 10). Interestingly, despite the fact that the members of the various indigenous ethnic groups were not considered citizens of Liberia, the settler state coerced them to pay taxes and to perform an assortment of duties.

During the neo-colonial phase, which commenced in 1926, with Liberia’s formal incorporation into the world capitalist system, and has continued since, class replaced ethnicity as the dominant determinant of access to the state. Under this arrangement, a class system evolved consisting of a ruling class with both local—consisting of state managers and entrepreneurs—and external wings—comprising the metropolitan-based owners of the businesses that controlled the Liberian economy—and subordinate classes consisting of the petit bourgeoisies, workers, farmers, the unemployed and the *hoi polli*. The resultant class relations were shaped by political, economic and social asymmetries between the ruling class, on the one hand, and the subordinate classes, on the other. Consequently, the bourgeoisies or the members of the ruling class cornered a disproportionate share of the dividends from the production process. For example, in 1980, the members of the ruling class comprising 4% of the population owned and controlled 60% of the national wealth (Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs,

1985). When the military coup occurred on April 12, 1980, the subalterns were hopeful that the new regime of Samuel Doe would have democratically reconstituted the neo-colonial Liberian state, including the inequities in the distribution of income and wealth. Regrettably, with Doe's ascendancy to the position of the "new spokesperson" of the local wing of the ruling class, the peripheral capitalist state and its maladies, including mass social and economic deprivation remained the *regles de jeu* of the local political economy. For example, by 1985, only 35% of the population had access to health care (Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, 1985). During the same period, the ruling class constituting 5% of the population accounted for 68% of the national income, and 70% of the national wealth (Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, 1985).

Significantly, with the Liberian state severely weakened by the sclerosis of chronic failure, the Doe regime, despite its repressive proclivities, became vulnerable to armed insurrection. Against this background, the Charles Taylor-led National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) took advantage of the age-old legitimate grievances of the Liberian subaltern classes and launched an armed rebellion against the Doe regime. The characteristic response of the Doe regime plunged the country into a bloody civil war that led to the deaths of over 250, 000 people over a period of about eight years (Human Rights Watch, 1998).

THE UNITED NATIONS' PEACE OBSERVATION MISSION: THE NATURE AND DYNAMICS

The Mandate

Under the terms of the Cotonou Peace Accord, which it helped broker, the United Nations agreed to participate in the ECOWAS-led peacekeeping operation in Liberia. Accordingly, the Security Council authorized the establishment of a United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) under Resolution 866(1993). The Mission's tenure was initially established at seven months, but was later on extended to four years (September 1993-September 1997). The observation mission's mandate consisted of two components: military and civilian. In the case of the military dimension, the mission had both exclusive and concurrent functions. In the case of the former, the mission was charged with the responsibilities of monitoring and verifying compliance with the ceasefire by all of the warring parties—National Patriotic Front of Liberia(NPFL), ULIMO-K, ULIMO-J, the Liberia Peace Council(LPC) and the Lofa Defense Force—and the embargo on the delivery of arms and military equipment. The concurrent functions were the disarming, encampment, and demobilization of the combatants in collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), the peacekeeping force of EOWAS, the sub-regional organization (United Nations Security Council, 1993).

In terms of the civilian component, the mandate included the performance of human rights functions. Specifically, the mission's civilian observers were charged with the responsibility of monitoring and investigating human rights abuses (United Nations Security Council, 1993). This included the killing, torturing and maiming of civilians, and the commission of sexual violence and related acts against women.

The Composition of the Mission

Initially, the mission comprised a total of 652 military and civilian observers (303 armed military observers), during its establishment in September 1993(United Nations Peacekeeping Department, 2008). The observers were drawn from 22 members states of the United Nations spanning the various regions of the world—4 observers from African states, 7 from Asian states, 9 from European countries, and two from South American states. Importantly, the national and geographical diversity of the observers was designed to underscore and reflect the centrality of the neutrality norm in peacekeeping operations.

However, by late 1996, the number of military observers was reduced to 92(United Nations Peacekeeping Department, 2008). As will be discussed later in the article, the substantial reduction was rationalized as a reflection of the emergent improved domestic security environment. That is, the United Nations claimed that against the backdrop of the progress that had been made in the peace process, especially as reflected in the preparations that were then underway for the holding of national election, the determination was made to set into motion the transition from the military aspects of the mission to its electoral assistance dimension.

The Activities of the Mission

Background

This section of the article examines the military and related activities of the observation mission—the monitoring of the ceasefire agreement, the monitoring of the implementation of the UN’s arms embargo against Liberia, particularly, the various warring factions, the disarmament, demobilization and encampment process that was jointly undertaken with ECOMOG, the peacekeeping force of ECOWAS, and the monitoring and investigation of human rights abuses.

The Monitoring of Compliance with the Ceasefire Agreement

One of the major responsibilities of the observation mission was to develop the appropriate modalities that would help enable it to monitor the warring factions’ compliance with the ceasefire agreement that was a cornerstone of the Cotonou Peace Accord. Accordingly, the mission used the establishment of monitoring sites as the linchpin of its observation function. By 1994, UNOMIL had established 29 monitoring sites throughout Liberia. However, the number of sites was inadequate. This problem was symptomatic of some of the broader limitations of the observer mission. First, given the small number of military observers—303 when the mission initially began, and a paltry 92 in late 1996—vis a vis the combined number of about 60,000 fighters (Berdal, 1996: 47) for the five warlordist militias—National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), ULIMO-K, ULIMO-J, the Liberian Peace Council (LPC) and the Lofa Defense Force —, it was difficult for the observer mission to engage in an effective policing of the ceasefire. The related problem was that the size of the mission also hamstrung its capacity to cover Liberia’s territorial expanse.

Interestingly, the mission sought to address these deficiencies by pursuing two strategies. The mission incorrectly assumed that it could seek and secure the cooperation of the various warring factions. Accordingly, it pursued a “confidence-building” strategy with the various warlordist militias. However, the strategy suffered from some major flaws. First, the mission did not use the

history of the unreliability of the warring factions, especially the NPFL, as a lesson. That is, the warlordist militias, particularly the NPFL, had recurrently demonstrated that they did not honor agreements as evidenced by the breakdown of one peace agreement after another—there were 13 failed accords prior to the Cotonou Agreement. Second, the mission failed to consult with ECOMOG, the lead peacekeeping force. For example, contrary to both the letter and the spirit of the Cotonou Peace Accord, UNOMIL made separate arrangements with the various warring factions in the performance of its peacekeeping function. That is, without consultation with ECOMOG, the peacekeeping force, UNOMIL proceeded to establish monitoring sites around Liberia and to deploy observers, based on the assurances received from the warring factions. The action conveyed to the warring factions that UNOMIL neither trusted nor respected ECOMOG. Thus by extension, the warring factions could follow suite. The other strategy was the rotating of the military observers around the country. However, the limited time which they spent in the various locations militated against regular and consistent monitoring.

