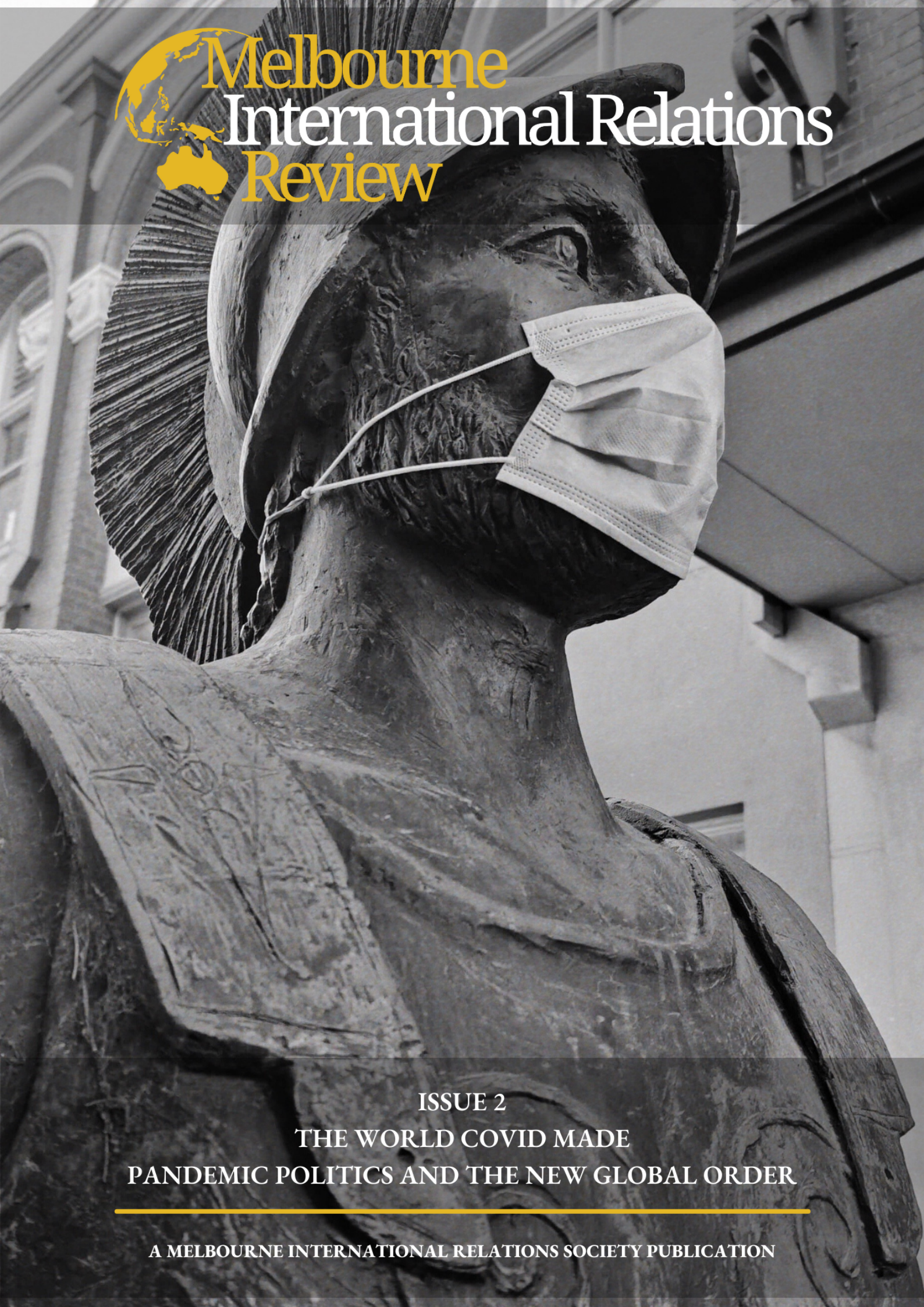
Melbourne International Relations Review



ISSUE 2

THE WORLD COVID MADE

PANDEMIC POLITICS AND THE NEW GLOBAL ORDER

A MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SOCIETY PUBLICATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which the Melbourne International Relations Review was published, the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation.We recognise their continuing connection to the land and water and pay respect to their elders past, present, and emerging. Sovereignty was never ceded.

