

LETTER FROM OUR MANAGING EDITOR

Oxford, February 2018

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the February 2018 issue of St. Antony's International Review (STAIR)!

This issue, *International Relations in a Post-Factual World*, grew out of significant soul searching by our editorial board after a series of events last year which seemed to call into question the role of experts. In the Brexit vote, the Columbian Referendum, and many of the foreign policy decisions of U.S. President Donald Trump, expert advice seems to count for less both with the government and the public.

Peering out from an ivory tower, Academics have found that the masses we expected to be waiting for our insights have found other sources of information. Years of scholarship has gone ignored by key decision makers, and even the brightest among us struggle to balance public outreach with paternalism, and a respect for expertise with elitism. We must ask, not only what has happened, but what is our response to these trends?

At STAIR we are confident that scholarly knowledge can play a positive role in society, and see our search for excellence in sourcing and publishing articles as part of that role. We also see a need for the academic community to reflect on its role, and are honored to be part of a broader conversation on these issues. Our website (www.stairjournal.com) contains details of our upcoming issues, events, and special features. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like more information.

I would like to offer my personal gratitude for the hard work by the entire STAIR editorial team, and for the guidance of our senior member Kalypso Nicolaïdis. I would also like to thank the entire STAIR Advisory Board, and welcome the addition of Professor Roger Goodman and Professor Kate Sullivan de Estrada to this body.

I hope you enjoy this issue of STAIR.

All the Best,

Leah Matchett
Managing Editor

I. Theme Section Introduction *Ivo A. Bantel, Katherine T. Tyson, Anna Klose, Leah Matchett*

II. General Section Introduction *Yutao Huang, Mayesha Quasem, Linda Slapakova*

III. Book Review Introduction *Millie Radovic*

I. Theme Section

As a publication dedicated to the dissemination of knowledge amongst academics and beyond, we face a challenging moment in history. As the world's problems have become more complex—climate change accelerates, economic cycles amplify, and questions of global inequality remain unaddressed—it seems that the opinions and advice of experts would be more sought after than ever. To the contrary, we find the courtyard of the ivory tower deserted. This issue seeks to address new questions that have been raised about the role of experts at a time when both decision makers and the public seem to have begun basing their opinions on emotions rather than facts.

In 2016, the Oxford English Dictionary named “post-truth” the word of the year. The same year, Michael Gove declared the British people “have had enough of experts.”¹ On the other side of the Atlantic, journalists in the United States grappled with new problems presented by a presidential race operating under the stress of “fake news” and increasingly tribal and populist rhetoric. Around the world, post-truth politics have presented themselves as anti-democratic, anti-progressive trends.² These events have garnered significant analysis individually, and as part of the broader emergence, of what is called the “post-factual” or post-truth world. At STAIR, we firmly believe that these events have significant implications for academia, and as such we have dedicated this edition to a reflective study of the role of experts in International Relations.

A truly post-factual world—one where the facts about an issue cease to correlate with people's beliefs about it—challenges both the accuracy and legitimacy of experts. On the one hand, this is a challenge to rationalist models of International Relations. Although always necessarily an idealized reality, the relatively new prospect of decision makers ignorant or unconcerned with the potential costs and benefits of their actions places significant stress on models relying on rational choice. On the other hand,

those academics who value praxis in their research may find that their ideas are derided for their association with experts.

No matter your epistemological stance, scholars in International Relations are either invested in finding the truth or in producing a truth. If this endeavour is discounted, and the conclusions we publish are disregarded, what then is the role of academics? Despite the wide breadth of topics and methodology falling under the banner of International Relations scholarship, the production of conclusions drawn from supporting material lies at the heart of any social science. As social scientists, the only response to new complications in a system is further study and analysis. Therefore, we have dedicated the February 2018 Issue to a reflexive study of these trends, hoping to gain a further understanding of the causes and challenges they present.

The initial difficulty with any discussion of post-truth, or post-factual politics, is the lack of a precise definition. The aforementioned Oxford English dictionary defines post-truth as “relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief.” Post-truth politics, therefore, are those politics where appeals to emotion and belief become more important than objective facts of a policy or debate. As Frankfurt has observed, this form of speech is less about lying and more about “bullshit.”³ The actors involved in this form of speech may believe that they are telling the truth, or they may not but that is of little concern to them. Rather, their focus is on persuading the audience. From this perspective, post-factualism in politics is more accurately described as the erosion of the obligation to reinforce claims made in the course of political debates. Recently, this behaviour is particularly prevalent on the far-right. Instead of being stalled by the fact-checking of media teams, populist political campaigners around the world last year appealed to xenophobia, Islamophobia, and other emotionally charged issues. This is the most striking in debates where candidates operate from factual bases so distant that they can barely be considered the same reality.

Coined by Steve Tesich in 1992⁴, in its current meaning the term post-factualism is not new, and neither is the phenomenon. Early scholarship disagrees on whether this issue is the product of broader social trends, or driven by deliberate and politically motivated actors. However, the emergence of post-truth as the Oxford 2016 word of the year owes itself to the heated campaigns of Brexit and the 2016 presidential elections in the USA. The rise of false news stories, the expansion of social media, and the decline of print journalism have all been cited as drivers of post-factualism. D’Ancona gives an overview of the related issues, highlighting how

emotional narrative accounts are trusted and shared more widely than other forms of information in the realm of governance and the financial sector.⁵ Concomitantly, ethical problems present themselves in experts' power to potentially manipulate the discourse on issue areas too complex to be fully understood by the wider public. The 2008 Financial Crisis, economists' failure to predict it, and the resulting public disenfranchisement has often been cited as one of the early causes of disillusionment with experts.⁶ This, coupled with the global revival of the Thatcherian idea that "there is no alternative" to the global free market⁷, led to the loss of trust in financial experts seen to be incompetent or even complicit in the face of economic difficulties.⁸ As this trust continued to decline, fake news was "making recipients feel they [were] now authorities on the subject, by virtue of the false news that they [had] received about it."⁹

The New York Times, in particular, has taken a broad view on this, attributing the apparent crisis of truth to a transition "from a society of facts to a society of data."¹⁰ A similar Politico piece noted that in the 2016 election "Americans [were] increasingly choosing to live in a cloud of like-minded spin."¹¹ From this perspective, post-truth politics is a reflection of our sins as citizens, more than a dupe by a political elite. In the same piece, the author reflects that "politics was NEVER more choose-your-own-adventure than in 2016, when entire news ecosystems for partisans existed wholly outside the reach of those who at least aim for truth" (emphasis in original). The combination of these two trends resulted in the beginning signs of a new norm: that it is legitimate to counter unwanted but substantiated claims with unsubstantiated ones. Facts, in short, no longer seemed to matter.

In contrast, other authors have focused on the actors involved in the rise of post-factualism. To these authors, post-truth politics is not the result of a profusion of smartphones, or poor news consumers, but a deliberate obfuscation of the facts for political convenience. James Fallows, at The Atlantic, has pointed to the growing role that partisan identity has begun to play, as politics have forfeited rational debate in favor of tribalism.¹² Part of this shift has been the sourcing of facts to fit policy, rather than shaping policy to fit facts. Ari Havt takes an even more pointed view, emphasizing the actors that drive misinformation campaigns. In *Lies, Incorporated: The World of Post-Truth Politics*, Havt skewers a range of actors from lobbyists to disreputable think tanks which, he charges, have been active agents in the development of a post-truth world. Other authors, including Steve Richards and Jonathan Freeland, have focused on the politicians like Donald Trump and Boris Johnson who have benefitted from, and exacerbated, this

trend¹³ as well as the established politicians who have left the way open.¹⁴

Popularized in the last several years, the phrase post-truth or post-factual politics has been stretched to include a wide range of phenomena. These range from structural changes in the way the population consumes news in the age of social media, to the rise and spread of fake news, or false news stories, on these platforms. Also often placed under this umbrella, there has been a visible political shift with the rise of populist political candidates across the world who value pathos over logos. These figures have been abetted by the rise of “alternative facts,” which reflect a growing lack of accountability to a common factual reality. Further, these trends are mutually reinforcing.

These different phenomena associated with post-factual politics share at their core changing, even democratizing authority relations, bearing incredible potential but also great risks. As gatekeepers to news media, politics, and expertise are removed citizens must take an ever greater responsibility. Without an increased personal commitment to accountability and healthy skepticism, we may be relegated to post-truth, tribalism, and affect.

From a more academic perspective, the rise of post-truth politics raises questions on the meaning of truth and expertise. While it is easy to discount alternative facts, recent political developments present a challenge to academics to re-examine the meaning of truth and the role of expertise. More specifically, this raises two sets of questions: firstly, what do we accept as legitimate claims to truth on which to base policy-making and the public debate? Secondly, is there any intrinsic value in specialised knowledge for the purpose of advising society (i.e. experts) if no such value is attributed by the potential recipients of such advice? The former has long been the focus of an ontological debate within International Relations and the social sciences more generally. In contrast, the latter—questioning the claim of academics to be the ultimate authority determining the legitimacy of claims about the world—is addressed by a much narrower literature. The ontological nature of truth, while interesting, is slightly beyond the scope of this journal. However, compelling insights on this fundamental question can be found in philosophical literature.¹⁵

Long before newspapers began publishing articles about the age of post-truth, research on the sociology of knowledge has questioned the moral and factual basis of expertise. Central to this inquiry is the difficulty of generating a definition of expertise. Where previously there was a firm and acknowledged horizontal divide separating experts and the general public, more recent scholarship

has questioned the simplicity of this, arguing that knowledge is by nature a social activity.¹⁶ This view calls into question the value of “expertise” as an independent criterion, since it obstructs the democratization of knowledge.¹⁷

This repudiation of truth and expertise feeds into the long-standing debate about democratic governance and technocracy.¹⁸ As early as the 1960s, scholarly attention turned to the tension between expertise as a basis for policy development, and the danger of ideological hegemony by an expert elite.¹⁹ To this day, there remains a significant mistrust of an “expert class,” as evidenced by Gove’s aforementioned remarks.²⁰ Despite being based in part on the dismissal of traditional expert roles, post-truth tendencies have in many cases reified the divides they sought to abolish. The construction of a mutually exclusive and oppositional dichotomy—“the people” against “the experts” and “democracy” against “technocracy”—is a recurring pattern employed by populists, whether in the realm of (denying) climate change,²¹ spreading racism and anti-immigrant sentiments, or rallying against the European Union.²² Although experts themselves have been critical about the possible tyranny of knowledge, recent work in this vein is more optimistic. Stephen Turner concludes that the scientific commitment to self criticism (as evidenced by the peer review process) rather than domineering proclamations, means it is ultimately compatible with liberal democracy.²³

However, this leaves us with the problem of definition. A view of knowledge and expertise as purely constructed overlooks the real power that certain groups of people have to influence policy. Mueser and Nagel, as well as Bogner, use this division as the basis for a new definition of experts to include those “actively involved in shaping public affairs.”²⁴

This definition of expertise is not without controversy, as it excludes actors with significant substantive knowledge, but little political relevance. However, if we take just the subset of actors considered to be policy experts, this definition serves as a useful departure point for this journal edition. On interviewing experts, Bogner concludes that “an ability to put specific knowledge to use for political gain is a constitutive characteristic of this type of “post-traditional” expert.”²⁵ A growth in post-truth politics has immediate ramifications for this understanding of expertise.

If we define expertise by the ability to shape public affairs, and yet experts are finding their opinions ignored on issues as diverse as Brexit, the FARC Referendum, and the Trans-Pacific Partnership, we must ask: what is the future of expertise? How does the democratization of knowledge relate to its dissolution? In a way, we ask the same question as the old adage about a tree

in a forest: without an audience or impact: what is the role of an expert? This edition does not answer all of these questions, but attempts to illuminate a small space in an increasingly relevant debate about how current political trends challenge not only International Relations, but the scholars who practice it.

We discussed these questions with Dame Minouche Shafik, the current Director of LSE, who has held leadership positions at the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Bank of England. In her feature interview with STAIR, Dame Shafik spoke about the role of experts in a world increasingly structured by a lack of trust towards them. She highlights the crucial importance of clear boundaries between impartial experts as policy advisors and elected politicians as the final decision makers. It is the blurring of these boundaries that has been, in her view, a crucial reason for the declining trust in experts and the rise of post-truth politics. Looking towards the future, Dame Shafik underlines that experts have to remain “the voice of rigour and reason in the cacophony,” reminding us that experts depend on their integrity and reputation. This makes it crucial to maintain academic standards, insist on transparency in research, and be conscious of the limits of academic findings. In addition to these short-term solutions, she called for a debate on the underlying roots of post-truth politics: social inequality, disappointment with political developments, and the future of the labour market with increasing automation.

While these developments have had considerable political repercussions in the political landscape and the international order, they have also already begun to find their way into academic discourse. With this edition, we endeavor to give this topic a broader platform for discussion for the first time by exploring a range of disciplinary perspectives. We do not only reflect on specific instances and implications of post-factual politics and aspects thereof, but also examine the broader context and the role of expertise.

In This Issue

An underlying theme of our special issue is the disruption of the current international order by post-truth politics. Three of this issue’s articles take a theoretical approach, highlighting the subversive nature of post-truth politics, while also complicating the exclusivity of the truth/post-truth dichotomy. Rather than a simple shift from a world of truth to a post-factual world, these articles remind us that the picture is considerably messier. Jaroslava Barbieri’s paper, “‘Trust Me. I’m Not an Expert!’ The

ABC of Post-Truth: Avoiding Risks, Biases, Clicks,” seeks to clarify the debate on post-truth politics with a typology of the current post-truth literature into micro-, meso-, and macro-level. Barbieri focuses on the creation of cognitive biases on the micro-level, social media changes on the meso-level, and global risks resulting from liberal policies on the macro-level. The author criticises how the three aforementioned issue areas are usually analysed in isolation. In contrast, systematising the existing literature shows the interrelatedness of the challenges posed by post-truth, pointing towards the need for a more holistic approach to policy-solutions.

In “Post-Truth Politics and the Fracture of Neo-liberalism’s ‘Double-truth’ Doctrine: Governmentality and Resistance in the US and the UK,” Clara Voyvodic Casabó critically examines the relationship between truth and neo-liberalism, taking recent UK and US politics with the Brexit vote and the rise of Trump as examples. Borrowing from Michel Foucault and Philip Mirowski, Casabó brings in the ideas of ‘double-truth’ and ‘governmentality’ to show the complex relationship between truth and governance in both countries. Neo-liberalism as an organising form of power and governance should not be seen as a doctrine of objectivity and truth, but as one of Mirowski’s “double-truths.” The liberal elite has created one alternative truth narrative for public consumption alongside the private truth narrative of the liberal architects themselves which, as Casabó states, allows “governance without criticism.” Recent events thus do not mark a shift from truth to post-truth politics, but instead, the rise of post-truth politics disrupts the double-truth doctrine, opening up new spaces for contestation of the neo-liberal governance logic.

The piece “Anti-System Society and Post-Truth: The Impact of Trump and Demagogue Movements on International Relations” by Aurora Ganz highlights the subversive nature of post-truth politics to international order, focusing on the Trump administration as a case study. The concepts of “anti-system parties” and “anti-system” are applied to International Relations from within an English School (ES) perspective. Ganz suggests that an anti-system society is emerging where the institution of post-truth is irreconcilable with the institution of diplomacy. The article seeks to show that post-truth affects the ES core concept of “international society,” and we as academics are faced with the question of, and how, post-truth politics require a revision of International Relations theory. While, as the author herself admits, the paper “raises more questions than solutions,” it serves as a reminder for the need of theoretical introspection within a rapidly changing world.

All three articles are careful not to give a definite account of

what post-truth politics mean for the future, and as such does not seek to provide templates for policy solutions. They also do not overstate the case of a new post-truth political culture completely replacing the old status quo. However, what they do suggest is the need for greater theoretical engagement of the topic in mainstay International Relations scholarship.

The remaining articles of this special issue take a more narrow focus, and illustrate the importance of non-state actors and new technologies to post-truth politics. With “A Typology of Cybersecurity Governance Models,” Jaqueline Eggenschwiler seeks to clarify cybersecurity governance by examining it through multiple models of governance: hierarchical, multi-stakeholder-based, and market-based. As a result, any policy prescriptions need to factor in that no single model of cyber governance fits all security issues, but that policy makers need to select the most appropriate type of governance, depending on problem type, to ensure effective regulation. Eggenschwiler therefore concludes that “the development of an overarching regime for cybersecurity does not appear useful.”

Katharina Pfeil’s article, “Expertise in a Post-Factual World: The Ideational Power of Think-Tanks,” provides an in-depth case study of the Paris Climate Agreement. It contributes to the question of relevance of think-tanks in a post-factual world, analysing Trump’s announced withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement. Through a discursive analytical framework of ideational power combined with an institutionalist approach, Pfeil studies what the growing scepticism of expertise means for think tanks. The article concludes on the somewhat sombre note that Trump’s framing of the debate weakens the ideational power of think tanks.

The last paper of our special issue, focusing on non-state actors, is Michelle Reddy’s analysis “Do Fences Make Better Neighbours?” It investigates the rise of legislative restrictions on foreign funding to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with a statistical analysis of 65 countries. Since NGOs have often been crucial in democratization and development policy through the diffusion of environmental, educational, and/or human rights norms, they are important vehicles for transnational advocacy. Reddy finds that when adopting foreign funding restrictions, leaders of hybrid authoritarian regimes are affected by policies in neighbouring countries—there are neighbourhood effects—explained by historical and economic ties. This quantitative analysis differs in methodological approach from other articles in the theme section, and demonstrates how governments have attempted to restrict NGO and expert involvement in some areas.

These developments have rattled the political landscape and

enriched academic debate. Furthermore, they point towards a need for a re-evaluation of academia's foundations and self-understanding. From these articles and feature interview, we can draw three recommendations for International Relations and academia as a whole. First, the academy needs enduring rigour; second, it needs better and more transparent communication, a humble attitude, and a clear communication of the lack of absolute certainty of knowledge; and third, it must work to combat institutional blind spots. As scholars, we must be aware of how knowledge from academic inquiry is context-specific and rooted in those circumstances. We should also be reflective of our role as experts in this post-truth climate.

II. General Section

Traditionally, STAIR devotes one section of the journal to a wide range of issues within the spectrum of international affairs scholarship. In this issue, the General Section reflects the multitude of highly relevant and challenging topics that continue to attract scholarly attention. In particular, the selected articles encourage readers to reimagine the roles of established actors and agents in international affairs, and consider the influence of under-studied factors that affect society at large.

In his article "Humani Nil A Me Alienum Puto: Analysis of Institutionalized Collective Emotions in International Relations," Arthur Duhe addresses some of the methodological and theoretical gaps in existing scholarship on collective affects, and the role of the study of collective emotions for International Relations theory. Through the examination of the collective emotive reactions of US citizens to the terrorist attacks in Sana'a in March 2015, and in Paris in November 2015, Duhe offers an innovative analysis of the role of the media in framing institutionalised collective emotions in the aftermath of the two events.

In contrast to Duhe's focus on an established research puzzle, Sebastian Forsch's article addresses a phenomenon so far largely absent from academic literature, the "wider movement of reform in the [NGO] sector," as NGO secretariats relocate to the Global South. Focusing on the "understudied link between strategy, organizational architecture, and the changing environment of International NGOs," Forsch comparatively surveys the processes through which NGOs pursued a relocation of their international secretariats, framing the phenomenon within a wider context of organizational adaptation.

From an analysis of institutionalised collective emotions to the examination of organisational decision-making in International

NGOs, the articles presented in this section offer new perspectives on established theoretical puzzles as well as relatively unexplored phenomena in international affairs. It also demonstrates the wide methodological scope that the discipline, and this journal, encompass. We hope this selection encourages the readers of STAIR to continue questioning the contours of International Relations in their academic and professional work.

III. Book Reviews

The book reviews featured in this issue address the post-factual condition of contemporary International Relations by questioning the very tenets of what may have been the factual world: the primacy of capitalist economics and American power. "Phishing for Fools" and "Is the American Century Over?" deconstruct these two tenets respectively. Their reviewers evaluate how far the academic community has come in addressing the emerging challenges of a post-factual world.

Prakhar Misra (University of Oxford) reviews *Phishing for Phools: The Economics of Manipulation and Deception* by George Akerlof and Robert Shiller. Another "pop economics" book, *Phishing for Fools* takes a critical approach to market economics. In re-examining capitalism, Akerlof and Shiller use real-life examples of consumers making poor decisions to argue that the market is not indifferent, but rather acts at the expense of consumers. This book, questioning basic and widely held economic maxims, is timely in a post-factual world where an enquiry into the status quo is the norm. However, rather than band-wagoning with the anti-establishment parade, Akerlof and Shiller make an attempt to explain it.

Whilst Misra is appreciative of Akerlof and Schiller's project and their style, his review highlights that, despite our ability to understand the problems of neo-liberalism, we have a long way to go in solving them. Although the authors are able to question the existing system, they do not present innovative solutions or alternatives. Nevertheless, Misra concludes that Akerlof and Shiller have provided a fresh perspective on the economic condition that has facilitated the rise of post-factual politics.

Tabitha Urban's (Hertie School of Governance, Berlin) review of "Is the American Century Over?" by Joseph Nye re-examines the state of American power in light of continued uncertainty about the future. Urban reviews Nye's earlier attempt at addressing the question of American primacy in International Relations with regards to the meteoric rise of anti-establishment politics within the United States since the release of the book. "Is the American

Century Over?" provides neo-liberals with important tools to defend American power in contemporary International Relations. One of Nye's central assertions is that we cannot take the realist "all empires have an expiration date" argument for granted because the modern American "empire" is nothing like its predecessors.

Urban's critique is that while Nye is liberal, he is not liberal enough. Much attention is paid to International Relations to argue that we are witnessing a "rise of the rest," and not the decline of America. However, Nye pays insufficient attention to how American prowess may be challenged by actors like Islamic State or American domestic anti-establishment groups. Urban suggests that "Is the American Century Over?" is an important book in that it theorizes about the modern day rise and decline of great powers, yet it neglects non-traditional domestic and transnational scopes in its analysis of contemporary International Relations.

Notes

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3 Harry Frankfurt, *On Bullshit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

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5 Matthew D'Ancona, *Post Truth: The New War on Truth and How to Fight Back* (London: Ebury, 2017).

6 Ben Thirkell-White, "Dealing with the Banks: Populism and the Public Interest in the Global Financial Crisis," *International Affairs* 85.4, 2009, 689-711.

7 Astrid Séville, "From 'One Right Way' to 'One Ruinous Way'? Discursive Shifts in 'There Is No Alternative,'" *European Political Science Review*, 9.3, 2017, 449-470; Arthur Borriello, "'There Is No Alternative': How Italian and Spanish Leaders' Discourse Obscured the Political Nature of Austerity," *Discourse & Society* 28.3 (2017), 241-261; Erik Swyngedouw and Japhy Wilson, "There Is No Alternative," in *The Post-Political and Its Discontents: Spaces of Depoliticization, Spectres of Radical Politics*, ed. Erik Swyngedouw (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 299-311; For a historical analysis: Roger Middleton, "'There Is No Alternative', Or Was There? Benchmarking the Thatcher Years," SSRN, March 29, 2017, accessed December 15, 2017, <https://>

- 8 Matthew D'Ancona, Post Truth.
- 9 Paul Levinson, Fake News in Real Context (New York: Connected Editions, 2017), 10.
- 10 William Davies, "The Age of Post-Truth Politics," The New York Times, August 24, 2016, accessed December 20, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/24/opinion/campaign-stops/the-age-of-post-truth-politics.html>.
- 11 Susan Glasser, "Covering Politics in a 'Post-Truth' America," Politico, December 13, 2016, accessed December 16, 2017, <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/12/journalism-post-truth-trump-2016-election-politics-susan-glasser-214523>.
- 12 James Fallows, "The Broken Check and Balance," The Atlantic, October 31, 2017, accessed December 18, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/10/republicans-in-congress-youve-got-another-chance/544466>.
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- 20 Henry Mance, 'Britain Has Had Enough of Experts.'
- 21 Riley E. Dunlap and Aaron M. McCright, "Organized Climate Change Denial," in *The Oxford Handbook of Climate Change and Society*, eds. John S. Dryzek et. al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 144-160.
- 22 Ruth Wodak, Brigitte Mral, and Majid KhosraviNik (eds.), *Right-Wing Populism in Europe: Politics and Discourse* (London: A&C Black, 2013).
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- 24 Michael Meuser and Ulrike Nagel, "The Expert Interview and Changes in Knowledge Production," in *Interviewing Experts*, eds. Alexander Bogner et. al. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 17-42; Bogner, "Introduction: Expert Interviews," 1-13.
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FEATURE INTERVIEW: DAME MINOUCHE SHAFIK IN CONVERSATION WITH STAIR

For this issue, International Relations in a Post-Factual World, STAIR Theme Editors Ivo Bantel, Anna Klose, and Katherine T. Tyson, sat down with the economist and current Director of the London School of Economics (LSE), Dame Minouche Shafik. The conversation focuses on the role of experts in a world increasingly structured by a lack of trust towards them. Looking towards the future, Dame Shafik argues that there has to be a short-term, and a long-term, solution to the rise of post-truth politics. In the short-term, we need to get public discourse to a better place. In the long-term, we have to understand the underlying issues of why people are dissatisfied and how experts lost credibility.

An economist by training, Dame Shafik has spent most of her career straddling the worlds of public policy and academia. Her early research focused on the determinants of investment, the environment and economic growth, the economies of the Middle East and North Africa, and trade and migration. During her 15 years at the World Bank, she became the youngest vice-president in the organization's history at age 36. She returned to the UK in 2004 and rose to become the Permanent Secretary at the Department of International Development. Dame Shafik subsequently joined the International Monetary Fund in 2011 as Deputy Managing Editor. From 2014-2017, she was Deputy Governor of the Bank of England and sat on all of the Bank's major policy committees. Dame Shafik took up the post of Director of the LSE in September 2017.

STAIR: Thank you for having us, Dame Shafik. We are very glad to be able to hold this interview with you. Due to your extensive experience as an expert advising in international institutions, and now being the Director of the London School of Economics (LSE), you can provide us with some unique insights on the post-truth politics debate. What role do you believe experts play in international relations today, and how have we got to where we are today?

Dame Shafik: In all the organizations I've worked for, experts have played a very critical role. They are there to pull together the facts, to synthesize knowledge, and to provide the best advice based on the current academic literature to inform decision-

"Dame Minouche Shafik in Conversation with STAIR," St Antony's International Review 13 no. 2 (2018): 15-23.

making. In all the organizations I have worked in there have also been very clear boundaries between what experts are supposed to do and what political actors are meant to do. In the civil service the rule of thumb is that civil servants advise and Ministers decide. At the World Bank and at the IMF, the expert staff are international civil servants and their job is to provide independent, rigorous advice based on global evidence. Their recommendations then go to a board consisting of political representatives from the 188 countries that were members of those organizations. Politicians did not always have to follow expert opinion because their job was to make a political judgement, but they had to at least listen to the expert opinion. To me, that distinction between the role of experts and the role of politicians is vital for making good policy that is both informed by evidence, but is at the same time democratically legitimate.

Where it often has gone wrong is when those boundaries got blurred: when experts tried to be politicians, and when politicians tried to be experts. There has been more blurring in recent years for a variety of reasons.

STAIR: What impact did this blurring of boundaries have on the relationship between experts and the public?

DS: It had a considerable impact: when experts try to behave like politicians, they undermine their own credibility since they are then seen to have an agenda as opposed to being objective and independent; however, experts rarely all agree on issues. In most fields, there are large areas with consensus among experts, but there are also areas of diverging views. Those divisions exist because people have analysed evidence and have come to different conclusions. It is not true that good academics do not have their own prejudices and biases, but allowing the blurring between being a politician and an expert has undermined credibility.

STAIR: Why do you think that post truth politics are on the rise, and are there specific technological or cultural roots that you see facilitating them?

DS: There have always been elements of post truth politics in history, so is not a completely new phenomenon. Yet today we witness this on a different scale due to social media and technology, and the degree to which it can spread globally. In the past, people had one local newspaper, and that's all they read. One could argue that currently, with the internet, people have access to a much

wider array of information; therefore, I don't think access to information is the issue. The problem is the algorithmic funnelling of people to information that confirms their own prejudices, and the manipulation of that information by vested interests. While this is not entirely new, this is again enabled by technology on a different scale than before.

STAIR: With that asymmetric information contributing to "echo-chambers," what prospects do you see for liberal democracies with rising post-truth politics?

DS: Post-truth politics is a huge challenge for democracy. Most people increasingly get their news from social media platforms and the internet in general. In order to protect democracy, I expect attempts to regulate the way social media and platforms operate. One step in that direction is making online platforms take responsibility for the information they publish, just like more conventional publishers. Whether that happens through self-regulation or legal regulation is still uncertain, but the status quo is not tenable. I am convinced that democracies cannot tolerate the current degree of risk and manipulation of the democratic process. Some of the platforms have understood this, and they are exploring different solutions, which is a good start.

As an example, consider fact checkers. Fact checking is similar to peer review in academia—an independent person checks to make sure that your data is good, your analysis is correct. However, while fact checking is a step in the right direction, the scale of the problem is very difficult to manage: fact checkers can't keep up with the volume of information out there. Another development is that you can now choose to be exposed to alternative views on Facebook, so that you're not channelled to those that coincide with yours, which is great and also part of the solution. Nevertheless, I suspect more will have to happen to protect the democratic process, and this issue will become particularly acute around elections in the future.

STAIR: Is there a problem with the way experts currently address the public and communicate their findings?

DS: Yes, there is a problem with the way experts communicate. Expertise is often defined around exclusion: to prove that you are an expert, you must have a certain degree or qualification, publish in certain kinds of journals, or sometimes have to be a member of a particular society or professional body. Thus, proving and earning

your expertise is about excluding others. A major part of this is also using language that is exclusive to your discipline and that only other experts can understand. Of course, this adds further barriers for the public at large.

Thus, it is vital that experts better engage with the public and explain what they do. There are great examples of how this has been done. For example, a study at the Bank of England highlighted how Dr. Seuss books are accessible to a wide audience because of their very low linguistic complexity—his objective was to encourage children to read. By contrast, Bank of England reports required an education of at least 13 years, which meant that more than half of the UK population could not understand our publications. If you are producing documents that are meant for public consumption, you must do a better job at using clear and simple language. By this, I do not mean dumbing it down. On the contrary, people who really know what they are talking about can explain things in very simple language.

Experts can also work with good storytellers who can help provide a bridge between experts and the public. For example, consider the contribution David Attenborough has made to environmental awareness. He has translated clear, rigorous thinking around the environment and the natural world, and has made it accessible to millions and millions of people.

STAIR: In your 2017 interview at the Hay Festival, you highlighted the difference between information and knowledge as crucial. Could you just perhaps elaborate a bit more on this distinction for us, and how it relates to politics as well?

DS: We are in an era of infinite information, yet knowledge is more elusive than ever. The challenge is sifting, sorting and digesting through tons of information, which can be difficult and time consuming. We all need better intermediaries who can do this for us. That is where experts need to find their niche, if they are to be seen as trustworthy. We must give people better tools to help them differentiate between genuine experts and charlatans. Consider the example of think tanks that digest information and put it in the public domain. Think tanks should be forced to publish who funds them, so that at least the public knows who is paying for these views. We need transparency, so that citizens can make informed judgments about who to trust and whose views to accept as credible.

STAIR: Moving on to discuss the spread of post-truth politics and responses to it: most of the debate on post-truth politics is centred on the western world, or at least the OECD. How do you think the post-truth movement has affected the global south?

DS: This is an interesting question. I don't know the answer, and I do not want to be an expert pretending to know what I do not know. I can think of examples, however, such as the Arab Spring, where social media played a big role in galvanizing and organizing, but there were also elements of post-truth: false rumours were spread, spurred by different political interests.

STAIR: With that example, would you say there could be a correlation of the proliferation of technologies with the rise of post-truth?

DS: We may have seen more cases of post truth-politics recently in advanced countries because internet access is greater, and social media platforms have higher penetration rates; however, access to technology is so widespread now, and I have no reason to believe that over time it would be that different in other countries.

STAIR: How has the democratization of knowledge with the internet changed our views of experts?

DS: I sometimes use the example of restaurant reviews to illustrate this. In the past, you would buy a book by a restaurant critic to choose where to eat. Today, you can go on TripAdvisor and read the restaurant reviews of thousands of your peers, and then aggregate those to decide what restaurant to pick. The democratization of knowledge means you do not need to listen to one expert who spent his or her life eating at good restaurants, but you can consult the views of thousands of people. For many, this is also seen as a more legitimate, reliable source of knowledge than the expert alone. I think this is a very big change, enabled by social media and the internet, but it has also changed the way people see experts: the wisdom of crowds is seen as just as credible as someone who has spent their life studying a particular issue.

STAIR: Looking into the future, how can experts still carve out a space for themselves with the seeming "oversupply" of facts?

DS: Experts need to be the voice of rigour and reason in the cacophony. They need to be humble about how much they know and resist media pressure to be simplistic and aim for headlines

that are attention-grabbing but may be inaccurate. Their role is to be independent and to be conscious that they are speaking in the name of their expertise, rather than in the interest of any particular group or body or institution. They also need—and this is a particularly important role for universities—to be open about the possibility of different viewpoints on a given issue, and that they can all have legitimacy as long as they come to different judgements based on evidence and rigorous analysis. Being independent, humble, and being open to evidence-based debate is the niche that experts need to occupy.

STAIR: What do you think of the idea that the current post-factual backlash is a reaction to the idea of "no alternative" that has been used by some policy circles to justify policies that have hurt many poor and disenfranchised?

DS: This is an example of a case when, as an expert, you have to be frank that in most policy areas, there is always an alternative. The alternatives just have different costs and benefits. So, for politics this means there are genuine choices to be made. The idea of "no alternative" is just not true. And presenting evidence of a policy alternative can be a valuable part of the policy-making process. It may make messages more complicated but, in the long run, it is better for experts to be honest that there are trade-offs in any set of policies. When I said that part of the problem is the blurring of boundaries between experts and politicians, experts arguing that there is no alternative and only one answer to a problem is an example of this. That is a very dangerous approach since, in the end, you undermine credibility of expertise by being too simplistic.

STAIR: With that in mind, what role do you think experts will play in international politics following the post-truth politics? Not as politicians, but needing to work with media to be able to get their information out there so it can be disseminated for the general public. How do you specifically envision that happening in any given that academia is becoming increasingly specialized?

DS: Intermediaries are crucial, especially the responsible media that reflect different points of view, or those that collect facts and research. We also need to educate people to make them better consumers of expert opinion. There is a very strong correlation between levels of education and engagement with post-truth politics. So both raising education levels in general, but also raising digital education and media awareness is necessary. A recent study with young people at various levels of education in

the United States found that, when shown sponsored content, most of them were unable to see that the content was produced by a lobbying group, or to differentiate between a news story and an advertisement. Better education can help empower people to make better judgements about the information they are getting.

STAIR: What role specifically should experts play outside of the media and the public with politicians sometimes deriding expert opinion?

DS: People who are genuine experts live and die on the integrity of their reputation. Experts and universities need to do what they have been traditionally doing even more rigorously: maintain academic standards, maintain rigorous peer review, insist on the transparency of data, identify any conflicts of interest. These are core principles of academic life, and are more important now than ever before.

STAIR: We now turn to specific recent examples, starting with Brexit. What is your view on Brexit in the context of post-truth politics?

DS: There was a lot of misinformation during the referendum. The best example is the famous NHS number of £350 million a week being paid to the EU that could go to the NHS. The head of the Office of National Statistics publicly refuted that number. And while this surely should have carried weight, the number was in the public domain, and so widely quoted that it had become accepted as fact. The lesson is that you must get out there very quickly to challenge false information. The Brexit referendum was not the finest hour for UK public debate. There was exaggeration taking place on all sides.

STAIR: Moving on to the EU, much of the anti-expert discussion in Europe is focused on the EU and so-called "technocrats" in Brussels. Does the push-back against Brussels reflect the failure of the EU to effectively communicate its role, or is there actually some truth to some of the critiques against technocrats?

DS: Part of it is the so-called democratic deficit problem, where people feel very disconnected from European institutions. Part of it is because politicians themselves have created the perception of the Eurocrats in Brussels imposing policies upon us. That is a very unhealthy dynamic. There have been many attempts to try close the democratic deficit by giving more power to the European

Parliament, for example, but that has not created confidence among most citizens. I do think that Europe needs to think hard about how to enhance the democratic credibility of the European Union.

STAIR: The 2008 Financial Crisis has come up again and again as being the start of the backlash against experts. With the economics discipline having been in turmoil since the crisis, what is at stake here?

DS: I do not think the real issue at stake is that economists failed to predict the 2008 Financial Crisis. Predicting the future is a very difficult business. Instead, what was really problematic is this: for many years much of the economics profession held the view that the policies in place pre-crisis would deliver prosperity and economic stability; however, the crisis revealed deep flaws in the way we regulated our financial system and in how the benefits of greater prosperity were being shared.

STAIR: In the last decade, has the elite managed to gain back some of the trust that was lost, or has the last decade worsened perceptions of the failure of the system as a whole?

DS: The jury is still out. In areas like financial regulation, we have gone some way to learning the lessons and putting in place better policies, although there is constant pressure from vested interests to reverse those. However, we have yet to address the fundamental issues around what technology and globalisation have done to income distribution and the fear that many are being left behind. Those questions are still to be answered, and it is particularly worrying because we know more change is coming—automation will further disrupt labour markets, and ageing populations will have to work for much longer in jobs that have not yet been invented. We also know that most countries have limited fiscal space to invest in the education and infrastructure to help people adjust to this new world. How we make our economic system work in a way that benefits everyone is still an open question.

STAIR: Thank you very much for the interview. Do you have any concluding remarks?

DS: There must be a short-term and a long-term solution to the rise of post-truth politics. In the short term, we need to get public discourse to a better place by challenging falsehoods, regulating platforms, and giving people tools to differentiate

fact from fiction. In the long-term, we need to understand why people are disgruntled and divided. At the LSE, we are trying to tackle this agenda under the banner of "Beveridge 2.0." Seventy-five years ago, one of my predecessors as Director of LSE, William Beveridge, tackled the "five giants" of want, disease, ignorance, squalor and idleness and created the modern welfare state. Those giants have their modern day equivalents—poverty and inequality, health, education, urbanisation, and unemployment—but with very different implications in an era dominated by the digital revolution and globalisation. Over the course of this year, all of us at LSE will try to find answers to these challenges, and find ways to engage the public in that process as our contribution to making the world a better place.