The resultant “monitoring deficit” provided the warring factions with *carte blanche*. For example, the various warring factions continued to commit myriad violations of the Cotonou Peace Accord. For example, in mid 1994, there were several instances of fighting between and among the various warlordist militias in contravention of the ceasefire provision. In one case, ULIMO-K made a bold attempt to capture Gbarnga, the administrative headquarters of the NPFL’s so-called government. The resultant effect was a “military tug and pull” between the NPFL’s forces and those of ULIMO-K. Ultimately, ULIMO-K did not succeed in its military campaign. Also, the NPFL-Central Revolutionary Council (NPFL-CRC), a self-styled “break-away faction” from the NPFL, formed an alliance with some of the other factions with the ostensible goal of neutralizing the NPFL’s military capacity, and eventually marginalizing Charles Taylor, the militia’s leader. However, the effort did not succeed. Consequently, the NPFL undertook a series of military operations against its rivals. Clearly, the recurrent fighting and subsequent breakdown of the ceasefire agreement demonstrated that the various warlordist militias were not committed to the peace process. As Butros-Butros Ghali, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, observes, “The factions [did] not show the political will required for the implementation of the Cotonou Agreement” (Secretary-General of the United Nations, 1994: 2).

Moreover, the warring factions were emboldened to attack the observation mission based on the latter’s limited capacity. For example, in September 1994, the NPFL, the major warlordist militia, detained 43 UNOMIL military observers in violation of the Cotonou Peace Accord. Additionally, the warlordist militia seized communication equipment and trucks from the observers (Secretary-General of the United Nations, 1994: 2). The looted equipment and trucks were subsequently used to help further the militia’s war efforts. Similarly, during the same period, the NPFL fired upon a United Nations helicopter in Harper City, Maryland County, in southeastern Liberia, when efforts were being made to rescue the detained UNOMIL observers.

Significantly, the unreliability, and the lack of integrity demonstrated by the warring factions coupled with their propensity to recurrently violate the terms of the ceasefire agreement created a precarious and dangerous security situation. In turn, this undermined UNOMIL’s capacity to perform its peacekeeping function. However, characteristically, instead of working with ECOMOG in determining an effective strategy for dealing with the actions of the NPFL, the United Nations threatened to withdraw all of its observers, if the peace process was not accelerated. With

the deteriorating security situation, the UN made good on its promise. Initially, it reduced the number of monitoring sites from 29 to 21 (Secretary-General of the United Nations, 1994: 3). This was followed by the closure of all of the remaining 21 monitoring sites except the few that were in the capital city region (Secretary-General of the United Nations, 1994:3). To make matters worse, the number of military observers was reduced to 90 as “an interim measure” (Secretary-General of the United Nations, 1994:3).

Monitoring Compliance with the UN Embargo on Arms and Military Equipment

Under UNOMIL’s mandate, it was given the responsibility of monitoring compliance with the UN Security Council’s resolution that prohibited the sale and transfer of arms to all of the warring factions in the Liberian civil war. The Security Council’s resolution was anchored on the belief that the prohibition of the flow of arms and military equipment would pressure the conflicting parties to accept and comply with a peace settlement. Against this backdrop, UNOMIL was to develop and implement the requisite modalities for the monitoring. However, the limited size of the peace observation mission vis a vis the size of Liberia militated against UNOMIL’s capacity to effectively perform this crucial function. Consequently, as the UN Secretary-General lamented, “UNOMIL did not make progress in monitoring the flow of arms” (Secretary-General of the United Nations, 1994:3).

Significantly, the inability of UNOMIL to effectively monitor the embargo on arms and military equipment provided an opportunity for the various warring parties to violate the prohibition with impunity. For example, the NPFL was able to transport new supplies of arms and military equipment from neighboring Cote d’Ivoire to its bases in the southeastern sections of the country. Clearly, the uninhibited access to arms and military equipment helped to convince the NPFL that it could win an outright military victory in the civil war. Accordingly, the warlordist militia played the role of the “spoiler” in the various peace agreements that were negotiated. That is, the NPFL engaged in the perennial practice of accepting the terms of various peace accords, including signing them, but then later on reneging on them. The underlying reason for the warlordist militia’s attitude was that it used the various peace agreements as, inter alia, opportunities for creating the propitious conditions for the acquisition of new supplies of arms and military equipment. In other words, each of the failed sixteen peace accords occasioned significant reduction in fighting. In turn, this created the enabling environment in which the NPFL acquire new supplies of weapons. Then once the acquisition process was completed, the NPFL would then renounce the peace accord. Ultimately, this became cyclical. This was because the international community was willing to pander to the warlordist militia on an endless basis. Hence, a “reneging-new peace accord chain” ensued.

Disarmament, Demobilization and Encampment of the Combatants

After sixteen failed peace accords, the Abuja II Peace Agreement finally succeeded in terminating the first Liberian civil war. The major reason for the “success” was that the leaders of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) led by the Nigerian autocrat, General Sani Abacha, decided to award Charles Taylor, the leader of the NPFL, the Liberian presidency (Interviews, 1998a). That is, hamstrung by “humanitarian fatigue,” especially the increasing human, financial and material costs of the ECOWAS peacekeeping operation, the organization made the determination that awarding Taylor the presidency would provide an effective “exit strategy” for the

organization. Accordingly, election was quickly organized for July 1997, with the new Liberian President assuming office in August 1997. Importantly, the core of the “awarding of the presidency to Taylor strategy” revolved around ensuring that the “electoral playing field was not leveled.” This would then work to Taylor’s advantage, since he had amassed tremendous amount of wealth during the civil war from the plundering and pillaging of Liberia’s natural resources. The wealth would then be used to finance his campaign, against the background that the other contending political parties lacked the financial means both singularly and collectively to compete with Taylor. The other dimension was that ECOWAS would allow Taylor to keep his military and administrative apparatus in tact even during the disarmament process (Interviews, 1998a). Having established control over about 90% of the country, this again was clearly to Taylor’s advantage.