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INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the Editorial Team and Melbourne International Relations Society, we are very excited to bring to you the second edition of the Melbourne International Relations Review (MIRR). MIRR is University of Melbourne's first student-run publication with a primary focus on the discipline of international relations. Accordingly, it was formed with the ambitions of creating an inclusive platform that is representative of the diverse student community interested with the International Relations discipline in Melbourne and beyond. MIRR is a space for critical engagement with international relations and we welcome debates and discussions on a myriad of topics that we will present with each issue.

As an academic discipline, international relations explains and interprets the interaction between states and the nature of the world order. However, for many people, the world changed in 2020. The sudden and unprecedented arrival of Covid-19 and the declaration of a pandemic on 11th March by the World Health Organisation changed social, personal and professional lives in ways nobody could have imagined. The SARS-CoV2 virus came as a social and economic shock which led to political crises and psychological trauma. Movement of people was disturbed as lockdowns and quarantines were imposed. The media was flooded with the aftermath of the Covid-19 virus. As a result, the tensions arising from the disorientation caused by Covid-19 has exposed cleavages and socio-economic issues in our society. Moreover, they have been intertwined with other issues such as racial injustice which paved the way to the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movements and further accelerated the problems already endemic to capitalism of multiple major social inequalities.

More than a year later, the world seems uncertain about how a return to normalcy would look like. In fact, the meaning of the word normalcy is being redefined. With multiple vaccines rolling out, immunisation against the virus is a positive sight with lockdowns, border closures and quarantines easing. However, the trauma and the repercussions of the pandemic is changing the global order. The health crisis touches on numerous aspects of social organisation including the role of medical experts. Additionally, it is encouraging academics, scholars and researchers important questions about how social cleavages can be addressed.

The theme of this issue is 'The World Covid Made: Pandemic Politics and the New Global Order' and it was chosen to address the many questions that have arisen since the start of the pandemic. This is also an attempt to challenge the many preconceived notions of the nature of the IR discipline. Additionally, it is becoming increasingly clear that the Covid-19 pandemic is a complex phenomenon, both sociologically and epidemiology. The significance of the pandemic perhaps is situated in the chances of

a new model of society and political sphere emerging from the debris of the present. Or it is possible that the pandemic will simply entrench changes that have already occurred. It is these very conversations that we attempt to encourage via our publication.

In this issue, we have compiled eleven very compelling pieces that challenge narratives that dominate and pursue in international relations. From an evaluation of vaccine nationalism to questioning the role of colonialism during health crises, the pieces we have selected offer critical analysis on a myriad of issues.

However, we did not want to limit our audience to just writings about Covid-19. Hence, we also have a general section that touches upon a variety of contemporary topics in the sphere of international relations. Our Editorial Team is composed of people from diverse backgrounds, and through this issue, we have attempted to represent the diversity of our broader community. We hope that this issue provokes discussions about the nature of international relations in a post-pandemic and post-covid world and we look forward to engaging in these conversations. We welcome feedback, criticisms and suggestions on this issue and the direction we should take in the future. Please reach out to us at mirr.editorial@gmail.com

The MIRR Editorial Team

EDITORS NOTES

ANUSHREE GUPTA - PRESIDENT

We started this publication with the intention of giving student researcher's a platform to explore their ideas. With the ongoing pandemic and the border closures, it became essential for us to write about our experiences and thoughts on how the post-pandemic world is going to be. It is my hope through my part on the editorial team for MIRR, that we have been able to do justice to the platform and the content that we have received.

With this second issue, I hope that MIRR continues to be a platform where students can share their perspectives on International Relations, and a space where we can continue the important work of showcasing multiple understandings of the world

Anushree is a third year Bachelors of Arts student reading Politics, International Studies. She is an avid reader, with a weird fascination with Vladimir Putin and Russian politics (she reserves the right to change this). Currently, she is very determined to learn spanish.

AKASH ANIL NAIR - ACADEMICS DIRECTOR

The world tells us the students of today are the leaders and academics of tomorrow,but opportunities are few and far between for students to explore and step up to their dreams. Being a part of this mission to provide students the platform to step up, explore and be confident of their work and aspirations has been the most enriching experience I have had during a very difficult and trying year. I hope we were successful in our mission to be a fruitful voice and platform to present students' work!

Akash is a Second?Third? Year Arts student majoring in Politics and International Relations and criminology. He is a shutterbug and can be seen lugging around a camera in the open world looking for birds!

MEVUNI WANIGASOORIYA - VICE PRESIDENT

I believe it was this year I truly understood the quote, 'The only thing constant in life is change'. With the pandemic and thought of becoming a history textbook chapter, the idea of change was frightening. But here we are, reading a publication compiled by students living oceans apart. The pandemic has impacted us all, wherever we are.There is no doubt we are stepping into a new world. So it gives me great pride and joy to have been an editor and active contributor to this year's MIRR edition. I hope we have done the publication justice and given a platform for students to express their views to this new world- a world of change, we are entering.