"TRUST ME! I'M NOT AN EXPERT!" THE ABC OF POST-TRUTH: AVOIDING RISKS, BIASES, CLICKS

Jaroslava Barbieri

Abstract

In a hyper-complex world, expertise is the new dogma. Since the Enlightenment, rationality was established as the status quo of knowledge production. Trump's election, Brexit, Russian propaganda, and populist movements across Europe challenge such a status quo under the banner of "post-truth." These phenomena are simultaneously interpreted as symptoms of: the weakening of the rationalist model of knowledge acquisition in favour of emotional appeals; the disruption of traditional hierarchies within which the monopoly over the definition of truth was predictable; the breakdown of the liberal international order. Arguably, these domains tend to be investigated in distinct analytical silos. This risks downplaying their complementary character. To illustrate this complementarity, this paper attempts to systematize the existing literature on post-truth into three levels. The micro-level addresses how liberal elites treat non-experts as rational actors pondering policy alternatives. However, we tend to select information and process evidence in a way that actually reinforces our pre-existing beliefs. Populists' success stems from promoting causal explanations and instigating emotions that maximize people's cognitive ease. The meso-level examines the shift to the digital era and how news companies are losing their traditional role as truth-gatekeepers. Due to shrinking print-newspaper consumption, news companies become reliant on digital advertisement revenue and on social media for traffic. Yet, social media is designed in such a way as to exacerbate political polarization and the proliferation of misinformation. The macro-level concerns liberal experts' self-appointed role as indispensable "risk managers." From climate change, to financial crises, nuclear proliferation, global terrorism, and cyber warfare, modern society paradoxically tackles risks it has itself produced through its technological progress. If the negative externalities of liberal policies fail to become manageable, or are depicted as such, experts' credibility falters. Populists as "risk avoiders" vis-à-vis problems allegedly produced by liberal policies can thus sell themselves as the political panacea.

Introduction

In November 2016, the Oxford English Dictionary awarded "post-truth" as the word of the year.¹ The latter concept "relat[es] to or denot[es] circumstances in which objective facts are less influential

in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief." American comedian Stephen Colbert claimed to have coined an equivalent definition already a decade earlier: "truthiness" alludes to "the belief in what you feel to be true rather than what the facts will support."² Whatever the terminology used, post-truth denotes (and demonizes) a new political culture, wherein evidence-based arguments are dismissed in favour of emotional appeals.

A term that is quite in vogue to describe such attitude to factual evidence is anything but diplomatic. Still, Harry Frankfurt convincingly explained why "bullshit" is not quite the same thing as lying:

It is impossible for someone to lie unless he thinks he knows the truth. Producing bullshit requires no such conviction. [...] [The bullshitter] does not care whether the things he says describe reality correctly. He just picks them out, or makes them up, to suit his purpose.³

In particular, several journalists have addressed the paradox of why bullshit is so pervasive given today's unprecedented levels of mass literacy. One reason lies in the role of tech company giants such as Google, Facebook, and Twitter in setting up a novel business model for news distribution, their impact on the traditional role of news companies to keep power in check, and their transformative effect on political debate online.⁴ Overall, these analyses illustrate what I classify as the meso-level: new actors and tools emerging with the transition to the digital era are re-shaping how information is produced, spread, and consumed, while torpedoing the gate-keeping structures of the past. Their findings often include a micro-level of analysis. In this regard, cognitive psychology research disrupts the rationalist model of how we think derived from the Enlightenment and on which much liberal discourse lies. The uncomfortable reality is that we heavily make use of heuristics, that is, cognitive shortcuts to select and process information. These mental mechanisms operate in such a way as to maximise our feeling of 'cognitive ease'. In so doing, they reinforce our pre-existing beliefs and reject opposing arguments. Since social media is increasingly serving also as a platform for retrieving news, we ought to bear in mind that the way they are designed precipitates the effects of said biases. We often fail to do so.

At the macro-level, from climate change to global terrorism, financial crises, nuclear proliferation, and cyber-attacks, the new global risks affect individuals regardless of their geographical and generational boundaries, and partially beyond traditional inequalities of wealth and class. Liberal elites position themselves as indispensable "risk managers" whose knowledge (expertise) derives its alleged superiority from policy-oriented quantifiable risk assessments. Hence,

they elevate such model of knowledge production (and the international order resulting from it) to a dogma. Failure to contain the negative externalities of the policies developed over the past few decades shook the credibility of such model. It also damaged the image of globalization promising countless opportunities and replaced it with one where uncontrollable risks are at its core. While promoting trade protectionism and closed borders, populists present themselves as "risk avoiders" vis-à-vis problems allegedly created by liberal policies.

Critically, the phenomenon of populism is subject to a whole gamut of different interpretations among scholars. Unfortunately, there seems to be a lot of confusion in everyday public debate as to what populism is, which challenge it represents today, and which conditions favour its appearance. This has impeded a more nuanced understanding of what went wrong with the current system and how its mechanisms affect Western societies. Overall, public debate has bypassed the question of what to do next.

The aim of this paper is to reorganise in a systematic way the existing literature emerging from the post-truth debate. Arguably, the three posited levels of analysis tend to be scrutinized in isolation as self-standing issues. As a result, their complementary character risks being overlooked. To better understand the ways in which the various challenges interact, a more holistic approach may help us design more creative solutions. In the first part, I rely on studies on cognitive biases to illustrate the micro-level. The second part summarises the meso-level by integrating the journalistic discussion. Drawing on sociological insights on "risk society," the third part addresses the macro-level, while engaging in the academic debate about populism. The fourth part spells out the key-features of distinct but related approaches to factual evidence brandished by post-truth protagonists: neglecting facts, non-liberal representations of facts, and strategic manipulation of facts. Finally, in line with contemporary efforts to mitigate the post-truth challenges listed here, I briefly discuss possible paths of future research.

The Micro-Level: The Truth is We are All a Bit Biased

Liberal elites refer to rationality simultaneously as a *given* of human nature and as a *regulative norm* to guide how we organize and reinvent human coexistence over time. As a result, they tend to treat citizens as rational actors, benefitting from expert opinion by pondering the costs and benefits of different policies. However, this tendency has been extensively challenged by experimental psychology research on how we collect, process, and judge information.

In his bestselling book, Kahneman identifies two systems defining the way we think.⁵ System 1 (S1) is fast and automatic, driven

by emotions and intuitions. System 2 (S2) is slower and relies on logical reasoning. S1 constantly offers impressions, feelings, and intuitions to S2. Generally, the process involved in how we perceive the world and judge incoming information proceeds smoothly, generating a sense of "cognitive ease." The latter reflects our tendency to rely on automatized impressions, allowing us to (over)simplify the meaning of empirical observations. Here's where our cognitive biases come into play. When S1 runs into difficulty, S2 is mobilized, triggering "cognitive strain." Accordingly, casting a judgment on whether something is true or false requires S2 to step in. Yet, we have a propensity to avoid such state of mind. In the context of today's hyper-complexity, one may expect instances of cognitive strain to multiply. Instead, research shows that our mind is wired in such a way as to constantly maximize the feeling of cognitive ease. In short, cognitive biases are a way of filtering the complexity of the world.

In this respect, a group of political scientists from the University of Illinois drew a significant distinction between being uninformed and being misinformed.⁶ On one hand, scholars have focused on how elite discourse shapes public opinion. However, this set of circumstances is critically changing, as traditional news publishers are no longer the only gate-keepers to information. On the other hand, a significant part of the literature revolves around the study of political heuristics. Generally, when information is unavailable, people rely on cognitive shortcuts to make up for the missing factual information. The trouble is that they make inferences that maximize consistency with pre-existing attitudes, beliefs, and preferences, that is, cognitive ease. In this regard, Kuklinski and his colleagues emphasize that such preferences might actually rely on inaccurate information that is nonetheless (wrongly) held to be true. They conclude that people display a sort of "cognitive stubbornness," which makes them cast judgments on the basis of their existing beliefs, however mistaken.

Given the overload of information available online, such information processing strategies have a critical role in evaluating the credibility of online sources. For example, we tend to automatically trust sources that trigger a sense of familiarity (recognition heuristic), that are visibly recommended by others (endorsement heuristic), that confirm pre-existing beliefs (self-confirmation heuristic), but reject sources that fail to immediately meet our expectations (expectancy violation heuristic).⁷ In a recent report, Craig Silverman uses both quantitative and qualitative data to analyse online rumours. He finds that "[o]nce a certain critical mass is met, repetition has a powerful effect on belief. The rumour becomes true for readers simply by virtue of its ubiquity."⁸ In other words, information consumers tend to rely on the "frequency heuristic," that is, information that they have been exposed to with more frequency. If the topic is of

little relevance to the receiver, this impression of familiarity triggers non-analytic processing of information.⁹ In short, the proliferation of fake news and the easiness with which we fall for them has all to do with how we think. Repeated exposure to a certain message (however misguided) generates a sense of familiarity, reinforcing the message content (familiarity backfire effect).¹⁰ In Kahneman's words, "[a] reliable way to make people believe in falsehoods is frequent repetition, because *familiarity is not easily distinguished from truth*" (emphasis in original).¹¹

Significantly, Taber and Lodge find evidence of interrelated biases.¹² When given the chance to self-select the sources they read, individuals search for evidence that confirms their existing attitudes (confirmation bias). When presented with pro and con arguments, people actively dismiss evidence that undermines their convictions (disconfirmation bias). The combination of these two biases contributes to increasing attitude polarization. Curiously, these results are especially prominent among more politically sophisticated respondents, such as "experts." This is justified by the prior belief effect, whereby people who strongly feel about an issue put more weight on supporting rather than opposing arguments. In this respect, post-truth might not mean exclusively that non-experts no longer listen to experts, but also the other way round.

In a similar vein, Nyhan and Reifler found evidence of what they call the "backfire effect": people fail to reduce their factual misperceptions when presented with evidence that "corrects" their initial beliefs. Under such circumstances, ideologically grounded beliefs tend to be reinforced rather than weakened.¹³ However, the operational definition given to "misperceptions" suggests that the fictional separation between experts and non-experts is nowhere near fading away. Misperceptions are interpreted as "cases in which people's beliefs about factual matters are not supported by clear evidence and expert opinion."¹⁴ Such distinction implies that objective reality can be rationally calculated, and that experts are naturally endowed with such capacity. From this perspective, "the truth everyone seems so keen to defend is reduced to what can be measured."¹⁵ This might help explain why experts' opinions and heavily fact-based analyses failed to appeal to a majority of voters in the US and the UK. For example, by giving equal weight to two sides of an argument, the BBC debating style assists citizens in their (unquestioned) ability to ponder the pros and cons of each position. However, when both sides of a question are presented in a balanced way, individuals still tend to side with the view that tallies with their pre-existing beliefs.¹⁶

This is where the micro- and meso-level meet. Computer scientists have shown that consumers of information on social media assimilate and promote content that supports their preferred nar-

ratives, while ignoring contradicting information. As a result, like-minded people get stuck in self-referential echo chambers, which insulate them from opposing views and thus promote polarization.¹⁷ Zuckerberg himself supposedly admitted that people have a propensity to ignore posts that do not fit their worldview.¹⁸ What matters to our discussion is that populists' success manifests our reliance on cognitive biases to simplify our understanding of reality. By appealing to voters' S1, populists normalize their discomfort with activating S2 to understand complex issues. By contrast, experts tend to either overlook the mechanisms of S1 or dismiss them as "irrational" convictions. Perhaps "we are all post-truthers and probably always have been,"¹⁹ and the real distinction to be drawn is between those that are ready to acknowledge it and those that are not.

The Meso-Level: Post(ed) Truth

The virtually infinite quantity of online accessible information sources feeds the illusion that today we can be free knowledge-seekers as never before. However, in recent years many have pointed to the creeping monopoly over news distribution of technology companies such as Google and Facebook. In this respect, one study conducted by the Pew Research Centre found that more than half of Facebook and Twitter users access the two social media platforms also as a source of news.²⁰ With the shift to the digital era, due to the decline in print-newspaper consumption, news companies started facing shrinking revenues. As a result, today they are forced to rely on digital advertising revenue. As investigative journalist James Ball explains, display advertising creates fractions of a penny in profits for each visit to a news story. This means that the only way to fund a news story is to increment traffic, that is, attract as large of an audience as possible. Most importantly, the growing function of social media as news distributors makes news organisations increasingly reliant on Facebook to boost their traffic.ⁱ Yet, the lion's share of digital advertising revenues that used to go to news publishers is now pocketed by Facebook and Google.ⁱⁱ In the US, in the first quarter of 2016, 85% of every new dollar spent on digital advertising went to the two tech giants.²¹ Sharing is caring (for tech-companies' revenues).

i Publishers' dependence on Facebook is evident from the recently added product of Instant Articles, whereby publishers can now post articles directly to the social media.

ii It is worth mentioning that the EU is working on a proposal that would give news publishers the right to demand tech giants to pay for using their content. At present, the plan seems to be failing. See Matthew Karnitschnig and Chris Spillane, "Plan to Make Google Pay for News Hits Rocks EU," Politico, February 15, 2017, accessed June 20, 2017, <https://www.politico.eu/article/plan-to-make-google-pay-for-news-hits-rocks-copyright-reform-european-commission/>.

In light of these developments, Katharine Viner decries how such click-based revenue models affects good quality journalism. As a matter of fact, the algorithm regulating our Facebook newsfeed arranges items on the basis of how often users read, share, or click on similar material. Perhaps more critically, algorithms operate following an exclusively quantitative logic. They do not discriminate between true or false information, "just big or small."²² In a nutshell, such a business model structurally favours the proliferation of bullshit.²³

It is worth mentioning that in 2016 the top fake election news stories on Facebook outperformed top election stories from nineteen major news outlets.²⁴ Inevitably, the referral traffic that news companies can get from Facebook's distribution potential becomes a major factor in influencing editorial choices. The problem is that sensationalist headlines have a higher probability of attracting clicks. This can be seen in the publication of "clickbait," that is, hyperbolic headlines referring to catchy stories, often based on unfounded evidence, or simply adverts. For example, BuzzFeed discovered that over a hundred pro-Trump websites that had American-sounding domain names had actually been created by locals in a Macedonian town, who profited from the fraction-of-a-penny-per click of US display advertisement embedded in their websites.²⁵

Significantly, in *Weapons of Math Destruction*, Cathy O'Neil debunks the myth according to which Facebook algorithms can offer more neutrality than the editorial choices made by real individuals. This is because the models created by such algorithms are "opinions embedded in mathematics."²⁶ Along similar lines, Emily Bell illustrates how the algorithms and social media platforms are "opaque and unpredictable."²⁷ In replacing traditional media in their role as truth gate-keepers, the largest social media companies are actually controlled by a small number of unaccountable people,ⁱⁱⁱ and their filtering activity escapes publishers' control.

Contrary to Zuckerberg's statements,²⁸ Facebook is more than just a technology company. The software embedded in its algorithm inevitably entails editorial choices. For instance, in June 2016, Face-

iii As far as transparency is concerned, another issue to consider is the role of behavioural profiling companies. Their actual impact has been questioned. Nonetheless, these companies can collect big-data analytics to profile social media users and thus tailor the message to the audience and, most importantly, their clients' goals. For example, the UK Leave campaign paid £3.5m to the Canadian company Aggregate IQ that targets Facebook advertising and profiling, while Cambridge Analytica worked for Ted Cruz on his presidential campaign. Among others, the company features Trump's ex-strategist, Steve Bannon, as a former board member. Jamie Doward and Alice Gibbs, "Did Cambridge Analytica Influence the Brexit Vote and the US Election?" *The Guardian*, March 4, 2017, accessed June 23, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/mar/04/nigel-oakes-cambridge-analytica-what-role-brexit-trump>.

book adjusted its algorithm so that its users' newsfeed would feature friends and family more prominently.²⁹ This had direct implications for many publishers who have come to rely on Facebook to increase their audiences. A month later, fine-tuning the algorithm involved the marginalization of "clickbait" news stories from its newsfeed.³⁰ It has also been reported that while accessing the most popular topics channelled through Facebook's algorithm, its news curators were "injecting" selected stories to the trending news module, regardless of whether their actual popularity could justify their inclusion. Allegedly, the management on the trending news team intended to sell the image of Facebook as a platform dedicated to the distribution of worthwhile news, while being biased against stories appealing to more conservative audiences.³¹ The World Wide Web is narrower than we wished for, shows us the part of the world we prefer, and makes sure we stay enmeshed in it.

The Macro-Level: A Matter of Trust Rather than Truth

The macro-level deals with the uncomfortable gap between what the defenders of liberal democracy had promised and what the policies of the past few decades have produced. This translates into a loss of public trust in liberal policies as the unquestionable expression of how Western societies should be organised.³² Interestingly, two major theorists of institutional liberalism accused the liberal system of being "rigged"³³:

We did not pay enough attention as capitalism hijacked globalization. Economic elites designed international institutions to serve their own interests and to create firmer links between themselves and governments. Ordinary people were left out. The Brexit and Trump phenomena reflect a breakdown in the social contract at the core of liberal democracy [...] Elites pushed for and supported the first part of this vision—free markets, open borders, and multilateralism—but in the 1970s and even more so in the 1980s, they began to neglect the other part of the bargain: a robust safety net for those who struggled. That imbalance undermined domestic support for free trade, military alliances, and much else.

In other words, liberal elites began to be associated with the almost teleological belief that a more open world would mean unprecedented opportunities for all. However, the perceived truth is that some are more equal than others in ripping off the benefits of such openness. In the eyes of many, policies serving a triumphant idea

of globalization failed to deliver the promised benefits. As a result, globalization ceased to inspire the vision of endless opportunities and began to rather evoke images of omnipresent risks. In the face of climate change, financial crises, migration flows, terrorist attacks, nuclear quarrels, and cyber infiltrations, traditional authorities find themselves unable to contain citizens' widespread uncertainty.

One direct consequence is that liberal experts' monopoly over knowledge production regarding what is best becomes vulnerable. Thus, their self-appointment as indispensable "risk managers" vis-à-vis the negative externalities of their agenda is questioned. In the context of non-transparent decision-making processes and technical solutions, populism exploits this momentum to channel new forms of certainty and public trust. By rejecting the portrayal of globalization trends as inevitable, populist leaders present themselves as "risk avoiders" vis-à-vis risks allegedly produced by liberal policies. If lifting trade barriers and opening borders are denounced for fostering unfair competition and terrorism, economic protectionism and political insulation can be sold as a viable, if not desirable, alternative.

In this respect, sociologist Ulrich Beck addressed the complexity of today's world in terms of "risk society." Pre-modern societies assumed dangers as being caused externally by non-human forces, that is, "hazards."³⁴ Political and religious authorities were thus seen as unquestionable extra-human sources of knowledge. By contrast, early modernity marked human efforts to control risks derived from nature. These were understood in terms of competition for resources and obstacles to wealth production. Critically, such risks were deemed calculable and predictable, and experts were tasked with controlling them. Instead, what characterizes late modernity is its focus on "debating, preventing and managing risks that it itself has produced" from the industrial revolution onwards. From this perspective, "we are not living in a post-modern world, but in a more-modern world. It is not the crisis, but the victory of modernity."³⁵ The key-problem is that the functions of control and protection embedded in the traditional institutions of industrial society (such as scientific expertise, the state and the military, commerce and the international system) fail to calculate and contain the risks produced by the same progress that created these institutions in the first place.³⁶ This conceals a fundamental paradox, whereby "[a]long with the growing capacity of technical options grows the incalculability of their consequences."³⁷ Post-truth may be also understood as an expression of people's discomfort with such paradox.

As a result, in assuming the rational manageability of risks, contemporary policy-oriented risk assessment is at odds with the new type of risks at stake. These are shaped by the anticipation of global catastrophes, and display unprecedented characteristics. In

fact, such new threats are: de-localised (they affect people across geographical borders, generation gaps and socio-economic classes); incalculable (they cannot be predicted); non-compensable (they are irreversible and cannot be insured against).³⁸ It is worth saying that the "risk society" hypothesis has been criticized for failing to pass the test of empirical evidence, for displaying too bleak an image of globalization trends, and for an overreliance on examples drawn from the German context.³⁹ Nonetheless, it offers valuable conceptual tools to challenge the way in which the post-truth debate overstates the role of emotional appeals. Within a narrative that highlights the failure (or unwillingness) to contain the negative externalities of liberal policies, paradoxically populists emphasise the importance of managing those risks, the prevention of which was liberal elites' duty (and promise). In this regard, the German sociologist criticises experts' monopoly over the definition of risks:

in the eyes of the technological elite, the majority of the public [...] only need[s to] be stuffed full of technical details, and [it] will share the experts' viewpoint and assessment of the technical manageability of risks [...] otherwise [...] [the public is] just hopelessly irrational.⁴⁰

In this vein, the common understanding of post-truth conflates emotional appeals with an inferior capacity to evaluate factual evidence. For example, Trump's rhetoric has been accused of privileging "the visceral over the rational, the deceptively simple over the honestly complex."⁴¹ The second connotation accurately suggests that populist leaders rely on an over-simplification of reality to push forward their agenda. Yet, the first connotation seems to associate populists' emotional appeals with a propensity to *necessarily* misinterpret reality at the expense of any "rational" (i.e. technical) evaluation.

Nonetheless, scholars have attempted to offer a more nuanced understanding of populism. There seems to be consensus on the fact that "populism worships the people."⁴² This fuels an understanding of "the people" as inherently correct.⁴³ At the same time, this assumption implies the dichotomization of the political arena between "the people" and "the elites" or "the establishment":

populism always refers to the people and justifies its actions by appealing to and identifying with the people; it is rooted in anti-elite feelings; and it considers the people as a monolithic group without internal differences except for some very specific categories who are subject to an exclusion strategy.⁴⁴

This is the starting point for a "minimal" definition of populism.⁴⁵ Of course, populism is not confined to Western societies alone. This is reflected in cross-national comparisons on the subject. Nevertheless, the post-truth debate focuses on populist manifestations in the West and seeks to answer the following questions:

- a) *what* is populism?
- b) *why* and *when* does it arise?
- c) *how* does it affect Western societies?

As far as the first question is concerned, the most complete reviews on the topic identify certain recurrent conceptual categories. For example, Gidron and Bonikowski illustrate how populism has been interpreted in terms of ideology, discursive style, or political strategy.⁴⁶ Along similar lines, Moffitt and Tormey claim that the current research reads populism as an ideology, political logic, discourse, or strategy/form of organisation. Given the non-negligible variation among populist actors for each of these indicators, they suggest that in the context of today's mediatization of politics, "political style" seems to be a more revealing feature of populism, comparable to other political styles.⁴⁷ Finally, Mudde and Kaltwasser note that populism has been commonly regarded either as a movement, style, or discourse.⁴⁸ Interestingly, they suggest caution in interpreting populism as a political style, as it might easily be confused with demagoguery. Instead, drawing on the work of Michael Freeden,⁴⁹ they consider populism as a "thin-centred ideology"⁵⁰

that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, "the pure people" vs. "the corrupt elite," and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* of the people.⁵¹

In other words, populism lacks a core set of ideological beliefs. Rather, relevant political actors rely on a "host ideology," which changes depending on the contingent circumstances. This explains why populism may refer to actors from the far right to the far left,⁵² thus exhibiting a "chameleonic" character.⁵³ Critically, this perspective rejects an essentialistic view of populism, whereby some actors are inherently populist, while others are not. While the far right has often been associated with populist movements, this approach invites us to acknowledge that "not all populists are xenophobic and xenophobia is not populism."⁵⁴

A second common definition of populism reads the latter as a form of discourse. In a not too dissimilar way from the previous definition, populism reflects "an anti-status quo discourse that simplifies the political space by symbolically dividing society between 'the people' and its 'other'."⁵⁵ The discursive perspective draws insights from Laclau's theoretical framework on populism as a "logic of (discursive) articulation."⁵⁶ The latter has been criticized for its excessive abstraction: in judging the constitution of the people as the ultimate form of politics, populism is made synonymous with politics. This hinders the theory's empirical applicability.

Within the same radical approach to democracy, Chantal Mouffe argues that the reliance on consensual politics beyond traditional left- and right-wing affiliations failed to acknowledge the intrinsically agonistic nature of a "politics of us vs. them," which is seen as *constitutive* of politics. Populism can be seen as an attempt to revitalise such adversarial model. Contrary to the liberal interpretation of political opponents, however, populists frame such model in moralistic terms, thus transforming political adversaries into enemies.⁵⁷ This anti-status quo element also permeates the third interpretation of populism as a political strategy.⁵⁸ The latter is used "for appealing to mass constituencies where representative institutions are weak or discredited, and where various forms of social exclusion or political marginalization leave citizens alienated from such institutions."⁵⁹ In this regard, the debate on post-truth acknowledges that populists' momentum seems to be intimately connected to times of crisis, which are exploited to reinforce the impression of urgency brought by their message.⁶⁰ The populist "appeal to 'the people' against both the established structure of power and the dominant ideas of society"⁶¹ suggests that crisis as a trigger for populism could have different forms.

On this point, the dominant perspective claims that increased support of populist parties is justified by the greater wealth inequality in post-industrial economies. In a changing global technological landscape where decreased demand in the manufacturing sector and growing automation affect jobs, blue-collar voters fear labour market competition from immigrants and resent the strengthening of austerity policies. In short, the losers of globalisation provide a ready constituency for populist parties. Another related perspective views populists' success as the expression of a cultural backlash against the shift to post-materialist values.⁶² These perspectives are also relevant for the question of how populism is affecting democratic societies more broadly. In particular, the post-truth debate is polarized between those who argue that populism should be considered as a threat⁶³ and those

that rather see it as a corrective to democracy. At the same time, some scholars look into the "ambivalence" of populism, as such normative juxtaposition simply reflects whether one privileges a liberal or radical view of democracy respectively.⁶⁴ Historically, the people has always been like Janus' face: as populace, it menaces the political order. As the sovereign people, it grounds it.⁶⁵

Truth and tales: post-truth approaches to factual evidence

Once we acknowledge that post-truth operates simultaneously across these three levels, we should consider the mechanisms that allow post-truth actors to actively challenge the mainstream conception of Truth held in liberal Western societies in general, and the latter's attachment to evidence-based arguments in particular. In this regard, post-truth encompasses three distinct but related approaches to factual evidence: neglecting facts, non-liberal representations of facts, and strategic manipulation of facts. Crucially, these may be "juggled" in various combinations depending on the context. Identifying how these specific approaches play out can help us tailor more appropriate responses.

Table 1. The three complementary levels implicit in the post-truth debate.

	What is it about?	What challenge does it represent?	Why is it relevant for the post-truth debate?
<i>Micro-level</i>	How individuals use cognitive shortcuts (heuristics) and display biases in choosing information sources and processing factual evidence. We tend to maximise our cognitive ease, thus reinforcing our prior beliefs and downgrading information that contradicts them	Liberal elites' treatment of citizens as rational actors is misguided and their dismissal of non-liberal arguments as irredeemably irrational is short-sighted	In an increasingly complex world, populists promote causal explanations, cherry-pick factual evidence, and instigate emotions in ways that fuel cognitive ease
<i>Meso-level</i>	How the tools for the production, distribution, consumption, and control of information are changing in the digital era	Facebook and Google exercise a creeping monopoly over the space wherein we acquire, produce, and spread information. The resulting click-based model topples traditional news companies as truth gate-keepers	Echo chambers and filter bubbles foster political polarization by isolating individuals in ideological silos online
<i>Macro-level</i>	How contemporary global risks resulting from liberal policies escape our capacity to rationally calculate and manage their consequences across space and time	The international liberal order began to inspire images of risks rather than opportunities among the losers of globalisation. Expertise as rationalist risk management loses credibility as an infallible authority over knowledge production of what is best and thus as a tool to generate trust and certainty	Populists exploit this trust vacuum by portraying themselves as risk-avoiders vis-à-vis global risks allegedly produced by liberal policies, thus promoting agendas that claim to 'reverse' the latter's negative externalities

Post-truth as neglecting facts

As *The Economist* put it, what is new is "that truth is not falsified, or contested, but of secondary importance."⁶⁶ This particular approach to factual evidence dismisses reference to verifiable facts as a key-element of what it takes to win an election. Public debates are framed in a way as to focus exclusively on high-salience issues, which favours efforts to instigate polarization in the electorate. Evidently, the general public's growing disillusionment with the consensual politics of mainstream parties creates fertile ground for success in such efforts. Facts are not used to substantiate a certain definition of truth: rather, an ad hoc reading of truth cherry-picks facts to suit the leading narrative, regardless of their validity. In short, facts are presented for their appeal, not their accuracy. Fact-checking is no longer synonymous with truth-seeking. For example, Trump's Twitter invectives and false claims resonate all the more due to the intense use of hyperbole: Obama was called "the founder" of ISIS;⁶⁷ Pope Francis supposedly endorsed Trump's candidacy;⁶⁸ Hillary Clinton allegedly purchased illegal weapons.⁶⁹ In this regard, political cynicism goes hand in hand with negligence towards factual accuracy. During the EU referendum campaign two "facts" are said to have swung many voters towards Brexit. Marked on the Leave campaign bus, the first claim maintained that EU membership costs the UK £350m weekly, which Brexiteers promised to re-direct to the National Health Service. The day after the vote, Nigel Farage disavowed that promise.⁷⁰ The second message was about Turkey's imminent accession to the EU, which would allegedly encourage alarming migration flows. However, this claim had no basis in reality: due to the authoritarian backlash of the last years, negotiations on Turkey's accession have achieved little progress lately.⁷¹

Despite the much-quoted line that people in the UK "have had enough of experts,"⁷² the irony is that the UK government found itself facing a shortage of trade experts to negotiate a deal with the EU following the referendum results.⁷³ This suggests that neglecting facts is driven by short-term calculations focused on steering election results, not creating a coherent ideological alternative in the long-term. In this regard, Arron Banks, the main funder of the Leave.EU Campaign, admitted that Brexiteers took an "American-style media approach." In other words, "[t]he remain campaign featured fact, fact, fact, fact, fact. It just doesn't work. You have got to connect with people emotionally. It's the Trump success."⁷⁴ From this perspective, the post-truth challenge is as much about populists neglecting factual accuracy as it is about

liberals neglecting the role of "hearts" while capturing the electorate's "minds."

Post-truth as non-liberal representations of facts

This leads to the second post-truth approach to factual evidence. Here the challenge lies in populism's effort to de-legitimise an exclusively liberal representation of facts as the driving force behind policy development. Again, this process of de-legitimation is often dismissed as a mere set of communicative strategies aimed at stirring voters' emotions instead of their rational capacities. How can disagreement with the status quo be "rational"? This assumption has been denounced for exposing liberals' self-referential discourse. In the words of Thomas Frank, "the group to which professionals ultimately answer is not the public but their peers (and, of course, their clients)."⁷⁵ From this perspective, populism represents a threat specifically to the model of liberal democracy, rather than democracy in general.⁷⁶ To put it in harsh terms,

[c]aricaturing one's opponents as having succumbed to their own feelings neatly avoids having to explain what it is they feel so strongly about. [...] While outright lies appear to be what the truth brigade attacks, scratch the surface and their real beef seems to be that others hold opinions they don't agree with.⁷⁷

As a matter of fact, for all those that felt left out from the benefits of globalization, the idea of attempting to reverse liberal policies (by espousing trade protectionism and closed borders) sounds actually quite reasonable. This resonates all the more whenever liberals' favoured policies are framed as unquestionable "facts of life." For instance, in the US context, "[democrats] acknowledge that inequality is rampant and awful, but they [...] remind us that there's nothing anyone can do about globalization or technology."⁷⁸ Most importantly, the censorship against non-liberal arguments contradicts the liberal principle of defending the political arena understood as a "marketplace of ideas." This metaphor posits the importance of rejecting any monopoly over Truth as possible, let alone desirable. By contrast, denigrating populist arguments as "unworthy" to join the political debate suggests that in the realm of political correctness all ideas are equal but some are more equal than others. Such a stance exacerbates the frustrations on which populists build the credibility of their message.

Post-truth as strategic manipulation of facts

The last post-truth approach to factual evidence assumes that Truth can be indeed monopolized through the manipulation of facts. By lumping together half-truths, outright falsities, and controversial interpretations, the relevant actors tailor the message to the target audience out of political calculations. It is not a coincidence that Russian propaganda has been referred to as "weaponization of information."⁷⁹ In this respect, Kremlin-sponsored multi-lingual news channel RT, the Sputnik agency, the "trolls factories" are not necessarily engaged in spreading false facts. Rather, they specialize in exploiting and exacerbating pre-existing grievances and divisions to wreak discord. In so doing, they blur people's understanding of the facts on the ground. This fuels the credibility of Moscow's narrative. Crucially, it contributes to increasing domestic strife in the targeted contexts on one side, and delaying the international community's response on foreign policy matters on the other. Fundamentally, Russian propaganda lacks a commitment to consistency. Nonetheless, the repetition of targeted messages in great volume and from a variety of sources increases their perceived persuasiveness.⁸⁰

It is worth noting that the tools used in the ongoing information warfare can be traced in long-standing Soviet practices, thus indicating a generalized "misplaced impression of novelty."⁸¹ Nonetheless, the content of contemporary Russian propaganda cannot be equated to Cold War propaganda. While the latter had the purpose of promoting the Soviet Union in a bipolar global order, today the Kremlin seeks to undermine the West's institutions and value-system in a scattered international context of alliances.⁸² In this regard, communication experts dismiss the idea of a coherent ideological system as the driving force: the Kremlin exploits "ideology, any ideology, for tactical aims."⁸³ Populists across the political spectrum recycle these messages, thus indirectly favouring Moscow's foreign policy goals.

Conclusion

The complexity of the post-truth challenge often invites the abuse of buzzwords, which muddies the waters rather than brings clarity to the topic. It is hoped that this proposed tripartite theoretical framework may bring coherence to a growing literature and open paths for future research.

The dynamics at the micro-level raise two questions. First, how can we minimise online users' exposition to fake news? One could

advocate in favour of shutting down claims that are proven to be false. Yet, in practical terms, it is quite difficult to establish which conditions warrant the prohibition of certain content. From a normative standpoint, an institution endowed with such censoring power would have an Orwellian sense to it.^{iv} Luckily, we are witnessing some less radical approaches. In December 2016, in partnership with fact checking organizations such as FactCheck.org, PolitiFact and Snopes, Facebook announced that its users would be able to report fake news by flagging sources of dubious veracity. Sources receiving sufficient flags shall display a "disputed news" label whenever someone accedes them. In turn, this would negatively affect the frequency with which they would appear in the newsfeed.⁸⁴ Of course, individuals might also flag content they do not agree with. Experimental psychology should study how these types of interventions may mitigate the unreflective and automatized information processing embedded in how we think. Would a "disputed news" label encourage social media users to look for alternative information sources? Would similar tools help reduce or foster online political polarization?

Second, to what extent can post-truth be accurately portrayed as an entirely new phenomenon? If our biases as human beings are a key-part of the problem, then how can the problem itself be presented as the prologue to a new era? To say that fake news have an unprecedented impact due to the distribution power of social media platforms is not the same thing as claiming that its use is unprecedented. Rhetorical devices, the art of lying, and bending facts out of political expediency are not new in politics. It might sound controversial, but isn't the Russian president (inadvertently) applying Machiavelli's advice in his *Prince* that "it is necessary [...] to be a great pretender and dissembler"⁸⁵ to ensure public order and state survival when conditions require it?

Arguably, the gullibility of the people is not a new phenomenon in politics either. In his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle identified three modes of persuasion that ought to be considered when crafting a speech: *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos*. Admittedly, both liberal elites and populists boost the persuasiveness of their claims by appealing to their alleged personal credibility (*ethos*): elites credit their expertise whilst populists insist on being part of the people. However, elites tend to rely on logical reason (*logos*) while populists count on emotional appeals (*pathos*). In light of our discussion of how

^{iv} Recently, French president Macron announced his plan to make misinformation online 'illegal'. Unsurprisingly, this move has raised public concerns. It may be a small step from tackling misinformation to imposing information favourable to the government. See Yasmeen Serhan, "Macron's War on 'Fake News'", *The Atlantic*, January 6, 2018, accessed January 15, 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/01/macrons-war-on-fake-news/549788/>..

we use heuristics to sift through the complexity of today's world, Trump's recipe seems to prevail. Liberals' denigration of emotions has somehow irrationally erased from the political equation what it takes to win an election. Scholars should trace in a more systematic way how public discourse is produced, received, and reproduced across political contexts, but also over time: which habits die hard? Which trends are genuinely new?

Of course, factoring in the meso-level makes things more complicated. The new technologies have completely re-shuffled our access to, processing of, and use of information, hence our ability to choose what we believe as true and what to do with it. For example, initially Zuckerberg dismissed as "a pretty crazy idea" the notion that fake news on Facebook influenced the US election.⁸⁶ More recently, after finding evidence of fraudulent Russian advertising purchases, Facebook removed hundreds of profiles and pages that were linked to the Internet Research Agency, which has ties to the Kremlin. More importantly, it decided to share more than 3,000 Russia-linked ads with the US Senate and House intelligence committees.⁸⁷

This type of collaboration between private tech-companies and governments seems to be a promising path of research. Could they create some form of shared decision-making to sanction those responsible for the spread of misinformation? In presence of large-scale misinformation campaigns, to what extent can tech giants be held accountable? Once new actors appear alongside (or in competition with) the traditional press as truth-gatekeepers, their relationship with politics deserves more attention not only by practitioners, but also by academics. How can tech companies and news organisations join efforts to keep power in check? How does the "creeping monopoly" over information by companies such as Google and Facebook affect the traditional relationship between truth and power?

Finally, at the macro-level the impact of populist messages should not be overstated nor evened out across political contexts. It is yet to be seen whether post-truth is opening a new political culture or rather stimulating the revision of the current one. Of course, in the former case the implications would be far-reaching, inspiring a research programme that is beyond the remit of this paper. How is the US disengagement going to affect the viability and credibility of a Western-led liberal international order? How will other international actors position themselves? For instance, Trump's decision to withdraw the US from the Paris Agreement became a testing ground for who will take global leadership on climate change.⁸⁸ Moreover, will threats such as cyber infiltrations and global terrorism encourage inter-governmental cooperation and intelligence data sharing or rather foster political insulation

and cross-border securitization? Last but not least, in an age of increasing technological automation which will destroy old jobs, but also create new ones, how should governments reform their educational systems to ensure that the next generations learn skills that will not be obsolete for the jobs of tomorrow? Far from being separate issues, these challenges are interrelated. Failure in any of these policy areas offers a ready constituency for populist messages with their recipes for restoring certainty. Arguably, the real challenge for any leadership supporting a liberal agenda is paradoxically to learn from populist leaders the ability to exploit the current crisis in order to create new trust-building channels. This is a risk worth taking.