Having crafted its “exit strategy,” ECOWAS then worked with UNOMIL in designing and implementing the modalities for the disarming and demobilization of the combatants. The disarmament and demobilization exercise lasted for a total of 72 days (November 26, 1996 to February 7, 1997). However, the exercise was plagued by several major problems. First, all of the combatants were not disarmed: Of the estimated 60,000 fighters in the various warlordist militias (Berdal, 1996: 43), only 21, 315 (Human Rights Watch, 1998:1) were disarmed. The related problem was that the fighters that queued in the demobilization centers were not the factions’ more reliable troops (Tanny, 1998: 137).

Another problem was that the combatants that were disarmed were never encamped. Hence, the disarmament and demobilization processes became a “revolving door” through which the combatants simply turned in their weapons as a façade of their respective militias’ commitment to the peace process, but then some of the so-called “disarmed and demobilized combatants,” especially from the NPFL, returned to “battle ready posture”(Interviews, 1998a). Particularly, this posture was Taylor’s “insurance policy,” in the event that the ECOWAS “exit strategy” did not go according to plan (Interviews, 1998a). That is, Taylor kept the “command and control structures” of his militia intact, so that if he did not “win” the presidential election, he could simply re-start another war (Interviews, 1998a).

Also, as part of their post-election strategy, most of the weapons that the various warring factions turned in during the disarmament process were not serviceable (Bah, 2006: 6). That is, most of the weapons that the various warlordist militias surrendered to ECOMOG and UNOMIL were no longer useful. The reason for this action was that the various warring factions decided to keep arsenals of their best weapons as their “insurance policies.” This was in view of the fact that the various warlords, who were opposed to Taylor becoming the President of Liberia, made the determination that a Taylor presidency would put their own security in peril. Accordingly, they needed to keep caches of their best weapons in the event that Taylor became president and decided to “eliminate them.” Importantly, the fact that the various militias did not turn in all of their weapons was evidenced by ECOMOG’s discovery of caches of weapons hidden in the home of Alhaji Kromah, the leader of the ULIMO-K warlordist militia, in July 1997 (African Research Bulletin, 1997:12751). Unfortunately, no punitive measure was taken against Kromah. In fact, he was allowed to organize a political party and contest the presidential election. This “policy of appeasement” helped to undermine the disarmament process by giving the appearance of acquiescence to the warlordist militias’ strategy of “hiding weapons.”

Monitoring and Investigating Human Rights Violations

The repository of evidence shows that UNOMIL did a poor job in the critical area of monitoring and investigating human rights violations. Accordingly, the various warring factions were unrestrained in the vitriolic commission of myriad human rights violations ranging from the raping of women to the unprovoked killing of innocent civilians (Human Rights Watch, 1990; Human Rights Watch, 1991; Human Rights Watch, 1992; Human Rights Watch, 1993; Human Rights Watch, 1994; Human Rights Watch, 1995; Human Rights Watch, 1996; Human Rights Watch, 1997; Human Rights Watch, 1998). Several cases were instructive. Hundreds of people were massacred in Carter's Camp on the Firestone Plantations Company. Initially, UNOMIL failed to investigate the massacre of the innocent civilians. However, it subsequently took sustained domestic and external pressure to get the UN to institute an inquiry. But, after the investigation, the culprits were never brought to justice.

Similarly, scores of other civilians were killed in Paynesville City, a municipality located outside of the capital city of Monrovia, including the burning of the bodies of the victims (Human Rights Watch, 1998). Additionally, nation-wide, thousands of others were murdered throughout the interior (Human Rights Watch, 1998). In these cases as well, UNOMIL failed to investigate these atrocities that were clearly in violation of international humanitarian law. The failure of UNOMIL to perform one of the major functions under its mandate helped to create a "culture of impunity" in which the various warring factions committed myriad war crimes and crimes against humanity throughout the country without any fear of being held accountable by the United Nations. As Paul Koulen, the former Acting Representative of the United Nations Development Program in Liberia, laments, "...The most important question [was] whether the [United Nations] ha[d] done any meaningful human rights work in Liberia. I think the answer is no" (New York Times, 1995:A3).

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PEACE OBSERVATION MISSION

The United Nations did not perform well in the crucial and principal area of helping to resolve the civil war. First, the United Nations did not demonstrate significant interest in helping to resolve the war. This was reflected, among other things, in the very limited amount of resources the organization committed to the peace-making and peacekeeping dimensions of its conflict resolution activities in Liberia. For example, the United Nations Military Observer Mission had one helicopter to cover the entire country. Clearly, this was woefully inadequate to patrol the territorial expanse of the country, and to monitor the various warring factions' compliance with the military-security provisions of the Cotonou Peace Accord. In fact, this was one of the major factors that hamstrung the U.N.'s ability to effectively perform its peace compliance and ensuring the respect for human rights' roles.

Second, the United Nations spent more money on the provision of allowances, salaries and the comfort of the members of its peace observation mission than on the peace-making efforts that were designed to stop the war. For example, the monthly maintenance tap for the peace observers stood at \$5 million. A lecturer at the University of Liberia summarized the inefficient use of resources by the United Nations during the first Liberian civil war thus:

The bulk of the limited money in the trust fund was spent to buy air conditioned jeeps, and to rent luxurious hotel suites for the United Nations observers. If that money had been spent on the disarmament process, we

would have gone a long way in ending the war. Clearly, the United Nations had no interest in helping to end the war. Its token presence was designed to placate the Liberian people, and to silence the critics of its policy of neglect in Liberia (Interview, 1998b).