Mevuni is a second year Arts student, double majoring in 'Economics' and 'Politics and International Studies'. She has a vast range of interests but is currently focussed on banking and consultancy. During her free time, you can catch her binging squid game or dancing salsa.

ANUSHKA SINGH - SECRETARY

The pandemic stricken state of the world is not a neglected reality, rather, an over amplified one. But it is so because of the all-pervasive nature of this crisis, since it has affected not just health infrastructure and global health policy, but also entrenched all spheres of world affairs, from international migration, to economic stability and power politics. MIRR is a journal that strives to contribute to the academic discourse surrounding international affairs by publishing articles by university students across Australia, students who stand as affected by the pandemic as any other demographic. We hope to provide them a platform to showcase their research and amplify their voices in a convoluted and isolated world reality.

Anushka is a second year Bachelor of Arts student majoring in Anthropology and Politics & International Studies. She is obsessed with incorporating anthropological discourse such as ethnic nationalism and cultural relativism in understanding the nature of conflict, development and identity politics in contemporary international relations research.

JESSICA EWERT- MARKETING DIRECTOR AND COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

With no previous editing experience and a newbie on the MIRS team, working on MIRR has been a wonderful experience - and in doing so, I have met some remarkable individuals. This years' topic is current and unfounded territory for diplomacy. The effects of the pandemic are widespread and impact the micro and macro of societies around the world. Its implications are likely ongoing for years to come. I am thankful to have had the privilege of being on the MIRR team of 2021, reading the submissions and communicating with our contributors.

Jessica is an Anthropology and Political and International Relations major at The University of Melbourne. During the pandemic she learnt how to knit and loves making scarves, as well as baking banana bread. Jess is also part of the MIRR team as Marketing Director, making graphics for events and social media! During her spare time, Jess loves to read and looks forward to going on day trips post-lockdown.

TIANCHE HE - EDITOR

When the COVID-19 outbreak was first announced in Wuhan China, no one expected what was to follow. The world as we used to recognise it, shattered dramatically into pieces of chaos and uncertainty.Then before we could comprehend, reconstructs itself into an unprecedented form. It must be acknowledged that this pandemic has changed everything, whether it be social interactions on a minor level or global politics on a major scale. The purpose of MIRR, and more specially the second issue, is to provide an opportunity for open ended discussions looking into the future of international relations. We hope that people who share our passion for similar subjects can work together to nurture meaningful and insightful discussions.

TianChi He is a student of bachelor of commerce, double reading in economics and finance. He has a fascination towards the trends of intersection international relations and economics portray. In his spare time, he likes to watch comedy and read.

THEMED

REDEFINING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: VACCINE NATIONALISM AND PANDEMIC POLITICS

ANUSHREE GUPTA

Abstract

This article explores the rise of vaccine nationalism during the peak of the pandemic in the year of 2020 and argues that vaccine related geopolitics will be extremely complex. A vaccine war amongst as a motivation to score some leverage in the global political sphere. Despite getting a vaccine, international travel and physical human networking will not resume normally for some time owing to the states acting in a realistic manner. Furthermore, the covid vaccine will be used as a foreign policy and a diplomatic too by states, well beyond its intended application of human health.

In the current global Covid-19 pandemic, global superpowers, international relations, and diplomacy are changing and being redefined. These developments will guide international relations in the near and far future. This essay will employ liberalism and Waltz's theory of realism to argue that the world and international relations will be more divided and conflictual, through the deployment of vaccine nationalism. Despite multiple warnings from scientists, states were not prepared for a pandemic (Lederberg 1988). Therefore, this essay will assert that the world post Covid-19 will be even more complex. We have witnessed that the geopolitics and foreign policy of states have already been deeply affected and will continue to do so. This will be influenced by strong attitudes of nationalism which when combined with frustration caused by major hits to the economy leads to conflict. This essay will further argue that the Covid-19 vaccine, amidst vaccine nationalism, will be used as a foreign policy and diplomatic tool.