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POST-TRUTH POLITICS AND THE FRACTURE OF NEO-LIBERALISM'S "DOUBLE-TRUTH" DOCTRINE: GOVERNMENTALITY AND RESISTANCE IN THE US AND THE UK

Clara Voyvodic Casabó

Abstract

The results of the UK's Brexit referendum and the US Presidential election in 2016 came as a shock to politicians, pollsters, and the public. Both campaigns and subsequent administrations have been defined by an angry populist rejection of expertise and global governance, and apathy for the distinction between fact and falsehood. This shift in American and British politics is characterized as "post-truth," a break from the standards of neo-liberal governance that valued expertise, facts, and objectivity. However, understanding the impact of post-truth requires a critical review of the relationship between truth and neo-liberalism. Mirowski argues that neo-liberal governance should not be considered a doctrine of objectivity and truth, but rather one of 'double-truth'. Double-truth offers the public a narrative of non-partisan expertise and objectivity in policy but retains a truth to its private elite of the intensive enforcement of deregulation practices and individual responsabilization. The double-truth doctrine allows governance without criticism as policy is deemed natural and objective, and expertise by the elite is viewed as beyond question, even as the elite put considerable effort into ensuring its longevity. Post-truth disrupts this dynamic, ushering in what Foucault identified as a crisis of governmentality: moments when the instrumentalities of government break-down and existing forms of reflection on government lose their self-evidence. Without the credibility of a public discourse that assures truth and objectivity, neo-liberal practices are exposed to criticism. Public protests in the US and the UK have reached new levels of mobilization, solidarity, and outrage, and now place considerable pressure to the new administrations. As the discursive rationalizations of governance are neglected, new spaces are opening where truth (as experience and subjectivity) can be claimed by those outside the governing elite, and discussions of class, race, and gender can help turn the paradoxical double-truths of neo-liberalism against each other.

Introduction

The year 2016 left the world reeling from two unexpected outcomes of democratic elections. The referendum in Britain saw voters calling for exit from the European Union, ending a thirty-five year-old relationship. In the United States the presidential election resulted in the shocking win of Donald Trump, an anti-establishment candidate infamous for the controversial comments he made on his campaign. Both results went against almost all expert opinion, polls, and political punditry. But more than their ability to shock the political intelligentsia, the two elections indicated a troubling new trend: a more casual approach to truth and the proliferation of fake news. This inspired the phrase "post-truth" to describe a new political order in which certainty in expertise, objective media reports, and fact-based accounts has been drastically shaken. This trend raised the question of whether the age of truth in politics was coming to an end, replaced by a new bizarre order of emotional resonance, misdirection, and manipulation by political leaders without repercussion.

However, to argue that we are currently entering a post-truth era implies that the previous era was one of objectivity and truthfulness, a claim that requires some critical examination. The choices made during the Brexit and Trump campaigns and subsequent administrations are perhaps less a cataclysmic break from objectivity and truth, but rather a shift away from a more complex relationship between truth and governance. Mirowski coined the term "double-truth" to describe this relationship, as a paradoxical regime of neo-liberal governance that offers one truth to the public while retaining a separate, private truth to its elite and core members.¹ The truth offered to the public establishes the natural and scientific legitimacy of neo-liberal policies of deregulation and individual responsabilization.ⁱ This discourse to the public places pre-eminence on the objective and apolitical nature of expert policy-making and frustrates any alternative. The truth among the governing elite recognizes that despite the naturalism of small-state, market-driven governance, its imposition actually requires a fundamental institutionalism, bureaucracy, and discourse, across several regimes, to ensure its longevity. Foucault's crisis of governmentality, which forces a reevaluation of the internal contradictions of governance and

ⁱ Responsibilization refers to the process whereby "subjects are rendered individually responsible for a task which previously would have been the duty of another—usually a state agency—or would not have been recognized as a responsibility at all" (Jenny Fleming and Alison Wakefield, *Sage Dictionary of Policing*).

the legitimacies that underpin it, presents a useful framework to examine how the shift from double-truth to post-truth has discredited the preeminence of expertise and objectivity, and opened new spaces for contestation, resistance, and solidarity.²

Brexit, Trump, and Post-Truth

Post-truth initially emerged to describe the growing trend and effect of fake news. Fake news referred to fabricated stories on the Internet whose purpose was usually to trick the algorithms used by Facebook and other social media sites, and thereby reach a larger online audience and generate more advertising revenue.³ The misleading headlines and falsified adverts that were initially meant to generate revenue slowly underwent a political shift. False articles about refugees or immigrants in the United Kingdom, for example, began to shift public opinion during the Brexit referendum campaign, and more politically charged articles in the US started stirring public opposition towards the established political parties.⁴ The phenomenon was so prolific that Oxford English Dictionary selected "post-truth" as its word of the year in 2016, defined as "relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief."⁵

Post-truth and its emotional resonance played a significant role in both the Brexit referendum and the US election. In the UK, Leave campaigners claimed that the UK was spending £350 million a year on the EU that could be spent on the National Health Service (NHS), even long after studies indicated that this was not true.⁶ In the US, fake news articles on Clinton could be found accusing her of anything from lying in a speech to having covered up a child-trafficking ring run from a pizzeria.⁷ These articles and stories spread quickly on social media, the speed and eye-catching headlines aiding their diffusion if not their accuracy. Their volume also allowed for the "illusory-truth effect," described by Hasher, Goldstein, and Toppino, that the more a statement is repeated the more truthful it must be.⁸ Truth takes a back seat to volume, and people become more and more likely to believe statements they see made multiple times.

However, misleading articles and confusing sources of information soon turned to direct falsehoods from the politicians themselves. After the Brexit referendum, it was immediately apparent that the Leave campaign had a low regard for recognizing (much less keeping) the promises it had made. Nigel Farage, head of United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), immediately backtracked and said that he had never promised that the UK would

spend the £350 million it claimed went to the EU on the NHS—a promise that had been written on a Leave campaign bus for the previous few months.⁹ Trump's campaign was also characterized by a haphazard approach to truth-telling. Politifact, a nonpartisan organization concerned with fact-checking public figures and politicians, awarded Trump in 2015 with "Lie of the Year," while a survey of his public statements made in 2016 concluded that only five percent could be characterized as true, with thirty-two percent characterized as false, and even sixteen percent as "pants on fire," a category of falsehoods so baseless as to be ridiculous.¹⁰ Trump's aide, Kellyanne Conway, following some controversial statements during the first few days of his presidency, coined the phrase "alternative facts."¹¹ Trump also co-opted the phrase "fake news" to describe any unfavorable media reports or attempts to fact-check his administration's statements.¹²

Trump's casual attitude to the truth in particular became a constant source of incredulity to the public and pundits watching his campaign. Conservative columnist Jennifer Rubin wrote in September 2016: "We concede all politicians lie. Nevertheless, Donald Trump is in a class by himself."¹³ Conservative *New York Times* columnist David Brooks judged Trump "perhaps the most dishonest person to run for high office in our lifetimes."¹⁴ David Frum from *The Atlantic* described Trump's dishonesty in May 2016 as "qualitatively different than anything before seen from a major-party nominee."¹⁵ Frum described this blatant untruthfulness as a "broken guardrail of democracy."¹⁶ While the idea that politicians lie is a familiar refrain, instances of outright lies are rare, especially in high and visible offices like that of the British prime minister or US president. Political scientist David Greenberg estimates that presidents keep about three-quarters of their campaign promises.¹⁷ However, Trump's campaign shattered that pattern; bizarre falsehood after falsehood characterized his speeches and public appearances. As Frum indicates, "the stack of lies teeters so tall that one obscures another: ... lies about his opposition to the Iraq and Afghanistan war, lies about his wealth, lies about the size of his crowds, lies about women he's dated, lies about his donations to charity, lies about self-funding his campaign."¹⁸

Between the proliferation of fake news and the clear disregard for facts, objectivity or expertise that was exhibited by the leaders of Brexit and Trump's campaign, the idea of a post-truth world has evoked concerns. The Oxford English Dictionary's choice of "post-truth" as word of the year doesn't just reflect the rise of the phenomenon but the prolific use of the word in the media and public lexicon. As politics has shifted towards blatant rejection of facts, the public has reacted in the US, the UK, and globally with

growing concerns about the lack of factualism in politics and the lack of repercussions for the statement of untruths. Media coverage of post-truth and post-truth debates have increased, and dozens of think-pieces, editorials, analysis, even reports by heads of state (such as Germany's Angela Merkel) and the UN have indicated concern over this trend and its implications.¹⁹ If objectivity and fact are no longer relevant for political and democratic decision-making, then the future of good governance looks to be imperiled. The current shift in political language seems to indicate a turn away from truth, expertise, and objectivity towards an uncertain future in public policy-making.

Neo-liberalism and Double-Truth

The term "post-truth" and its frantic proliferation warrant some critical reflection. If the new world view is post-truth, what was the previous political world view and its relationship to truth? While many theories have attempted to describe the preceding era and its political and economic leanings, none have been as prevalent as neo-liberalism. In its orthodox definition, neo-liberalism is "a modified form of liberalism tending to favor free-market capitalism"²⁰ that "transfers control of economic factors to the private sector from the public sector ... suggesting that governments must limit subsidies, make reforms to tax law in order to expand the tax base, reduce deficit spending, limit protectionism, and open markets up to trade."²¹

However, neo-liberalism should not be considered simply as an economic system, but rather as an organizing form of power and governance. Foucault argues that neo-liberalism represents a shift away from disciplinary patterns of authority based on state power and towards the emergence of the economic science as the singular logic of governance.²² This shift offers new forms of knowledge and power that have moved away from the use of force for maintaining authority toward wielding authority through a subtle and systemic governing of the individual body.²³ Wolin argues that neo-liberalism represents a transformation, driven by an ideology of the cost-effective, to the material rather than the "ideal". This leads to a form of "inverted totalitarianism"—a system that leads to "economic 'rationalization', with continual 'downsizing' and 'outsourcing'"²⁴ and "aspires to totality."²⁵ Neo-liberalism is not simply about political decisions, but also social and economic orderings and practices that seek to responsibilize the individual and grant pre-eminence to the market.

Vital to this governance is the function of truth and knowledge. According to Foucault, neo-liberalism is a governance that

"represses, normalizes, disciplines, creates regimes of truth, and also grows or gestates the populace and provokes creativity, as essentially bodiless, and without agency."²⁶ This form of governance capitalizes on truth as its discursive currency when justifying the neo-liberal process. Neo-liberal governance rests on its "ability to know the truth about the objects of governance"; it is predicated and justified as a regime of expertise and objective best practice.²⁷ Therefore, the concept and value of truth is essential to the justification of neo-liberal governance. Cotoi argues that in order to understand neo-liberal governance, a key set of questions are required to examine its relationship with truth.

How is it possible to utter true statements about persons, their behavior and ways of intervening on these? How were the truths put into practice and by whom, through which conflicts, alliances, blackmails, violences, seductions, and subordinations, as alternative to what other truths?²⁸

The notion of alternative truth is at the heart of what Mirowski considers the double-truth doctrine of neo-liberalism. In looking at the financial crisis in 2008, he argues that the relationship between truth and neo-liberal governance is that the public is offered one truth about the natural, objective nature of markets and the importance of deregulation, while another truth, the truth of how those markets are maintained, is retained for the rulemaking set of elite.²⁹ As Kotz argues, "eventually the contradictions of [institutional forms] of capitalism undermine its continuing operation, leading to a systemic crisis."³⁰ However, when crisis loomed, expertise was re-invoked to identify perceived human failings, suggest modifications, and permit the rationality of neo-liberal governance to overcome its stumbling block.³¹

Harvey argues that "the neoliberal state will resort to coercive legislation and policing tactics (anti-picketing rules, for instance) to disperse or repress collective forms of opposition to corporate power ... the coercive arm of the state is augmented to protect corporate interests and, if necessary, to repress dissent. None of this seems consistent with neoliberal theory."³² Direct coercion is only a shallow reading of the contradictions that allow neo-liberalism to persist as a governing logic. As Peck argues, neo-liberalism is not so much an attempt to minimize the role of the state as a regulatory body, but rather depends on its governance to evolve its own permutations in the functions of markets.³³ Understood through the double-truth doctrine, this conflation of a hugely bureaucratic neo-liberal state and deregulated

privatization indicate not a contradiction but rather a method of governmentality. The first, public, truth argues for the necessary and natural forms of deregulated and responsibilized governance, while the second, private, truth recognizes that despite the so-called natural element of market-driven economies, there are systems, narratives and bureaucracies required to put it in place. Neither force nor power over institutions alone is sufficient to sustain this logic, however; the justification of truth allows the very embeddedness of neo-liberalism into the fabric of its social and economic existence.

Therefore, the double-truth doctrine Mirowski envisioned is one that by its nature cannot speak its own name. As wardens of the economic and objective, those in power do not admit their own ideology or potential bias despite the contradiction of how neo-liberalism is upheld. Neo-liberal governance relies on a complex narrative of truth, expertise, and objectivity that underpins its social, political, and economic decision-making.³⁴ While the "spontaneous order" of neo-liberalism unfolds, it requires "highly regimented set of organizations to take power and impose their ideal structures of a market society," not all of which are governmental, but also corporate and social.³⁵ Neo-liberalism becomes synonymous with Enlightenment principles of "freedom, openness, dynamism, multiculturalism, innovation, growth and so on."³⁶ Wacquant and Bourdieu argue that it is in this vein that the figure of the expert is one of the crowning achievements of neo-liberal governance; the expert can prepare highly technical documents—"preferably couched in economic or mathematical language"—justifying the 'truth' of policy-choices as being the only right way to proceed.³⁷ It economizes the social—the political is removed from policy-making and replaced by expert calculations.³⁸ This grants the value of neo-liberalism's naturalistic slant—the evolution of human progress is buttressed with an endless search for optimized growth and prosperity. By equating neo-liberalism not with an ideology but an apolitical and ahistorical truth about how the world functions, the double-truth doctrine obliterates the public's ability to criticize a political and social form of governance that in fact requires significant structuring to hold in place.

Neo-liberalism and Post-Truth

Both the Brexit and the Trump campaign tapped into a growing frustration of a working class frustrated and mistrustful of what was perceived as the global, moneyed expert elite.³⁹ Both campaigns used emotion-laden claims to attack established policies and blame foreigners for domestic problems. Following the

referendum and the election, both Trump and Theresa May—who as the new British Prime Minister became Brexit's eventual torch-holder—have pushed for what appear to be more protectionist and anti-neo-liberal policies than their predecessors. Theresa May provided inflammatory anti-immigrant rhetoric to substantiate a hardline negotiating position in Brexit,⁴⁰ whilst Trump promised to ban Muslims and build a wall to stop illegal immigration from Mexico.⁴¹

However, the ramifications of Brexit and Trump's actual policies and practices are notably no less neoliberal than those that came before. May has pushed forward with standard neo-liberal promises of deregulation and privatization, including backing plans to sell "underused" NHS assets to property developers.⁴² Trump's own discourse is full of neo-liberal promises: \$10.5 billion in budget cuts,⁴³ promises to cut consumer protection,⁴⁴ environmental deregulation,⁴⁵ and, most importantly, to revoke the Affordable Care Act (also known as Obamacare) that had extended health insurance to people who previously had not been able to afford it. All of these policies are in line with classical neo-liberal policies of deregulation, privatization, and individual responsabilization.

The protectionism of their policies is not a confrontation of neo-liberalism either. As Chomsky argues, neo-liberalism and protectionism have often gone hand in hand: NAFTA was never a "free trade agreement," but rather a protectionist policy to impede Asian and European competitors while paying lip-service to the idea of free markets.⁴⁶ Protectionism has often permitted the freer trade of powerful markets versus weaker ones; neo-liberalism has always carried its predecessors' imperialistic tendencies. Furthermore, Martinez argues that the nationalist and imperialist tendencies of neo-liberalism often put to the test the question of "free trade."⁴⁷ These tendencies in states with the most powerful markets allow them to protect their own whilst promoting the idea of free trade. This manifests Mirowski's double-truth on national and cultural lines; one truth is cycled as justification and mandate, the other is understood by the few who benefit from its implementation. Martinez argued that this contradiction of truths, on both national and global levels, will lead to a crisis, which it did in 2008.⁴⁸ As a result, neo-liberalism faces an erosion at its core as its cycles of crisis and contradiction continue unaltered, even in this discursive shift towards protectionist policies and away from a status quo of global economic governance. Anderson argues that, in its unsustainability, there is an increasing tendency for more and more demographics to question the infallibility of the neo-liberal deregulated market governance, with growing support for popular social anti-elite campaigns just as Trump and Brexit.⁴⁹

Following these popular movements, Cross posits that neo-liberal governance finds it can no longer be stabilized without recourse to increasingly authoritarian tactics, which disrupts its complicity with economic stakeholders but more vitally, its logic of a natural, unaided progression towards economic freedom.⁵⁰

In this crux between the rejection of liberal elite expertise and the continuation of the same neo-liberal policies is the hypocrisy and contradiction of double-truth. The electoral success of Trump and Brexit largely depended on the rejection of the first truth, that a small group of experts could navigate the objective functioning of an apolitical market, but his and May's administrations have also continued with the same policies of deregulation and privatization, despite appeals to the working class against expert elites and claims of nationalist protectionist policies. Post-truth has thus disrupted double-truth, discrediting expertise and objectivity and the scientific naturalism of the market as the justification for neo-liberal governance. Instead current administrations have won power, visibly and publicly, with the rejection of these narratives, and wielded it with blatant untruths and little regard for facts or objectivity. The disregard for Mirowski's first, public, truth reveals not just a breakdown of politics but of credibility, and post-truth opens new spaces to challenge and confront the logic of neo-liberal governance.

Crisis of Governmentality

Foucault's crisis of governmentality offers a useful way to frame this clash of post-truth with double-truth. Since all the previous justifications and logic of governance have been ignored in post-truth but the policies and methods of government have not changed, this leads the public to question the legitimacy of neo-liberal governance in the first place. Public response to the post-truth Brexit campaign and Trump's campaign and administration does not focus simply on an individual or single issue, but challenges the neo-liberal system as a whole. Without the rhetoric of naturalism, of true "truth," neo-liberalism becomes an ideology like any other and therefore subject to political alteration.

The sheer scale of public response to post-truth is indicative of this burgeoning crisis of governmentality. Following Trump's election, large protests broke out immediately across the United States with thousands of people protesting for days following the election in the US and around the world.⁵¹ The Women's March on Washington on the day after Trump's inauguration demonstrated the breadth and depth of anti-Trump political activism, focusing on a host of issues including immigration reform, healthcare, re-

productive rights, the environment, LGBTIQ rights, racial equality, and freedom of religion.⁵² Following the inauguration, political activism has continued at unprecedented rates, from demonstrations in solidarity with Muslim immigrants⁵³ to protests of Trump's lack of transparency in showing his taxes,⁵⁴ demonstrations in support of scientific study and evidence-based policy,⁵⁵ protests against the handling of investigations into Trump's ties with Russia,⁵⁶ and demonstrations and mounting public opposition against the repeal of Obamacare.⁵⁷

In Britain, thousands turned out in a "March for Europe" following the Brexit referendum to protest the results of the vote and the lies of the Leave campaign. This was followed by another demonstration in March 2017, concerned with the Leave campaign's lies and its turn to nationalism, xenophobia, and the new austerity measures many were afraid the Conservative Party would implement with Brexit.⁵⁸ When May called a snap election, Labour chose to release its most left-wing, socialist party manifesto in decades, including revitalizing the NHS, abolishing university fees, renationalizing some energy companies and train operators, and increasing tax on the wealthiest fourteen percent in the UK.⁵⁹ Young voters were particularly mobilized, turning out for the first time en masse and helped push forward an unexpected turnaround for the embattled left-wing Labour party.⁶⁰ The decision of Labour to embrace a more radically socialist position and its eventual pay-off speaks volumes towards an invigorated willingness by the public to challenge not only political elite but the tenets of neo-liberal governance.

The number of protests against Trump and the result of the UK's snap election are not only suggestive of public discontent with unpalatable politicians; they represent a broader response to systemic issues. These protests mark an important milestone in neo-liberal splintering; as Brown argues, there is a fragmentation against those who can no longer reconcile neo-liberal institutions and their policies with practices against gender relations and rights, workers, and standards of living.⁶¹ In particular, the fight over Obamacare has indicated a shift in public attitude towards neo-liberal responsabilization, as conservatives now find themselves facing bleak repercussions from a public no longer keen to be again totally responsible for their own health and security. The desire within neo-liberal logic to economize the social is being challenged across the spectrum of political activism that is beginning to question the preeminence of the market over the safety and health of its individuals.

Such widespread public reaction to the current US and UK governments, especially with people who have never been politically

active before, can be seen as a challenge to neo-liberalism.⁶² When Wolin described the neo-liberal transformation of "inverted totalitarianism," he argued that the focus on the market and monopoly of decision-making by the economic elite lead to a "state of insecurity in which the public serves the useful function of making people feel helpless, thus making it less likely they will become politically active, and thus helping maintain the first dynamic."⁶³ Protests and political activism are not only subject to logistical obstacles, but obstacles of discursive acceptance; Baumgarten and Ulrich argue that governmentality means that a so-called rational actor is embedded into a discursive system which inherently restricts the paradigm and scope of demands of the protest.⁶⁴ Drawing parallels to Wolin's "aspirations of totality," Walker and Cooper argue that this discursive system expands the perception of neo-liberalism to "world-as-a-whole"—a thing that cannot be truly altered nor mastered—and which then offers very limited avenues to imagine change.⁶⁵ Double-truth in neo-liberalism justifies dismissal of the possibility of public good with condemnation of its "unscientific" and "unrealistic" nature and instead instills in individuals the responsibilities to not only follow the demands of government, but also to "self-govern."⁶⁶ This, as Wolin points out, undercuts the ability to organize large groups and offer a united opposition to the causes of oppression and inequality, because each obstacle and insecurity regarding health, wealth and happiness are objectively presented as a reality requiring the adaptability of individual responsibility.⁶⁷ However, as the Brexit campaign and then Trump continued to completely disregard one side of the double-truth doctrine while attempting to simultaneously strengthen the neo-liberal system, both parties across the Atlantic have been met by considerable political resistance from people who had not previously been politically active or who felt that their subjective experience could not counter the "objectivity" and "truth" dictated from above.

It is in this context that the crisis of governmentality becomes a useful tool to understand the current chaos of political order. Solidarity in public protest is a direct contradiction of individual responsabilization and the idea of natural and unalterable market forces. The movements and marches reflect not only personal discontent about failures in objectivity and expertise, but also highlight the non-elite and marginalized experiences of immigrants, women, people of colour, and of different gender orientation. Within these movements is a burgeoning recognition that racism and xenophobia are not over, that current politics and social systems are not ahistoric and asocial, and that scientific inquiry, especially regarding the growing risk of global warming, is of crucial

importance.⁶⁸

These new truths, subjective and not permitted in singular narratives of neo-liberal governance, emerge as political contestation increasingly manages multiple strands of issues and resistance. The neo-liberal construct of "governance" is hostile to the political, instead opting to mesh political with business lexicons and "reducing people to self-investing and responsabilized human capital [in] the project of a growing economy."⁶⁹ Therefore, to act politically and in solidarity becomes a Gramscian act, involving practices generated "from below" through exchanges of experiences and ideas that destabilize hegemonic and dominant social relations, including the idea of objective truths dictated by expert elite that devalues the experiential truths of everyday life.⁷⁰ The precarity of neo-liberalism—lacking predictability, job security or social or material welfare—contributes to this. Masquelier argues that although this uncertainty has a divisive influence on societies and may lead to a sense of helplessness that cripples political action, sufficient precarity may also compel individuals "lacking in structural or positional power" to appreciate the value of "bulking up the muscle of collective power" and improve solidarity in political action.⁷¹ Key to this, Masquelier argues, is recognizing that human action can lead to change,⁷² rather than accepting the neo-liberal premise that the "natural" forces that dictate economics and therefore politics cannot be altered or mastered but simply survived.⁷³ A post-truth world upends the double-truth doctrine; the naturalism of the markets, of expertise, of apolitical economic decision-making, one of the last few constants in a precarious system, is a truth that is no longer catered to by those in power. But just as the new elite have ignored the value of truth and objectivity and traded it for the uncertainty of post-truth, so have they lost their justification for ongoing economic and social precarity. As a result, political activism has risen to challenge not just the individuals in power but the very logic of neo-liberal governance itself.

Conclusion

The public mobilization that has emerged since Trump's election and the swing to the left that followed the Brexit referendum and ensuing negotiations both indicate that a post-truth world is one where more attention is being directed at systemic, not just individual, issues. Foucault argued

Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime

of truth, its "general politics" of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true.⁷⁴

Brexit, Trump and the populist movements that bolstered them have imploded the double-truth of the neo-liberal regime, and discredited the "status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true". If the narrative of truth and objectivity that justifies neo-liberalism becomes too fragmented, too unconvincing, and too proliferated with lies and impunity for lying, then it throws its logic of governance into question. The misdirection and falsehood of UKIP, the Leave campaign, and Theresa May's hardline stance against the "expert elite," while simultaneously upholding neo-liberal policies has damaged her credibility. Trump, as a reality-star millionaire turned politician, continues to pursue drastic neo-liberal policy and practice, but makes no attempt to justify his excesses and policies and disregards the importance of expertise and discourses of truth in underpinning the huge efforts involved in keeping neo-liberal policies in place. As a result, the functional power of truth has been stripped from its usual wardens of economic and political expertise, generalized, and in some way democratized into new spaces of contestation.

It remains to be seen if a new solidarity and mobilization of political engagement will affect the structural inequalities that lie at the heart of neo-liberalism. These are still early days in both administrations and while systemic reverberations and upheavals have been felt on both sides of the Atlantic, it is difficult to say whether it will be enough. Will activism and newly galvanized political involvement address deep-rooted issues of neo-liberal governance, or will these new grass-roots movements find their slogans and political drive coopted and commodified by corporations? When discussing a crisis of governmentality, Foucault is careful to avoid any prescriptive of what may come next.⁷⁵ Instead, he argues that it functions only as a reordering of how the current political, economic, and social system that govern and where the rules, spoken and unspoken, are re-examined. There is a growing sense that the policies of self-regulation that were largely considered acceptable before may no longer be swallowed so easily. With the paradigm shift of Brexit and the election of Trump, a post-truth world may not simply be an apocalyptic descent into fake

news and chaos but a potential catalyst to hold the justifying logic of an entire system of governance to account.

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A TYPOLOGY OF CYBERSECURITY GOVERNANCE MODELS

Jacqueline Eggenschwiler

Abstract

Cybersecurity has emerged as a topic of rising political and economic relevance. Public and private actors alike have become increasingly sensitized to the issue, and have put in place relevant cybersecurity strategies. Considering the proliferation of activities and processes that depend on properly functioning network infrastructures, the political, economic, and social costs related to interruption or default are alarming. The growing number of threats to the security of cyberspace has spurred calls for more expansive governance.

Despite the topic's rising importance, there is little clarity on what cybersecurity governance constitutes. Current framings exhibit a bias towards multistakeholder governance, a type of governance predominantly propagated by Western constituencies, which seeks to bring together in a collaborative fashion relevant stake-holders to deliberate and implement solutions to collective problems. Apart from contributing to theoretical muddle, multistakeholder-oriented conceptualisations of cybersecurity governance prevent critical analysis. Questioning the appropriateness of multistakeholder-dominated understandings, this paper argues that cybersecurity governance entails multiple types of governance, including hierarchical, multistakeholder-based, and marked-based types.

Introduction

Computer systems and networks have become critical determinants of the functioning of global markets, political institutions, and wider society.¹ Given their far-reaching significance, their safekeeping has become an important concern for public as well as private actors. According to DeNardis and Raymond, questions about the security and development of cyberspace have "emerged as a crucial international [issue] on par with more longstanding collective action problems such as environmental protection, human rights, and basic infrastructural systems of finance, water, and energy."²

With ever more activities and processes depending on properly functioning network infrastructures, the political, economic, and social costs related to interruption or default are formidable.

Jacqueline Eggenschwiler, "A Typology of Cybersecurity Governance Models," *St Antony's International Review* 13. no. 2 (2018): 64-78.

Assaults on critical system and network infrastructures, for instance in the form of Distributed Denial of Service attacks (DDoS) or malware strikes, underscore the need for effective governance mechanisms addressing the security and future development of cyberspace.³

However, cybersecurity governance lacks a common understanding, a formal definition, and even an agreement on the mere spelling of the term.⁴ While there might be a general appreciation of the increasing number and frequency of threats emerging from cyberspace, cybersecurity governance remains to be better understood: what are the constitutive elements of cybersecurity governance, and what types of governance does it rely upon? With a view to answering those questions, this paper analyses current, predominantly Western, framings of cybersecurity governance, characterized by multistakeholder governance, and explores alternative options of conceptualization. The paper proposes a tripartite typology of cybersecurity governance. In doing so it contributes to the creation of an analytical frame of reference related to the governance of politico-technical issues. Moreover, it highlights the fallacy of one-size-fits-all approaches to cybersecurity governance, and highlights the need for policy makers to consider modularity (i.e., the combination of different types of cybersecurity governance for a given issue area). In addition to a power struggle, cybersecurity governance resembles a collection of different co-operation problems, implying a multiplicity of different actors and institutional outcomes. Challenging the dominating Western view, that governance of politico-technical issues is most effectively done via multistakeholder arrangements, this paper argues that cybersecurity governance relies on multiple types of governance.

In terms of methodology, the paper draws on a variety of different sources, including secondary academic literature on governance, international relations, and computer science, as well as policy materials and industry developments. This paper represents a qualitative body of work. Data was collected by means of online desk research. Databases queried included, among others, Taylor & Francis Online, EBSCOhost, Elsevier Science Direct, Google Scholar, Google Books, as well as Search Oxford Libraries Online (SOLO). Data analysis followed an interpretative inductive design grounded in the textual data reviewed. Three key types of cybersecurity governance emerged from the analysis, including hierarchical, multistakeholder-based, and marked-based types.

The paper has two notable limitations, one relating to the validity of analysis, the other to the field of research. Regarding the first caveat, given the absence of tried and tested steering mechanisms and the paucity of relevant empirical data, any analysis of cyberse-

curity governance is exploratory to a certain extent. Cybersecurity incidents are characterized by a high degree of uncertainty both with regards to the probability of and the scale of devastation, and generally remain difficult to quantify. The paucity of empirical data mainly stems from the reluctance of governmental and non-governmental bodies to share relevant incident data in a distributed, transparent, and openly accessible manner.⁵

Concerning the second shortcoming, much of the topic under investigation is transitory and in constant flux. Conceptually, cybersecurity governance is a field that is likely to remain under construction for the foreseeable future. Such being the case, data reliability, validity, and generalizability have to be understood and evaluated within their discrete contexts of emergence.

This paper is organized along three sections. The first section reviews relevant background information underpinning cybersecurity governance. The second section examines current, predominantly Western, framings of cybersecurity governance and proposes an empirically and theoretically more informative typology of cybersecurity governance. The third section summarizes the findings and discusses the broader theoretical and practical implications of the paper.

Tracing Cybersecurity Governance

Cybersecurity governance is a difficult concept to grasp, a fact reflected in the proliferation and inconsistent application of the term cyber to various social and political phenomena. Any scholarly undertaking aiming to typify cybersecurity governance must begin with an examination of its underlying elements. Consequently, the purpose of this chapter is to review relevant background information related to and underpinning cybersecurity governance. The analysis elaborates on the following constitutive elements: cyberspace, cybersecurity, and governance.

Cyberspace

First described by William Gibson in the mid-1980s, cyberspace is the most elemental concept in the context of cybersecurity governance.⁶ It lays out the domain within which cybersecurity governance can be construed. Even though cyberspace has become deeply embedded in everyday life, there is little clarity on what it constitutes. The understanding of cyberspace is still nascent and the concept riddled with terminological ambiguity. Cyberspace is often equated with the World Wide Web, but the two are not the same. Cyberspace can be thought of as a network of networks, in-

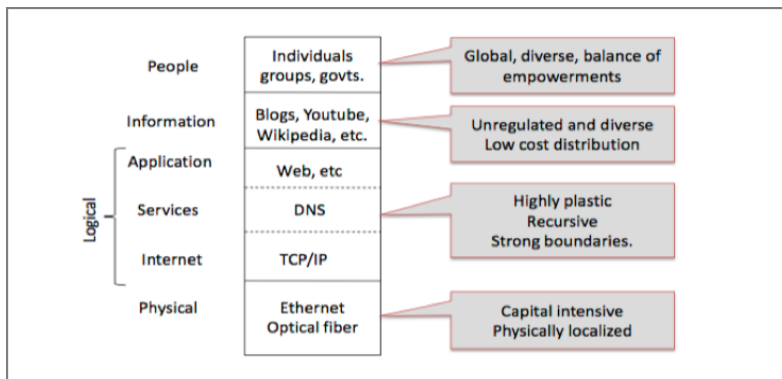
cluding both open and closed systems. The World Wide Web on the other hand denotes an information space that can be accessed via Uniform Resource Identifiers (URIs).

The number of definitional accounts pertaining to cyberspace is bewilderingly large, ranging from technological to socio-political and economic descriptions. The broad range of meanings attached to cyberspace has led some scholars to think of it as an essentially contested concept.⁷ The absence of definitional unanimity has serious implications for theory and practice. For one thing, it spurs theoretical contradiction, for another, it adds to conceptual confusion and misrepresentation. Debates around the meaning of cyberspace require more critical engagement and analysis. As Scott Jasper writes:

An ideal definition must be qualitative in substance and include technological, human, and complexity components while recognising the global nature of cyberspace.⁸

Against this background and consistent with a theorization advanced by Choucri and Clark, this paper conceives of cyberspace as a virtual domain consisting of four layers: (1) the physical layer, comprising tangible infrastructure, including, wires and computer boxes; (2) the logical layer, consisting of protocols, DNS, and software; (3) the information layer, encompassing text, photos, videos, and other user-generated information; and (4) the user layer, involving "people and constituencies who shape the cyber-experience and the nature of cyberspace itself, by communicating, working with information, making decisions, and carrying out plans."⁹

Figure 1. Layered model of cyberspace as devised by Choucri and Clark¹⁰



All of the layers interact with each other and are dependent on the functioning of the respective layer below. Such conceptualization recognizes both the physical and less physical, socio-informational characteristics of cyberspace enabling human interaction, and applies to open as well as air-gapped systems.¹¹ It highlights layer contingency, and also captures well the realities of cyber-attacks and global reach of cyberspace. Given the presence of vulnerabilities, cyber-attacks can be carried out at any one of the four layers, across open or closed systems. The number, scale, and severity of security related incidents emerging from cyberspace have dramatically increased over the past two decades, affecting political, civilian, and corporate entities alike.ⁱ Examples of open network exploitations include the 2016 Democratic National Committee email hack as well as the recent WannaCry ransomware attack. The cyber operation *Olympic Games*, better known under the name *Stuxnet*, is an example of a closed network attack.¹²

Cybersecurity

The proliferation of cyber-based security incidents has been accompanied by a shift in the perception of cyberspace. Cyberspace has evolved from a matter of low politics to a matter of high politics.¹³ Initially a science and engineering driven project, cyberspace has become an area of strategic concern, a domain of power execution, and a zone of conflict and violence.

The global, often non-transparent interconnections afforded by cyberspace have challenged the traditional understanding of leverage and influence, borders and boundaries, [as well as] international relations [and] national security.¹⁴

With cyber-weapons, financial crime, political and corporate espionage, and cyber-terrorism becoming ever more rampant, the securing of cyberspace and reliant infrastructures has become a major concern for both state and non-state actors. As a case in point, between 2011-2016, the UK government dedicated £860 million to a national cybersecurity programme intended to make the UK one of the most secure places to conduct business in.¹⁵ The private sector, too, has made significant strides in terms of securing cyberspace. Large financial institutions, for example, have developed self-made systems of security and punishment through

ⁱ For a visual overview of the world's biggest data breaches and hacks, with selected losses greater than 30,000 records, please refer to <http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/visualizations/worlds-biggest-data-breaches-hacks/>.

collaboration and information exchange, depriving fraudsters of their ability to transact.¹⁶

In terms of conceptual coherence, cybersecurity is just as ambiguously defined as cyberspace. The European Union, for example, understands cybersecurity to refer to:

the safeguards and actions that can be used to protect the cyber domain, both in the civilian and military fields, from those threats that are associated with or that may harm its interdependent networks and information infrastructure. Cybersecurity strives to preserve the availability and integrity of the networks and infrastructure and the confidentiality of the information contained therein.¹⁷

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) advances an even more inclusive definition of cybersecurity:

Cybersecurity is the collection of tools, policies, security concepts, security safeguards, guidelines, risk management approaches, actions, training, best practices, assurance and technologies that can be used to protect the cyber environment and organization and user's assets [...] Cybersecurity strives to ensure the attainment and maintenance of the security properties of the organization and user's assets against relevant security risks in the cyber environment. The general security objectives comprise the following: availability; integrity, which may include authenticity and non-repudiation; [and] confidentiality.¹⁸

The reduction of threats to the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of data and systems forms the very core of cybersecurity. Absolute security is an ideal state and near impossible to achieve. Security involves the management of trade-offs. Consequently, cybersecurity can best be conceived as measures, proactive and reactive, "designed to protect networks, computers, programmes, and data from attack, damage, or unauthorized access in accordance with the common information security goals: the protection of confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information."¹⁹

Rather than a purely technical endeavour, cybersecurity is also a socio-economic and political enterprise. The consequences of cyber-insecurity propagate beyond the technical realm. A great number of efforts geared towards making cyberspace more secure emanate from political entities, such as the United Nations Group

of Governmental Experts (UN GGE), or the European Union (EU). How cybersecurity is defined has important implications for its governance. Understanding cybersecurity as multifaceted set of technologies, practices, and processes implies the presence of equally complex and diverse mechanisms of regulation and stakeholders.

Governance

Initially construed as a space free from regulation and intervention, a position commonly referred to as cyber-libertarianism, the rising tide of threats to the security of cyberspace has spurred calls for more expansive governance.

[Governance] refers to the entirety of regulations put forward with reference to solving specific denationalised and deregionalised problems or providing transnational common goods. The entirety of regulations includes the substantial norms, rules, and programs, the processes by which norms, rules, and programs are adapted, monitored, and enforced, as well as the structures in which they operate.²⁰

Governance is distinct from government in that it implies a multiplicity of actors engaged in regulatory efforts and varying, hybrid forms of organization and levels of interaction.²¹ At the international level, where no one government holds the authority to exercise overarching, hierarchical control, governance occurs in the absence of government. That is, governance denotes a "modicum of order [and] routinized arrangements [without] a centralised authority."²²

Against the background of increasing complexity and diffusion of centralized power, the term governance has enjoyed widespread use across a great number of discourses, and has come to mean many things. In the context of cybersecurity, governance has come to refer to the entirety of regulations put forward with reference to the protection of critical internet resources and the endorsement of policy around these technologies. Dominating Western conceptualizations of cybersecurity governance exhibit a historically founded bias towards multistakeholder governance. The latter denotes a type of governance centred on bringing together, in a collaborative effort, key stakeholders to participate in the deliberation, decision-making, and implementation of solutions to problems related to the operation of the internet. This type of governance is said to have been an outgrowth of early, US-driven resource management practices that relied on the partici-

pation and contribution of different actors. Parties with a vested interest or stake in cybersecurity governance issues have come to include states, the private sector, civil society, international organizations, technical communities, as well as academic circles.²³ Such multi-actor dominated understandings of cybersecurity governance differ markedly from more authoritarian, government-centred conceptualizations of cybersecurity governance as advanced by states such as Russia and China.²⁴

Heralded as the panacea for internet-related ills, multi-stakeholder governance has received far-reaching endorsement, particularly from the West, including the United States, Japan, Australia, Canada, and most of Europe. Unfortunately, the far-reaching affirmation of multistakeholder governance has not been accompanied by much critical analysis. On the contrary, multi-stakeholder governance has been presented as teleological goal and value in itself, and has been championed across cybersecurity-related discourses without much reflection. This is problematic for several reasons. Firstly, the plain re-application of this type of governance to cybersecurity discourses impedes broader theoretical examination. Secondly, it hampers conceptual understanding.