Third, the United Nations helped to undermine the peace process in several ways. It made a concerted effort to take control of the Liberian situation, and to be credited for the resolution of the war, even though it was the Economic Community of West African States that intervened to save Liberia, when the United Nations showed no interest in the plight of the country. For example, the United Nations' public education program in Liberia stressed the need for the various warlordist militias to trust the United Nations, by inference not to trust ECOMOG (Africa Confidential, 1993:3). This kind of petty posturing by the UN played into the hands of the Taylor-led NPFL that had an adversarial relationship with ECOMOG from the advent of its intervention in Liberia. Specifically, it lent credence to the NPFL's claim the ECOMOG was a partisan force initially designed to save the Doe regime, and subsequently to prevent the NPFL from seizing state power in Liberia. Similarly, United Nations personnel held discussions with the leaders of the various warring factions, without consultation with ECOWAS, and its peacekeeping force. In other words, there were instances in which the United Nations pursued its own peacemaking efforts, without collaborating with ECOWAS. This situation, among other things, sent mixed messages to the belligerents. This was because while ECOWAS was making efforts to induce compliance from the various warlordist militias with the numerous peace accords both through peace-making and peace-keeping, the UN was placating the warlords. Ultimately, the lack of coordination between ECOWAS and the UN helped embolden some of the warlords, especially the National Patriotic Front (NPFL) led by Charles Taylor, to become even more intransigent. That is, the various warlords became cognizant of the fact that amidst the use of divergent approaches by ECOWAS and the UN, the warlordist militias could continue to violate and flaunt the various peace accords with impunity. Another way in which the United Nations undercut ECOWAS' efforts was reflected in the fact that the personnel of the United Nations Observer Mission (the UN peacekeeping force) were deployed, and established monitoring centers around Liberia without consulting with ECOMOG, the peacekeeping force, which had ultimate responsibility for security matters under the Cotonou Peace Accord. Instead, in setting up the various monitoring centers, the United Nations' observer force elected to negotiate security arrangements with the respective warring factions, actions that were clearly outside of its authority. Again, the lack of coordination in such a critical security area between ECOWAS and the UN helped to undermine the resolve that was required on the part of the international community to pressure the various warring factions to comply with the peace accords, and to ultimately end the war.

Fourth, the performance of Trevor Gordon-Somers, the first Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General, did not help to enhance the efforts to resolve the civil war. For example, his practice of holding discussions with the various warring factions without consultation with ECOWAS and its peacekeeping force helped undercut the latter's effectiveness. Particularly, it emboldened the warring factions, especially the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, to flaunt ECOMOG's directives. Also, as was previously discussed, the linking of Mr. Somers to the

fraudulent effort to give the National Patriotic Front of Liberia greater leverage, undermined his and the United Nations' credibility, especially in the eyes of the Liberian masses.

Fifth, the United Nations' performance in the human rights area was dismal. For example, the United Nations did not take concrete steps to help bring to justice those who committed various acts of war crimes and crimes against humanity in contravention of international law. Throughout the first Liberian civil war, there was a repository of evidence that the various warring factions had committed vitriolic human rights violations.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS' INTERVENTION FOR THE RESOLUTION OF THE FIRST LIBERIAN CIVIL WAR

The UN's intervention in the first Liberian civil war had several implications for the ultimate resolution of the war. First, the UN's decision to pursue parallel peacemaking and peacekeeping activities helped to convince the warring factions, especially the NPFL, that they could ignore ECOWAS and its peacekeeping force (ECOMOG). In other words, since the core of the UN's conflict management activities was to placate the warring factions, the NPFL made the determination that the UN was better to deal with than ECOWAS. Ultimately, this helped to embolden the various warlordist militias in their refusal to comply with the terms of the various peace agreements. That is, given the UN's approach, the various warring factions were convinced that they could continuously flaunt the various peace accords because the UN was ready to capitulate to their demands. The resultant was the creation of a cyclical dynamic of the warring factions violating a peace accord; then they were placated; then the warlordist militias violated the new peace accord; then they were placated; and so on. Importantly, this helped to prolong the war, evidenced by the fact that sixteen peace accords were violated by the warring factions.

Second, the UN undermined ECOMOG's effectiveness by encouraging the warring factions to work with its peace observation mission because the latter was "neutral." By inference, the UN was making it clear to the various warlordist militias that ECOMOG was partisan; hence, its edicts should be disobeyed. The fact that the Taylor-led militia demanded and got the UN to bring peacekeeping contingents from outside of West Africa (Uganda and Tanzania) to disarm its militia attested to the fact that the "world organization" was complacent in undermining ECOMOG's neutrality.

Third, the UN's failure to help mobilize financial resources to help fund the ECOWAS-led peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts in Liberia helped to constrain the latter's efforts. For example, inadequate financial resources were at the foundation of ECOWAS' incapacity to establish a larger peacekeeping force, in view of the fact that the totality of the Liberian state had disintegrated. Hence, the peacekeeping force needed to be quite sizeable, in order to provide security around Liberia. Ultimately, this situation contributed to ECOMOG's incapacity to help prevent the warring factions from committing sundry atrocities against the civilian population, especially in the interior of Liberia.

THE LESSONS

What are the lessons that can be learned from the UN's intervention in the first Liberian civil war? First, it is counterproductive for the UN and a regional or subregional organization to pursue parallel peacemaking and peacekeeping activities in the same conflict. Such an approach, *inter alia*, leads to the waste of financial and logistical resources. The alternative is for the determination to be made regarding whether the UN or a regional or subregional organization is advantageously positioned to lead the conflict management activities in a particular civil war. Once such a decision is made the requisite financial and logistical support should be mobilized to support the "lead organization." Additionally, the other members of the international community can play a supportive role. While this lesson runs counter to those who suggest parallel intervention by the UN and regional organizations (Matrak, 2008), it is important to recognize that the use of the "parallel approach" would promote needless inter-organizational squabbles, thereby detracting from the central focus of creating propitious conditions for the resolution of a civil war.

Second and related, irrespective of whether the UN or a regional or subregional organization is playing the "lead role" in a particular civil war, it is imperative for the "lead organization" and the rest of the international community to adopt a common approach toward the conflict. This is important because it helps to minimize the problem of "sending mixed messages." As the first Liberian civil war showed, the "sending of mixed messages" by the UN and other actors in the international community can help to embolden the belligerents in flaunting ceasefire agreements and broader peace accords. This is particularly critical when a major player in a civil war sends a signal to the warring factions that it is prepared to pander to their demands, no matter how preposterous and incessant they are. The resultant cyclical effect can prolong a civil war.

Third, while accommodation and compromise are essential mainstays of the conflict management tapestry, their recurrent use in a civil war, especially against the backdrop of intransigence by a warring faction or factions, can give the latter the incentive not to cooperate in ending the war. Alternatively, the international community would have to use compellence in a civil war, especially when it is clear that a warring faction or factions is not interested in the termination of the war. In other words, at particular times in a civil war—when the various avenues of accommodation and compromise have been exhausted—the international community would need to demonstrate resolve in pressuring the various warring parties to comply with the terms of a ceasefire agreement, the contours of a larger peace agreement, and the overall trajectory for the termination of the war.

THE RAMIFICATIONS FOR THE BROADER LIBERIAN CIVIL CONFLICT

Although the first Liberian civil war officially ended in July 1997, under the aegis of the Abuja II Peace Accord, the underlying civil conflict remained unresolved. The crux of the Liberian civil conflict is that the neo-colonial state has generated multifaceted crises of underdevelopment—cultural, economic, political and social. However, various governments have failed to address these crises of underdevelopment. For example, the Taylor regime (1997-2003) failed to democratically reconstitute the neo-colonial Liberian state and to address the perennial problems, including class inequities and political repression. Clearly, this set the stage for the second Liberian civil war which commenced in 1999. Again, the war visited carnage on the country. After almost four years, the war

ended in 2003 under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Two years later, multiparty elections were held, and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was elected the new President of Liberia.

Importantly, in order for Liberia to end the cycle of warfare and build a peaceful, democratic and prosperous country, the underlying civil conflict—the multifaceted crises of underdevelopment must be addressed. The approach would need to transcend simply the liberalization of the “political space.” Instead, it would require the use of a comprehensive approach that would seek to address the crises of underdevelopment in their totality by, among other things, addressing the enduring legacy of authoritarianism, class inequities, the exploitation by multinational corporations, and the sordid history of injustice.

CONCLUSION

The central conclusion of the article is that the UN’s intervention in the first Liberian civil war through the use of the peace observation model did not help to create the enabling conditions for the termination of the war and setting into motion the process of resolving the underlying conflict. This was principally because the UN’s peace observation activities undermined ECOWAS’ efforts to keep the “peace” by, inter alia, holding the warring parties accountable. The UN’s behavior can be attributed to the troubling “turf battle in search of the credit for success.”

Clearly, if the international community is to play a meaningful and effective role in conflict management, especially against the backdrop of the burgeoning tide of civil wars, the UN must work with sub-regional and regional organizations in an honest, frank and supportive manner. This would mean, among other things, that the focus should be on supporting the organization that is well positioned to help manage a conflict.

NOTES

ⁱ The data on the incidence of civil wars in the international system was compiled from Ekaterina Stepanova, "Trends in Armed Conflicts," SIPRI Yearbook, 2008, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 1-29.

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Romo, David Dorado. *Ringside Seat to a Revolution: An Underground Cultural History of El Paso and Juárez: 1893-1923*. El Paso, TX: Cinco Puntos Press, 2005.

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Born and raised in El Paso, Texas, a dominant image that sticks out in my mind is a view from Interstate-10, a common route for commuters. Whether heading east- or west-bound, the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) is, at one point, visible from the freeway, and if one takes a second look, an interesting juxtaposition presents itself: a reminder of the *borderlands* where this Texas city is nestled up against one of the most violent cities in Mexico—Ciudad Juárez. Here, visible on one side of the border is a setting of higher learning with its Bhutanese architecture and the Sun Bowl football stadium and on the other, one of many “*colonias*” (translated as “colonies”) comprised of dirt roads and make-shift housing upon desert hills in Juárez. Divided by the natural border of the Rio Grande, as well as man-made fences, images of higher education and shanty town life are visible in stark contrast, each facing the other as a reminder of its existence.

For many, living on the U.S.-Mexico border encompasses rich experiences of cultural hybridity (i.e., language and other forms of cultural practices) and a sense of blurred borders. Granted, you will become aware of the very concrete and material forms of *borders* by signs of the Border Patrol—*la migra*—and heavy surveillance at the ports of entry. The sister cities of El Paso and Juárez are known to many throughout the United States as sites of a constant flow of immigration, labor, and capital, transnational business, drug trafficking, femicide^{Mark}, and of course, the increasing violence of the drug cartels spread throughout parts of northern Mexico and into El Paso.

What may not be as dominant of a characteristic is the region’s rich history related to its role during the Mexican Revolution in the early 20th century—a major social and political upheaval characterized by several movements, such as agrarian, socialist, populist, and anarchist. David Dorado Romo’s 2005 book *Ringside Seat to a Revolution: An Underground Cultural History of El Paso and Juárez: 1893-1923* is an important contribution to this significant part of Mexican and U.S. history. The book is a thorough historical and visual account, with numerous photos and other cultural artifacts, of what life was like in the *borderlands* during the revolution. As stated by Romo in his prologue, “[El Paso and Juárez] probably did more to spark the

Mexican Revolution than any other city in either Mexico or the United States. Yet their stories are still untold” (Romo 2005, 11).

Raised in both Juárez and El Paso, Romo notes that he spent a large part of his life trying to get as far away from both of the cities as possible—not an uncommon desire for many young El Pasoans, many of whom have referred to the city as “Hell Paso.” Like many of us who grew up in the region, it was easy for him to take it for granted. While he found himself from an early age wanting out and determined not to live on the border (“on the edge of the world”), Romo asserts, “. . . something kept drawing me back to this desert, this place that so many consider nothing more than a vast cultural wasteland. . . If geography is destiny, as they say, then I felt I had to come to terms with my own geography” (Romo 2005, 3-4).

He began the project by searching for any material remnants of Pancho Villa in the region. Villa has been viewed historically as a key figure in the revolution, and in many ways, as what occurs often throughout history, his image overshadows other instrumental figures and circumstances during this time. Thus, as Romo continued to search for hints of his presence, he became not only increasingly aware of the damage time and modern society has done (“. . . the Roma hotel had been torn down to make space for a Burger King. Pancho Villa was definitely not there any more”) but also aware of voices silenced in past histories of the revolution, specifically in regard to this region (Romo 2005, 7). Romo explains,

Pancho Villa took me to places where I never expected to go. But although Villa is everywhere in this book, it’s ultimately not about him. He’s merely my tour guide.

Instead *Ringside Seat to a Revolution* is about an offbeat collection of individuals who were in El Paso and Juárez during the revolution. Many of them crossed Pancho Villa’s path at one time or another. More often than not, they were both spectators and active participants during one of the most fascinating periods in the area’s history. (Romo 2005, 10)

Romo’s attention to detail with regard to the time Villa spent on the border, as well as attention to his personality and tastes (“Villa’s musical tastes: he enjoyed ‘El Corrido de Tierra Blanca,’ ‘La Marcha de Zacatecas,’ ‘La Adelita,’ and ‘La Cucaracha’”), is just one example of a major strength in this text (Romo 2005, 10). Tracing the steps of the military leader, Romo’s focus on Villa leads to more detailed findings related to those voices that have been overshadowed by more well known figures. Therefore, Romo’s methodology takes shape as a microhistory in the form of interviews and extensive archival research. As Romo notes, “Ultimately, microhistory is a method of study that focuses more on the mysterious and the poetic rather than on the schematic” (Romo 2005, 14).