Types of Cybersecurity Governance

Cybersecurity as an area of concern and governance has largely been addressed by means of multistakeholder governance. However, once the full spectrum of technical, socio-political, and economic implications is taken into account, the idea of a single governance structure for cybersecurity becomes untenable. No one model of governance is able to effectively address all of the different facets of cybersecurity.

Who governs the various parts of [the cybersecurity] mosaic [varies] dramatically. Some areas [are] dominated by technical experts, others by government agencies, others by regulatory officials, others by users, and so on.²⁵

With a view to providing a more rigorous conceptualization of cybersecurity governance, this paper argues that cybersecurity governance entails multiple types of governance, including hierarchical, multistakeholder-based, and market-based types.²⁶ While sharing certain attributes, each of the three types of governance is based on different rule systems, operating frameworks and moral codes. Table 1 highlights some of the key features of the different types of governance presented above.

Table 1. Summary of different types of cybersecurity governance²⁷

	Hierarchical Governance	Market Governance	Multistakeholder Governance
Affinity with problem types	Crises, disasters, problems that can be solved by executing force	Routine issues, non-sensitive issues	Complex, unstructured, multi-actor issues
Types of output and outcomes	Laws, regulations, control, procedures, compliance	Services, products, contracts, voluntary agreements, alliances	Consensus, agreements, social exchange, principles
Typical failures	Ineffectiveness, red tape	Inefficiency, market failures	Never-ending talks, no decisions
Main Actors	State actors	Non-state actors, private actors	State and non-state actors

Hierarchical governance describes a top-down style of regulation, guided by black-letter law, rules, and policies. Hierarchical governance is closely related to the Weberian ideal type of bureaucracy, which is dominated by a carefully designed, hierarchically structured division of tasks as well as impersonal authority.²⁸ Hierarchical governance is characterized by authoritative systems of centralized command and control and strict internal and external accountability procedures. Actor constellations are dominated by governmental and state-affiliated players. In the context of cybersecurity governance, hierarchical governance is visible in processes related to cybercrime, cyber-conflicts, and cyberwar. A pertinent example of multilateral, state-centred hierarchical governance is the 2001 Council of Europe (CoE) Convention on Cybercrime. Ratified by forty-nine governments, the Convention deals with copyright infringements, child pornography, computer-based fraud, and violations of network security, and presents a state-led attempt at harmonizing national criminal laws and connected provisions in the area of cybercrime.²⁹ It represents the first international treaty on criminal offences committed via cyberspace and is a textbook example of vertical international law-making. Law-making is vertical in the sense that states are regarded as superior sovereign actors, executing hierarchical command and control in the form of authoritative legislation over subordinate entities.

In contrast to hierarchical governance, market governance denotes a bottom-up type of regulation, organized along doctrines of competition and efficiency. Service thinking and output legitimization are at centre of this type of governance. In its ideal-typical form, market governance accounts for decentralization and the creation of independent, autonomous units (private actors). Ac-

tor relations are dominated by contract management and benchmarking.³⁰ With regard to cybersecurity governance, market governance is evident in areas such as malware defence and packet routing. Independent private actors regulate these non-sensitive, routine issues by means of contractual Service Level Agreements (SLAs), specifying service scope, delivery, and cost.

Multistakeholder governance represents something of a half-way house between hierarchical governance and market governance. Multistakeholder governance is based on exchange relationships between a wide range of governmental and/or non-governmental stakeholders as a means of finding solutions to collective problems.³¹ Interactions are guided by trust, reciprocity, and consensus-based decision-making. Multistakeholder governance has seen wide application across a great number of discourses. One of the most frequently invoked examples of multistakeholder governance in the realm of cybersecurity pertains to the management of the Domain Name System (DNS). The regulation of this system is guided by an inclusive approach that treats public, private, and civil actors as peers. Coordinated through the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, the DNS governance network comprises registries, registrars, ISPs, intellectual property advocates, commercial and business interests, non-commercial and non-profit organizations, governments, as well as a global array of individual internet users, working together to preserve the operational stability of the internet.

Table 2 provides an overview of noteworthy cybersecurity governance activities, ordered according to their affiliation with one of the three types of governance identified. Far from a complete representation, the table is intended to underline the argument that cybersecurity governance is concerned with more than just one type of governance, that is, multistakeholder governance.ⁱⁱ

ii The three types of cyber-security governance do not exist in hermetic isolation, but overlap at times. Hybrid versions exist but are not explicitly listed in Table 2, e.g., the global Forum of Incident Response and Security Teams (FIRST), which combines computer security incident response teams from government, commercial, and educational entities.

Table 2: Overview of cybersecurity governance activities.³²

Type of Governance	Examples of Cybersecurity Governance Efforts	Institutional Arrangements/Actors Involved
Hierarchical Governance	State-led inquiries following cybersecurity incidents, National-level computer emergency response teams (CERTs), International legal instruments (e.g., the Convention on Cybercrime of the Council of Europe)	UN, NATO, EU, OSCE, ITU
Multistakeholder Governance	Multistakeholder-guided botnet takedowns (e.g. the Conficker Working Group, or Dridex Partnership), DNS and cybersecurity-related policy development in for a like ICANN or the IETF, Cybersecurity Information Sharing Partnerships (e.g., UK CiSP)	IGF, UN GGE, ICANN, Internet Society, IETF,
Market Governance	Private sector responses to system and network breaches (e.g., Google's response to Operation Aurora), privately run computer emergency response teams (CERTs)	Software companies, ISPs, Telecommunications providers, Commercial CERTs

Cybersecurity governance involves private sector administrative decisions and contracts among private entities as much as it does hierarchical structures governing cyber-related criminal offences or multistakeholder approaches regulating parts of the DNS. The propagation of multistakeholder governance as the (supposedly) most adequate form of cybersecurity governance, seems misguided, both empirically and theoretically.

Situations of widespread crisis appear to benefit from hierarchical modes of governance. Matters of this nature often require governments to act in their principal capacity as providers of security. In circumstances of urgency, hierarchical modes of governance tend to be associated with the lowest costs of co-ordination as interventions generally follow a unidirectional, top-down logic. Public actors effectuate controlled and direct interventions. On the other hand, however, hierarchical modes of steering are inclined to suffer from rules-based rigidity and ineffectiveness. Corrective actions propagated by public entities do not always bring about

the degrees of remediation required and frequently lack transparency.

Multistakeholder-oriented governance setups seem to carry particular sway in complex, amorphous settings. Informal collaborative efforts among different stakeholders can help reduce transaction and agency costs in pervasive, unstructured circumstances. The combination of knowledge and expertise with skills-based specialization increases efficiency. However, ad hoc collaborative responses, such as the Conficker Working Group, have a tendency to battle with issues of scalability and sustainability. In the absence of formal structures and commitments, co-operation can only go as far as members are willing to contribute resources. Also, there is a risk that mitigation efforts could result in endless discussions and debates due to an absence of guidelines or unclear goals. Furthermore, as outlined by Piscitello, "informal communications may not be sufficient for all global incident response efforts, especially in situations where there is zero tolerance for error or omission."³³

Market-based forms of steering appear to be most suitable for routine security transactions, such as endpoint or information protection. Contrary to multistakeholder-oriented modes of governance, market-based means of steering offer scalability. Security provision follows a competitive, contract-based logic. However, in situations of high uncertainty and considerable risk, this logic is hard to sustain, and markets tend to fail (e.g., by raising the price for security to socially unstable levels).

The next section summarizes the findings and discusses the broader theoretical and practical implications of this paper.

Conclusion

Initially regarded as a space free from intervention, the growing number of security incidents emerging from cyberspace has spurred calls for more regulation. Although a topic of great relevance, little theoretical work has been conducted on the conceptualisation of cybersecurity governance. In an attempt to address this deficiency, this paper has reasoned that cybersecurity governance can be construed as three different types of governance, including hierarchical, network-based, and market-based types. Such a conceptualization offers a useful corrective to dominating multistakeholder approaches. Firstly, it highlights the wide range of actors and activities involved in the enterprise. Secondly, it encourages academics and practitioners to think of broader (ultra-multistakeholder) spheres and domains of cybersecurity governance. Recognizing cybersecurity governance as a concept that ex-

tends beyond the borders of multistakeholder governance allows for more comprehensive and rigorous theoretical examination of cyber events, and provides policymakers and researchers with a more nuanced framework for addressing the broad spectrum of security challenges emanating from cyberspace. Once the broad range of technical, socio-political, and economic issues is taken into consideration, the idea of a single governance structure for cybersecurity—that is, multistakeholder governance—becomes untenable. Presented as a teleological goal, the plain re-application of multistakeholder governance to cybersecurity governance has impeded broader theoretical examination and hampered conceptual understanding. Far from a monolithic, multistakeholder-dominated enterprise, cybersecurity governance is a complex web of distinct tasks of "which some are appropriately relegated to the private sector, some the purview of traditional sovereign nation state governance or international treaty negotiations, and some more appropriately multistakeholder."³⁴

In terms of policy implications, the three-pronged conceptualization of cybersecurity governance suggests that against the background of ever-increasing technical complexity, heterogeneity of actors, and blurring borders between external/internal and public/private matters, policymakers are challenged to select the most appropriate type of governance or combination of types for a given issue area of cybersecurity.³⁵ Scholars and practitioners need to take stock of the different types of cybersecurity governance presented in this chapter and develop adequate policy prescriptions and processes that allow for satisfactory programme outcomes and effective security delivery.³⁶ They need to recognise that no one mode of governance can effectively regulate the entirety of issues associated with and related to cybersecurity. Depending on the problem type (e.g., widespread security crises, critical infrastructure attacks, or routine issues), different forms of steering or combination of types of governance may yield more effective results than others.

Effective regulation of the challenges created by the transition of cyberspace into a global infrastructure at the centre of trade and security requires a variety of institutional arrangements, exhibiting different degrees of organization and authority. The development of an overarching regime for cybersecurity does not appear useful. Cybersecurity as a topic of regulation is simply too complex. A modular approach centred on the three types of governance presented in this paper, and offering different possibilities of combination, seems more appropriate and empirically relevant.

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ANTI-SYSTEM SOCIETY AND POST-TRUTH: THE IMPACT OF TRUMP AND DEMAGOGUE MOVEMENTS ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Aurora Ganz

Abstract

This article describes the impact of demagogue movements across Western liberal democracies on the international order. It applies political science and the theory of anti-system parties to international relations to highlight the limitations of traditionalist International Relations theory like the English School idea of international society. Trump and his administration are used to explore how post truth collides with several principles, values, and modus operandi of the International Society and its order, to the extent that they may represent the emergence of a new opposing (dis)order.

Introduction

The use of post-truth in international affairs is like the use of a quanco for a football match: it obstructs the game. Like sports, international relations are regulated and organized. They happen within established frameworks in which very little is improvised. Yet, today, in what we call the post-truth era, these regulating principles waver.

I argue that demagogue movements across Western liberal democracies challenge the necessity of the international order as we know it. Demagoguery, of which Trump's administration provides the best example, collides with several principles, values and modus operandi of the International Society. To support my argument, I resort to theories of political science, specifically, the concept of anti-system parties, and apply it to international relations.¹ I use the framework of the English School (ES) to connect IR archetypes, like 'international order' and 'international society,' to the concept of 'post-truth.'

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The article suggests that an anti-system society is emerging. It assumes that, as the ES theorizes, the configuration of the world today reflects the principles and values of the International Society that emerged after 1945. The article argues that demagogic movements seek to build an anti-system (dis)order, which contrasts with the existing order. In particular, both societies rely on institutions, intended as habits, practices, values, and rules, to understand and shape the world. The article compares the institution of diplomacy with the institution of post-truth, and explains why the two are not reconcilable. I conclude by suggesting that reflections on the flaws of the dominant society should go hand in hand with the impacts of anti-systemness, due to the correlative nature of the phenomena.

With regards to methodology, the paper combines empirical observation of key facts with hermeneutics. This dual approach appreciates the methodological pluralism of the English School (ES).² Observation of current affairs identifies the "story" and depicts the tendencies of "post-truth" society. The empirical phase introduces its historicity, namely the factual dimension of post-truth. It emphasizes specifically the role of leaders, their behaviours, and values. According to the ES, leaders' "codes of conduct" can be used to discern the normative content of an international society.³ Hermeneutics analyses narratives to reveal intentions, interests, and values. In particular, statesmen's discourses project explicitly and implicitly the essence of the international order they represent and defend. Little notes that "ES theory may be considered first as a set of ideas to be found in the minds of statesmen." This methodology develops the critical potential hidden in the ES framework.

I focus on Trump and his administration for several reasons. First, the current US government keeps legitimizing the use of post-truth at the highest level of both national and international politics. Second, within International Relations the US is often depicted as a leading power—or hegemonic force—of the International Society. Trump's narrative breaks the tradition, dissolving the tie between the US and the International Society. Third, Trump has played a significant role in increasing the hype on post-truth, putting the issue on everyone's agenda, lips, and even smartphone.

The Emergence of an Anti-System International Society

In political theory, anti-system parties are those movements that reject the belief systems of the main political order in which they emerge and operate.⁴ In doing so, they undermine the legitimacy

of the regime they oppose. The disconnection between system and anti-system parties creates a fracture that goes beyond purely ideological diversity: anti-system parties aspire to a complete reconceptualization of the existing order, from its values to its *modus operandi*. Anti-system parties are often described as 'non-democratic' and 'unconventional'; their actions are portrayed as 'illegal' and 'violent,' and they end up being isolated by other political actors.

The concept of anti-system party can be applied at the international level of analysis. Here the opposition happens between a dominant international society and an anti-system society, which completely opposes the former. The concept of international society was introduced and developed by the English School to depict the actual order of the international system, in spite of its anarchy. This order results from establishing common rules, prioritizing the same values, and institutionalizing and systematizing the actors' *modus operandi*. Hence, while the system was born lawless, the Society regulated it. This has predominantly been interpreted as the victory of the 'liberal' and the realization of the Age of Enlightenment. However, there are at least two main reflections to make. First, the character of the Society is not deterministic, but rather historically produced: the Society happens to be liberal. Second, the Society accepts only like-minded members. As a result, similar to what happens at the party level, the anti-system society gets discredited and dismissed by the traditional one. The current antagonism against Trump provides examples: the main narrative from within the system stresses that Trump is not 'fit' for office. Exponents of the International Society describe Trump as 'not presidential' and his values and *modus operandi* are always dismissed. Ikenberry writes that "Donald Trump's every instinct runs counter to the ideas that have underpinned the post-war international system."⁵

Trump's understanding of the world differs profoundly from all his predecessors. Previous presidents aimed to unite the world under US leadership. Since Wilson, US presidents' narratives have insisted on the idea of the US being the main demiurge of the international 'order.' Obama's quote that "the United States really is an indispensable nation in our world order" mirrors George Bush's "new world order" speech in 1999. According to Ikenberry "as the most powerful state in the system, the United States has agreed to restrain itself and operate within an array of regional and global institutions."⁶ In other words, as member of the Society, the US has accepted its rules; as the most powerful of its members, it has forged its rules.

Under Trump, the US has started dismissing the Society. For

instance, the international order is built on the recognition of the state as the dominant element of the international system, and the respect of the International Society and its institutions as referee of the order. The anti-system society deconstructs both these pillars.

First, the state suffers in an anti-system (dis)order. While the international society defends the primacy of states, the anti-system society decries it. Although many believe there is a return to nationalism, I believe that the 'we versus they' narrative is pure rhetoric. Nationalism is indeed a major sentiment among anti-system movements, but it serves demagogic objectives rather than the glorification of the state as supreme entity. This narrative hinges on the contradictory idea that politics should not be 'political.' In the anti-system society, politics is ineffective, corrupted, and useless. Although the existence of states is not yet questioned, today the anti-system society engages continuously in harsh polemics against the state. The rhetoric of demagogic movements depicts the state as an outsider. Political institutions are described in antagonistic terms. The anti-system society defends business logics and business modus operandi as the best strategies for governing and ensuring the public good. A continuous glorification of the private sector and of international anarchy clashes with traditional views and modus operandi of the International Society. Philosophers have extensively ruminated what qualities a good 'prince' or president should have; they had never thought of him being an outsider, an a-political figure. This is in contrast to the innovative approach of Trump's administration: key areas of foreign policy, including the peace in Middle East, US-China relations, the border with Mexico, counter-terrorism and US engagement in Iraq, are now managed by Jared Kushner, a real-estate developer.

Along with the near-destruction of the traditional state actor and the domestic system, the anti-system society dismisses the foundations of the international order. Most organizations and initiatives for cooperation are seen as unnecessary, most rules as useless and wrong. Trump aspires to repeal the major organizations of International Society: he believed NATO was obsolete; he openly saluted Brexit, and called the EU project 'unreasonable'; he describes the UN as a 'club for people to have good time.' Trump's endorsement of Duterte's policy of extrajudicial killings in the Philippines contradicts most international values, including the rule of law and human rights. The foundation of this destructive behaviour is a diametrically opposed world-view.

There is a tendency within anti-system attitudes to question everything that comes from the dominant society. This includes also the wide range of evidence-based policies that guide the

International Society, from climate change to existing initiatives for gender equality. While within the International Society the boundaries between right and wrong are often clear, they get blurred in the narrative and practice of the anti-system society. The emergence of post-truth as analytical gateway to reality may provide a better explanation of the divergence.

Anti-Systemic Society and Post-Truth

In spite of their opposition, the International Society and the anti-system society function in similar ways. They both consist of international organizations, non-governmental organizations, transnational networks, and individual human beings seen as composing a world society. According to the ES, what holds together the society are its institutions, namely the sets of habits and practices geared towards the realization of common goals.⁷ Institutions are here detached from any bureaucratization and refer to 'how the game is played.'⁸

Among its primary institutions, the International Society relies vastly on diplomacy and international law to establish its order. On the other hand, I identify post-truth as the main institution that the anti-system society uses to build its own (dis)order. Post-truth and diplomacy for example cannot go hand in hand. Diplomacy has constitutive and regulative implications on both the states and their relations. According to Buzan, the institution of diplomacy is based on authoritative, clear, consistent, and mediated communication.⁹ Also post-truth can be seen as an institution, a code of conduct, to the extent that it provides a tool for making international politics. Post-truth establishes norms, rules, and institutions; it reflects the belief and values of its society; it creates an independent (dis)order.

When a political establishment embraces post-truth as its code of conduct, it immediately challenges the pre-established understanding of international order. Diplomacy does not work when post-truth is exalted, and vice versa. Donald Trump doesn't practice traditional diplomacy.¹⁰ Trump's untraditional diplomatic manners have shaken the international community on more than one occasion, including with Australia's President Turnbull, the Pope, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, NATO members' representatives—especially Montenegro's Prime Minister, or The Philippines' President Duterte. Trump's abrupt (threat to) withdrawal from international agreements ignores more conventional approaches, which would go through extensive inter-agency discussions and diplomatic procedures. There is a general perception that Trump bypasses diplomacy for a 'new and distinctive ap-

proach to government,¹¹ which capsizes how the US approaches international affairs.

Post-truth describes a political culture that goes beyond the existence of factual knowledge and objectivity.¹² The concept of truth as value, a founding principle, and a policy driver is overcome. Before the anti-system society, behaviours and beliefs were not explicit: the position of the Society towards 'truth' is not clear. Lies and propaganda have often distorted reality to achieve political objectives well before the anti-system society. Critical studies have largely revealed the (not so) hidden constructions of our reality. However, prior to the emergence of anti-system society and especially prior to Trump's presidency, no authority had publicly admitted the existence of an alternative reality. The dichotomy had traditionally been between truth and lies; political discussions debated the use of lies. Today the argument divides between truth and 'alternative facts,' using the famous phrase of Kellyanne Conway, senior aide to Donald Trump.¹³ The problem is ontological: both facts exist; what you believe in only depends on you and your evaluation criteria. Trump's administration conceives truth as subjective. In doing so, it legitimizes different interpretations of reality, including tangible and quantitative facts. Talking on Trump, Washington Post journalist Alyssa Rosenberg wrote that the President spent his time "insisting he didn't say things he clearly said, denying positions he previously claimed and accusing other people of the flaws he manifests in baroque fashion."¹⁴

Post-truth is not just lies. It implies the systematization, legitimization, and institutionalization of lies. In questioning factual, objective, scientific evidence, it undermines the principles that guide evidence-based policies. For instance, in Trump's administration the ground for policy-making lacks any objectiveness or evidence. Trump's praise of conspiracy theories and unreliable sources such as Breitbart News, Fox News, and cable TV, confirm the disbelief in proven, authoritative, and scientific research.

While the anti-system society denies scientific-evidence as policy driver, the latter has increasingly built cross-sector cooperation to integrate science and research into policy making. Trump and his administration's approach to climate change is in stark conflict with existing international institutions (e.g. UNDP, UNESCO, WWF, NASA, COP21) that integrate science into policy and governance. The case of climate change is evident. While there is increasing evidence, as well as awareness and recognition of human-caused global warming, Trump famously defined global warming as 'very expensive bullshit,' 'expensive hoax' created by and for the Chinese in order to make US manufacturing non-competitive. After Trump's withdrawal from the Paris Climate Change Agree-

ment, the US is the only country not to join the deal.

The detachment of policies from science is proved also by the cuts of public spending for scientific research: for example, fifty-nine million dollars of cuts to earth science research grants at NASA, alongside a plan to end five space-based projects; spending for the Science office of the Department of Energy (DOE) would fall seventeen percent to \$4.473 billion, the lowest level since 2008; the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), one of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA)'s primary research arms, would see its budget drop by twenty-two percent, from \$514 million to \$400 million. Science is not the only field paying the price: historical facts and data are rewritten, gender and race quantitative evidence dismissed, and cooperation, humanitarian and foreign policies built accordingly.

Within the international arena, post-truth has both a destructive and constitutive power. Its destructive force scatters the institutions of the global order destroying their legitimacy and authoritativeness. Trump's administration has worked steadily to erode the basis of internationally and nationally recognized authorities. Alongside his distrust of scientific, factual, and objective knowledge, his administration has challenged what the International Society recognizes as authority.

Secondly, post-truth has a constructive power. Post-truth concurs to build a new order, providing the founding principle and the political logics behind it. Building an order on the lack of objectivity means that legitimacy gets decentralized, authority lacks authoritativeness, and political problems are detached from their scientific base.

This approach to truth brings subjectivism to its extremity. This impacts power too: in this context, authority does not need authoritativeness. Since the dominant system is untrustworthy, the traditional structures that guarantee accountability, legitimacy, and order need to be dismissed because they are unreliable. There are (at least) two reflections that need to be developed further. First, 'truth,' as axiomatic knowledge, should not be defined by any extra attribute: truth is. Post-truth opens the door to a parallel reality, which does not need to be grounded in reality. In other words, the problem with post-truth is both epistemological (how do we know the world?) and ontological (what is the reality?).

Second, in spite of the existence of truth, the anti-system society obliges us to reflect once again on the role of power in constructing alternative truth. Along with relativism and subjectivism, the problem with truth is that it is always imposed. Truth is not democratic. The dominant society has traditionally defined the norm. Although the International Society tries to portray itself as the

right one, its order is not deterministic either. This should push us to question how to balance the need for truth with the aspiration of democracy.

Conclusion

Recently, Stephen Walt, professor of International Relations at Harvard, criticized Trump's diplomacy, affirming that his "big-stick-and-no-carrots approach is making the world more dangerous."¹⁵ He continued saying that "the US has pretty much abandoned its role as a potential mediator in lots of potential hotspots. If the past twenty-five years have taught us anything, it is that few foreign policy problems can be solved simply by blowing things up."¹⁶ Yet Walt assumes that Trump endorses and employs the same language and codes of conducts of the other actors. This article shows that this is definitively not the case. In particular, the idea of post-truth as a means through which to conduct politics challenges the whole architecture of the International Society. Anti-system society neglects a pillar of the international order, namely the fact that "power is not self-justifying; it must be justified by reference to some source outside or beyond itself, and thus be transformed into 'authority.'"¹⁷ In the case of the anti-system society, the 'anti' justifies its own existence.

The article provides a theoretical overview, rather than a comprehensive sociological analysis of post-truth. It raises more questions than solutions. Its objective is to place the phenomenon of post-truth into IR theories, trying to understand its effects and implications on IR dynamics. Although post-truth can potentially capsize completely the current *modus operandi* of the international order, it is clearly too early to see systemic changes. Yet, are systemic analyses still relevant in such a dynamic reality? Scholars have recognised the lack of analysis on the creation and decay of 'institutions' and, more importantly, on institutional change which, compared to structural change, is faster and more frequent.¹⁸ There is also a clear reference to reductionist elements, of which the role and personality of leaders are crucial.

The idea of an anti-system society is used here to portray a net division between the dominant society and demagogue movements. The International Society has not yet surrendered to the emerging force of the anti-systemic Society. However, the principles, values and intentions of a post-truth society are fundamentally different from the existing order and challenge some of its foundations. In particular, the profound discredit of the authoritative actors of the International Society, from politicians to policy-makers, imply a bureaucratic restructuring and envision a future where post-truth

principles and ideas get institutionalised.

Recent phenomena escape from traditional schemes. The article resorts to a multiplicity of theoretical approaches to expand the theoretical tools at our disposal to interpret international relations and world's affairs. For instance, in political science, there is extensive literature on anti-systemic parties¹⁹ as well as on lies as political tool.²⁰ These studies may provide an innovative approach and further analytical gateways to decipher today's complex reality. The presence of potentially subversive forces within the international should push scholars to review traditionalist way of interpreting reality and power.

Notes

1 Giovanni Sartori, "European political parties: the case of polarized pluralism." *Political Parties and Political Development* 147 (1966).

2 See Robert H. Jackson, *The Global Covenant: Human Conduct in a World of States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

3 Ibid.

4 See Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*, (Colchester: ECPR, 1976.)

5 John Ikenberry, "The Plot Against American Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 96, No. 3 (May/June 2017).

6 Ibid.

7 Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* London: Macmillan, 1977.

8 Barry Buzan, *From International to World Society? English School Theory and the Social Structure of Globalisation*, *Cambridge Studies in International Relations*, Vol. 1 (95) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

9 Ibid.

10 John Lloyd, "The Danger of Trump's Mood Based Diplomacy," *Reuters*, April 28, 2017.

11 Phil Levy, "International Costs to Trump's Distinctive Diplomacy," *Forbes*, 2017. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/phillevy/2017/05/09/international-costs-to-trumps-distinctive-diplomacy/#7c71671912e7> accessed 28 January 2018.

12 See K. Horsthemke, "'#FactsMustFall'? Education in a Post-Truth, Post-Truthful World," *Ethics and Education* 12:3: 273-288.

13 Kellyanne Conway, Meet the Press interview, *NBS News*, 22 January 2017. <https://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press/meet-press-01-22-17-n710491> accessed 28 January 2018.

14 Alyssa Rosenberg, "Why feminists should be grateful every time President Trump insults a woman," *Washington Post*, 29 June 2017.

15 As quoted in Simon Tisdall, "Trump's disdain for diplomacy is making the world more dangerous," *The Guardian*, June 27, 2017.

16 Ibid.

17 Martin White, *International Theory: The Three Traditions*, 1991. 99.

18 Buzan, *From International to World Society?*

19 See for example, Giovanni Arrighi, Terence Hopkins, and Immanuel Wallerstein *Antisystemic Movements* (London: Verso, 1989).

20 See for example Hannah Arendt, *Lying in Politics: Reflections on the Pentagon Papers* (Northfield, MN: Carleton College, 1972).

EXPERTISE IN A POST-FACTUAL WORLD: THE IDEATIONAL POWER OF THINK-TANKS

Katharina Pfeilⁱ

Abstract

Uncertainty of issues on the political agenda and weak party loyalty suggest an ever more important role of policy advice in the US. However, the climate of populism and post-factual politics change the public policy landscape. In this paper, I explore how the discursive framework of ideational power could contribute to assessing the relevance of think tanks in the US today. An in-depth case-study of the announcement to withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement examines how the ideational power of US think tanks interacts with the populist communication of President Donald Trump. The case shows that institutional approaches to think tanks and the discursive framework of ideational power are complementary. Trump's amorphous framing of the debate weakens the power over ideas of think tanks and thus poses a threat to their relevance.

Introduction

Post-factual, populist political communication has dominated the Brexit referendum and both the campaign and presidency of Donald Trump. Statements like "the people in this country have had enough of experts" (Michael Gove, *Financial Times*, June 3, 2016) and "The experts are terrible" (Donald Trump, April 4, 2016) indicate this. How do research organizations like think tanks react to this growing scepticism of expertise?

In this paper, I focus on think tanks in the US. The American think tank landscape is unique in terms of the variety, number and channels to access policy-making. Four hundred of the 1,835 think tanks are located in the political centre Washington DC.¹ With the presidency of Donald Trump, US think tanks face new challenges and opportunities.² However, how anti-establishment and anti-

ⁱ I wish to thank Eleana Economidis, Sarka Grofova, Isaac Lichtenstein, Steve Kammer and two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

expertise ideas affect established think tanks has not been much investigated. This paper explores how the discursive framework of ideational power could contribute to assessing the relevance of think tanks in the US today.

Think tanks are "independent, non-interest based, non-profit organizations that produce and principally rely on expertise and ideas to obtain support and influence the policy-making process."³ From the 1980s onward, they have proliferated and attracted considerable scholarly attention.⁴ There are three widely-acknowledged characteristics of think tanks: the neutrality of their translation between politics, society and academia, the claim that public interest motivates them, and the distinctiveness of their organizational objectives. In a post-factual world, however, the relationships between the knowledge, policy, and the public change. Provided that think tanks bridge knowledge, policy, and the public, their relevance is affected by a shift towards post-factual politics.⁵ This argument requires elaboration.

First, how do the relationships between knowledge, policy and the public change? Factual knowledge is replaced by emotional appeals and personal beliefs which shape public debates.ⁱⁱ For the public, it becomes more difficult to detect fake news or self-declared expertise. At the same time, individuals can easily connect to the emotions and beliefs that post-factual or populist leaders spread. This may widen the gap between public and policy on one and knowledge on the other side.

Second, this paper focuses on research organizations, and not on individual experts. I consider think tanks as influential yet diverse organizations. Examining their political relevance, "one cannot understand experts or their expertise without an acknowledgement and appreciation ... of the organizations in which they are embedded."⁶ Compared to experts in ad hoc commissions, think tanks are permanent bodies that continuously "compete for power in the marketplace of ideas."⁷ We need to rethink their role in post-factual times to evaluate whether this is the start of a new wave of think tanks.⁸

Third, what tools help develop a scientific explanation for the relevance of think tanks in post-factual politics? I will show how the discursive framework of ideational power can complement institutional approaches to the relevance of think tanks in the US.

The remainder is structured as follows. In the next two sections, I consider definitions of think tanks and descriptions of the changing public policy climate in the US. The fourth section

ii See also the definition of post-truth in the Oxford Dictionary, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/word-of-the-year/word-of-the-year-2016>. In this paper, I do not differentiate between post-factual and post-truth.

concentrates on how the discursive framework of ideational power could contribute to an analysis of the relevance of US think tanks today. Section 5 examines the application of ideational power to the case of the withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement. Section 6 concludes.

The Role of Think Tanks

Controversies around the role of expertise in society often begin with the problem of a universal concept of think tanks and their impact on policy-making. A complete definition of think tanks is difficult because of their variation in terms of mission, size, affiliation/independence, funding, and political and cultural differences of their institutional settings.⁹ While, for instance, the so-called "DC-5" (the American Enterprise Institute, Brookings Institution, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Cato Institute, Heritage Foundation) are the largest and most prosperous think tanks in the US, most of the think tanks are small-sized and transient.¹⁰

Various models of how think tanks operate have been developed. Weaver categorizes think tanks into universities without students (e.g., Brookings, AEI, Hoover), contract research organizations (e.g., RAND) and advocacy tanks (e.g., Heritage, Centre on Budget and Policy Priorities).¹¹ Fraussen and Halpin provide a typology along the categories of research capacity and organizational autonomy into strategic, sole-trader, advocacy/partisan and amateur think tanks.¹² As Stone elucidates, the boundaries between think tanks and other forms of organization are blurred in a "dual dynamic of competition and convergence."¹³ Think tanks are chameleons, pushed to adapt to an increasingly competitive market of ideas.¹⁴ In this sense, they have become fluid organizations in between policy evaluation and policy advocacy.¹⁵

Quantifying the impact of research organizations in policy-making requires a nuanced but comparable understanding of think tanks and a robust measure of their political influence.¹⁶ There have been attempts to overcome the methodological difficulties.¹⁷ Nevertheless, these assessments provide indications rather than a conclusive identification of the impact of their ideas and expertise. Performance indicators, which track the number of media reports or testimonies before congressional committees or the number and diversity of publications, should be treated with caution. They neither provide an estimate of the quality or expertise of think tanks, nor of the long-term impact of particular ideas, nor of how ideas are spread and heard.¹⁸

Does this imply that the influence of think tanks is immea-

surable? To answer this question, we should consider the annual "Global Go To Think Tank Index Report," which claims to be the "gold standard of excellence for think tanks around the world."¹⁹ The 2016 report aims to provide a comprehensive ranking of 6,846 active think tanks worldwide. It has been under criticism for being speculative, with missing information, selection bias, and perception-ranking.²⁰ However, to my knowledge, alternative tools for impact measurement on a global scale have not yet been implemented. The impact of think tanks can be approximated through performance, media presence, expert panels or surveys, but obtaining an accurate number of active research organizations, and their large-scale categorisation is more complex than the report presents. In a post-factual world, conventional performance indicators as measures of impact may become even less accurate.²¹

The Political Landscape in the US

Besides the continuing debates around the definition and the impact of research organizations, there is considerable scholarly confusion about concepts of populism and the depiction of Trump as a post-factual, populist politician.²² The election of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the US has been described as a departure from the political status-quo, a "populist shock."²³ It entails an uncertain future for the role of think tanks. Scholars debate whether the populisms we experience in the US and in Europe are ontologically distinct from already existing conceptualizations.²⁴

In a reassessment of the definition of populism, Freeden revitalizes the question of whether populism is a movement, syndrome, pathology, style, or ideology.²⁵ According to him, we can understand populisms, if at all, as thin phantom ideologies.²⁶ That means that they only have sweeping core features in common. Beyond them, they are fragmented and internally inconsistent—a new form of "amorphous" and "discursively bellicose" ideology.²⁷

I deem three populist core characteristics important in order to understand Trump's political agenda and communication. The first component is anti-establishmentarianism. Populists criticize and challenge the status-quo. This is based on their claim to be the true voice of "the people". Instead of representing a plurality of voices, however, they usurp and replace them by an authoritarian, monocultural, nativist populist rhetoric. The public advocacy and policy positions of populists are strongly antagonistic, creating intolerance and distrust between "the people" and "the others."

This connects to the second component of populism: monoculturalism. Nostalgic outcries for control and sovereignty and the prioritization of native citizens over non-natives reflect the popu-

list intolerance of multiculturalism. While Brexit has been dominated by themes of sovereignty and control, Trump's rhetoric and agenda resemble a very nativist kind of populism. Populists politically manipulate anxiety and resentment to their own advantage, aggregating grievances and presenting threats from everywhere.

Third, populists are pseudo-charismatic, good communicators and action-oriented mobilizers. Their language is efficient, simplifying political ideas, blurring fact and fiction. The combination of the semantic flexibility of the "empty signifiers"²⁸ of populist communication with a cult of personality and strong leadership is persuasive for people who link their various own ideas to what is being communicated.²⁹

Think tanks need to react and adapt to these unfamiliar political realities. They play a more significant role in the US than in other democracies such as Canada or Great Britain and have proliferated in the last three decades.³⁰ Framing long-term public policy narratives or evaluating particular pieces of legislation, they have always been a source of policy ideas.³¹ However, the shifting public policy climate in the US since the presidential election may affect their relevance significantly. It does not resemble the time when think tanks first established their relationship to policy and the public.³²

A Discursive Approach to the Relevance of Think Tanks

Given that think tanks spread policy ideas, a framework that provides three distinct analytical categories of the power of ideas seems particularly valuable to assess their relevance. In the following sections, I examine how a discursive approach can complement institutional accounts on the relevance of think tanks in a populist public policy environment.

Discursive institutionalism is concerned with the contextualization of ideas. In a contextualized analysis, the focus lies on the "substantive content of agents' ideas and their interactive processes on discourse."³³ It examines at what policy-making stage ideational elements are used, by whom, and with what motive.³⁴ Rhetorical strategies, public debates, and the reactions of the media convey discursive interactions.³⁵

Based on Campbell, I define four types of political ideas for the analysis.³⁶ Public sentiments are normative background ideas which limit the range of publicly acceptable and legitimate alternative solutions. Paradigms are cognitive background ideas which limit the range of cognitive alternatives. Frames are the normative concepts and symbols to legitimize programmes. Programmes are cognitive concepts, theories or elite policy prescriptions to specify

policy solutions and thus facilitate action.³⁷

Scholars have struggled with measuring ideas and their effect on policy-making.³⁸ First, the verbal (or written) expression of ideas may be a systemically biased indicator. Actors may strategically deploy communication to misrepresent their ideational reasoning, which leads to systematic measurement error and tilts the explanation in favour of ideational elements.³⁹ Second, ideas are not only interpersonal but often intrapersonal, meaning that every actor has their mental maps—a black box for the outside observer. Therefore, it is problematic to prove that an agent applied the identified idea to a particular decision. Third, there are multicollinearity problems: ideas are independent but highly correlated with their material circumstances.⁴⁰

The framework of ideational power may not remedy these three problems. It may overlook information which is inconsistent with the framework or interpret ambiguous information in ways that support the hypothesis. However, in light of the problems with isolating the impact of a particular idea within the "soup of ideas," a contextualized analysis that considers the incentives of think tanks, rhetorical strategies and ideational interactions with various actors may complement institutional and rationalist accounts.⁴¹

Discursive institutionalism defines three categories of ideational power.⁴² An actor's persuasive capacity to shape the normative values and cognitive validity of ideas is categorized as power through ideas (also: rhetorical power).^{43; 44} Rhetorical ideational power has two functions: legitimising certain ideas in the overall competition of ideas within expert communities or the public as well as challenging existing dominant ideas and institutional setups.⁴⁵ Normative appeals often trump academic or scientific cognitive explanations as the reasons for certain policies might be more accessible on an emotional level.⁴⁶

Power over ideas (also: epistemic power)⁴⁷ characterizes the capacity of an actor to either directly impose an idea or to resist and disregard alternative ideas.⁴⁸ Direct imposition of ideational elements is possible when actors control coercive or institutional means of power like the mass media.⁴⁹ More indirect power over ideas such as shaming others or raising awareness do not necessarily require control over media.

When think tanks frame public debates, they hold power over ideas which is based on their epistemic authority over a particular knowledge domain. Based on the scientific status quo and their research agenda, think tanks assign legitimacy to particular ideas. They have the power to neglect alternative ideas and to classify them as unsound and unqualified for societal debate.⁵⁰ However,

epistemic ideational power is subject to contestation, especially in post-factual politics.⁵¹ Once a think tank dominates and imposes ideas in a particular policy area, other actors may challenge its position by putting forward alternative normative or cognitive arguments. Especially now that the monopoly of traditional print media is being replaced by electronic media, it is increasingly difficult to steer political communication and thereby preserve a monopoly of power over ideas.⁵²

Power in ideas (also: structural power)⁵³ concerns background ideas like systems of knowledge or institutions which determine what kind of ideas are considered.⁵⁴ This kind of ideational power refers to the institutional constraints that slowly develop over time.⁵⁵

To my knowledge, Schmidt is the first who applies this specific framework of ideational power to the phenomena of Brexit and Trump.⁵⁶ Similar to Widmaier,⁵⁷ Schmidt describes a life-cycle of ideas depending on the different stages of influence—political leaders persuade, elites consolidate, and structures institutionalize ideas. However, she does not specifically consider think tanks as part of the expert elites that extend rhetorical power and provide a mainstream consensus on the issue at stake in a changing political environment.

The Withdrawal from the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement

In what follows, I apply the framework of ideational power to think tanks in populism in an in-depth case-study on President Trump's withdrawal announcement from the Paris Agreement in June 2017.

Case selection and methodology

Mitigating climate change is widely understood as the political challenge of our century.⁵⁸ Clashing ideas, scepticism, and heated debates have always been part of the climate change agenda in the United States. Albeit the greater context of ideas and debates about climate change over the last thirty years, we limit the case to the immediate time around Trump's announcement to withdraw from the agreement.⁵⁹

Rather than claiming that idea X led to policy decision Y, the framework of ideational power allows for a qualitative examination of how ideational elements and discursive processes interact.⁶⁰ As mentioned above, performance indicators only provide inconclusive indications of the relevance of think tanks.⁶¹ Therefore, although case-studies may be less reliable and confident than

large-N studies, and have been criticized as subjective, non-replicable research designs, their looseness allows constructing first hypotheses.⁶² At this exploratory stage of the research on think tanks in the US of Trump's presidency, this may be of advantage.

Description of the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement

Environmental scientists describe the Paris Agreement in December 2015 as a historic achievement,⁶³ landmark,⁶⁴ a new beginning of the international climate change negotiations. Its central goal is to mitigate global warming by keeping the temperature increase below 2 degrees Celsius this century. The hybrid architecture of the agreement revolves around nationally determined contributions (NDCs) which are voluntary, successive, and increasingly ambitious. Transparency guidelines require all countries to submit a self-report about their emissions and implementation achievements regularly. Every five years, a global stock-take assesses the collective progress. An improved capacity building framework, appropriate financial flows, technology framework, and help for vulnerable countries will be implemented.⁶⁵

The US agreed to cut emissions by twenty-six to twenty-eight percent until 2025. For the Obama administration, this was a great achievement. They changed direction, despite hostility and debate surrounding the climate action and legislation, especially in the Republican-majority Congress.⁶⁶ Paris presented an opportunity for US climate leadership.⁶⁷ The outcome further paved the way for more activism in civil society despite the ongoing struggle over coherent climate and energy policy solutions. In 2017, around sixty percent of the surveyed Americans oppose the withdrawal from Paris Accord.⁶⁸

Climate change supporters have won growing support but continue to be disorganized.⁶⁹ Surveys show that environmental concerns are still of secondary priority in the US. The Americans prioritize national security and their economy over environmental issues. They are not willing to give up their freedom (of choice) or to pay more to protect the climate.⁷⁰

Challenges of think tanks in populism from an institutional perspective

Rastrick analyses how the departure from the status quo affects think tanks in the US from an institutional perspective.⁷¹ Emphasizing the distinctiveness of the institutional composure of the political system in the US, he assesses how think tanks operate in the new public policy landscape. He identifies two opportunities and four challenges.⁷² Civil society scepticism increasingly pressur-

izes think tanks to justify their roles. Closed executive decision-making and Trump's isolation from public policy voices hamper their capacity to inform decision-making.⁷³ Withdrawal of governmental funding will impact those think tanks without a diversified funding base.⁷⁴ Rapid shifts of policy priorities challenge the provision of long-term recommendations and the capacities to inject timely, substantial, and informed research into policy debates.⁷⁵ A "business as usual" mind-set will not lead to the same levels of influence and access as in previous administrations.⁷⁶ My analysis will complement these identified institutional challenges with an ideational analysis.

Due to the scope of the paper, the analysis is limited to what types of ideas are conveyed in selected publicly available documents such as public statements and blog posts. Two think tanks shall be in the centre of the analysis: The World Resources Institute (WRI) and the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (C2ES). Both are listed in the "Top Ten Environment Think Tanks."⁷⁷

WRI is a global research organization which is represented in over fifty countries, with over 700 experts and staff. It aims to transform big ideas at the intersection of the environment, economy and human welfare into action. Moreover, it publishes independent research to identify risks, develop opportunities and then shape business strategies, government policies, and civil society action.⁷⁸ According to its most recent annual report, the US government provided WRI with eight percent of its funding in 2016. Other Government/international resources gave forty-nine percent and most of the rest came from foundations (thirty percent) and corporations (ten percent). Eleven percent of the budget (\$9,865) was allocated to climate research.⁷⁹

C2ES with the mission "Working Together for the Environment and the Economy" also presents itself as independent, nonpartisan, and non-profit in its goal of contriving practical solutions to global warming.⁸⁰ It has twenty-three employees and is the successor of the Pew Center on Global Climate Change.⁸¹

According to C2ES's most recent annual report, the US government provided seventeen percent of its funding in 2016. Foundations gave thirty-two percent and most of the rest came from business philanthropists (fifteen percent) and membership dues (twenty-three percent). Thirty percent of its annual budget (\$3,128) was allocated to domestic and international policy.⁸²

It is important to emphasize that the results of this analysis are limited to the specific case and setting. Significant national differences in the role of think tanks limit the generalizability of this specific case study.⁸³ The following must further be treated with caution because it provides a selective interpretation of

Trump's rhetorical strategies. Especially the absence of coherence in Trump's communication makes a systematic analysis difficult.⁸⁴

The ideational interactions between Trump and the two think tanks

On the first of June 2017, President Trump announced the withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement. Due to legal risks, economic disadvantages and the loss of sovereignty, the US will renegotiate or enter a new arrangement.⁸⁵

Dissecting Trump's statement into different ideational elements, the three components of populism in his communication become evident.⁸⁶ He uses vague, normative concepts of sovereignty, fairness and equality as ideational frames to legitimize the decision to withdraw. Paradigmatic ideas about the economy are attached to these frames to persuade the audience cognitively. The lack of programmatic ideas, i.e. specific policy solutions, reflects the uncertainty surrounding this decision and the emptiness of his idea of renegotiation.

President Trump exerts emotional power through ideas in the withdrawal speech. Persuasion through ideas need not be entirely rational or factual. In fact, Trump may increase his rhetorical power with his incoherent, emotional communication. He uses vivid and emotional language, e.g., "their wish to see us remain in the agreement is so that we continue to suffer this self-inflicted major economic wound."⁸⁷ Normative frames and cognitive concepts are closely tied together: "The Paris Accord would undermine our economy, hamstring our workers, weaken our sovereignty, impose unacceptable legal risks, and put us at a permanent disadvantage to the other countries of the world."⁸⁸

Trump challenges the epistemic power of the establishment, but also manipulates facts and studies from established think tanks to his own advantage. First, he challenges the status-quo on climate change by undermining opinion leaders in the established expert and political elite, such as UN officials, and Green Climate Fund representatives.⁸⁹ He questions the elites' power over ideas by blaming the economic situation of the US, the disadvantages of the agreement, and the state of finances (\$20 trillion debt) on the former administration. Second, Trump challenges existing dominant paradigms and institutional setups, such as international cooperation or climate solidarity. He legitimizes a limited set of ideas by excluding alternative views or evidence, and blurs truth and untruth, for example, by depicting that the "others laugh at us as a country."⁹⁰ Rather than engaging with substantial environmental ideas within the accord, he frames the facts in a way to match his populist rhetoric.

The diverse landscape of think tanks in the US circulates various ideas and pieces of evidence for a cognitive justification of populist policy-making. This allows Trump to cherry-pick and assemble the facts around normative framing. Two think tanks are associated with actively supporting Trump's decision. The Competitive Enterprise Institute (CEI) as "the think tank that destroyed the Paris Climate Agreement"⁹¹ and the Heritage Foundation, an advocacy tank which is one of the "DC-5."

The CEI has the goal to promote freedom and fairness, entrepreneurship, innovation, and the prosperity to flourish. It associates the Paris Agreement with energy poverty, job loss, foreign interference, and enormous political and economic costs.⁹² Trump should not break his election promise and yield to global pressure on climate change. Furthermore, it evaluates Trump's announcement as a positive move to a brighter future, away from the "25-year misadventure in global governance" (CEI Director, Myron Ebell).⁹³ This would guarantee low energy prices in the long run and economic growth of 3 percent per year.

Trump establishes post-factual power over ideas, by imposing his truth, and selectively borrowing facts from climate-sceptic think tanks.⁹⁴ He attempts to dominate and control the meaning of the ideas surrounding the economy, international agreements and climate action. For instance, according to Trump, the agreement will not be able to deliver any of the degree Celsius targets, but only a "tiny, tiny amount." However, the 0.2-degree reduction he refers to is not a negligible amount on a global scale. Stating that there will be close to no reduction by 2100, he ignores scientific evidence which projects the impact of the agreement at just below one degree Celsius temperature reduction.⁹⁵

On the one hand, Trump criticizes and undermines expertise, but on the other hand, he selectively uses expert opinions to legitimize his ideas. It is interesting to see that he only partly uses rhetorical power to challenge the establishment. Trump selectively assumes the epistemic ideational power of advocacy think tanks to establish his own epistemic power. He cherry-picks suitable facts and expert evidence to justify his decision, presenting only his truth. Selective economic ideational concepts support the justification of the withdrawal through frames, paradigms and public sentiments. Trump invokes a scenario for 2040 when Paris would cost the US nearly \$3 trillion and 6.5 million industrial jobs if the US complied with the agreement. He adds that these jobs would not be lost but transferred to foreign countries. This is underpinned by research from an economic consultancy firm, the National Economic Research Associates (NERA). Basing his cognitive ideas on their evidence strengthens his power through ideas

and makes his justification more persuasive.

However, Trump's claims about economic damage are implausible. The original report and a response of NERA to the use of material from their study reveal that Trump mis-characterizes the study. He is highly selective in the evidence he picks.⁹⁶

The NERA study aims to investigate the challenges for reducing emissions in the US industrial sectors long-term. It is not to a cost-benefit analysis, nor does it recommend any institutional arrangements. Rather, it models five different scenarios to account for uncertainty. Using the results for an estimation of the effects of the Paris Agreement with a single implementation scenario and at a single point in time is a rhetorical simplification on Trump's side.

Beyond that, according to a WRI evaluation, the conclusions in the study are deduced from an unrealistic scenario of transformation towards decarbonization. Further, the focus on industrial sector emissions distorts the results.⁹⁷ Climate action is presented as too expensive. The costs would decrease due to additional innovations and incentives for low-carbon solutions.⁹⁸ An economy-wide target would require an analysis of other sectors with cost-effective solutions to reduce emissions.⁹⁹

Both think tanks employ power over ideas, but in different ways. They neglect Trump's arguments by classifying them as unsound, illogical and unqualified for societal debate. The WRI does not address Trump's normative ideational justification for his withdrawal decision. Remaining on a cognitive, fact-checking ideational level, it assesses that Trump's argumentation is flawed. On the contrary, the C2ES analyses ideas of sovereignty and competition and addresses Trump's antagonistic framing.

The WRI evaluates the withdrawal decision as a "colossal mistake."¹⁰⁰ Its core claim is that Trump's withdrawal announcement exposes that he fundamentally misunderstood the agreement. Criticising Trump for his backward economic thinking, the WRI advances the paradigmatic idea that we need not choose between economic growth and climate activities.

The ideational power of the WRI is mainly based on policy-related, cognitive concepts, and theories, addressing three themes: the renegotiation, diplomacy, and the economy. It emphasizes that Trump does not address the specifics of the re-negotiation, nor issues of foreign relation or diplomacy or the economic advantages of the agreement.¹⁰¹ Thereby, the WRI reveals Trump's attempt to exclude ideas which are key to the debate to withdraw.

Contrary to the WRI, the C2ES responds to Trump's ideas of sovereignty, competition and addresses the antagonistic rhetoric. The C2ES describes the decision as ignorant, profoundly disap-

pointing and a reflection of Trump's "fundamental misreading" of the agreement. It directly responds to the paradigms and frames which Trump powers through his speech. Hence, the ideational confrontation seems to be more multi-levelled in the C2ES's reaction to the withdrawal than in the WRI's, which addresses ideas on a highly technical, cognitive level.

The C2ES explains that instead of undermining national sovereignty, the Paris Agreement would in fact address Trump's concern that "other countries do nothing."¹⁰² Transparency is a core achievement of the agreement. The parties of the agreement committed to transparently report their goal which ensures that they know about each other's part in the challenge of reducing emissions. Hence, this think tank clarifies that all countries are together in the challenge of climate change and economic transition. It stresses the paradigm that instead of isolation, more engagement should lead to what Trump demands. More cooperation would result in more respect for national sovereignty, mutual trust and confidence.

In theory, epistemic power refers to how experts frame the scope of discussion. However, in this case the framing of the debate occurs on Trump's side and the think tanks react to him. Trump dictates their agenda. Think tank experts challenge Trump's credibility, his employed frames and facts. In this sense, I would argue that the ideational interaction is reversed: instead of being undermined by a populist, the WRI and C2ES contest the spurious epistemic power Trump borrows from the CEI and the NERA study.

The pitfall for think tanks is that they do not fully respond to Trump's populist rhetorical framing but concentrate on his borrowed facts. They attempt to bridge the widening gap between knowledge and politics in post-factualism by providing scientifically proven facts. However, Trump connects normative and cognitive ideas to one amalgam of populist anti-establishment rhetoric. The ideational power of think tanks is considerably weakened by Trump's overall amorphous populist rhetoric. They do not manage to spread substantial policy ideas or frame the scope of debate themselves, but rather conduct fact-checking on the terms he dictates.

Conclusion

This paper has explored how the discursive framework of ideational power could contribute to assessing the relevance of think tanks in the US today. There is neither a universal definition of think tanks nor of the unfamiliar populist political reality they operate in. This makes them a difficult object to study. The political climate

in the US differs from the time when the first think tanks established themselves. Now, these chameleonic organizations need to react and adapt to the new political environment. The shifting public policy climate in the US since the recent presidential election affects their rhetorical strategies and the need for justification of their role in policy-making significantly.

This paper has examined ideational power as a complementary analytical framework to institutional and rationalist approaches. It provides a lens to analyse rhetorical strategies in ideational terms by categorising types of ideas and contextualising them. Ideational power determines how think tanks remain relevant in an ideational environment where President Donald Trump (a) employs rhetorical ideational power to challenge the establishment, and (b) borrows spurious epistemic ideational power from advocacy think tanks and imposes post-factual frames on policy issues.

Trump uses rhetorical ideational power to challenge existing dominant ideas and institutional setups, such as international cooperation or climate solidarity. He legitimizes a limited set of beliefs, imposing his paradigms and frames and excluding alternative ideas on the economy.

The WRI and the C2ES employ epistemic ideational power in response to Trump's statement. They neglect Trump's ideas and classify them as unsound, illogical and unqualified for societal debate. Trump, however, does not only contest the epistemic ideational power around, for example, climate solidarity and the economy, but also borrows alternative ideas from advocacy think tanks.

Ideational interaction is reversed in this case. Trump cherry-picks and manufactures suitable expert evidence to justify his decision. The think tanks challenge Trump's ideas, credibility, facts and, ultimately, the decision to withdraw. Instead of being undermined by a populist, the WRI and C2ES contest the epistemic power Trump borrows from advocacy think tanks (mainly the CEI and the NERA study). They further attempt to bridge the widening gap between knowledge and politics in post-factualism by providing scientifically proven facts. However, they do not manage to spread substantial policy ideas or frame the scope of debate themselves, but rather conduct fact-checking on the terms Trump dictates.

Extending the temporal or spatial boundaries of the case or the selection of think tanks would make the findings more robust. As has been shown in other case-studies, ideational power is a useful tool to analyse the change of ideas over time. A more faceted comparison of think tanks, on the independence-ideology spectrum,

would specify the relevance of policy vis-à-vis advocacy tanks in populism. Moreover, more diverse data would enrich the study. In the case above, I mainly consider blog posts and statements. A qualitative examination of various materials would constitute a full contextualized analysis. It would allow us to investigate the effect of just-in-time blogging on online platforms vis-à-vis in-depth reports, interviews, or testimonies before legislative bodies in a rapidly changing post-factual world.

This paper has contributed to the question of the relevance of think tanks in a post-factual world. It considered a framework that helps develop a complementary scientific explanation of the relevance of US think tanks in the public policy environment of Trump. Second, it applied the framework of ideational power to the case of the withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement. Even though the empirical analysis only considers a short excerpt of the overall climate debate with two think tanks in-depth, it provides interesting insights for both the ideational scholarship and the research on think tanks.

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DO GOOD FENCES MAKE GOOD NEIGHBOURS? NEIGHBOURHOOD EFFECTS OF FOREIGN FUNDING RESTRICTIONS TO NGOS

Michelle Reddy

Abstract

This study investigates the rise of legislative restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs, focusing on the influence of neighbourhood effects of countries within the same region adopting similar legislation. Legislative restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs are most likely to occur in hybrid and authoritarian regimes, which are most prevalent in the developing world. Drawing from a dataset of sixty-five countries implementing foreign-funding restrictions to NGOs between 1993 and 2016, this study uses comparative historical analysis to examine neighbourhood effects of foreign funding restrictions in Eurasia and East Africa. In a final step, it uses preliminary social network analysis based on Twitter API to examine counter-mobilization in the only two countries that have successfully resisted foreign funding restrictions: Kyrgyzstan and Kenya.

In a departure from previous scholars, the study finds strong support for neighbourhood effects, evidenced by Russia's 2012 foreign agent law in Eurasia, as well as Ethiopia's 2009 legislation in East Africa. These neighbourhood effects are often due to historical and economic ties (Russia and Central Asia), including regional economic organizations, migration ties, or the experience of regional conflict spillover due to recent democratization revolt or terrorist attack in a neighbouring country. Finally, transnational linkages to international NGOs, particularly in terms of human rights and environmental organizations, are evident in social media networks of civil society organizations contesting foreign funding restrictions in Kenya and Kyrgyzstan. This provides support for the importance of interorganizational linkages with international organizations in countries where restrictive legislation is being contested.

Introduction

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been the building blocks of democratization and development policy since the 1990s, advancing health and educational development goals as

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well as driving transnational advocacy. However, since 1998, there has been an incremental, and recently more sudden, rise in legislative restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs,ⁱ reflecting, in more recent years, wider democratic backlash in countries that were assumed to be on the road to democracy.

What explains the rise of legislative restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs? This study focuses on the rise of such restrictions in hybrid regimes,ⁱⁱ given that countries with hybrid regimes are experiencing democratic pushback and are prone to tension between civil society (including NGOs) and government. The rise of hybrid regimes is not a new phenomenon. Levitsky and Way¹ pointed to the proliferation of competitive authoritarian regimes in 2002. However, Carothers and Brechenmacher indicate that the pace of democratic reversal has accelerated in recent years, and democratic pushback is occurring around the world,² whilst simultaneously we see electoral victories of populist and nationalist leaders in democratic states.³ While there is much scholarly debate over whether economic or social and cultural factors contribute most to rising populism, Berman argues that populism is more of a consequence of democratic dysfunction, rather than a cause, and signals that domestic democratic institutions are not responding to, or are unable to respond to, societal challenges.⁴ Restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs indicate recognition of the mobilizing power of global civil society and the desire to use legislative means to restrict its influence when it is a challenge to executive power.

The existing literature regarding the rise of foreign funding restrictions to NGOs is highly inconclusive. Overall, foreign funding restrictions are most prevalent in authoritarian and authoritarian-leaning regimes, where there is electoral competition⁵ and legislative restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs typically arise around election time.⁶ Funding from NGOs may provide opportunities for opposition groups and is often viewed by leaders as a way to intervene in the political process, particularly during elections. The general consensus is that leaders adopt foreign funding restrictions when they perceive threats to their legitimacy during election time.

i Foreign funding restrictions most directly apply to organizations registered as national NGOs and local CSOs, the international NGOs that finance them, and international NGOs registered as operating in a country with restrictions.

ii Here, I draw upon Levitsky and Way's (2002) definition of hybrid, or competitive authoritarian regimes as "civilian regimes with democratic institutions that permit meaningful competition for power, but where politics strongly favors the incumbent so the regime cannot be labeled democratic."

Scholars disagree as to whether neighbourhood effectsⁱⁱⁱ and development aid are significant variables, or whether democracy in and of itself significantly lowers the risk of adoption of foreign funding restrictions.⁷ While Carothers and Brechenmacher⁸ suggest that countries may be more likely to enact foreign funding restrictions if their neighbours have similar laws, Dupuy, Ron, and Prakash find that neighbourhood effects are inconclusive.⁹ However, isolating domestic processes within countries cannot occur because of variation in democracy over time and space, as well as the fact that the likelihood of transition is rooted in shared histories with regional neighbours.¹⁰ The level of democracy in a country is potentially influenced by the level of democracy in neighbouring countries, or other countries sharing important economic or political ties.¹¹ By creating a new dataset, this study maintains that leaders are inspired by leaders in neighbouring countries, with whom they face similar economic and political challenges, to adopt similar restrictions on the foreign funding of NGOs.

Though foreign funding to NGOs provides support for social services such as education and health, leaders enacting legislation prioritize domestic concerns over the mobilization of civil society and opposition groups.¹² The provision of social services by NGOs may also give legitimacy to leaders who are unable to provide education and health, or other social programs, otherwise. With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the rapid successive waves of democratization around the world, NGOs proliferated in the developing world as carriers of technical and scientific expertise, as well as norms of Western civil society, specifically in the realm of human rights and environmental rights. Prior to the 1990s, foreign aid was exclusively transferred through government channels, however international donors increasingly reallocate development aid to NGOs.¹³

Boli and Thomas maintain that international NGOs played a central role in the development of a comprehensive world culture within a global civil society.¹⁴ International organizations, particularly in the domains of human rights, education, and environment, were formed to develop and diffuse technical standards. Alongside economic organizations, they catalyzed the spread of "global institutions and world cultural principles of scientific rationality, progress, individualism, and universalism."¹⁵ Similarly, Bromley notes the increasingly scientific emphasis among international development and nongovernmental organizations,

iii Here I define neighbourhood effects as the interaction between the adoption of legislative restrictions by a country, and the adoption of similar legislation by its neighbours at the regional level.

as part of a rationalizing world culture.¹⁶ In particular, in fields such as health¹⁷ and education, organizational aims shifted from charity to rights.¹⁸ International NGOs increasingly outsource service delivery more locally and take part in transnational advocacy. Transnational advocacy networks emerged to diffuse information, such as scientific studies, international education standards, and global human rights norms from international experts to influence policy outcomes in developing and democratizing countries.

World society theory assumes that global scientific and human rights norms and practices diffuse across borders, carried by international organizations and communities of experts. However, given the rise of populism in the current post-factual world, it is evident that practices countering the diffusion of a world society are spreading. Pizmony-Levy notes that rather than one world society, there may be multiple competing ideas circulating transnationally regarding the organization of society, which travel across borders. Pizmony-Levy suggests that world society theory marginalizes the process of institutionalization at the national level given its core assumption of diffusion.¹⁹ The carriers of global scripts, international NGOs, will have different capacities in different times, also depending upon their power.²⁰ Lao goes further, suggesting that there is global spread for some ideas; however, there is a burnout.²¹ Global scripts may diffuse but diffusion may not be continuous. Support for certain ideas, and certain policies, may vary with time, particularly in terms of policy trends. In particular, Lao gives the example of neoliberalism, which received strong support but then eventual backlash. Similarly, Steiner-Khamsi maintains that in particular moments systems may look outside themselves to other national systems, to borrow policy, and in this process of selective policy-building, externalized policy is translated locally.²² The institutionalization of competitive elections, therefore, may not necessarily indicate complete democratization or a robust civil society. The rise of foreign funding restrictions reflects the notion that executive leaders, around the time of elections, may be inspired by the legislation of their neighbours to enact restrictions on civil society, and garner public support by presenting them as counter-terrorism measures, or as motivated by anti-foreigner, anti-Western, sentiment. The adoption of foreign funding restrictions may also reflect a move away from a more interconnected, globalized world, towards assertions of state sovereignty, within a context of parallel regional trends by neighbours with shared historical and economic linkages, or those experiencing similar crises. The rise of populism worldwide illustrates global pushback to once taken-for-granted global norms. While a rationalized, scientific world

culture spread throughout the world since the 1990s, particularly carried by international NGOs, the political process, incentives of leaders, and individual country agency,²³ are also important in the institutionalization of these norms.

To provide a more comprehensive explanation for the rise of foreign funding restrictions to NGOs, particularly given that previous studies only included foreign funding restrictions until 2011, I create a new dataset through 2016. The dataset highlights a particular spike in foreign funding restrictions since 2012, particularly in certain regional neighbourhoods. In my dataset of sixty-five countries with restrictions, there are nineteen hybrid regimes, all aid-dependent, and thirty-one authoritarian regimes.^{iv} I then use comparative historical analysis to examine the internal logics of individual countries adopting foreign funding restrictions, within the two regions most impacted by restrictions, Eurasia and East Africa. In a final step, I use preliminary social network analysis through the use of Twitter API to examine the counter-mobilization in two countries that successfully resisted restrictions: Kyrgyzstan and Kenya.

In terms of democratization and pushback against democratization, neighbourhood effects are evident in the adoption of foreign funding restrictions, which are central in the relationship between the state and civil society. As democratic backlash has spread through Eurasia and East Africa, so has the adoption of foreign funding restrictions, which Christensen and Weinstein²⁴ argue is a tactic in the repertoire of authoritarian-leading leaders, often paired with other reforms limiting civil society. Overall, external global influences of pushback against civil society are evident, but particularly more acute in certain regions where there is more democratic backlash: Eurasia and East Africa. The rise of hybrid regimes in Eurasia and East Africa reflects the notion that the level of democracy in one country may be influenced by its neighbours, particularly due to shared histories, economies, regional crises, and migration patterns. Internal logics of countries adopting restrictions reflect wider regional patterns in response to global civil society, as well as commonalities across transitioning regions.

iv Hybrid regimes with legislative restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs include nineteen countries in total: Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Cambodia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda, Ukraine, Venezuela, and Zambia. Authoritarian regimes with legislative restrictions include thirty-one countries in total: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Burundi, Cameroon, China, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Laos, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Russia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.

Domestic Challenges within Hybrid Regimes, and the International Environment

In an increasingly globalized world, the external environment influences domestic politics. This is particularly true in aid-dependent countries. All of the hybrid regimes with foreign funding restrictions in the dataset are also aid-dependent. Levitsky and Way note that divergent paths of hybrid regimes during the post-Cold War era are tied to countries' relationships with the West, as the post-Cold War international environment affected countries differently.²⁵ However, there may be shared logics across geographic neighbourhoods of hybrid regimes that help explain the global pushback against foreign funding to NGOs. Leaders anxious to maintain power despite domestic challenges may be more likely to be inspired by legislation adopting foreign funding by their neighbours experiencing similar challenges.

First, Carothers maintains that the geopolitical shift of power away from the West in many authoritarian-leaning regimes accounts for the closing space for civil society.²⁶ Many governments in developing and post-Communist contexts are pushing back against Western influence. For instance, Russia is increasingly assertive in the post-Soviet space to demonstrate political strength for the Putin government at home, domestically insecure due to the worldwide drop in oil prices. These manifestations are not only military, as in the cases of Ukraine, the annexation of Crimea, and airstrikes in Syria, but are also reflected in increasing political influence in Eurasia, particularly with other oil-producing countries or those dependent on remittances from migrants in oil-producing countries.

Second, since the Color Revolutions (pro-democracy uprisings in several former Soviet states) and the Arab Spring, there has been a heightened realization of the power of civil society, particularly by uneasy authoritarian and authoritarian-leaning leaders. Concurrently, civil society organizations have increasingly been a cornerstone of peacebuilding, democratization, and development strategy since the 1990s. The heightened potential of their organizing power and their increased access to international funding is catalyzed by other revolutionary processes such as literacy, university education, urbanization, and technological, enabling citizens to mobilize more easily than ever. The Color Revolutions and the Arab Spring led many neighbouring leaders to restrict the space for civil society out of fear of mass social mobilization.

Authoritarian-leaning leaders clinging to power for generations typically instrumentalize outside crises and fears of terrorism to clamp down on associations that may challenge further longevity of their rule. Therefore, as a third reason for the closing space for civil society, Carothers also points to the proliferation of counter-terrorism measures affecting organizations, either purposely or not purposely affecting NGO operation.²⁷ In Eurasia and East Africa, legislative restrictions not only exist to counter Western influence but also seek to limit the influence of Islamic organizations, often veiled in counter-terrorism legislation. Executive leaders frequently instrumentalize the fear of radical Islam to garner popular support for NGO restrictions, as in the case of Kenya after Al-Shabab attacks in Somalia and Kenya sent reverberations through East Africa. Terrorist attacks may also lead to a rise in counter-terrorism and money-laundering measures to restrict associations that are critical of the government and have no link to terrorist groups.

Fourth, the process of uneven development in many resource-rich countries is also a contributing factor to the closing space for civil society. Foreign funding restrictions on NGOs are also most likely to occur in economies dependent on extractive industries, which are themselves most prevalent in the developing world.²⁸ Resource-rich countries are often subject to worldwide economic shocks due to their reliance on commodities, therefore increasing the likelihood of economic crisis, another risk factor for regime legitimacy. Within Eurasia, regional economic agreements may pre-empt the diffusion of legislation in related areas.

Finally, migration and refugee flows are an important consideration for the pushback against global civil society. As in the case of Eurasia, countries dependent on remittance flows from migrants working in the oil industry in neighbouring countries are also more economically dependent on their neighbours, and as mentioned above, are more vulnerable to economic crises potentially destabilizing regimes. As noted by Freedom House, the migration crisis and economic downturn both threaten the stability of Eurasia's [current] entrenched dictatorships.²⁹

Similarly, East African leaders also view refugee flows as threats to their stability, citing the necessity of counter-terrorist measures as well as lamenting the influx of international aid workers. East Africa contains the largest refugee camps in the world, attracting large international NGOs, and prompting counter-terrorism legislation also aimed at restricting foreign funding flows to NGOs. Overall, in this context of economic crisis, heightened capacity for citizens to mobilize through the use of technology and transnational influences, migration crises,

and global terrorism, authoritarian-leaning leaders are inspired by legislation within their region adopted by other leaders with similar challenges and similar historical legacies, to restrict a global civil society that may strengthen their opposition.

Data Collection

I constructed a database of countries with foreign funding restrictions from 1993-2016. I initially consulted Dupuy, Ron, and Prakash's list of countries with foreign funding restrictions (1993-2011),³⁰ and Christensen and Weinstein's list of countries with restrictions (all years until 2011).³¹ I then crosschecked with the ICNL Law Monitor,³² especially to update the data to include the 2011-2016 period. I also consulted Freedom House,³³ Human Rights Watch,³⁴ CIVICUS State of Civil Society Reports,³⁵ USAID Annual CSO Sustainability Reports,³⁶ World Politics Review,³⁷ NGO Monitor,³⁸ the Carnegie Endowment,³⁹ and various legal texts. In order to capture national dynamics and popular opinion, particularly for these cross-case examples, I supplemented the above databases, legal texts, and reports, with articles from *Foreign Policy*,⁴⁰ the *Economist*, the *Economist Intelligence Unit*,⁴¹ as well as many national newspapers such as *The Moscow Times*,⁴² *The Washington Post*,⁴³ the *Guardian*, and the *Nation*.

Finally, I specifically discuss two regions where there is substantial evidence of neighbourhood effects of foreign funding restrictions: Eurasia and East Africa. Bartlett and Vavrus⁴⁴ advocate a new approach to case studies – the comparative case study – attentive to macro, meso, and micro dynamics, particularly in terms of tracing a phenomenon of interest. The comparative case study approach compares and contrasts as well as traces across sites or scales.⁴⁵

Findings

In examining the year legislation was enacted in each country, there is clear evidence of neighbourhood effects of foreign funding restrictions, particularly given the spread of Russian foreign agent^v laws in Eurasia and the spread of Ethiopian foreign funding restrictions across East Africa. A review of foreign funding laws reveals a spread of restrictions targeted at environmental groups in Latin America. There is also a spread of restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs further east, beyond Eurasia, in India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, and China.

^v The connotation in Russian of "foreign agent" means "spy" or "traitor" (Human Rights Watch, 2016).

Table 1 illustrates sixty-five countries with first-time restrictions since 1998. Table 2 includes repeat restrictions, and in particular, reflects a rise in the number of restrictions since 2011 as well as neighbourhood effects. Overall, 129 foreign funding restrictions were adopted since 1998, and of these, fifty-four restrictions from 2012-2016.

Table 1. Countries Enacting Legislative Restrictions on Foreign Funding to NGOs

1993-2016, first time restrictions

Year of Legislative Restriction, Country

1993		2003	Uzbekistan	2009	Uganda
1994		2004	Azerbaijan	2009	Vietnam
1995		2004	Indonesia	2009	Zambia
1996		2004	Azerbaijan	2010	India
1997		2004	Indonesia	2010	Somalia
1998	Mozambique	2004	Qatar	2010	Venezuela
1999	Burundi	2004	Uruguay	2011	Ecuador
1999	Cameroon	2005	Afghanistan	2011	Israel
1999	Equatorial Guinea	2005	Eritrea	2011	Tunisia
1999	Ukraine	2005	Panama	2011	Western Sahara
2000	Oman	2005	Sri Lanka	2012	Algeria
2000	Thailand	2006	Moldova	2012	Canada
2000	Yemen	2006	Myanmar	2012	Nepal
2001	Belarus	2006	Peru	2012	Rwanda
2001	Libya	2006	Sudan	2012	Tajikistan
2001	Singapore	2007	Bhutan	2014	Cambodia
2001	Congo (DRC)	2007	Bolivia	2014	Laos
2002	Angola	2007	Zimbabwe	2014	Nicaragua
2002	Bahrain	2008	Jordan	2014	South Sudan
2002	Egypt	2008	Russia	2014	Zambia
2003	Belize	2008	Turkey	2014	Kenya
2003	Benin	2009	China	2015	Austria
2003	Pakistan	2009	Ethiopia	2016	Bangladesh
2003	Turkmenistan	2009	Sierra Leone	2016	Kazakhstan

Table 2. Countries with Legislative Restrictions on Foreign Funding to NGOs

1993-2016, including repeat restrictions

Year of Legislative Restriction, Country

1993		2006	Moldova	2013	Bolivia
1994		2006	Myanmar	2013	Belarus
1995		2007	Moldova	2013	Indonesia
1996		2007	Bhutan	2014	Turkmenistan
1997		2007	Bolivia	2014	Myanmar
1998	Mozambique	2007	Zimbabwe	2014	Hungary
1999	Equatorial Guinea	2008	Indonesia	2014	Cambodia
1999	Cameroon	2008	Jordan	2014	Egypt
1999	Ukraine	2008	United Arab Emirates	2014	Nepal
1999	Burundi	2008	Russia	2014	Nicaragua
2000	Yemen	2008	Turkey	2014	Sierra Leone
2000	Thailand	2008	Mozambique	2014	Sri Lanka
2000	Oman	2009	Russia	2014	Azerbaijan
2001	Malawi	2009	Sierra Leone	2014	Laos
2001	Singapore	2009	Ethiopia	2014	South Sudan
2001	Belarus	2009	Uganda	2014	Sudan
2001	Libya	2009	China	2014	Zambia
2001	Yemen	2009	Vietnam	2014	Russia
2002	Egypt	2009	Sudan	2015	Russia
2002	Angola	2010	Somalia	2015	Azerbaijan
2002	Tanzania	2010	India	2015	Angola
2002	Bahrain	2010	Venezuela	2015	Cambodia
2003	Belarus	2010	Yemen	2015	Nicaragua
2003	Guatemala	2010	Uzbekistan	2015	Tajikistan
2003	Belize	2011	Sudan	2015	Jordan
2003	Benin	2011	Yemen	2015	India
2003	Turkmenistan	2011	Indonesia	2015	Pakistan
2003	Pakistan	2011	Belarus	2015	Pakistan
2003	Uzbekistan	2011	Israel	2015	India
2004	Uzbekistan	2011	Tunisia	2015	Ethiopia
2004	Azerbaijan	2011	Ecuador	2015	Uzbekistan
2004	Indonesia	2011	Panama	2015	South Sudan
2004	Uruguay	2012	Algeria	2015	Guatemala
2004	Qatar	2012	Nepal	2015	Uganda
2004	Turkey	2012	Canada	2015	Azerbaijan
2005	Afghanistan	2012	Russia	2016	South Sudan
2005	Eritrea	2012	Rwanda	2016	China
2005	Sri Lanka	2012	Vietnam	2016	Israel
2005	Bahrain	2012	Tajikistan	2016	Tajikistan
2005	Panama	2013	Sudan	2016	Uganda
2005	Panama	2013	Ecuador	2016	Uzbekistan
2006	Peru	2013	Turkmenistan	2016	Kazakhstan
2006	Sudan	2013	Azerbaijan		

Post-Soviet countries are more likely to implement legislative restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs, as are, more broadly, post-Socialist countries, it seems due to the legacy of one-party rule (Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan). The length of executive tenure is highly correlated with authoritarianism, and in all of Central Asia, there has only been one peaceful transition to power (Kyrgyzstan) since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Neighbourhood effects, closely related to shared histories, proximity to crises, such as terrorist attacks and

conflict, as well as intertwined economies and migration patterns, are evident here and will be discussed in a further section.