The bulk of *Ringside Seat to a Revolution* includes detailed accounts of these figures, as well as specific events and circumstances that help shaped life on the border during the time leading up to, during, and after the revolution. The text is divided up into four sections: “Journalists, Radicals, and a Saint,” “The Revolution as Spectacle,” “A City Divided,” and

“Dying on the Border.” Each section includes a multitude of stories, all connected by their proximity to the El Paso-Juárez region, but covering a vast array of aspects of the revolution. In the first section (“Journalists, Radicals, and a Saint”), specific historical figures are discussed in detail and often connected to each other, such as: Terresita Urrea (the 22-year-old miracle worker who was and is still viewed as a saint, as well as a cultural symbol of revolution), Lauro Aguirre (unconventional revolutionary, editor, and agitator), Victor Ochoa (“the first Mexican American to launch a revolutionary movement from El Paso” and “inventor, editor, spy, smuggler, and science fiction writer” (Romo, 2005, 33-34)) and anarchists like Ricardo and Enrique Flores Magón, who, between 1906 and 1912, led an anarchist movement that attempted four separate uprisings from El Paso (Romo, 2005, 52).

There are also stories related to those who witnessed the revolution from a spectator’s perspective, as well as those affected more closely in the most violent ways, such as massacres. Many of these stories provide a complex view of this great social upheaval while taking into consideration issues of race, class, and gender. The section titled “The Revolution as Spectacle” includes some of the following chapters: “Cheap Tickets to the Battle of Juárez,” “Folk Hymns to Death, Marijuana, and Pancho Villa,” “Women and Young Girls Go to Juárez 1000 Nightly,” “Pancho Villa & the Greasers: Fronterizos in Film,” “Police Stop Woman at the Juárez Bullring,” and problematic articles from the *El Paso Times* about bulls being pitted against lions and buffalos for the sake of entertainment. The third section, “A City Divided,” presents considerations of segregation, racism, and xenophobia on the border in the sections, “A Racial Geography of El Paso” and “The Bath Riots.”

The last section, titled, “Dying on the Border,” concludes with death and execution and in what seems to be a sense of closure to this part of history. The last chapter in the section details the assassination of Pancho Villa. However, in the epilogue, Romo proclaims that after searching for years of his “psychogeographical explorations” in El Paso and Juárez, he finally bumped into Pancho Villa (Romo 2005, 261). Romo describes an evening where he followed a group of musicians into a Juárez bar where he sees an illusion of Villa on the bandstand playing the bajo sexto. Caught up in the illusion and the people dancing, he ends the book with, “When they stopped dancing, Pancho Villa had disappeared” (Romo 2005, 261). This almost seems to emphasize that the search continues and these glimpses of history will remain fluid, rather than complete and understood.

Much like other border studies texts, *Ringside Seat to a Revolution* emphasizes the complexity of the *borderlands*, not only in regard to geographical considerations and physical border crossing, but also in regard to cultural and identity politics. The text presents instances where notions of citizenship are complicated, as well as a consideration of the complexities of “truths” and “facts” in telling these stories. For the most part, the structure and content of Romo’s book provide important considerations of how knowledge about history is produced. Romo states early on, “This book is about a historical perspective that has been driven underground, buried underneath racist mythologies found in those ubiquitous books about the so-called Wild West...Although there are always two sides to every history, it’s usually only one

side that gets told in these accounts” (Romo 2005, 11). In a way, this book not only tells the stories related to revolution and struggles for social justice. Its emphasis on uncovering these untold stories and providing a sort of space for the voiceless to speak for themselves also lends itself to another form of “justice” related to bearing witness. It also provides another layer to a more dominant history of social change in U.S. history and interrogates the grand narratives of these histories. Romo elaborates,

Most educated Americans have heard of the Harlem Renaissance. But how many of them are aware of the cultural renaissance El Paso experienced during the Mexican Revolution? The story of Rosa Parks refusing to move to the colored section of the bus has become a central drama of the American experience, and rightly so. But the story of 17-year-old Carmelita Torres, who in 1917 refused to get off the El Paso-Juárez trolley to be deloused, bathed in kerosene and have her head shaved by U.S. immigration authorities, has never been told. Why is her experience also not part of the American consciousness?

On that note, it is possible to say that this text is first and foremost directed to an academic audience and scholars of cultural studies, border studies, and regional studies, for example. *Ringside Seat to a Revolution* is an excellent educational tool. It is heavy on history with only a limited amount of theory. Rather, Romo is dedicated for letting much of the cultural materials and voices from the past speak for themselves. He has compiled the work in a way that is easy to maneuver, with numerous sections that allow for points to stop and return to later. The visual elements add to the richness of the stories, and in a way, add to a more personal dynamic. By being able to see many of these faces—faces of happiness and laughter, faces of hopes and struggles, and faces of death—serves as an effective complement to the written text. Romo’s book can also serve as a counter-history to the sorts of mythologies that have been presented as histories of the “Wild West.”

Furthermore, it is worth noting that Romo’s book is worthy of interest for anyone who grew up in the El Paso-Juárez region. As someone born and raised in the region, reading about and seeing the wealth of history was not only fascinating but also struck a personal chord. Having shown the book to grandparents, it served as a catalyst for conversations that ranged from my paternal grandfather, who grew up in El Paso’s Segundo Barrio (“Second Ward”), pointing out parts of the city that he remembers, some of which are now demolished, to my maternal grandmother relaying stories she used to hear from her mother about Pancho Villa. In other words, a book like Romo’s reinforces the crucial need of knowing where you come from and the struggles and experiences related to your points of origin. The past does not stay put, however, and this is apparent in parts of the book where Romo notes the demolishing of certain buildings. In the appendix of the book, Romo provides a “walking tour” of El Paso and Juárez landmarks. Such information may also provide for a consideration of historical preservation. Many of the buildings in this book have either been demolished or are in danger of such a fate. *Ringside Seat to a Revolution* can, thus, serve as not only an educational tool for these parts of

history that may disappear but also for movements taking place in the city for the preservation of these histories in the face of capitalistic “growth” and “development.”