Neighbourhood effects also account for the acceleration of foreign funding restrictions, particularly in East Africa and Eurasia. In East Africa, Ethiopia's 2009 Proclamation to Provide for the Registration and Regulation of Charities and Societies (CSP), prohibits participation in human rights and advocacy activities for NGOs that receive more than ten percent of their funds from foreign sources.⁴⁶ The 2009 Proclamation in Ethiopia inspired similar legislation throughout East Africa. Similarly, the 2012 Russian Foreign Agents legislation, requiring foreign-funded NGOs engaging in political activity to register with the Ministry of Justice, inspired similar legislation across the post-Soviet space, particularly in Central Asia, as did the 2014 legislative update enabling the government to label NGOs as foreign agents.

Neighbourhood effects exist not only for the spread of restrictions, but in the type of restrictions. For instance, "prior approval of every foreign contribution" is common in the Middle East and North Africa (Algeria, Jordan, and Bahrain), extending across the Red Sea into Eritrea, then Central Asia (Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan), and South Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka). "Foreign Agents" legislation, pervasive in the former Soviet Union, spread after the 2012 Foreign Agents Law enactment in Russia. Several countries in this region have enacted or proposed laws modelled after a 1938 US Foreign Agents Act,⁴⁷ including Russia and others in Eurasia. Foreign agents legislation is not restricted to this region but also recently implemented by China and Israel in 2016. Caps on international funding are found in East Africa (Kenya and Ethiopia). Mandatory routing of funding through government-controlled channels can be seen in Nepal, Uzbekistan, Sierra Leone, Eritrea, and Uganda, with draft legislation rejected in Kenya in 2015 but currently considered in Nigeria.

Central Asia in particular has a high extent of countries with repeat restrictions. In 2016, all Central Asian countries were classified as consolidated authoritarian regimes, except for Kyrgyzstan, where draft legislation was recently dismissed. Though with relatively proximate 2015 Freedom House scores to Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, classified recently as a consolidated authoritarian regime, passed foreign funding restrictions in 2016.

First, countries with historical linkages – such as the case of Central Asia, with a shared post-Soviet legacy – may be more likely to be inspired by legislation from neighbouring countries regarding foreign funding restrictions. The spread of Russia's 2012 foreign agents law throughout Central Asia, and also into Eastern

Europe (Belarus and Ukraine), is a prime example, particularly as the text of each law appears strongly inspired by the Russian law. Gessen expresses suspicion that a Russian aid agency is working to influence officials in the region,⁴⁸ with similar bills enacted or drafted throughout the post-Soviet space.

Second, crisis may make a country more vulnerable to restrictions, and crisis affecting a region can lead to regional spread of restrictions. As mentioned earlier, Carothers indicates that the Color Revolutions— Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004), and Kyrgyzstan (2005)—and the Arab Spring made authoritarian and authoritarian-leaning leaders anxious throughout the area and targeted NGOs, as advocacy groups may push for transparency within corrupt regimes.⁴⁹

Economic crisis also explains the rise of foreign funding restrictions. Economic inter-linkages, such as shared migration patterns or resource dependency, may help spread legislation restricting NGOs throughout a region. For instance, the collapse in global commodity prices, particularly oil, drove Russia into recession in 2014, which spread quickly throughout the Central Asian region, as Russia holds seventy-four percent of Central Asia's GDP.⁵⁰ Economic linkages may also be likely to motivate neighbourhood effects of legislation, particularly given the current state of economic crisis in the region. Most countries in the region are either oil-producing or reliant on remittances from migrants in nearby oil-producing countries, as well as Russian subsidies. Despite initial moderate gains towards democracy, Central Asian political institutions are generally viewed as phantom. Rising debt and empty treasuries threaten Eurasia's now "stable" authoritarians, responding with measures against any potential opposition.

Spread of 2012 Russian Foreign Agents' Law in Eurasia

The 2012 Russian foreign agents' law requires NGOs to register with the Minister of Justice if they engage in political activity (defined very broadly) and receive foreign funding.⁵¹ Following a boycott of the law by Russian human rights group, the government inspected hundreds of NGOs to identify advocacy groups deemed to be foreign agents.⁵² All legal challenges mounted in response lost their court cases. The law was updated in 2014 to permit the government to register "foreign agent" NGOs without their consent, and since then, has registered 138 groups. Groups that have not registered voluntarily but found to be foreign agents have been significantly fined (approximately \$16,000 USD for groups, and \$10,000 USD for individuals), with various leaders

facing criminal charges.⁵³

Similar legislation was passed in Tajikistan in 2015, requiring all public associations to notify the Ministry of Justice of any contributions from foreign sources.⁵⁴ First, in 2012 international cooperation in education was targeted: the Ministry of Education established new rules requiring prior approval for all forms of cooperation between educational institutions and international organizations. In 2014, all foreign citizens became legally restricted from participating in meetings, rallies, and demonstrations in Tajikistan.⁵⁵ In March 2016, a law was adopted requiring registration of foreign-funded grants to CSOs with the Registry of Humanitarian Aid within ten days of receipt.⁵⁶

Legislation in Tajikistan passed despite a notably active civil society, whereas in Uzbekistan civil society has not been as strong. Significant legislative restrictions on foreign funding existed since 2010 in Uzbekistan, requiring special approval from a commission for NGOs to receive a grant from foreign sources, and stipulating that funds from foreign sources be channeled through state-owned banks that determine whether or not to release the money.⁵⁷ If the money is received by the NGO, required reporting is burdensome.⁵⁸ Uzbekistan adopted additional legislative restrictions in 2016, requiring NGOs to notify the Ministry of Justice about upcoming trips of NGO representatives abroad, and to obtain approval for the receipt of all funds and assets from foreign states, organizations, and citizens.⁵⁹

In Turkmenistan, a 2013 presidential decree led to burdensome advance approval requirements for all foreign funded projects and programs through a state committee.⁶⁰ In Azerbaijan, a 2015 legislative reform extended broad powers to the Ministry of Justice to "inspect and punish" the activities of foreign NGOs.⁶¹ Another 2015 reform established a registration procedure for foreign donors to receive approval from the government to provide grants to Azerbaijani NGOs.⁶² Earlier legislation in 2014 concerning registration, receipt, and reporting of grants for all NGOs created particular difficulties for foreign-funded NGOs. Additionally, as of 2014, legislation stipulated that the legal representative of a foreign NGO have permanent residence in Azerbaijan.⁶³

In October 2016, Kazakhstan passed legislation similar to the Russian foreign agents law, following mass protests against the government earlier in 2016 against government initiatives to sell land to foreigners and reflecting discontent over overwhelmingly high unemployment, corruption, and other social grievances in terms of housing and education. Shormanbayeva notes that "the Nazarbayev regime uses informal and formal methods to squeeze

out NGOs, independent media, and trade unions."⁶⁴ Order No. 553 of the Ministry of Finance requires reporting of receipt of funds and other assets from foreign sources. Additionally, Order No. 554 requires reporting of the receipt and expenditure of foreign funds to state income authorities, and Order No. 556 establishes a database for the reporting of foreign funds.

However, in contrast with the 2016 legislation, in 2005, Kazakhstan drafted and then abandoned legislation banning foreign funding to NGOs, likely due to pressure from international organizations.⁶⁵ At the time, Kazakh President Nazarbayev wanted to chair the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and therefore did not want to appear to be seen as restrictive of civil society. Additionally, Europe was Kazakhstan's main trade partner, purchasing sixty percent of its oil output.⁶⁶ Kazakhstan was classified as a hybrid regime when it resisted restrictions in 2005,⁶⁷ but is currently classified as a consolidated authoritarian regime.⁶⁸ The World Trade Organization notes that between 2004 and 2015, Kazakhstan's trade balance fell by approximately twenty-three percentage points, largely due to the worldwide drop in oil prices.⁶⁹ In the interim, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and Russia joined the newly created Eurasian Economic Union on January 1, 2015, spearheaded by Putin. In December 2015, the Kazakh government adopted a new National Action Plan on NGO-Government Cooperation for 2016-2020, establishing channeling of all NGO funds through a single state operator, and indicating further review of legislation concerning foreign CSOs operating in Kazakhstan.⁷⁰ The Eurasian Economic Union expanded to include Armenia and Kyrgyzstan, creating further external linkages with Russia. In parallel, similar foreign agents legislation extended into Belarus, and was introduced, and contested, in Ukraine.

Kyrgyzstan is Central Asia's last remaining hybrid regime. In May 2016, Kyrgyzstan's parliament voted down a foreign agents'-inspired bill, after massive protests by civil society in the capital arguing that the bill would harm Kyrgyzstan's external image and restrict necessary social programs.⁷¹ However, it is uncertain whether the bill was rejected due to the historically strong Kyrgyz civil society, or because conservatives voted against the bill since they wanted a more restrictive bill. In terms of external linkage, Kyrgyzstan is more open to international donors than its neighbours. Following the Tulip Revolution in 2005 and internal ethnic conflict in 2010, many international donors facilitated the emergence of civil society organizations in Kyrgyzstan. Regarding other external linkages, Standish points out that Kyrgyzstan currently hosts a Russian military base and hosted an American military base during the war in Afghanistan (2001-2014), setting

Kyrgyzstan between East and West.⁷² Kyrgyzstan's 2015 ascension into the Eurasian Economic Union reflected a more recent step into Russia's sphere of influence. In parallel, consideration of legislative restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs once again resurfaced.

Spread of 2009 Ethiopia Law in East Africa

INGOs have been highly present in Ethiopia since the civil war and famine of the 1990s. Ethiopia's 2009 Proclamation, in the year preceding general elections, established barriers to NGO entry, limited activities, mapped organizational structures, and created new monitoring mechanisms.⁷³ Dupuy, Ron, and Prakash note that the 2009 Proclamation divided NGOs into three categories: (1) Ethiopian charities, (2) Ethiopian resident charities and societies^{vi}, and (3) foreign societies, or rather INGOs.⁷⁴ Only the first category, Ethiopian NGOs, are permitted to work on democracy, equality, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, conflict resolution and reconciliation, justice and law, and democratization.⁷⁵

Ethiopian NGOs are also strictly limited in terms of their spending, encounter burdensome reporting and registration procedures, and in 2010 were stripped of any resources exceeding \$27,000 USD at the time of registration.⁷⁶ The suppression of opposition groups was noteworthy during the subsequent 2010 elections, assuring the continuation of Prime Minister Zenawi's rule from 1985 until his death in 2012. Kiai concludes that the 2009 NGO law in Ethiopia reduced civil society groups by sixty percent within a year.⁷⁷

Eritrea's Proclamation No. 145/2005 requires that international CSOs engage in activities through the ministry or a related government agency.⁷⁸ In Somalia, Law 43 in 2010 placed residency requirements on founders of national NGOs,^{vii} required INGOs to financially empower domestic NGOs, and mandated government approval for foreign funding. In July 2009, al Shabaab established the Office for the Supervision of the Affairs of Foreign Agencies (OSAFA) to monitor the movements of all NGOs and international organizations operating within Somalia, and continues to menace humanitarian NGO operations, exacerbating current famine relief.⁷⁹ Elections were supposed to be held in June 2011, but the mandates of the president and the parliament were extended until 2012.

vi Ethiopian resident charities and societies have members resident in Ethiopia, but over ten percent of the budget is comprised of foreign donations.

vii Law 43 requires at least five foreign or national founders, a majority of whom must have permanent residency in Somalia.

In Yemen, the vice-president ran unopposed for president in 2012. Just prior to the election, legislation in 2011 required all associations and foundations to obtain government approval before conducting activities "on behalf of a foreign entity,"⁸⁰ with lengthy reporting for foreign-funded activities. The 2010 Law on Money Laundering and Counterterrorism also targets foreign funding to NGOs, allowing the government to "halt the activities of any company or organization operating in Yemen for a period of twenty-four hours, with a possible extension of up to a month without following any legal procedures."⁸¹ Many of these measures are in response to internal conflict between the government and political opposition groups in northern Yemen since 2009.⁸²

In Sudan, beginning in 2006, legislation mandated government approval for the use of foreign funds. Therefore, foreign funding restrictions to NGOs were passed one year after the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement and shortly after the formation of the national legislature, and circumscribed NGOs to a very narrow scope of humanitarian activities and away from more broad-based civil society initiatives.⁸³ In addition, Sudan has the highest number of repeat restrictions (five cases) in the dataset. After the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued a warrant for President al-Bashir's arrest, more than thirteen large INGOs were expelled from the country in 2009, followed by the denial of flight clearance to dozens of UN flights, imposition of travel restrictions on NGO workers, the arrest of a dozen immunization workers, and the detention of community leaders.⁸⁴ Further legislation in 2013 governed activities of foreign humanitarian groups including United Nations agencies, and permitted only national organizations to work on human rights, which must be approved by the government. In 2014 the government expelled several large NGOs from Darfur—including ACTED and the Red Cross—while others left voluntarily.⁸⁵

After years of conflict, South Sudan gained its independence from Sudan in 2011. Within five years, South Sudan passed three legislative restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs. As early as 2014, CSOs reported a fear of being labeled as foreign operatives or opposition sympathizers by state intelligence.⁸⁶ In 2015, the South Sudanese government issued a new requirement that all expatriates secure work permits prior to entering the country, yet these permits often take four to six months to be issued.⁸⁷ NGOs also faced more registration requirements, such as multiple visits, fees, fingerprinting, and background checks. In February 2016, the South Sudanese Parliament passed the NGO Act as well as the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) Bill, issuing more restrictions such as the employment of eighty percent local staff,

including at senior levels, which may be difficult to achieve given low rates of educational attainment and adult literacy.⁸⁸

As in Sudan, South Sudan requires NGOs to sign individual country agreements with the government, therefore international NGOs view this requirement as an additional restriction.⁸⁹ Additionally, NGOs are required to use South Sudanese banks despite questionable financial security, and the government may impose unspecified fees. The Relief and Rehabilitation Commission has the power to direct CSOs to areas of need in South Sudan.⁹⁰ The legislation covers humanitarian groups as well as in advocacy and human rights CSOs.⁹¹

With restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs rooted in earlier legislation in 2009, Uganda's parliament passed the NGO Act in December 2015. Jeffrey Smith, an Africa specialist with the Robert F. Kennedy Center for Human Rights, remarked that the Ugandan NGO Act was "part of growing authoritarian contagion in the region, with Ethiopia's 2009 Charities and Societies Proclamation as the ultimate blueprint."⁹² Upon securing a fifth term in office, President Museveni enacted the NGO Act in April 2016. Apart from numerous restrictions on all NGOs, such as placing NGOs under a national bureau with broad powers to refuse registration and permits, the NGO Act requires that a Ugandan diplomatic mission determine the employment suitability of all foreign employees of NGOs prior to their arrival.⁹³ Dupuy, Ron, and Prakash note that restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs in Uganda first began with requirements for receiving and reporting grants.⁹⁴ Since then, civil society has been quite vocal, but unsuccessful in legally contesting the legislation.

Uganda is an economic hub for South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda. South Sudan and Rwanda also have similar restrictions. All four countries, as well as Sudan and Ethiopia, have experienced violent conflict since the 1990s. Uganda has experienced conflict since the 1980s and is home to one of the world's largest refugee camps. Rwanda has been home to many international NGOs since the 1994 genocide and the spillover of conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Rwanda enacted legislative restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs in 2012, the year preceding parliamentary elections, resulting in a burdensome registration process for international CSOs that required a large number of documents, including an action plan approved by the line ministry.⁹⁵ Although the law states that international CSOs may be registered for a five-year period, in practice they are obliged to register annually, as their funding is usually appropriated one year at a time and the immigration directorate requires that they show evidence of funding for the

entire period for which they request registration.

Another example, Kenya, also has experience of internal conflict, and experienced a terrorist attack by Somali militant group al-Shabaab in 2013. Legal restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs often accompany the rise of anti-terrorism laws across the East African region, and are often used to silence foreign-funded NGOs and dissidents. In 2014, Kenya de-registered more than 500 NGOs accused of links with al-Shabaab yet with little evidence.⁹⁶ In 2015, three NGOs, Muslims for Human Rights, Haki Africa and the Agency for Peace, were accused of operating outside the law, funding terrorist activity, and subsequently banned, yet civil society groups and foreign governments have challenged these allegations.⁹⁷

In Kenya, while there are no current restrictions on receipt of foreign funds, NGOs must secure approval of the NGO Coordination Board to become a branch or affiliate of foreign organizations of a political nature.⁹⁸ Houghton indicates that the 2013 Public Benefits Organization (PBO) Act was a consensus between the government and PBO sector to strengthen and revitalize the sector, and was an example of legislation initially in favor of CSOs.⁹⁹ The PBO Act was signed into law by outgoing President Mwai Kibaki in 2013,¹⁰⁰ but was not implemented by the current administration until September 2016 due to pressure from civil society organizations.

President Kenyatta and Deputy-President William Ruto, allegedly elected due to flawed elections, were under investigation by the ICC for committing atrocities during the 2007 elections but pursued strategies to escape these allegations.¹⁰¹ Within its first year, Kenyatta's administration made five attempts to amend the PBO Act without consultation with the PBO sector, to increase executive power over registration, regulation, and funding of CSOs,¹⁰² and referred to foreign funding of CSOs as "imperialist." Kiai states that Kenyans working for human rights associations were portrayed as "foreign lackeys and scavengers chasing foreign cash."¹⁰³ Additionally, Kiai indicates that democracy, development, human rights, and accountability, though enshrined in the constitution, were portrayed as "foreign values."¹⁰⁴ The various amendments to the PBO Act aimed to cap foreign funding of NGOs to fifteen percent, and sought to label any NGO receiving more than fifteen percent of foreign funding as a foreign organization as well as to channel all international funds through a government body.¹⁰⁵ Due to pressure from civil society organizations, amendments to the 2013 PBO Act were narrowly defeated in parliament.

A similarity among these East African examples, in

addition to their experience of internal conflict and regional spillovers, is the pervasiveness of refugee camps, indicating an influx of INGOs. Kenya hosts the world's largest refugee camp, Dadaab, hosting mostly Somali refugees. The second largest refugee camp in the world is in Ethiopia, hosting mostly Somalis as well. Another large refugee camp, Kenya's Kakuma camp hosts mostly Somali and Sudanese refugees. South Sudan hosts the seventh largest refugee camp, with Sudanese refugees, and Uganda hosts the eighth largest refugee camp, with many Rwandan refugees. The protracted nature of modern conflict has led to enduring refugee situations, resulting in long-term presence of INGOs and international aid workers in areas receiving large numbers of refugees. Finally, crises, such as the drop in oil prices, influx of refugees, terrorist attacks, natural disasters, and conflict prompt restrictions, as illustrated by neighbourhood effects. Crises are worrisome to anxious authoritarian-leaning leaders, who often instrumentalize crises to justify restrictions on civil society by citing the need to eliminate foreign influences.

The importance of transnational civil society linkages

In tandem with international policy's increased reliance on NGOs as a scaffolding for democracy and development, Schofer and Longhofer¹⁰⁶ indicate that numerous scholars such as Andrews, Ganz, Baggetta Han, and Lim¹⁰⁷; Minkoff, Aisenbrey, and Agnone¹⁰⁸; Minkoff and McCarthy¹⁰⁹; Skocpol¹¹⁰; and Reger and Staggenborg¹¹¹ increasingly investigate the importance of advocacy organizations, professional and social movement associations, etc., as key participants in national politics. However, these organizations often struggle in terms of funding and when confronted with a more restrictive environment. The key, then, to the preservation of nascent associations lies in external linkage, whether through regional economic organizations - for example, Christensen and Weinstein¹¹² suggest that the desire of Kazakh President Nazarbayev to chair the OSCE led to an initial dismissal of draft legislation - or through strong ties to international NGOs (INGOs). Schofer and Longhofer maintain that INGOs are macro-level structures that support associational life, and at times overwhelmingly so in aid-dependent countries.¹¹³ While "boomerang effects" do exist, where local groups solicit international allies as indicated by Keck and Sikkink,¹¹⁴ Schofer and Hironaka¹¹⁵ and Tsutsui and Shinn¹¹⁶ suggest "inverse boomerang" dynamics, as global movements and networks facilitate the emergence of local NGOs with similar commitments - "squeezing the state from above and below." This squeezing out of the state,

then, can be the impetus behind "anxious dictators and wavering democracies" as noted by Freedom House.¹¹⁷

Diffusion needs actors and mediators, as noted by Pizmony-Levy.¹¹⁸ Moving beyond measurements of INGO office presence, the ability of INGOs to engage, support, interact, and enter alliances with domestic NGOs is a crucial determinant in the capacity of civil society to resist draft NGO restrictions in hybrid authoritarian regimes. Here, I provide a preliminary social network analysis as a visualization of virtual ties between INGOs and local organizations in two countries where foreign funding restrictions were successfully contested: Kenya and Kyrgyzstan. Barberá et al note that the ideal setting to observe policy preferences is one where a researcher can observe behavioural choices in the natural environment where choices occur, without being noticed, to infer the characteristics of the individual actors.¹¹⁹ Similarly, Barberá highlights the importance of Twitter as a space for daily communication about politics for ordinary citizens as well as political actors.¹²⁰ In particular, Kenya has the highest internet connectivity rate in Sub-Saharan Africa, aside from South Africa. In this section, I examine Twitter data to examine major organizational actors in the interorganizational networks in Kenya and Kyrgyzstan. As social media users' characteristics may be inferred by their network positions, Barberá et al indicate that Twitter may reveal shared political preferences through selection of who to "follow," as individuals tend to interact with others who are similar to themselves.¹²¹ If social networks are assumed to be homophilous in terms of revealing political ideology, as noted by Barberá¹²² as well as Bond and Messing,¹²³ Twitter API analysis illustrates similarity between international environmental and human rights organizations with local and national organizations contesting foreign funding restrictions.

I analyzed Twitter data to observe the extent to which international organization relationships were at the core of the social network of Twitter user "PBOAct" (referring to the Public Benefits Act). Use of Twitter RESTful API provides access to the Twitter user information including user and follower profile, lists of followers, text of tweets, and media contents in text (URLs). Twitter is a directed network where an edge, as seen in the network maps below, indicates a relationship between users. A network "tie," following Barberá et al, is assumed by "following" an organization or social movement page on Twitter. The direction of the arrows on the map indicates the direction of the tie, whether it is outward ("follower") or inward ("followed"). A common assumption among researchers observing Twitter networks is that more followers indicates more influence.

The visualizations below do not contain all followers, as this would include 2,792 followers, as in the case of the PBO Act¹²⁴, but reflect the most influential users of a Twitter page. In this analysis, I downloaded user information regarding a certain movement related to countering foreign funding restrictions. I adjusted code developed by Barberá.¹²⁵ I then extracted a list of followers based on certain keywords related to human rights or environmental organizations. Subsequently, I applied snowball sampling to construct an interorganizational network between international NGOs and local movements/NGOs contesting foreign funding restrictions. Then, I transformed the list of followers of the social movement, or organization, to see who they follow as well, into an adjacency network, displayed in the network visualizations below. Degree centrality is defined by the number of links held by an individual node. Users that are more central in the network map have higher network centrality.

Figure 1: Social Network Visualization 1.



In Figure 1, organizations^{viii} working on rights (search term "organizations" and "rights") following the PBO Act (Twitter page for contestation of the restrictive "Public Benefit Organisations Act") included the Human Empowerment Revitalisation Drive (HERD Initiative)¹²⁶ ("herdinfo"), an international NGO addressing crime,

viii Here, I include only organizations that are followers of the social movement, and I do not include individuals, since my analysis focuses on interorganizational linkages.

education, and underdevelopment in Africa^{ix}; Conquest for Life,¹²⁷ an NGO serving disadvantaged communities in South Africa; and SANGOTeCH,¹²⁸ an initiative of SANGONeT and TechSoup Global that provides software and hardware for NGOs in coordination with donor partners. In addition, FXB – Association François-Xavier Bagnoud¹²⁹ ("FXBIntl") an international development organization with health, education, protection, and community development programs in thirteen countries, has inward and outward ties with SANGOTeCH and Search for Common Ground¹³⁰ ("SFCG"), an international peacebuilding NGO with offices in thirty-five countries. In addition, Search for Common Ground follows IFES –International Foundation for Electoral Systems¹³¹ ("IFES1987"), an international NGO headquartered in Washington, DC, promoting sustainable development. The Institute for Education and Development (IED) Africa¹³² follows Act! – Act Change Transform¹³³ ("tendasa"), a Kenyan NGO addressing environment and natural resources management, democracy, human rights, peacebuilding, and conflict transformation. Act! as well as GDA Kenya¹³⁴ (Global Development Agencies Kenya), an NGO involved in peacebuilding and youth non-violence, follow the PBO Act. The PBO Act also follows GDA Kenya. Finally, NiSisi!¹³⁵ ("Uongozi"), a Kenyan social movement promoting a national identity and livelihoods, follows the PBO Act. Overall, the map shows many interorganizational linkages in terms of "followers" between international NGOs and Kenyan NGOs involved in human rights.

An examination of ties from the PBO Act to environmental organizations (search terms "environment" and "organizations") led to the second network visualization, illustrating Greenpeace's centrality and an outward tie (according to Twitter) from the PBO Act page to Greenpeace.¹³⁶ Figure 4 illustrates ties between Greenpeace Luxembourg¹³⁷, Berlin¹³⁸, Southeast Asia¹³⁹, and Canada¹⁴⁰, as well as a Canadian organization, West Coast Environmental Law¹⁴¹, with inward and outward ties to Greenpeace. Greenpeace also follows the Environmental Working Group¹⁴² ("ewg") in Washington, DC.

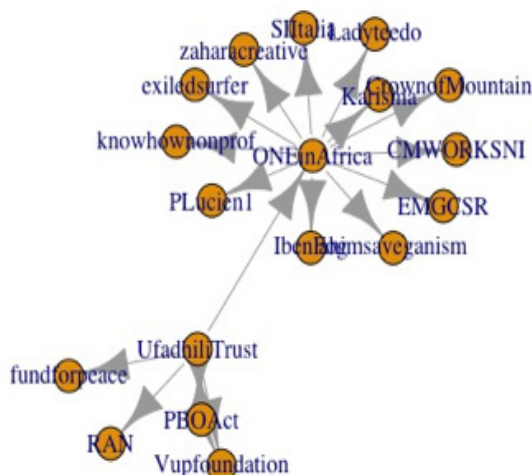
ix Descriptions of organizational activities are mostly from Twitter user profiles, or organizational websites.

Figure 2: Social Network Visualization 2.



In Figure 3, I specifically examined network ties via Twitter between sustainability organizations in Kenya (keywords "sustainability" and "organization"). PBO Act follows the Vijana Umoja Pamoja (VUP) Foundation,¹⁴³ a Kenyan youth organization. PBO Act has both inward and outward ties to Ufadhili Trust,¹⁴⁴ a Kenyan nonprofit involved in social responsibility. There are also outward ties from Ufadhili Trust to the Rainforest Action Network (RAN),¹⁴⁵ an environmental advocacy organization in San Francisco, as well as the Fund for Peace¹⁴⁶ in Abuja and Washington, D.C. Overall, Ufadhili Trust appears to have high network centrality based upon this preliminary analysis, as there are inward and outward ties in the follower list for the user profile PBO Act. Ufadhili Trust is a Kenyan nonprofit organisation focused on economic prosperity, social equity, and environmental justice. One in Africa,¹⁴⁷ an advocacy organization addressing poverty, preventable disease, access to energy, and government corruption and accountability, has even more outward ties, and appears to be a hub in the following social network visualization, with an inward tie from Ufadhili Trust and outward ties to organisations such as Know How Non-Profit,¹⁴⁸ a London-based organization providing digital toolkits to NGOs. The network visualization also shows an outward tie from One in Africa to EMG-CSR (Enable More Good),¹⁴⁹ a Dutch sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility advisory firm. One in Africa also follows CMWorks,¹⁵⁰ a Belfast-based social inclusion consultancy working with third sector organizations. One in Africa also follows Soroptimist International ("SIItalia")¹⁵¹ an international advocacy organization for women based in Italy. Zahara Creative¹⁵² is a communications organization based in Nairobi and is also followed by One in Africa.

Figure 3: Social Network Visualization 3.

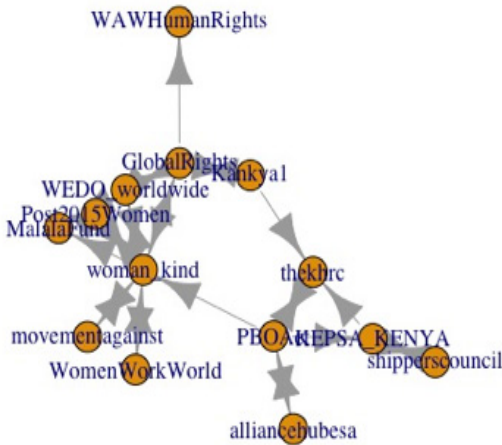


Furthermore, Figure 4 illustrates human rights organizations with a connection to the PBO Act page (keywords "human rights" and "organizations"). Here, there are many organizations working on gender, such as Womankind Worldwide¹⁵³ (inward tie from PBO Act), the Malala Fund¹⁵⁴ (inward tie from Womankind), and Women Work World¹⁵⁵ (inward and outward ties from Womankind). Womankind has inward and outward ties to MAVI ("movement against"),¹⁵⁶ a youth-run advocacy and human rights organization based in the United States; the Post-2015 Women's Coalition;¹⁵⁷ the Women's Environment and Development Organization ("WEDO_Worldwide")¹⁵⁸ based in the United States; and Women Working Worldwide,¹⁵⁹ a feminist, trade justice, anti-poverty, labour rights organization based in the United Kingdom. Global Rights,¹⁶⁰ an international human rights organization, is also a hub within this network, with offices in Africa, Asia, and the United States, with inward and outward ties to WEDO Worldwide, Woman Kind, and outward ties to Women for Afghan Women ("WAW Human Rights"),¹⁶¹ based in the United States and Afghanistan.

PBO Act also has inward and outward ties to a regional network actor, Alliance Hub East and Southern Africa,¹⁶² and a national human rights actor: KHRC, the Kenyan Human Rights Commission.¹⁶³ Alliance Hub East and Southern Africa provides technical support to CSOs to strengthen leadership and capacity. PBO Act also follows KEPSA KENYA (Kenya Private Sector Alliance),¹⁶⁴ an umbrella group of private sector organizations in Kenya. KEPSA KENYA has inward and outward ties to the Shippers

Council East Africa,¹⁶⁵ a business membership organization of cargo owners based in Kenya.

Figure 4: Social Network Visualization 4.

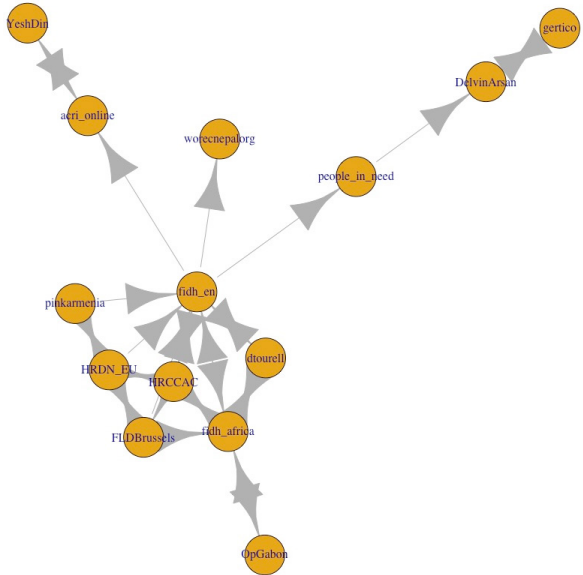


In Figure 5, focusing on Kyrgyzstan, I examine ties related to Tolekan Ismailova, a lead human rights activist and director of the human rights movement Bir Duino-Kyrgystan (Twitter user "HRCCAC" - Human Rights Center "Citizens Against Corruption"),¹⁶⁶ which is part of the Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors. The network illustrated in Figure 5 illustrates centrality of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH),¹⁶⁷ with inward and outward ties to Tolekan Ismailova, as well as clusters containing Frontline Defenders Brussels,¹⁶⁸ the Human Rights and Democracy Network (Europe),¹⁶⁹ and FIDH Africa.¹⁷⁰ Tolekan Ismailova has inward and outward ties to FIDH Africa, Human Rights and Democracy Network (Europe), and Frontline Defenders Brussels.

Yesh Din (Volunteers for Human Rights)¹⁷¹ is an Israeli human rights organization working in Palestine, with inward and outward ties to ACRI (Association for Civil Rights in Israel),¹⁷² Israel's largest and oldest human rights NGO, which has an inward tie from FIDH. WOREC Nepal (Women's Rehabilitation Centre),¹⁷³ a women's and human rights NGO in Nepal, also has an inward tie from FIDH, which is followed by Pink Armenia,¹⁷⁴ a human rights NGO in Armenia focused on gender and LGBT rights. FIDH follows People in Need,¹⁷⁵ a large Czech NGO working on relief, development aid, education, and human rights in approximately thirty countries. In addition, FIDH Africa has inward and outward

ties from OpGabon,¹⁷⁶ an advocacy organization in Gabon. Overall, Twitter API analysis illustrates linkages with international environmental and human rights organizations in countries contesting legislative restrictions on foreign funding to NGOs.

Figure 5: Social Network Visualization 5.



Conclusion

This study provides evidence for neighbourhood effects of foreign funding restrictions, focusing on East Africa and Eurasia, as well as the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia. Foreign funding restrictions on NGOs reflect pushback against global civil society and the diffusion of rational, scientific norms and international human rights norms carried by international NGOs. Neighbourhood effects in part explain the rising rate of restrictions, which encountered a particular spike in 2012. Overall, regional crises, such as conflict, humanitarian crises, economic crises, migrations, and proximity to democratic uprisings, may lead in certain cases to neighbourhood effects, increasing the rate of adoption of legislative restrictions. Membership, or aspired membership, in regional organizations can make or break the path to legislative restriction; in addition, countries can also be inter-linked through a shared colonial history and migration remittances, which also interlink economies and crises. Social

network analysis reveals the domestic intersection of global and local NGOs in hybrid regimes that resisted foreign funding restrictions. The ability of international NGOs to engage with local NGOs and foster organizational emergence may be an important turning point in countering pushback to global civil society, before organizations lose their funding sources altogether.

Notes

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GENERAL SECTION

HUMANI NIL A ME ALIENUM PUTO: ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONALISED COLLECTIVE EMOTIONS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Arthur Duhé

Abstract

Despite the growing body of literature on emotions in International Relations theory, some major issues are still to be tackled satisfactorily. One of them concerns the ability to study and analyse collective emotions. This article offers a methodological reflection on how institutions shape these affects. After having identified five variables that may impact empathic reactions, I aim to highlight the importance of one of these institutions, namely media, through a comparative analysis of articles written in the US during the week after two terrorist attacks, one in Sana'a in March 2015, and the other in Paris in November of the same year. I argue that—given the difference in terms of coverage, of concomitance with other cognitive processes, and of representations of the victims—the articles written about Sana'a are less likely to trigger empathy than those written about Paris.ⁱ

Introduction

Despite increasing academic production, the emotional turn has so far failed to integrate into mainstream International Relations theory. This failure is partly due, I believe, to two issues that have been unsatisfactorily handled so far: (1) How to analyse collective emotions; (2) How to identify the importance of these collective emotions in international affairs.

This article tackles the first of these issues. The difficulty of analysing emotions is due to their very nature: intimate and ephemeral, and therefore "hard to define, hard to operationalize, hard to measure and hard to isolate from other factors," especially

ⁱ I sincerely thank Christine Pelican and my anonymous reviewer, who substantially helped to strengthen and clarify this article.

Arthur Duhé, "Humani Nil A Me Alienum Puto: Analysis of Institutionalized Collective Emotions in International Relations," *St Antony's International Review* 13 no.1 (2018): 142-158.

since IR theory implies relations within and between collectives.¹ The notion of "collective emotions" implies the experience of similar emotions within a given collective, and, therefore, collective affective dynamics. Despite recent attempts to identify these dynamics thanks to the insights of psychology, this collective dimension raises some major ontological, epistemological and methodological issues, such as the problem of aggregation.² If emotions already appear as blurry when taken individually, the collective dimension brings an additional layer of complexity.

To circumvent this issue, scholars often observe "what happens when emotions become more accurately visible: in time of crisis," such as wars or terrorist attacks, because emotions are more likely to be openly displayed, and to turn into acts.³ However, reflections on crises have two blind spots. First, they often minimize the importance of low-level affects that not only constitute our everyday experience but also shape our dispositions and that therefore may be necessary to explain our whole collective affective experience. Second, they do not take into account the striking absence of emotions in certain situations.

This article will follow another path by focusing on the institutionalization of emotions. Collective emotions, indeed, happen in a given socio-historical context, in which institutions produce emotional stimuli and emotional frames.⁴ These frames shape the emotional reactions of the collective. But, conversely, they are also produced by the biases and representations shared by the actors within these institutions, and beyond them, by a certain number of the members of the collective. Collective emotions are hard to seize and analyse, but looking at the emotional frames produced by major institutions could help us to draw a plausible picture of these emotions.

In this article, I will scrutinize the media, and more specifically articles written after two terrorist attacks that occurred abroad, namely one in Sana'a, Yemen, in March 2015, and the other in Paris, France, in November of the same year. The aim of this comparative discourse analysis is to identify what emotional frames are at stake in each case, and how they may respectively influence the readers' empathic reactions in one way or another.⁵ Despite the fact that public institutions have, not surprisingly, received most of academic attention, governments and other public institutions are not the only actors at stake here.⁶ Besides the fact that news coverage is crucial in shaping public perceptions of international affairs, the media are also crucial as they "can have similar effects, exposing dispersed audiences to a common stock of affect-inducing events" and, consequently, contribute to produce collective affects.⁷ If impressions have vanished, the

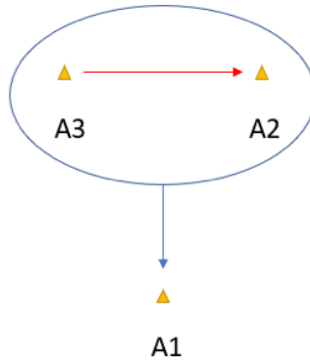
press remains, and can therefore be studied in order to guess these impressions. To do so, I will first highlight the mechanisms of empathy and isolate five variables which reduce the level of empathy experienced. It is precisely the presence or the absence of these variables that I will look for while exploring the articles written on the two cases. Obviously, given the scope of this article, this study will be limited in two ways. First, only one emotion will be considered here, namely empathy. Second, I only refer to three newspapers, which is arguably a rather limited sample of the media, and of social institutions.

A definition of empathy

Empathy disturbs our typical dichotomy between positive emotions—such as love—and negatives ones—like anger. If most scholars would classify empathy as a positive emotion because of its positive external outcomes, it is nevertheless undeniable that empathy leads a subject to experience pain (*pathos*), which makes it (at the least) an ambiguously positive emotion.⁸ Empathy is a reaction to the representation of the suffering of a being that appears as alike; our understanding of this mechanism has been improved by recent discoveries in neuroscience. The role of mirror-neurons that fire when we witness someone's emotions, allowing us to recognize her emotions but also to feel similar emotions as the same neural structures are triggered, has especially been proved crucial in this process.⁹ Unlike love or hate—which are linked to bad or good features we attach to an object—empathy only requires the recognition of similarity, be it illusory or real. In other terms, whereas we love or hate specific individuals, empathy is *a priori* extended to the entirety of humanity. However, this is only true *a priori*. As empathy is supposedly an automatic process,¹⁰ what is striking is precisely its failure: the lack of empathy, and the variation in intensity of empathic reactions.¹¹

Head warns us that "questions of empathy in lived experience do not fall neatly into the neuroscientific, psychological, or philosophical accounts of empathy but are messy and complex."¹² Even though neuroscientists have brought a dry scheme of empathy, they recognize that the latter has to be fleshed out in diverse ways. These emotional reactions, although they may be located in neural mechanisms, are always anchored in a given social context.

A straightforward definition of empathy could be "the feeling experienced by A1 when she witnesses the sadness inflicted towards A2 by A3."



There are five distinct elements: A1, A2, A3, the relation between A3 and A2 and the whole process. Therefore, five variables can be derived from our model to explain the variation in empathy:

The first three variables concern the nature of the agents.

V1: A1, for an intrinsic reason, is less likely to experience empathy.

V2: A1 knows A2, and does not like her.

V3: A1 knows A3, and likes her.

Another variable focuses on the process between A2 and A3 itself. It has two dimensions:

V4a: the process is not fully witnessed by A1.

V4b: the process does not appear as inflicting A2 with sadness, or with enough sadness.

The last variable inserts the experience of empathy in a more complex emotional experience.

V5: empathy is overtaken by other cognitive processes.

These variables are not exhaustive, and certainly not contradictory. Consequently, empathy may be undermined for several reasons, including some that I do not mention here. Though arguably "the gap between the coarse explanations of these processes that it is currently able to provide and the sophisticated and detailed explanations that an emotion-based approach to international

studies in most cases demands remain quite wide," these variables nevertheless offer a starting point for our analysis.

The case

I will analyse here the articles published by three large-publishers—namely *The New York Times* (NYT), *The USA Today* (USAT) and *The Los Angeles Times* (LAT)—during the week following both attacks.ⁱⁱ These newspapers have been picked for three reasons: firstly, they reach a large audience; secondly, they do not have strong positions on the cases studied here; thirdly (more pragmatically), their articles are online and therefore easily available. These resources include:

- (1) articles concerning the terrorist attacks.
- (2) articles on events related to these attacks, such as commemorations in the US.
- (3) letters to the editor being relevant for this topic.

As these three newspapers publish articles online and in print, both these sources have been taken into account.

On March 20, 2015, during midday prayers, a pair of suicide bombers blew up in the mosque al-Hashoosh, while at the same time two other attackers targeted the mosque al-Badr. The Yemeni branch of the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (also known as Daesh) claimed responsibility for these attacks that killed 142 people and wounded more than 351, becoming the most lethal terrorist attack in Yemen's history. On November 13, 2015 in Paris, three suicide bombers struck near the Stade de France, followed by suicide bombings and mass shootings which targeted people in cafés and restaurants. Finally, terrorists took control of the Bataclan, a concert hall, by storm-shooting the audience before detonating their suicide vests. These attacks—also perpetrated on behalf of Daesh—were responsible for the deaths of 130 victims and injured between 352 and 368 persons, making them the deadliest attacks in France since World War II.

These two cases have been chosen for the similarities they share, which neutralizes some variables. First, both these attacks were organised and perpetrated by the same terrorist group—Daesh—so A3 is the same in both cases. Second, these events happened the same year, with little variation of the geopolitical situation in the Middle-East and in the world. This proximity in

ⁱⁱ At the time of the events, it was estimated that USAT had a weekday circulation of 1,650,000, NYT of 1,000,000, and LAT of 650,000. There is unfortunately no room here for a more sociological study of these newspapers, such as their editorial policies, despite this lead being potentially fertile for this analysis.

time means that A1's identity and her perception of A3 are likely to be identical in both cases, which excludes V1 and V3 to explain the variations of empathic reactions. Third, these attacks appear as similarly harmful since the means used are the same, and the number of victims (killed or wounded) is significantly close, which excludes V4b.ⁱⁱⁱ Fourth, the victims were ordinary people, that is to say, no militaries, no officials, and no well-known or symbolic individuals, unlike—for instance—the terrorist attack on *Charlie Hebdo* in January 2015. In Paris, victims were at cafés, restaurants and at a concert of rock music, whereas the victims in Sana'a were in mosques and the streets around. Arguably, although these buildings facilitate very different sorts of activities, both attacks occurred in social and public spaces. The victims, therefore, were targeted uniquely as members of their collective. Despite the fact that the victims were complete strangers to most US citizens, individuals are perceived through representations and—as they are only known as members of these collectives—it is precisely the representations of the collectives which are at stake. Besides, it means that—despite being terrorist attacks—these events could hardly be considered as national crises from an American perspective.

While in the case of the shooting in Paris, the collective is national—France—the situation is more complicated in Yemen, a country experiencing a long-lasting and deadly civil war. There, the victims were killed in mosques mostly frequented by Houthis, a religious and ethnic minority following a form of Shia Islam. In January 2015, the actions of Shiite militias armed by Iran and allied to the supporters of the former president Ali Abdallah Saleh caused the fall the government of Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi. The Islamic State's communiqué claiming responsibility for the bombing in Sana'a therefore mentioned political and religious motives, since Houthis are Shiite and as such accused of being polytheists and allies of Tehran. However, for strategic reasons, the Islamic State did not support Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, but rather emphasized the religious aspect of the conflict. Despite this complex situation, it should be kept in mind that the victims in Sana'a, although mostly belonging to the same religious and ethnic community of the militias, were largely not members of militias themselves, highlighted by the fact that 13 children were counted amongst the victims.

iii This point was decisive in the choice of the two events, since other terrorist attacks were closer in time, such as the suicide bombing in Beirut, Lebanon, in November 12, 2015, which was fortunately less heavily lethal, making the comparison less relevant.

Analysis of the variables

V1, V3 and V4b have been excluded by the nature of the two cases. Consequently, three variables may explain a variation in emphatic reactions that I will successively consider.

Analysis of V4a

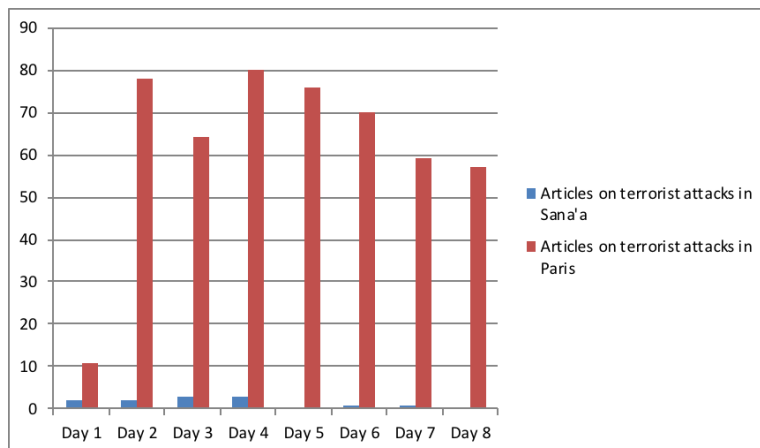
This variable is the most radical one, as it suggests that the process leading to empathy is not actually fully perceived or acknowledged by A1. As such, it has to be tackled first. Despite the stress of this article on media, I will shortly mention how the United States government reacted during the press briefing as I believe these interventions set the tone for the following media reaction.

On March 20 during the Press Briefing, Press Secretary J. Earnest condemned the bombings, expressed his condolences to the families of the victims on behalf of the US and deplored the brutality of this "unprovoked attack on Yemeni citizens who were peacefully engaging in Friday prayers in their places of worship."¹⁴ On November 15, President Obama himself reacted and claimed that "this is an attack not just on Paris, it's an attack not just on the people of France, but this is an attack on all of humanity and the universal values that we share."¹⁵ I will analyse the content of these speeches later in this article, but the use of two distinct protocols is meaningful, denoting that Paris attacks required a more personal and symbolical approach from the United States. Far from being anecdotal, these protocols obey to certain patterns: since President Obama already made a speech after the terrorist attack towards Charlie Hebdo in January 2015 (12 victims), whereas most of the statements after terrorist attacks, including the deadliest ones—such as the one in the Garissa University College in April, 2015 (148 victims)—were made by Press Secretary J. Earnest.¹⁶

An analysis of the articles published online in the seven days after the terrorist attacks is even more indicative of this difference.^{iv} From March 20 to March 27, 2015, *NYT* mentioned the terrorist attacks in four articles (including one press review). During the same period, *LAT* dedicated seven articles to this event and *USAT* only one. In comparison, during the week after the event in Paris, *NYT* published 166 articles referring to it, *LAT* 177, and *USAT* 152.

^{iv} The collection of data being different for each of these newspapers, the following figures are only close estimations.

Figure 1: Comparison of the quantity of articles written about each event in the first eight days



The graph shows the number of articles published each day, "day one" being the date of the attacks. It underlines the substantial gap existing between the figures. Not only did the newspapers pay much more attention to the terrorist attack in Paris, but it was an open subject long after the event itself, whereas the bombings in Sana'a ceased to be discussed after only a few days—the article in day 6 is a press review.¹⁷ I will not expand further on these figures, since they show that a major variation in empathic reactions within the population is to be expected given the substantial difference of media exposition of these two events. Arguably, many US citizens entirely ignored what happened in Sana'a.

Analysis of V5

V5 shows how empathy is undermined by other cognitive processes. Spinoza described the conflict between two different cognitive processes the "wavering of the mind."^{v18} These cognitive processes should not be limited to what we would commonly call feelings, but broadly understood. The dichotomy between emotions, on the one hand, and rationality, on the other hand, has been largely rejected by neurologists who have shown how emotions are always used during supposedly rational processes.¹⁹ In this case, I observe rather a conflict between a rational understanding and an empathic feeling.

In the few articles mentioning the terrorist attack in Yemen, the

^v Edwin Curley suggests the translation "vacillation of mind," which is undoubtedly correct but loses the liquid metaphor.

newspapers remind us of the nature of the relationship between the US and Yemen and, more precisely, between the US and the Houthis, a relationship which is undoubtedly complex. Although the Republic of Yemen is not a traditional ally of the United States as it supported Saddam during the Gulf war in 1990-1991, it recently allied its forces with the US to fight against the Yemeni branch of Al-Qaida, the latter being dramatically active. To this extent, the Houthis' rebellion "has raised concerns that it will undermine counterterrorism operations against Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), the local affiliate of the terror group" despite the fact that they are also fighting against Al-Qaida since this organization targets Shiite worshippers.²⁰ Consequently, the main interest of the US in Yemen was to maintain a stable situation so that its military forces can put an end to this branch of Al-Qaida, whereas the Houthis' revolution introduced chaos, jeopardizing the US's ambitions in the region. Explaining the geopolitics of the region and the position of the diverse actors through time obviously requires more than a few words, and the largest parts of the articles on the attack in Sana'a.

It does not mean, however, that victims are forgotten. *LAT*, for instance, evokes an interview with one of the victim: "blood was running like a river, said one survivor, Mohammed al-Ansi, who said he was thrown six feet by one of the blasts at the Hashoosh mosque, where the floor was strewn with body parts."²¹ Such a reference to the victim's concrete and personal experience is essential as empathy is accented by familiarization between the other's body and ours.²² Moreover, stylistic devices—this visual comparison between blood and a river—also contribute to stimulate cognitive-emotional processes. Nevertheless, these references that flesh out the bare news are extremely limited both in number and in extent, which makes the *LAT* article exceptional in this matter. Undoubtedly, the geopolitical analysis was necessary and none of these articles adopted a Manichean perspective on the political situation in Yemen. But, due to the organization of the articles, the reader is mostly engaging with a puzzling situation instead of empathizing with the victims.

In contrast, very few articles concerning the terrorist attacks in Paris examined the French positions in Syria or, more generally, in the Middle-East. Newspapers used a division of perspective by publishing, on the one hand, articles analysing the causes or the consequences of these terrorists attacks in Paris: for example, the fact that France sent its forces to bomb Daesh,²⁴ the Syrian refugees situation²⁵ or the economic impact these acts had; and, on the other hand, articles taking an emotional point of view, by focusing on one or two witnesses.²⁷ So, even though the newspapers tried

to shed some light on the bigger picture, room was left for a more emotional reception of the event.

Analysis of V2

Without a doubt, this hypothesis is the most fruitful one for this analysis. If empathy is an automatic emotional response while witnessing someone's pain, the identity of this person will influence the intensity of empathic reactions. This can, obviously, go both ways, since a stronger identification can increase empathy whereas a negative opinion can decrease it and even completely prevent it from happening. I already mentioned that the agent A2, the victims, is a collective and is judged as such. In other words, it is not the opinion on the actual victims that is at stake, but rather on the collective to which they belong.

Bleiker and Hutchison underlined the importance of visual representations

that give us the illusion of coming as close as possible to the actual pain: hence the frequent global circulation of "images of starvation, of emaciated concentration-camp victims, of hooded prisoners, of broken and bleeding skins, of blood-stained floors in prison cells."²⁸

Each of the articles on the event in Sana'a contained at least one picture, and *USAT* even dedicated one gallery to this event.²⁹ These pictures obviously tried, successfully I believe, to evoke the violence of the bombings without falling into the obscene or morbid: bodies covered with blankets, damaged cars and buildings, a (lightly) wounded child waiting for treatment.

Figure 2. A wounded boy waits for treatment at a hospital (Yahya Arhab, European Pressphoto Agency).³⁰



Arguably, these photographs directly convoke in contemporary readers' mind similar images, such as those featured in the media after 9/11 or other dramatic events, thereby encouraging the perception of similarities.

However, other pictures interfere with the cognitive-emotional process, such as the picture of the Houthis' military forces which scramble the representation of Houthi citizens as victims of terrorist attacks.

Figure 3. Houthi fighters chant slogans during the funeral procession for people killed last week in suicide bombing in Sana, Yemen (Hani Mohammed/Associated Press)³¹



Houthis—it should be remembered—are not only victims, but also belligerents. Today's victims may be tomorrow's aggressors and, therefore, the lethal attacks towards the civil population only constitute an episode extracted from a larger history of mutual aggression. Hence this comment in *NYT*.

The attacks were the deadliest on civilians in recent memory in Yemen. But rather than trying to de-escalate tensions on Saturday, the Houthis, a rebel movement led by Zaydi Shiites from northern Yemen, and the president, Abdu Rabbu Mansour Hadi, appeared to grow even more belligerent.³²

The Middle-East is without a doubt a region in which geopolitics is complex at every level and, sometimes, extremely violently conflictual. This fluidity between victims and perpetrators may however contribute to a stereotypical idea of the Orient as the scene of eternal and barbaric wars. Maria Struken, quoted in *USAT*, evokes an "empathy fatigue [...]" for the parts of the world where violence occurs so frequently.³³ The paper version of the first article published by *NYT* on these bombings was entitled "Worry that instability could help jihadists plot against West." Such a title therefore draws a perspective on these attacks by privileging the consequences they have for Westerners and not for the Yemenis who are not Westerners, including the victims and their close relations. This title, modified for the online version, designates two groups: on the one hand "us," who may be victims of jihadists, and on the other hand "them," who are destabilising the region because of their long-lasting civil war.

Empathy, it has been said, is based on the identification of similarities shared by A1 and A2, that is to say, on the identification of a collective to which both A1 and A2 belong. This collective can be extremely large: "human beings," or even "living beings"; or more restrictive, like "US citizens." However, these identifications are not immutable, but are fluid and dynamic. Experiments on Dutch and Belgian students after 9/11 showed that the students interviewed were more sensitive to fear—and therefore more capable of empathy with US citizens—when the questionnaire about these events referred to them as Westerners rather than Europeans.³⁴ Highlighting a "common ingroup" makes one experience more empathy and reciprocally, presenting victims as outgroup members will reduce the level of emphatic reaction. The articles, by highlighting a dichotomy between the Western civilization and an Oriental world, implicitly refer to a long-lasting cliché. But, conversely, by doing so, they maintain this division,

potentially lowering the empathic reaction of the US citizens towards non-Westerners victims of terrorist attacks.

On the other hand, France is a close ally of the US and French and US citizens are bound by a long relationship of friendship as it is reminded by President Obama himself:

We love the French [...] France is our oldest ally. You helped us win our independence. We helped liberate France from fascism. We owe our freedom to each other. We love France for your spirit and your culture, your *joie de vivre* [...] We know these places. They're part of our memories, woven into the fabric of our lives and our culture.³⁵

This notion of a common ingroup is reminded by the presence of US citizens among victims or witnesses of the attacks. Newspapers particularly focused on one of the victim, Nohemi Gonzalez, a Mexican and US citizen who studied industrial design in Paris.³⁶ *USAT* interviewed several US students living in Paris.³⁷ Other articles, written by US citizens who live in Paris, offer a more personal—and thus more emotional—tone.³⁸ One of these articles is meaningfully entitled "A terrorist attack that strikes close to home." Paris is obviously not the homeland of most US citizens, but the proximity between the United States and France—a proximity emphasized by newspapers and politicians alike—is such that the grieving city is presented as a close neighbour. And a neighbour is nearly a friend, as Terence would claim. Mourning crossed the ocean: moments of silence were observed in several sportive or cultural events,³⁹ prayers were made and candles lit, both in the streets⁴⁰ and online.⁴¹ Letters to the editor during this period also reflect this intense empathy—as much as fear that terrorist attacks could happen in the US and desire for revenge—and sometimes referred to a sense of Western community of interests and culture.⁴² Contrary to articles which produce an emotionally provocative discourse, these letters are also emotionally indicative—they exemplify an emotional state—and invocative—they do so on behalf of a collective.⁴³ Emotions, supposedly felt by the whole collective, are displayed within this collective, echoing emotional experiences.

Subliming this feeling of community, Paris became a symbol not only of France or of Western civilization, but of humanity itself. President Obama affirmed that "this is an attack not just on Paris, it's an attack not just on the people of France, but this is an attack on all of humanity and the universal values that we share," a claim echoed by a reader who wrote "the barbarity of terrorism will

never darken the flame of reason that illuminates the City of Light and guides humanity's better angels."⁴⁴ The "we" did not stand anymore for "we, Westerners" but for "we, humans" embracing the entire world. Universalization, however, is the prerogative of the powerful, and is not given to everyone, and certainly not to the Houthis.

In sum: V1, V3 and V4b have been excluded given the nature of the cases, but, from the analysis of the articles, it appears that three variables may have affected emotional reactions of the US readers towards the victims:

- (1) V4a: a substantial difference in terms of coverage of the events.
- (2) V5: other cognitive processes may have disturbed the pure emphatic reaction in the Yemeni case. On the other hand, regarding Paris, a clear distinction is made between articles on geopolitics, and articles on the victims of the attacks themselves, which limits the effect of other cognitive processes.
- (3) V2: the description of the victims in Sana'a is much more ambivalent, as they are also portrayed to be actors in a civil war. Concerning the victims in Paris, the emphatic reaction is supported by a multiplication of portraits and a universalization of their status.

Conclusion

A few of the variables influencing empathic reactions which I have identified can be observed in the articles following the two terrorist attacks. The emotional frames produced by these newspapers are likely to prevent empathy in the Yemeni case, and to stimulate it in the French one. This article may appear as a sharp critique of these newspapers. Rather it is an exploration of a few elements that still constitute a black box in IR theory: (1) relationships between collectives in IR are not undifferentiated but shaped by the representations they have of each of them; (2) these representations are dynamic and may vary through time in the long-run but also very quickly, due to frames that induce the reception of information; (3) diverse institutions reflect, maintain, and produce these representations, and have therefore to be analysed in order to draw a plausible picture of these representations of a given community at a given moment.

Surely, institutions cannot and should not be reduced to the three newspapers I have focused on in this article. Not only are media

more diverse and plural than they may appear here, but media are only some of the institutions producing emotional frames. The picture here is therefore necessarily limited and, as such, distorted. To reach a more accurate perception of the collective emotions, one would have to pay attention to other institutions, be they public or private, such as governmental ones I only shortly mentioned, or, perhaps more important even, educational ones. Furthermore, even though I have privileged emotional frames that were applied just after the events—making only allusions to the relations between these frames and long-lasting representations, for instance the opposition between a Western civilization and an Oriental one—a more ambitious analysis of the representations conveyed by the institutions in a longer period of time could allow us to better understand the intertwining of emotional frames and clichés that shape the perception of the self and others. The idea that US citizens are more likely to experience empathy towards Westerners than towards the people of the Middle East may hardly come as a surprise, but the analysis of the institutionalization of collective emotions, including low-level ones, seems to be a key element to discern how representations are created, maintained and activated at a given moment by a given emotional frame.

Moreover, this analysis could also help us to observe more precisely the role and importance of affects on international affairs. Would the US armed forces co-operate with the French without this emotional reaction of the US people? Could empathy for French people undermine the empathy experienced for Syrian refugees? The scope of this article is modest and does not offer any response to these questions, but the institutionalization of emotions appears as a fertile ground. Our understanding of affects has hugely benefited from other fields: it is now time for us to assimilate them into our own terms.

Notes

1 Jean-Marc Coicaud, "Emotions and Passions in the Discipline of International Relations," *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 15, no. 3 (2014): 495.

2 On this point, see Todd H. Hall and Andrew A. G. Ross, "Affective Politics after 9/11," *International Organization*, no. 69 (2015): 856–60.

3 Roland Bleiker and Emma Hutchison, "Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics," *Review of International Studies* 34, no. S1 (2008): 129.

4 Neta C. Crawford, "The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships," *International Security* 24, no. 4 (2000): 116–156.

5 For more fundamental reflections on the use of discourse analysis in order to study emotions in IR, see Simon Koschut et al., "Discourse and Emotions in International Relations," *International Studies Review* 19, no. 3 (2017): 481–508.

6 Neta C. Crawford, "Institutionalizing Passion in World Politics: Fear and Empathy," *International Theory* 6, no. 3 (2014): 535–557.

7 Hall and Ross, "Affective Politics after 9/11," 857.

- 8 Coicaud, "Emotions and Passions in the Discipline of International Relations"; Crawford, "Institutionalizing Passion in World Politics"; Naomi Head, "A Politics of Empathy: Encounters with Empathy in Israel and Palestine," 42, no. 1 (2016): 95–113.
- 9 Giacomo Rizzolatti, *Mirrors in the Brain: How Our Minds Share Actions, Emotions, and Experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), chap. VII. For a full description of the emotive turn in neurosciences, see Jean-Michel Roy, "From Intersubjectivity to International Relations - The Relevance of the 'Emotive Turn' of Cognitive Science," in *Emotions in International Politics - Beyond Mainstream International Relations*, ed. Yohan Ariffin, Jean-Marc Coicaud, and Vesselin Popovski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 80–111.
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- 16 See <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/01/07/statement-president-attack-france> and <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/04/02/statement-press-secretary-garissa-university-college-attack> (both accessed January 15, 2018).
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- 19 Antonio R. Damasio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain* (London: Heineman, 2003); Rose McDermott, "The Feeling of Rationality: The Meaning of Neuroscientific Advances for Political Science", *Perspectives on Politics* 2, no. 4 (2004): 691–706. For its consequence for IR theory, see Jonathan Mercer, "Human Nature and the First Image: Emotion in International Politics," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 9, no. 3 (2006): 288–303.
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- 30 Ibid.
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MOVING TO THE GLOBAL SOUTH: AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELOCATION OF INTERNATIONAL NGO SECRETARIATS

Sebastian Forsch

Abstract

This paper analyses the relocation of international NGOs' secretariats from the Global North to the Global South as part of a wider movement of reform in the sector, a phenomenon that has hitherto been largely ignored in the academic literature. I conduct an exploratory comparative case study of ActionAid's 2003 process of relocating its international secretariat from London to Johannesburg and Oxfam International's 2014 decision to move its headquarters from Oxford to Nairobi. For this purpose, I assess the drivers, facilitating factors, implementation, achievements, and challenges of these relocations and identify important lessons for organisations contemplating similar measures. I approach the subject from an organisational studies perspective to shed light on the understudied link between strategy, organisational architecture, and the changing environment of international NGOs. The findings suggest relocations are part of a late organisational adaptation to the transformational changes undertaken by international NGOs in the 1990s when they increasingly turned towards advocacy and campaigning work. Moreover, I find that ActionAid's seminal move was primarily driven by principled considerations, whereas Oxfam's more recent decision to relocate has a more instrumental dimension that reflects changes in the global fundraising and political environment since the 2000s. While the relocations send a strong political message with potentially positive spin-offs, they have a limited scope and impact, carry considerable opportunity costs and risks, and need to be seen in the broader context of organisational adaptation.

Introduction

A hurricane is blowing through the world of international development and when the dust settles, the landscape is going to look entirely different. At the centre of the storm is a mix of acknowledgement and fear around a simple principle, which is that to be effective and meaningful in the 21st century, NGOs have no business continuing to hole up in headquarters in the north.¹

Sebastian Forsch, "Moving To the Global South: An Analysis of the Relocation of International NGO Secretariats," *St Antony's International Review* 13. no. 2, (2018): 159 - 186.

From their rather humble and idealistic origins, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) have grown to become well-established key players in global governance today. They are among the most trusted institutions worldwide and have developed globally recognized brands. In 2014, the 30 largest INGOs alone managed a combined income of almost nineteen billion euros.² Like most large and complex organisations, INGOs have always spent "considerable time, energy and other resources discussing and modifying their governance structures."³ Over the past two decades, however, INGOs' reform efforts have intensified in response to the hurricane of crisis awareness, fear of disruptive change such as disintermediation as well as increased scrutiny of their operations. What is more, recent restructurings share the aim of strengthening the role and voice of the Global South (the South) within their organisations, which is new for INGOs that were founded and headquartered in the Global North (the North).⁴ While the alleged strengthening of the South entails a variety of different measures and dimensions, it has been the relocation of international secretariats (ISs) in particular that has "raised eyebrows among the development community"⁵ and beyond, and is the most visible manifestation of the changing North-South dynamic within INGOs.

This comparatively recent development requires explanation as INGOs have for a generation talked about empowering "southern voices"⁶ and "shifting their power bases south."⁷ World Vision, for instance, adopted a Declaration of Internationalization that aimed at an equal North-South partnership within the organisation as early as 1978.⁸ Nevertheless, progress at World Vision—emblematic of the INGO sector at large—was slow and unsatisfactory until the late 1990s.⁹ It was not until 2003 that ActionAid became the first major INGO to embark on a then path-breaking process that aimed at overcoming the intra-organisational dominance of the North and entailed the move of its IS from London to Johannesburg. It took another eleven years for Oxfam to announce in 2014 the plan to move its IS from Oxford to Nairobi by 2019 - the only major INGO thus far to follow ActionAid's example.

Against this background, this paper seeks to answer the question why ActionAid and Oxfam relocated their ISs from the North to the South and what the implications of this move are. For this purpose, I conduct a comparative case study analysing the drivers, facilitating factors, implementations, as well as achievements and challenges of these relocations. The two case studies are followed by a cross-case analysis and discussion in order to assess the broader implications of relocating ISs. The findings suggest that the relocations are part of a late organizational adaptation to the

transformational changes undertaken by INGOs in the 1990s when they increasingly turned towards advocacy and campaigning work. Moreover, I find that ActionAid's seminal decision to relocate its IS is primarily driven by principled considerations, whereas Oxfam's more recent decision has a more instrumental dimension that reflects changes in the global fundraising and political environment. In terms of implications, ActionAid has had to pay a price for its pioneering and principled decision to pave the way, whereas Oxfam's more careful approach might allow it to jump some of the hurdles. The relocations of ISs send a strong political message with potentially positive spin-offs, which, however, have a limited scope and impact, come with considerable risks and opportunity costs, and need to be seen in the context of other measures being taken simultaneously.

In the next section, I present the research design. This is followed by a background discussion on INGOs in the organisational studies literature, the rise of INGOs over the course of the second half of the 20th century, and the current challenges facing and reform efforts underway in the sector (3.3). Subsequently, I present case studies of ActionAid and Oxfam, followed by a cross-case analysis and discussion of the findings, before concluding.

Research Design

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are conceptualised as private, self-governing, and non-profit organisations.¹⁰ There are millions of NGOs worldwide that range "from local self-help groups to large national organisations, and from volunteer-based outfits to highly professional specialist agencies."¹¹ The number of INGOs, NGOs that work in two or more countries, was estimated to be around 47,000 more than ten years ago¹² and is likely to have significantly increased since. This paper, however, is interested in the comparatively small group of approximately 50 large Northern INGOs¹³ that are characterized by their size in terms of scope (working in more than 100 countries in some cases), finance (of up to several billion USD annually), staff (of up to several thousand permanent employees), and recognition and influence (possessing globally recognized brands).¹⁴ If not stated otherwise, the term INGO refers to this group only.

Given the lack of literature explicitly addressing the issue of concern, I conduct an exploratory comparative case study of ActionAid and Oxfam to analyse the drivers, facilitating factors, implementation, and implications of the decisions to relocate ISs. The analysis is based on a desktop study that triangulates the academic and policy literature, official documents from ActionAid

and Oxfam, and statements from representatives of both organisations in media reports. The desktop study is complemented by five semi-structured interviews with representatives from both organizations and independent experts (see Appendix for a list).

Due to their importance for addressing transnational challenges, understanding the internal governance of INGOs "is important to enhancing global governance and problem-solving."¹⁵ In particular, enhancing the understanding of INGOs' move to the South is relevant as it "could challenge the typical division of labor among large development organizations"¹⁶ and, for some, might even "transform the international aid system"¹⁷ at large.

More specifically, I address three main research gaps: First, the relocation of ISs to the South has attracted considerable attention but it is poorly understood and contextualised. Debates on the issue tend to be limited to blog posts, newspaper articles, and anecdotal evidence that are not assessed systematically and not embedded in the academic literature. Second, while the dramatically changing environment and the unsustainability of the status quo are emphasised in almost all recent contributions on INGOs,¹⁸ case studies and empirical evidence of ways in which individual INGOs try to respond to these development are rare.¹⁹ Finally, despite constant complaints about the limitations of INGOs' structures²⁰ and the fact that "there is considerable research on the links among governance, strategy, and architecture in the corporate world, public agencies, and social movements" there is "much less in the context of transnational civil society organizations."²¹ Furthermore, "due to their unique characteristics, management theories developed for for-profit organisations cannot be applied as is to INGOs."²² The same applies for the literature on national NGOs as "being global [...] is qualitatively different from being national."²³ The limitations of this paper are primarily constraints to generalisation inherent in the qualitative, comparative case study approach. Additionally, Oxfam's decision to relocate is a rather recent one and might still be subject to changes.

Background

International NGOs in the Organizational Studies Literature

This section briefly reviews the organizational studies literature on INGOs to contextualise the role of ISs. To start with, ISs are part of the organizational architecture, which comprises "informal culture and expectations, formal structures and systems, human resources, and their interactions to accomplish the tasks required to achieve organizational goals."²⁴ ISs perform different functions

in different INGOs. Usually, they serve to enhance coordination and to provide certain services to all members of the organisation, but have limited power, which predominantly remains at the national level.²⁵ Brown et al. identify five different types of formal governance structures—unitary organisations, federations, confederations, networks, and support organizations—which attribute different roles to central bodies.²⁶ Federations and confederations are the most common types among INGOs. The former, of which ActionAid is an example, "have strong central units that set strategic contexts for affiliates and protect their shared brand" whereas the latter, such as Oxfam "are characterized by less central coordination and more autonomy among members."²⁷ However, these are ideal types only and regardless of their type of formal governance most [INGOs] have some sort of general assembly of members or constituents. Most have international boards that oversee the work of international secretariats. The international secretariats coordinate the transnational work of national affiliates, some of which have their own national boards.²⁸ Additionally, despite the range of issue areas INGOs address, there are "common problems and pressures"²⁹ and a "remarkable consistency in the kinds of big strategic questions that emerge and demand attention."³⁰

Another important similarity of INGOs affecting organisational structure is that, "in the absence of any formal power, trust is the currency."³¹ In the organizational studies literature trust can be conceptualised as legitimacy, which is "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions."³²

The Rise of International NGOs

While the first INGOs were founded as early as the mid-19th century, the majority were established "in the burst of internationalism that followed the end of World War II"³³ and faded out in the 1960s and early 1970s. These INGOs were all founded in the North—predominantly by committed individuals with "an idealistic mission and a strong volunteer spirit."³⁴ They often had a single fundraising and planning office in the North and ran field programmes in the South.³⁵

Spurred by the unfolding process of globalization, INGOs expanded significantly over the 1970s to 1990s. INGOs "noted that globalization put immense pressures upon their organizations to move toward more coordinated rather than purely decentralized or unitary models."³⁶ Due to their origin as independent national

rather than international or global organizations, INGOs responded to this pressure by constituting themselves "in a range of federated models where most of the power remains at the national level."³⁷

In the 1990s, INGOs became "the new darlings of development discourse"³⁸ and further increased their size and influence. However, this exposed them to increased demands for accountability. Critics argued that INGOs had enjoyed the "high ground of public opinion without being subjected to the same public scrutiny given to corporations and governments."³⁹ This view was sustained by more readily available information about INGOs and their activities and research that questioned "many of the cherished assumptions about NGO comparative advantage—closeness to poor people, cost-effectiveness, high levels of innovation and flexibility."⁴⁰

However, Edwards finds that INGOs have responded "pretty well to the first signs of a mid-life crisis in the 1990s"⁴¹ by professionalizing, bureaucratizing, and centralizing their architectures,⁴² which included the creation of ISs to enhance coordination.⁴³ Additionally, INGOs engaged in self-regulation and developed codes of conduct and shared standards and norms such as the INGO Accountability Charter established in 2006. Another response to increased scrutiny was that INGOs, which had "focused primarily, if not exclusively, on service-delivery,"⁴⁴ adopted rights-based approaches and engaged increasingly in advocacy and campaigning. These approaches "emphasised the importance of collectives of the marginalised to ask duty-bearers to live up to their responsibilities"⁴⁵ and changed INGOs theory of change.⁴⁶

Since the 2000s, INGOs have continued to grow and multiply their budgets. Among the reasons for this growth are the professionalization of global fundraising and the "revival of political support for foreign aid."⁴⁷ For illustration, Table 1 compares the size of six major INGOs in 1999 and 2011/2012 by income, which has on average grown by 222%.

Table 1: Size of six major International NGOs in 1999 and 2011/2012 by income⁴⁸

	1999 (in million USD)	2011/2012 (in million USD)	Growth (in %)
World Vision	600	2,790	365
Save the Children	368	1,578	329
Médecins Sans Frontières	304	1,147	277
Plan	295	821	178
Oxfam	504	1,189	136
CARE	525	765	46
Total income / average growth	2,596	8,290	222

Current Challenges and Reform Efforts

Despite INGOs' positive recent development (see Table 1), many observers share the conviction that INGOs suffer from an "identity crisis"⁴⁹ and face a "profoundly uncertain [future]".⁵⁰ Some even ask if INGOs "still have the right to exist."⁵¹ Simultaneously, INGOs are going through intensified reform efforts. For instance, next to ActionAid and Oxfam, "after more than 50 years of ground-breaking achievements, Amnesty has been through a major transformation"⁵² and Greenpeace, "now well into its fifth decade of existence, ... is undergoing a process of renewal ... making big changes to the way we work."⁵³

While current reform efforts of INGOs entail a huge variety of measures with different goals that are beyond the scope of this paper, there are four main reform initiatives that address the North-South dimension. First, from the 1990s onwards INGOs have increased staff diversity and opened their governance by recruiting more people from the South, particularly at the board and senior executive level. More recently, there is also a trend of moving a significant number of staff positions (particularly non-executive ones) from northern to southern locations.⁵⁴ Second, almost all INGOs have increased their number of affiliates in countries in the South.⁵⁵ Third, a limited number of INGOs, such as Amnesty and Transparency International, have strengthened and revived their regional organisational structures in the South, which had previously often been "mere extensions of headquarters,

nodes of management that do little more than reduce span of control."⁵⁶ Finally, there is the relocation of ISs to the South. This initiative started with the move of ActionAid's IS to South Africa in 2004. Oxfam's 2014 decision to relocate its IS to Nairobi is thus far the only case of a major INGO to follow ActionAid's example. It is thus a rather recent development, which has, however, attracted considerable attention in the INGO world.

Why has the perception of a looming INGO crisis resulted in such an array of reform efforts that, for the first time, share the similarity of strengthening the South? The existing literature does not explicitly answer this question. More generally, concerning INGOs late-life blues, it merely highlights the increasing lack of perceived legitimacy and accountability.⁵⁷ At the same time, INGOs' intermediary service business (between donors, on the one side, and implementing agencies or beneficiaries, on the other) is under threat as Southern NGOs are increasingly capable of working directly with donors, and donors themselves prefer to be closer to the projects they fund.⁵⁸ This disintermediation is further facilitated by the spread of new communication technologies that allow donors to directly contact and communicate with organizations and communities in the South.⁵⁹ The anticipated revenue losses due to disintermediation are exacerbated by the prospect of economic stagnation in traditional Northern funding markets.⁶⁰

Additionally, INGOs are confronted with problems of managerialism and bureaucratization, which accompanied their growth and render their work increasingly apolitical and technocratic. This "explains why quite a few INGOs, by professionalizing, have become disconnected from the real struggle – or the people that this struggle is about."⁶¹ Managerialism and bureaucratization also go against the attitudes of young people, who "are increasingly looking at issues of affiliation in new and more flexible ways, engaging with a constantly evolving range of issues and networks according to their current interests."⁶² Facilitated by new technologies and social media, this has led to the rise of social movements, whose "speed and scale... provoking social change" have partly left INGOs behind.⁶³

Action Aid's Process of Internationalization

Introducing ActionAid

ActionAid was founded in London in 1972 and used to be a rather conservative, bureaucratic, top-down organization that focused on service-delivery and child-sponsorship to meet the basic

educational and welfare needs of children in the South.⁶⁴ Over the late 1970s to 1990s, ActionAid expanded its presence in the North by setting up sister organizations. Yet, ActionAid in London continued to supervise country programmes and channelled the money raised by its sister organizations (with the exception of French Aide et Action) to the South. Simultaneously, in the 1980s ActionAid broadened its mission towards community development and expanded its presence in Africa and Asia.⁶⁵

As Newman notes, "the 1990s were a period of turmoil for ActionAid, and the organization which emerged at the end of the decade was very different from the one at the start."⁶⁶ In 1992, a transition towards a rights-based approach was initiated;⁶⁷ in 1998 Indian Salil Shetty was appointed CEO with a clear change agenda; and subsequently a federated ActionAid Alliance was formed as an interim structure to enhance coordination.⁶⁸ The two latter moves, as well as the ambitious Fighting Poverty Together strategy that formally shifted the organization towards a rights-based approach,⁶⁹ had sparked controversy and were accompanied by replacements at the senior management and board level to foster support for change and to increase diversity by appointing non-British board members.⁷⁰ Based on a 2003 memorandum of understanding, ActionAid formally initiated internationalization as a process of decentralizing and "transforming ActionAid's own governance structures, shifting our own practice of power through establishing national Boards and Assemblies in affiliated Member countries and constituting an International Assembly of affiliated Members that elects an International Board."⁷¹ Internationalization included the founding of ActionAid International (AAI), which superseded the Alliance, and the establishment of an AAI IS taking over the international tasks from London-based ActionAid.⁷² It was decided to set up the IS in the South and Johannesburg was later chosen as the new location.