With this in mind, and while the text is quite strong, the only weakness that could perhaps be worthy of noting is a lack of more connections between the past and the present. In the prologue, Romo begins by locating himself biographically with regard to the project, including his own desire to distance himself from the region that eventually brought him back. While he states, “The first rule of psychogeography is to walk through the streets without preconceived notions; just drift and let the city’s underground currents take you where they will,” this sort of distance could take away from what seems like an overarching theme of the book. Romo obviously sees major importance in these stories and these material remnants of history, and this appears to be a crucial part of the prologue. However, the epilogue seems a bit brief and rushed. While there is a connection back to Villa as a catalyst to these stories and this romantic notion of the search, a stronger epilogue could have made more connections between the past and the present. Perhaps some coherence between Romo’s personal relationship with the region and his geographical fate could have provided for more discussion about issues like historical preservation and struggles against development, which erases the past.

Ringside Seat to a Revolution is a valuable text for all reasons listed above. While one book cannot encompass all layers of these complex stories of revolution, Romo’s text does an excellent job of beginning such conversations. By immersing himself in this microhistory of the El Paso-Juárez *borderlands*, Romo states, “I too have found underground trails, forgotten ancestors, lost photographs and music I had never heard before. This subterranean history is slowly becoming the history of all of us” (Romo 2005, 14).

Book Review:

Humiliation, Abu Ghraib and the Failed Peace in Iraq

Reviewed by Richard Van Heertum

In her book *Humiliation, Abu Ghraib and the Failed Peace in Iraq*, Victoria Fontan offers a fascinating perspective on the Iraq War and War on Terror, arguing that humiliation plays a key role in both. She starts with the premise that humiliation was instrumental in the shift from liberation to counterinsurgency in Iraq and, more generally, serves as the central rallying cry for fundamentalist terrorism across the globe. This is particularly true of Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda, who base their discourse on the humiliation and injustice the Western world has imposed on the Middle East and Muslims everywhere from the crusades forward. Using the voices of Iraqis and other stakeholders, she provides a compelling argument for the need to refocus our attention on cultural differences and humiliation resulting from Bush Administration policies post-9/11; particularly related to the War on Terror, the occupation of Iraq and current debates around torture.

Fontan argues that the Iraq War and aftermath have only amplified the saliency of humiliation discourses that have galvanized terrorist organizations across the globe, leading to the a whole new generation of terrorists recruits in wait including former supporters of the overthrow of Hussein. The most compelling case comes near the end the book when she interviews Haijji Mahmoud, a hard working middle-class married man with kids who is on a waiting list for suicide bombing to redeem his country and oust the liberators turned occupiers. He is not an overly religious man, but feels a personal sense of humiliation at the hands of American occupiers who he wants to repay for what they have done to his country and its people. Fontan believes this shift is the result of an inability to understand or respect the culture of the Iraqi people, the nature of relations between the three main groups (Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds) and, at its heart, gender roles and relationships in the country. Key in this misunderstanding is how honor societies work and the importance they give to the honor of their women and families.

Abu Ghraib is the most obvious example she provides of how humiliation turned many Iraqis against the occupation, but she starts earlier with Fallujah and the de-Baathification policy of Paul Bremer. In Fallujah, the hyperreality of perception mixed with huge mistakes by American forces, led the local population to organize against the “occupiers.” Fontan bases her notion of hyperreality on Baudrillard, positing that perception can transcend reality and that we

should have been more careful about how we framed the perception of the aftermath of war. Her point is that rumor soon became fact in a society that was ripe for al-Qaeda infiltration. This was particularly true as soldiers shamed families with raids that undermined our role as “liberators.” Carefully culled images were effectively used by al-Qaeda and insurgents in videos and other propaganda tools to build support for their cause. And Abu Ghraib only furthered the sense that Americans had supplanted Hussein as a force that sought to use humiliation of both women and men to control the population. The images that emerged from the scandal were interesting in two senses, as they first led to questioning of the invasion and then, in an odd twist, became a powerful force to avert broader debates on the war, torture and American foreign policy in general.

It is in this at times acute social analysis that the strength of the book lies. Here she argues that Abu Ghraib was reframed by the media as a story about two “bad apple” female soldiers. The two women, Privates Sabrina Harman and Lynndie England were publicly vilified and essentially humiliated to both misdirect the public away from other images of rape and murder from the prison and a broader debate about torture and the war on terror. But the condemnation of these women also served to absolve the country of its blame in the actions. Just as a few “bad apples” were to blame for the corruption scandal that plagued the corporate world a couple of years before the financial crisis started, a few “bad apples” were behind the horror of Abu Ghraib – not the administration and its position on torture. In fact, it appears humiliation was at the very heart of our torture strategy – shaming women through their sexuality and sometimes outright rape and using verboten proximity to homosexuality to shame men.

An interesting subtext of this discourse is that two women were chosen to be the major scapegoats, just as Martha Stewart was absurdly chosen as the scapegoat of insider trading on Wall Street a few years back, and just as French women after World War II became the scapegoats for pretty widespread French complicity and cooperation with the Germans during World War II (see Verhoeven’s underrated *Black Book* for a wonderful filmic treatment of this dynamic at play). Fontan makes the point that this is simultaneously the case on both sides of the ideological battle over Iraq. Those against the war and occupation used the situation of Iraqi women to fortify their argument, while often simultaneously supporting those that make women second class citizens and worse (ironically Hussein improved the position of women in Iraq dramatically during his reign) and by conservatives to misdirect attention from the failures of the Bush administration and the aforementioned debates on torture tactics.

She also points out the flawed elections of 2005, which served as a powerful propaganda tool for the administration, but undermined and alienated Sunnis in the country by marginalizing their participation in the process. This was also true of women, who were either told who to vote for by husbands or disallowed from participating at all. And this was the case with the deBaathification effort, as Sunnis were marginalized and ostracized, complicit Shiites were rewarded and experts in all areas were shunned and expelled from the Iraqi infrastructure. The book uses these examples to outline in detail how American policymakers inside and outside Iraq squandered a real opportunity for peace in the wake of Hussein’s overthrow and capture. It frames this analysis in a well-articulated case for social justice that transcends simplistic leftist or

humanist arguments to capture the complex interplay of factors that came together to make Iraq the disaster we are still dealing with today. As she argues toward the end of the book, “The basic right of a people to sovereignty, integrity, and dignity ought to be a universal human right.”