Today, "ActionAid works with 15 million people in 45 countries to defeat poverty and achieve greater human rights."⁷³ In 2016, ActionAid employed 3,064 staff and had a total income of EUR 228,983 million.⁷⁴ Of this, AAI was comprised of roughly 120 staff (or 3.9%)⁷⁵ and spent EUR 21.3 million on programme costs (approximately 9.3%).⁷⁶ As of January 2018, there are 27 Affiliates and Associates and 18 country programmes.⁷⁷

Drivers

There are three drivers (in decreasing order of importance from first to third as reflected in the emphasis of the sources) behind ActionAid's decision to relocate its IS in the context

of internationalization. The first driver is norm inconsistency (ranked first). Maycock, then ActionAid Head of Europe, illustrates that internationalization "has been absolutely driven by our desire at ActionAid to be consistent with our values of power and equality and good governance."⁷⁸ This assessment is seconded by ActionAid's current CEO, Brazilian Adriano Campolina, who emphasizes the "desire to be consistent with our values of putting the poor and marginalized at the centre of our work."⁷⁹ Against this background, internationalization "was not simply to be a structural transformation, but rather a political shift."⁸⁰ This resulted in a principled and "symbolic" decision to relocate the IS to the South.

The second driver is ActionAid's increased advocacy and campaigning focus (ranked second) and the adoption of a rights-based approach in the 1990s. This reorientation required ActionAid to address credibility, which was "the big issue for us at the time, ... particularly in the South"⁸¹ as well as to "enhance accountability to local stakeholders, deepen legitimacy locally and develop a local identity."⁸² These new requirements were incompatible with the image of "an undemocratic, Northern-based, money-driven organization."⁸³ The relocation of the IS was consequently a response to the realization that "to be an organisation talking about poverty and power and talking about eradicating poverty in the South we couldn't be based in the North."⁸⁴

Finally, the third, albeit less emphasised, driver is fundraising concerns (ranked third) regarding expectations of Northern donors and resource competition.⁸⁵

Facilitating Factors

There are three main facilitating factors (once again, in decreasing order of importance from first to third as reflected in the emphasis of the sources) that allowed Internationalization and the relocation of the IS to become politically feasible, which was a move that then "not many other organizations had even contemplated, far less put into practice."⁸⁶ The first and most decisive factor is leadership change and boldness (ranked first): "Courageous leaders were critical to catalysing organizational transformation at Action Aid – both those who challenged from below and those who were open to being challenged at the top."⁸⁷ The 1998 appointment of Shetty as CEO was the most visible of such opportunities and a strong signal that turned the management into "catalysts for change."⁸⁸ This development, however, had been preceded by changes at the board level allowing for Shetty's appointment in the first place. His appointment was considered a "bold decision" given

that there were no southern CEOs at major INGOs at the time.⁸⁹ Subsequently, with Internationalization and the founding of AAI, the Board similarly turned itself into chance catalyst by consenting "to give up their control, their ownership of the organization."⁹⁰

The second facilitating factor is room and demand for change from below (ranked second). The demand was spurred by participatory approaches and room for individuals.⁹¹ The former had become a key tool for ActionAid by the late 1990s and "contributed to building the organisational capacity to listen to poor people, and an evolving understanding of the need for downward accountability."⁹² The room for individuals, arguably a result of the slightly anti-establishment and chaotic organization culture, facilitated the creation of networks of agents of change at different levels of the organization, including that of country directors, senior management, and board.⁹³

Finally, a feeling of crisis (ranked third) is another facilitating factor. During the 1990s a clash between ActionAid's shift towards a participatory and rights-based rhetoric and its unchanged bureaucratic, top-down structures unfolded and led to "muddled and unprincipled" action.⁹⁴ Ultimately, the feeling of crisis was reinforced by a Taking Stock review and feasibility study for the envisioned internationalization process, which came to an "excoriating, devastating" conclusion.⁹⁵ It also unveiled the discrepancy between action and rhetoric and resulted in the feeling that ActionAid "didn't really have an option not to do it."⁹⁶

Implementation

The first implicit step towards Internationalization had already started in the late 1990s with the recruitment of Southern trustees to sit on the then British ActionAid Board.⁹⁷ From 2003 onwards, former country programmes were transformed into affiliates, ActionAid expanded into new countries and set-up a more democratic governance structure.⁹⁸ When AAI was created in 2003, an IS had to be established and an AAI CEO recruited. The formation of AAI turned the London-based ActionAid as the former international centre into ActionAid UK, a member of AAI like any other national affiliate, and AAI became the international coordinating body of the newly formed federation. To underscore this move, Ramesh Singh from Nepal became the first CEO and Noerine Kaleeba from Uganda the first Board Chair of AAI.

The establishment of the IS in Johannesburg further highlighted the aspiration to shift power and the separation of AAI and ActionAid UK.⁹⁹ Additionally, "there was a deliberate decision not to merely transplant the London office in Johannesburg but to find

new ways of connecting with member countries."¹⁰⁰ This entailed a regional-hub perspective that resulted in a multi-locational IS with staff distributed over London, Nairobi, Brussels, Bangkok, Rio de Janeiro, and Johannesburg. However, the establishment of the Johannesburg IS, where AAI's CEO and senior management are based, and the definition of the tasks of AAI and its IS have been a rather slow and bumpy process. With every new CEO further restructurings followed and the secretariat's tasks became more defined. In 2008 the IS was comparatively large with around 150 staff, mostly based in London, and has since shrunk to 120 staff, of which approximately fifty are based in Johannesburg.¹⁰¹

Achievements and Challenges

Table 2 provides an overview of some of the major achievements of ActionAid between 2003 and 2013. At first sight, these achievements are remarkable: ActionAid has transformed itself into an international federation in which members are represented with equal votes in an Assembly; it has almost doubled in terms of income; it has significantly increased the number of countries it works in; and it has diversified its membership from being exclusively Northern to predominantly Southern.

Table 2: Comparative Snapshot of ActionAid in 2003 and 2013¹⁰²

	2003 (prior to Internationalisation)	2013 (ten years since Internationalisation)
Structure	Unitary organization (leading an alliance of sister organizations)	Global federation (of equal members)
Leadership	Control of ActionAid mostly with British trustees	Control of ActionAid sits with Assembly (from 26 countries)
Members	6 founding members of AAI	26 members
Reach	Working in 19 countries	Working in 45 countries
Income	EUR 116 million (2003)	EUR 224 million (2011, 93% growth)
Ownership	Country programs are wholly owned subsidiaries of British-owned ActionAid (with the exception of ActionAid Brazil)	15 country programs have become members and are governed by National Boards and General Assemblies

In terms of impact, Burnett argues that diversity and local knowledge from around the world have significantly improved

decision-making at the AAI board level.¹⁰³ The relocation of the IS has over time also reduced the number of expatriates working at AAI.¹⁰⁴ The combination of these factors had led to "a visible change in the face of the organisation" being achieved.¹⁰⁵ This "brings credibility and acceptance too, as individual national ActionAids around the world are increasingly seen wherever they work as self-regulating independent members of a southern-led international family, not as agents of British or American influence."¹⁰⁶ Therefore, internationalization is believed to have enhanced ActionAid's legitimacy and has become an important source of pride and motivation for staff.¹⁰⁷

However, there are also several unanticipated challenges and downsides. For instance, the comparatively large IS that was required for leading the initial phase of internationalization absorbed considerable unrestricted funds.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, there was the perception that the scope of Internationalization overstretched ActionAid's capacity at the international and the national levels. For instance, while the goal of rapidly increasing Southern membership went well as a technical process, "a big challenge facing the organisation was the extent to which all members of the federation could participate "equally" in line with our values of internationalization."¹⁰⁹ In addition, internationalization has contributed to a loss of strategic focus, which caused a decline in visibility and fundraising in ActionAid's traditional key markets, Italy and Britain, which still generate most of ActionAid's income.¹¹⁰

The simultaneous transformation of the IS into a multi-site office with a new centre in Johannesburg on top of all the other changes has arguably fragmented the IS, rendered it "stretched too thin,"¹¹¹ and exacerbated rather than strengthened its role in leading internationalization.¹¹² The capacity of the IS was further challenged by the fact that many London-based employees decided not to move to Johannesburg (primarily for practical and family reasons), and consequently either left ActionAid or were redeployed to ActionAid UK.¹¹³

In sum, ActionAid's overall achievements since 2003 remain remarkable, but have to be put into the context of the very positive developments within the sector at large, in which almost all INGOs have grown significantly, partly much more than ActionAid (see Table 1). It is thus difficult to establish any causality between Internationalization and the positive organizational development. In fact, the relocation of the IS in particular might have been the component of Internationalization where most miscalculations have been made and can certainly be characterised as rushed.¹¹⁴

Introducing Oxfam

Oxfam was founded in 1942 as The Oxford Committee for Famine Relief to assist starving people in Greece during the Second World War. It began working in the South in 1951 and, by the mid-1970s, already managed 800 projects worldwide.¹¹⁵ For long, Oxfam was "a loosely knit network of organizations that shared the Oxfam name."¹¹⁶ In order to foster coordination and collaboration, particularly for global advocacy activities, Oxford-based Oxfam International (OI) was formed as a confederation in 1995 by its then ten members and a rights-based approach was adopted.¹¹⁷ In 2014, the Oxfam 2020 vision was announced, which entails the decision to enhance Oxfam's presence and engagement in the South, including via the relocation of the IS.¹¹⁸

Today, Oxfam reaches 22.2 million people in more than 90 countries to address global poverty and injustice via development, humanitarian, campaigning, and advocacy work.¹¹⁹ In total, Oxfam has an approximate annual income of EUR 1,071.4 million (2015/2016)¹²⁰ and 9,953 staff worldwide (2014/2015).¹²¹ Thereof, OI has an annual income of GBP 11.8 million (approximately EUR 16.3 million, or 1.5%, as of and for the year to March 2015) and 160 staff (approximately 1.6%).¹²² Sixty employees work out of the Oxford-based IS,¹²³ most of the rest from advocacy offices in Addis Ababa, New York, Washington D.C., Brussels, and Geneva.¹²⁴ Currently, there are twenty member organizations, five of which are located in the South: Hong Kong (founding member of OI in 1995), Mexico (joined in 2008), India (2011), South Africa (2016/2017), and Brazil (2016/2017).¹²⁵

Drivers

There are three drivers (in decreasing order of importance from first to third as reflected in the emphasis of the sources) behind Oxfam's decision to relocate its IS to Kenya. The strongest driver is Oxfam's increased advocacy and campaigning focus (ranked first) based on its rights-based approach. According to Phillips (then Oxfam GB's Campaigns Director), Oxfam "will need to go further along the journey from "for" to "by" and "with." International NGOs are not here to 'develop' people: we are here to accompany people in their struggles for a fairer world."¹²⁶ An external review encouraged the focus on advocacy and campaigns, finding that next to emergency relief this was the comparative strength where Oxfam was perceived to be most useful to its partners. The need

for legitimacy and credibility as the basis for advocacy was a key driver behind the recognition that "we can no longer be a Northern European and a bit of Eastern North American organisation."¹²⁷ As a result, Oxfam decided that by

reshaping the relationship of all of our governance, management and operational models we are firmly rooting our representation, power and influence in the global South; to ensure that the focus of participation and decision-making lies with those for whom we are primarily accountable: the women and men living in poverty.¹²⁸

The second driver is fundraising and global power shifts (ranked second). As Matt Grainger, Head of Media at OI, expresses: The relocation of the IS is part of "a really strategic decision by the Oxfam federation to build more of a presence on the ground in the South."¹²⁹ This is seconded by OI's current CEO, Ugandan Winnie Byanyima, who states that "we don't change because it's fashionable; we change because the global dynamics of power and poverty are now so different than before."¹³⁰ Among others, the Oxfam 2020 vision identifies fundraising opportunities as a strategic issue, as "more and more wealthy people, corporations and foundations [are] in the South."¹³¹ Grainger adds that Southern countries are "growing ever more influential on international stages."¹³²

The final driver behind the relocation of the IS and the Oxfam 2020 vision is norm inconsistency (ranked third). Byanyima illustrates:

We [INGOs] need to transform ourselves into genuinely international organizations (...). I want Oxfam to be part of a stronger, global movement for a values-driven society that treats people more equally and preserves the planet. In our own way, within the Oxfam world, that will mean devolving power to the south.¹³³

In the words of Phillips, "we will need to bring our cherished values—of solidarity, equality, inclusion, and diversity — into the governance and structures of our organizations."¹³⁴ The primary inconsistency that Oxfam seeks to reconcile thus lies in the aspiration of being global and the fact that "we are pretty much all about north, at least in our power structures."¹³⁵

There are three facilitating factors (in decreasing order of importance from first to third as reflected in the emphasis of the sources). The first one is a groundswell of desire for a more equally balanced organization (ranked first) that had gathered strength at different levels of Oxfam for many years. The origins of this groundswell go back to the strong solidarity background of many of OI's founding members. This "founding and still present culture" within Oxfam was subsequently strengthened by the adoption of a rights-based approach, and a more multi-dimensional and distributional understanding of poverty. Over time, a coalition of actors formed that supported the move South. This coalition included existing Southern affiliates and individuals across Northern affiliates, particularly in the campaigning and advocacy departments.¹³⁶

Second, there is a feeling of lagging behind (ranked second) the dramatic changes in the global political economy and the advancements of peer organization. As expressed by Byanyima, "we find ourselves at a critical juncture where the world is changing faster than us and we need to take another step in our own change if we are to remain relevant."¹³⁷ In terms of the aspiration to be truly global, currently only five out of twenty Oxfam affiliates are Southern. Despite the recent increase of Southern affiliates, this is still a low number compared to peer organisations, such as ActionAid, which counts sixteen Southern affiliates out of twenty-seven in total, as well as Transparency International, which is "much more globally balanced."¹³⁸

The third factor that facilitated Oxfam's move South and took up the groundswell is leadership changes (ranked 3rd). Since the 2000s, the boards of many powerful Northern affiliates had become considerably more Southern and board members intuitively welcomed a power shift. Additionally, when Byanyima came into office in early 2013 taking over from an Australian, Jeremy Hobbs, it was decided to switch the roles between OI's and Oxfam GB's CEOs in terms of representing Oxfam at the highest international level and being its global face. Byanyima's enhanced leadership and her strong ties with African civil society changed the dynamics and allowed her to take up the groundswell and advance the Oxfam 2020 agenda.¹³⁹

Implementation

Three major initiatives led up to Oxfam 2020. The first one was the 2010 launch of the Single Management Structure, which reduced

the duplications caused by the presence and operations of several affiliates in a single partner country to enhance impact, cost efficiency, and identity.¹⁴⁰ The second initiative is the 2012 Global Brand Identity to strengthen Oxfam's profile and influence.¹⁴¹ Finally, the Oxfam Strategic Plan for 2013-2019 "defined a new level of ambition for our [Oxfam's] confederation. It means for the first time in Oxfam's history, every affiliate is now working to the same shared plan."¹⁴²

Against this background, the Oxfam 2020 vision was launched in October 2013 with the goal to deliver the Strategy Plan by 2019. It comprises three key areas: (1) influence more effectively, (2) simplify and streamline ways of working, and (3) be more globally balanced. The first area consists of the establishment of regional hubs to enhance the use of knowledge and decentralise its creation. The second area builds on the Single Management Structure and aims at strengthening the country level. The third area aims at a "stronger representation, power and influence from the 'global South'" that entails the increase of Southern affiliates.¹⁴³ This includes the recent upgrade of Oxfam South Africa and Oxfam Brazil from observers to affiliates and adding a total of eight new Southern affiliates by 2020.¹⁴⁴

The relocation of the IS is also part of the third area of Oxfam 2020. Thirty locations were scrutinized assessing the ability to engage with partners, to operate, and to speak out.¹⁴⁵ Based on this assessment, Nairobi was chosen as the new location for the IS and in 2016 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Kenyan government. The relocation began in 2017 and is expected to last two years.¹⁴⁶ Approximately fifteen senior staff will be moved first and around fifteen local staff are expected to be recruited subsequently.¹⁴⁷ Thus, the Nairobi IS will initially be smaller than the current Oxford-based one, as some staff are expected to stay in Oxford, or to move to other parts of the existent multi-site office structure.¹⁴⁸

Cross-Case Analysis and Discussion

Table 3 provides a comparative overview of ActionAid and Oxfam. It shows among other things that fourteen years after embarking on internationalization ActionAid has a more globally balanced membership than Oxfam. The drivers behind the decisions to relocate ISs from the UK to Africa in the context of internationalization and Oxfam 2020 are remarkably similar. Overall, the analysis suggests that the increased advocacy and campaigning focus is the single most important driver. The relocations can thus be seen as a response to the observation that

"policy influence INGOs that represent political interests might need a governance structure that differs from that of service delivery organizations."¹⁴⁹ The shift away from service-delivery to advocacy and campaigning prompted questions about INGOs' legitimacy, accountability, and representation. This posed a challenge to INGOs, whose architectures have been characterized by "decades of history of a North-South resource transfer model of development."¹⁵⁰ The move South is thus part of INGOs' efforts to overcome the sort of architectures and accountability systems that had privileged donors and headquarters in the North over those people in the South who they claim to represent.¹⁵¹ A look at the sector at large confirms that the first INGOs that strengthened the South are advocacy-oriented organizations such as Amnesty, Greenpeace, and Transparency International.

Across the cases norm inconsistency is the second most important driver, which is closely intertwined with the former. The shift towards advocacy that often aims at exposing inconsistencies between what targets preach and practise has simultaneously exposed significant norm inconsistencies of INGOs themselves and undermined their credibility. Moreover, it has strengthened the claims of staff and partners by transforming them from "means to service delivery goals" to "critical [factors] to influence campaigns"¹⁵² who experience cognitively unpleasant norm inconsistencies first-hand in their daily work.

Table 3: Comparative Overview of ActionAid and Oxfam (based on Parts 4 and 5)

	ActionAid	Oxfam
Foundation	1972	1942
Architecture	Federation	Confederation
Members in South / total	16 / 27 (59%)	5 / 20 (25%)
Reach	45 countries 15 million people	90 countries 22.2 million people
Staff IS / total	120 / 3,064 (3.9%)	160 / 9,953 (1.6%)
Income IS / total (in million EUR)	21.3 / 228.98 (9.3%)	16.3 / 1,071.4 (1.5%)
Drivers	1) norm inconsistency 2) advocacy & campaigning 3) fundraising	1) advocacy & campaigning 2) fundraising & power shift 3) norm inconsistency
Facilitating factors	1) leadership changes & boldness 2) room & demand for change from below 3) feeling of crisis	1) groundswell of demand for change from below 2) feeling of lagging behind 3) leadership changes

Fundraising is a third shared driver, albeit more important for Oxfam, as Northern markets are declining, private wealth in the South is increasing, and more and more funds are available to organizations registered and/or rooted in the South only.¹⁵³ The changing global power dynamics and the rise of emerging economies were not of particular concern to ActionAid around the turn of the century. However, the recognition that having "a 'Western' identity is a mixed blessing in many developing countries"¹⁵⁴ for influencing and fundraising has become more emphasised since the 2000s and influenced Oxfam's decision to move South. The analysis thus shows that there is an overlap of both principled and instrumental as well as internal and external drivers.¹⁵⁵ Yet, ActionAid, as the sector's forerunner, displays more principled motives, whereas Oxfam is driven by more instrumentalist considerations about funding and changing global power dynamics.

Concerning the facilitating factors, "leaders who can transcend the narrower interests of their national organizations and advance a bold vision for the global organization are critical in these change efforts."¹⁵⁶ Given the more visionary and pioneering nature of ActionAid's early move, leadership initiative and a small coalition of change-oriented individuals in different key positions at the right point in time were crucial factors that allowed for Internationalisation's scale and speed of change. In contrast, in Oxfam's case it is a groundswell of demands for change from below, having accumulated over time and eventually recognised and met by change-oriented leaders. For Oxfam, which launched Oxfam 2020 ten years after ActionAid's Internationalisation, a feeling of lagging behind and peer pressure is another facilitating factor. Barney Tallack, former Director of Strategy at OI, confirms that Oxfam is "following some pioneers", including ActionAid.¹⁵⁷

In terms of implementation, the implications of ActionAid's primarily principled approach entail the painful lesson that "it is all very fine to have a dream, but the practicalities of that dream stay with you for decades."¹⁵⁸ While in theory moving South might be a "no-brainer,"¹⁵⁹ in practice it comes with considerable logistical challenges. In contrast, Oxfam's 2020 strategy and the relocation of the IS have been more strategic and informed by a comprehensive exchange of experiences and information with peer organizations.¹⁶⁰ Concerning the experience of ActionAid's Internationalization, which was extensively shared with Oxfam, Tallack identifies two main lessons. First, "it takes a long time to build up countries as equal members." Therefore, Oxfam deliberately decided to go slower about the process of admitting new affiliates. Second, Oxfam considered the exact location of

where to move its IS more carefully, and "Johannesburg was not on our list precisely because of the experience of ActionAid", which refers to the comparatively high costs of operation and the difficulty to recruit international staff.¹⁶¹ Oxfam's more careful "wait and see approach"¹⁶² might thus allow it to reap some of the fruits of relocating without encountering as many hurdles as ActionAid did, but is less ambitious and represents less of a transformational change.

Turning towards the assessment of the relocations of ISs at large, it is important to consider the great deal of symbolism that the relocation of headquarters entails. This symbolism makes the relocation an inherently political move. However, condemning this move straightaway as a gimmick or gesture politics is as short-sighted as regarding it as the incarnation of a global power shift. In fact, the relocation of ISs is a strong message to internal and external stakeholders that changes little by itself, but – as ActionAid demonstrated – can provide the ground for path dependency and positive spill-overs. ActionAid's experience also suggests that the relocation can indeed successfully contribute to transforming INGOs' face, increase diversity and equity, and ultimately enhance legitimacy.

Nevertheless, there are considerable opportunity costs of relocating ISs. Structural changes at such a scale are very resource and time intensive undertakings that cause resistance and require costly adaption. Retaining and attracting staff and capacity are additional challenges exacerbated by restructurings as these cause concerns about job security and salaries.¹⁶³ Oxfam's relocation to Nairobi, for instance, is reported to face challenges concerning work permits and transitioning of staff as well as the need for significant employee support in the new location.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, as these changes are predominantly inward-looking, the respective resources and time cannot be devoted to other activities such as programming and fundraising.

The implications of INGOs' move South for their Southern constituencies are equally ambiguous. On the positive side, Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah, CEO of CIVICUS, contends:

[T]he positive spin-offs from these organisations – the trained activists, lobbyists and professional campaigners – are going to European cities at the moment. Having that community of professional people working for social change in cities such as Nairobi will benefit that city.¹⁶⁵

Moreover, a Southern-based IS could facilitate the collaboration and exchange between INGOs and Southern NGOs and create

employment for local support staff in addition to attracting international experts. However, it is important to acknowledge that, in the cases of ActionAid and Oxfam, first, the move of the IS South does not entail that power shifts completely. Rather, due to their multi-locational approach, power and staff are also diffused and partly retained in the North. For ActionAid, "the idea was never to make Johannesburg the new London."¹⁶⁶ Second, AAI and OI employ comparatively few staff. The combination of these two factors makes Oxfam relocate no more than 15 employees and recruit 15 more locally. By stating that if Oxfam "ends up employing a few hundred Kenyans in their Nairobi office, that will have a positive impact on Nairobi society,"¹⁶⁷ Sriskandarajah is representative of many observers who fundamentally misjudge the limited scale of the relocation of ISs. Additionally, there are concerns that INGOs going South might crowd out the very Southern organizations that they allegedly support by absorbing dedicated Southern funding and "bring[ing] salary scales that attract skilled workers out of the local non-profit sector."¹⁶⁸

Conclusion

Based on a comparative case study, this paper has analysed ActionAid and Oxfam's relocation of ISs to the South. I find that they face a similar combination of principled and instrumentalist drivers for this move. These drivers include changed accountability requirements resulting from a reorientation towards advocacy and campaigning, an increasingly exposed accumulation of norm inconsistencies, and strategic considerations, such as fundraising. However, ActionAid's early decision to relocate its IS is more principled, whereas Oxfam's decision to follow the example is more instrumentalist. ActionAid certainly had to pay a price for its pioneering and principled decision to pave the way while Oxfam's more careful approach might allow it to jump some of the hurdles.

Overall, the findings suggest that the relocation of ISs can be seen as an aftermath of the last wave of truly transformational changes undertaken by INGOs in the 1990s, which included the adoption of rights-based approaches and the declining importance attached to service-delivery. While the principled case for an intra-organizational strengthening of the South had already been clear long before, the reorientation in the 1990s made it even more evident and provided the ground for ActionAid's seminal process of Internationalization. Since the 2000s, more instrumentalist drivers such as the increasingly difficult fundraising environment in the North, global power shifts, and peer pressure have kicked in. Overall, they provide the background for Oxfam's decision to

relocate and for a range of other on-going reforms in the INGOs sector such as the revival of regional structures.

For future research, it would be insightful to complement and compare this paper's analysis of the relocation of ISs with similar measures addressing the North-South imbalance undertaken by other INGOs, such as Amnesty, Greenpeace, Transparency International, and the WWF to assess in how far they differ, and why certain INGOs decided to engage in one type of reform rather than another. Based on the experiences of ActionAid and Oxfam, the risks that other INGOs undertaking similar moves to the South should consider include human resource challenges, opportunity costs in form of time and resources to manage the adaptation process, and potentially ambiguous effects on Southern constituencies.

Concerning the meaning and implications of relocating ISs, the analysis suggests that they need to be seen in conjunction with other measures taken simultaneously (here ActionAid's Internationalization and Oxfam 2020). In this context, the relocation sends a strong political message that can support a broader change agenda via potential spin-offs and credibility but has limited scope and impact itself given that power within most INGOs – and certainly within ActionAid and Oxfam – resides with national affiliates, the most powerful of which are Northern. Therefore, the relocation of ISs is an incremental step in the right direction towards enhancing INGOs' legitimacy in times of unrest and a perceived crisis in the sector, but it falls short of embodying the transformative change that many observers regard indispensable for INGOs' survival in times of disruptive change in the sector in the form of rising Southern (I)NGOs and of virtual platforms for campaigning and giving.

Appendix – List of Interview Partners

Name	Position / Affiliation
Ken Burnett	Former Board Member and Chairman (1998-2003), ActionAid
Stanley Arumugam	Former Senior Head – Governance, Leadership & Accountability, ActionAid International
Barney Tallack	Former Director of Strategy, Oxfam International
Burkhard Gnärig	Executive Director, International Civil Society Centre, former CEO of terre des hommes Germany, Greenpeace Germany, and Save the Children International
Peter Christiansen	Former Deputy Executive Director, International Civil Society Centre, and Director, ActionAid Denmark

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GEORGE A. AKERLOF AND ROBERT
J. SHILLER, *PHISHING FOR PHOOLS: THE
ECONOMICS OF MANIPULATION AND
DECEPTION*. PUBLISHER: PRINCETON
UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2015.

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By the title, *Phishing for Phools* sounds like just another addition to the "pop economics" books to be shelved near Freakonomics and the like where economists start battering theoretical economics to tell us where it fails, how it is disconnected from real life, and why it needs to be reformed. Indeed, it is almost exactly "pop economics," but a little bit more. Even though not intellectually stimulating, it is a refreshing book to detail curious mishappenings around us. In the preface Akerlof and Schiller make it clear, "...as reformers both of economic thought and of the economy, we seek to change not what is right with the world, but what is wrong." The book comprises relatable narratives and real life examples rather than equations and dense economic jargon. It is backed by meticulous analysis of facts and figures with a lucid expression and a straightforward perspective.

The authors have done a stellar job in expressing intricate economic concepts in an elementary parlance to make one point: that consumers are manipulated for profit whenever the market has an incentive to do so. They mention in the introduction, "when there are completely free markets, there is not only freedom to choose; there is also freedom to phish" and the rest of the book is essentially devoted to nailing this point home. Their writing is laudable but the book fails to uncover any staggering truths or break new ground.

The book starts with Akerlof and Schiller reinterpreting Adam Smith's invisible hand and the concept of equilibrium to introduce us to a new "phishing equilibrium." In this new equilibrium whenever there is an opportunity to exploit a consumer, the consumer will be exploited by the market. This is not due to "foolishness" of the consumers but due to their "phoolishness", which essentially arises from information asymmetry, behavioural responses,

cognitive biases, and other such phenomena. Similarly, the 'phishermen' are not inherently evil individuals waiting to wreak havoc but it is the design of the market that leaves no option with them than to employ tactics of manipulation and deception. Car salesmen, the pharma industry, credit cards issuers, banks, advertisers, politicians- everyone uses 'phishing' techniques to get the maximum out of the consumers in order to make hefty profits.

Right from the introduction, titled "Expect To Be Manipulated: Phishing Equilibrium", throughout the book the authors maintain that sellers in a market find ways to force consumers to make decisions that are not in their best interest. However, unlike other narratives of capitalism that pass a moral judgement on the deceptive tactics used by capitalists, *Phishing for Phools* acknowledges capitalism as a default state of being in the modern society. It argues that this manipulation is not an aberration and instead the norm given how the incentives in the system are structured.

In the book, we get introduced to an array of colourful characters like Mollie who is addicted to gambling and shows us why she cannot make a better decision of her savings; or a car salesman who doubles as a 'phisherman' and reveals some tricks of his trade. The authors traverse the personal and professional lives of the three biggest advertisers of the world in order to build context and visuals around their underlying points. They follow stories and historical evolution of institutions before landing on the concepts of savings and loan crisis, junk bonds, and securities. In one chapter, they explain reputation mining and securitization with seven questions about avocados and in another they detail out the design of marketing campaigns of pharma products to dupe consumers. The parallel between the regulation and lobbying of alcohol and tobacco industries also throws light on the phishing in everyday American life. Backed by reliable hard economic data, and expressed in a consumable fashion, *Phishing for Phools* makes a convincing argument that the market works against the consumer. Yet, there are points when the authors delve too deeply into analysing issues that are already accepted in popular culture. For example, the authors revisit the subjects of lobbyists and intentions of advertisers in unnecessary detail.

Traversing through the skeletal structures of presidential campaigns and financial institutionalization in America, Akerlof and Schiller paint a very sour picture about the state of affairs around us. They acknowledge this throughout and mention that it is so on purpose. Owing to their constructive and solution-driven focus, they address issues that need to be reformed rather than talking up what is already well-functioning. Throughout the book, they clarify this stance: "Do we like free markets? Yes, but." They are

calling for a reform of capitalism without outlining what that reform ought to be. That is not a problem in itself; it is acceptable for authors to propound what the problem is and rephrase it in a different light for a more evolved understanding. But given the time spent on highlighting the problems, the reader spends their time awaiting a solution that has been lurking around the corner but never comes.

One cannot help but notice that almost all examples in the book are from the United States. Thus, readers need to be wary of exporting the understanding of the book directly to local contexts outside of the States. Even though Akerlof and Schiller convince us of certain ubiquitous 'phishing' techniques, cultural differences across countries and continents do change the quantum of impact of such 'phishermen'. The book allows us to view the inherent problems in modern capitalist economies with a mature take on the core misgiving(s) of such a system. *Phishing for Phools* is not spectacularly different from works written by Dan Ariely, Daniel Kahneman, Dan Gilbert, Richard Thaler and others, yet it carves its niche on a bookshelf. It does equip us with sufficient arguments to have a coffee table conversation with our libertarian friends and colleagues.

Phishing for Phools is a book of breadth, rather than one of depth. While Akerlof and Schiller do illuminate issue, at some level there is a longing for a fitting conclusion to their arguments. Even though the broader plot of the book is quite clear, invariably, there is an expectation for them to tie up the sub-plots to discuss something more insightful. Sadly, that almost never happens. That said, it is a meticulously well-researched book with no paucity of personal anecdotes that the authors have lived and experienced and as such, a light and refreshing read on a daunting topic.

JOSEPH S. NYE, JR., *IS THE AMERICAN CENTURY OVER?* PUBLISHER: JOHN WILEY & SONS, 2015

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"Americans have a long history of worrying about their decline" (p.18) —this is what Joseph Nye notes in his succinct analysis of what the future role of the US will be in the global order. For many, this worry seems to have culminated in the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States. An election that for many began as joke snowballed into an election campaign and a first year of presidency dominated by a rhetoric that ridiculed fundamental American values, and only seemed to emphasize the right to freedom of speech. Conversely, Trump utilized the American fear of decline in his election slogan "Make America Great Again," implying that the US has gone through a period of decline. This is where opinions diverge as to what American decline looks like and what should be done to arrest this from happening, polarizing a society that is already far from homogenous. Embedded in this contemporary context, Nye's *Is the American Century Over?* focuses on a compelling question worth considering.

According to Nye, the "American Century" began in 1941 when the US entered World War II and thereby started shaping global politics—when this will end is unclear, but Nye believes that it will not be in the near future. What is occurring, however, is a "rise of the rest." Hence, the US is, if anything, in relative decline to other states but not in absolute decline, like the Roman Empire was. Dedicating an entire chapter to the internal decay of the Roman Empire, Nye disputes the comparison between the decline of the Roman Empire and the decline of the US. He does not see the US as declining due to "imperial overstretch" (p.71) or due to internal factors like "domestic battles over culture, collapse of institutions, and economic stagnation" (p.72). However, the anti-establishment election of Trump has caused a shift in internal dynamics, leaving American society polarized and confused about what its culture stands for anymore. Particularly worrying are the racial tensions still present in the US today, and which have been fuelled by controversial "travel bans" implemented through executive orders by the current president.

Nye's analysis suggests that Trump's opinions on foreign policy could have dangerous consequences for American power. Although leaders around the world have pledged their standing allegiance to the US, there have also been palpable tensions of action and

opinion that strain American international relations, especially with its European allies. However, it has also become obvious that Trump's views on American involvement abroad have the potential to ultimately alienate many allies in the future. This is significant, since Nye emphasizes Sir Lawrence Freedman's statement that "American power is based on alliances, rather than colonies" (p.115) and that alliances are assets, whereas colonies are liabilities. Colonies, Nye states, were one of the reasons for the demise of the British Empire. It therefore seems that Nye is too quick to dismiss how the actions of an individual president could easily threaten US leadership in the global context. Nye gives a bird's eye view of the US's global role, and although Nye could not have forecast a Trump presidency at the time that he published this book, he ought to have dedicated more time to the role of individual agency in determining the future of American power.

What else could challenge US power in the future?¹ Since Nye coined the terms "soft" and "hard" power in the late 1980s, it is natural that these form the basis of his analysis as to which entities could threaten US primacy. Running through a series of possible contesters, he uses an abundance of statistics to back up his argument that none of them show the potential to rival the US in the next thirty years. Interestingly, Nye discusses "Europe" as one entity, whereas the other potential contenders are all single states, and this anomaly is cause for further scrutiny. He argues that Europe is having difficulty in acting as a single entity, especially when it comes to military action, since there is no European army. A current example that is not mentioned in this book is the refugee crisis, where opinion and policy differ widely in the European context. However, this crisis also highlights another factor that Nye fails to mention as one of Europe's current strengths: soft power. Using this example, it can be seen that millions of refugees are attracted to Europe's values and way of life. On the other hand, the appeal of the US to foreigners, as well as the sheer possibility of them being able to move there, is highly questionable. However, it should be recognized that pinpointing exactly how much soft power a state or an entity has is an uncertain task. This is, therefore, a critique not just of this chapter's argument, but of any assessment of soft power.

The only contender that Nye sees worth dedicating an entire chapter to is China. China has amassed hard power by economic means, with its purchasing power parity already exceeding that of the US. China's military sophistication, however, lags behind that of the US. Nye sees this, as well as China's lack of soft power (although it has attempted to increase this through Confucius Institutes and the hosting of the Olympics), as reasons why China

will not threaten US primacy in the near future. This argumentation seems credible, especially since Chinese policy lacks broad acceptance. However, Nye fails to address the link between rapid economic development and an increase in military expenditure, which could soon threaten US military capacity. Furthermore, Nye emphasizes the hypocrisies of Chinese policy, such as the establishment of Confucius Institutes in Manila at the same time as China threatens Philippine interests militarily. However, the US is itself no stranger to a hypocritical foreign policy, merely one recent example being their arms deals with Saudi Arabia. It therefore would have been interesting to delve deeper into this issue in order to explore the differences on this point between China and the US and thus to strengthen this line of argument. This also fits in well with the argument that China cannot rise peacefully, as propagated by realists like John Mearsheimer, but which Nye contests due to the containment policy that has guided US action towards China since 2011. However, the question remains what will happen in the case that Trump manages to ultimately alienate China. Currently, this seems likely, since he has been an open critic of China as well as of the "One China" policy, something that Beijing will not be bound to tolerate in the long-run. It can only be hoped that his remaining advisors manage to exert enough influence on his policy actions, in order to avoid any practical damage that may result from clumsy rhetoric and undiplomatic gestures.

Included in Nye's definition of the term "soft power" is diplomacy and the important role this plays in tackling transnational issues that concern the US and its allies, like terrorism. Nye believes that cooperation is the way forward in dealing with these issues and sees power as a positive sum game in the future. Since Nye recognized in 2010 that power is increasingly being diffused to non-state actors, it would therefore have been interesting to explore the extent to which the power exerted by terrorist groups like Islamic State has the potential to rival US primacy.² Taking Nye's definition of power, Islamic State—for instance—has an increasing soft power potential through its ideological appeal, as well as hard power through the selling of oil. However, as one of the forerunners of neo-liberal thought, Nye's analysis on this is naturally constrained by the neo-liberal assumption that states are the main actors in international relations. This guides Nye's answer to the question as to what could end the American century. Finishing on a cautionary note, Nye warns of letting fear dominate the narrative about American decline. This is something to take away from this book, since a fear of vulnerability can lead to dangerous policy choices, both by the US and by rising powers.

Notes

- 1 Joseph S. Nye, *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1990).
- 2 Joseph S. Nye, "The Future of American Power: Dominance and Decline in Perspective," *Foreign Affairs* 89, no. 6 (November/December 2010).