One of the dangers of writing contemporary history is that events will change between the time the author finishes their book and the time it is actually published. To some extent, this is one problem with Ms. Fontan’s otherwise persuasive account of the underlying dynamics that in Iraq. This shortcoming does not undermine the story overall, though, as Fontan brings a fresh perspective to the war based on her heterodox focus on humiliation and gender as key factors in the birth and success of the insurgency in Iraq. While some semblance of peace has finally been restored, based in no small part on some of the strategies Fontan suggests, and as financial chaos undermines our concern with Iraq and Afghanistan, we also find her prescience.

In fact, in the final pages of the book, Fontan predicts the financial crisis that now plagues us and how it relates to one of Bin Laden’s key strategies – to cause economic unrest in the West that will force a more isolationist policy and thus leave the Middle East less tethered by American interference, and ultimately allow for the establishment of fundamentalist Muslim governments across the region. We see this very real danger reemerging in Afghanistan and more perilously in Pakistan. Without sensible policies to address the realities of terrorist thought and discourse, we endanger our future stake in the region and the lives of the innocent victims caught in the political tempest that surrounds them.

Fontan starts the book by recounting current scholarship on humiliation and how it relates to the profound cultural differences between Iraqis and Americans. She then moves on to explain how Osama bin Laden used the theme of humiliation and the restoration of human dignity as the very *raison d’être* of al-Qaeda. Bin Laden bases his ideology around the humiliation of defeat Islam has suffered at the hands of the West, from the Crusades and establishment of Israel in 1948 to more recent intrusions into Middle East social, political and economic life that culminated with the 2003 Iraq War. Bin Laden, in fact, started talking about the potential of centering the struggle in Iraq as early as 1994, recognizing the powerful mobilizing effects of American military invasion of a sovereign Arab country.

The theme of humiliation is well-developed throughout the book and she offers compelling evidence of its profound impact. As with other magic bullet arguments though, it does lack a more complete picture of the conflict and the ways that other factors like racism, ulterior motives and religion play a role in the insurgency. An interesting article in the *New York Review of Books* by Helen Epstein (“America’s Prisons: Is there Hope,” June 11, 2009) however drew a similar conclusion regarding violent criminals in the United States and the shame that seems too often accompany their violent behavior. Efforts are underway in some prisons to address this deep sense of social shame and humiliation that was at the heart of violent behavior, as essentially emasculated men acted out to restore pride and honor (and undercurrent of the internal prison social organization). The ties are clear and show the ways shame can be at the forefront of violent behavior – whether it be the shame of poverty, academic underachievement,

inability to support a family, childhood abuse or the loss of the sense of national pride and respect for social and religious norms.

In the final chapters, Fontan offers a series of policy changes that could help restore peace in Iraq. She starts with the successful Sunni Awakening Initiative (Sashwa movement) that helped bring Sunnis to the counterinsurgency and more of the population against al-Qaeda. This initiative centered on restoring pride in the population by paying them and allowing them to actively participate in the security effort. She then argues that we must abandon the notion of quick fixes (a common problem in American politics), ensure that we include Iraqis in all aspects of the political and security work, reestablish basic human rights and respect the Geneva convention, ignore our own propaganda (by recognizing its role inside the country) and placing the needs of the Iraqis above our own. This last suggestion provides an example of another problem with the book, which is an idealism about war and its purposes. While I commend her call for human dignity and human rights, it conflicts with the underlying goals of the Bush Administration in Iraq and American interests in the Middle East in general. Obviously she concludes by arguing that we must institute humiliation awareness in the military and among politicians making decisions. Throughout the book, she makes the point that American soldiers in Iraq during World War II appeared to have more knowledge of the local culture than we did 60 years later. However, she also provides a perspective you will rarely hear on the left – namely, that we have a responsibility to stay in Iraq and finish the work we started. Her argument is that now that we are there, we must realize the fragile and chaotic moment present and not abandon the people of Iraq and their future for political expediency. With this position, she again shows her ability to transcend simplistic arguments that fail to recognize the reality on the ground post-invasion.

There are other problems with the book. For one, I believe it may take an overly sympathetic perspective on some aspects of Muslim culture that the West is fair in critiquing. The patriarchal nature of many Islamic societies, subjugating half the population, is one even if there is an underlying hypocrisy as regards the West; and postcolonial critiques of these perspectives are legitimate (see, for example, Chandra Mohanty's work). In a similar light, the question of repression is largely ignored – and its relationship to the very humiliation of which she speaks, though Fontan does offer the ironic finding that women gained increased freedom under Hussein they have since lost. Does the repressive nature of the society play into both the feelings of humiliation and its resultant push toward violent retribution? Further, does the desperation of the general population play a significant role in their willingness to give their lives for the very freedom we promised them? Finally, I find her position on terrorism untenable. While we might consider some elements of the counterinsurgency legitimate freedom fighters, this cannot, in my mind, extend to al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups that believe it is okay to kill innocent civilians. I understand the claims that the U.S. and other countries engage in "state-sponsored" terrorism and I am firmly against those actions as well, but to use innocent civilians to make a political point is beyond the scope of acceptable practice. Just as I am against the death penalty and the right of any individual to take the life of another for their political ideology, I

will never suborn terrorism as either understandable or justified based on the direness of circumstance or the fervency of belief.

Overall, I found the book an engaging read, filled with crisp cultural critique, strong supportive evidence and a cornucopia of first-hand accounts that strengthen the central argument. Humiliation did seem to play a profound role in the escalation of violence after the initial siege and really serves to define so much of the “clash of civilizations” the discourse itself helps frame. While things have stabilized in Iraq (to some extent), a story making news this August detailed a potential change in strategy in Afghanistan where General Stanley McChrystal plans to organize a more local effort that relies on building trust with local communities and vastly increasing the number of Afghan security troops. While this is not humiliation awareness per se, it does hint at a growing recognition that respecting and working with local populations is a better way to wage war in the Middle East (and probably beyond). One hopes that Fontan’s message is disseminated widely and that humiliation studies insights proliferate in the public sphere. Its relationship to violence seems relatively obvious and widespread. At the heart of the problem are the roles we ascribe to women, both in Iraq and at home.