Keohane and Nye (2001) posit that some threats and problems result in the creation of powerful calls for cooperation as states are not equipped to solve them on their own. In the past, we have seen examples of solidarity between states during the eradication of smallpox in 1980 (UN News 2020). In March 2020, when Italy became a hotspot for the coronavirus, China sent a team of doctors and nurses with a huge supply of medical equipment to help them fight the spread of infection (Wood 2020). While this may be a diplomatic action between the two countries, to develop some goodwill and securing support, it should not be ignored that this is also a sign of cooperation in the liberal sense where states are acting in a collectivist *manner*. However, the politics led by this deadly virus reflect anything but international solidarity or national interests. If less infected states had supported heavily infected states in the beginning of the outbreak of the virus, the infection could have been contained and the national security interests of all states would have been satisfied (Fidler 2020, p. 749). A collective action between

states would have possibly led to quick recovery from the health crisis. However, border closures and nationalistic tendencies have led to countries taking measures that goes against cooperation.

Waltz (1956) states that principal actors as 'states' in the international political arena are only concerned with their own national security, interest and power. He argued that since there is no overarching world government, states are required to protect themselves against threats. He recognised two reasons as to why states limit cooperation – unequal gains and feelings of insecurity. Furthermore, Waltz (1979, p. 107) claimed that since states are unsure about the intentions of other states, they will be unlikely to cooperate due to fears of unequal gain and benefit. Therefore, to protect themselves from the coronavirus, governments adopted a protectionist policy in which they had imposed restrictions on the movement and people's behaviour. Travel restrictions and bans were put in place. *As a result, this led to the suffering of many sectors of the economy*. Unfair discrimination against certain marginalised communities was exposed (WEF 2020, p. 37). The frustration of a suffering economy caused by this health emergency, combined with jingoistic nationalism has led to scapegoating and states blaming each other; in this case it is China. US President Donald Trump labelled the virus as the 'foreigner's disease'. They have extended this exasperation and have blamed China for their own failings. This influenced public opinion and has led to violence against marginalised communities and stigma against those who have been infected by the virus (Fidler 2020, p. 749). States became desperate to go back to business as usual and developing a Covid-19 vaccine became the world's number one priority. Pharmaceutical companies and governments united to discover and develop the molecular formula to treat the infection and prevent further spread. The government supporting domestic pharmaceutical companies to secure vaccines for their citizens became a matter of national security, further extending into their power and a sense of vaccine nationalism.

'Vaccine nationalism' is a phenomenon wherein governments sign agreements and deals with pharmaceutical companies and manufacturers to secure vaccines for their own population (Scott 2020). It is expected of governments to buy and hoard vaccines to protect their citizens. However, this creates huge supply problems where developing countries are left without access to potentially life-saving drugs and vaccines. Consequently, this form of nationalism jeopardises the availability of the vaccine and gives rise to a 'climate of mistrust between rival countries' (Ramscar 2020). Developed and vaccinates countries will discriminate against developing and not vaccinates countries, by isolating then. This can be done in the form of imposing travel restriction for people travelling from unvaccinated countries to vaccinated countries. The lack of understanding would lead to less trust in international cooperation. An example of this is when Australia formulated the vaccine for the H1N1 virus, also known as swine flu, in 2009 within seven months of the pandemic (Bollyky & Bown 2020, p. 102). The wealthy and developed countries bought all the available provisions of the vaccine, leaving low-income countries

stranded. Following the appeals of the World Health Organisation (WHO), the United States, Australia, Canada and six other countries signed an agreement with the international organisation to donate approximately ten percent of their supply of the vaccine to developing countries (Chan 2009; UN News 2009). These nine countries agreed to do this only after determining that their supply of the vaccine is enough to meet domestic needs.

To prevent the same from happening again, WHO and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance joined forces to regulate the distribution of the covid-19 vaccine (WHO 2020). COVAX, one of the pillars of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, was launched by the WHO, the European Union and France in April 2020. It is set up to make sure that low-income funded nations, who would not be able to afford the drug otherwise, have equal access to the vaccine. COVAX is significant because there is a potential risk of a large number of populations being unprotected by the virus and having another pandemic. This facility aims to create a five percent buffer of the total number of available doses and build a stockpile that will help prevent outbreaks and support humanitarian organisations (Berkley 2020). Although COVAX was set up with good intentions, wealthy countries such as China, Russia and the US have decided not to be a part of this initiative (Scott 2020). This demonstrates the power struggle between three countries who are racing to get a vaccine and their prestige back. COVAX is supporting nine different vaccine candidates. While this is a wise decision, countries will have trust issues based on which country's vaccine they have been allocated under the plan. As a result, politics will be an obstacle for the distribution of the vaccine. Invariably, the level of trust between states will be a defining factor, but vaccine nationalism will drive up the mistrust and conflict between states.

Having access to a vaccine is an opportunity for states to strengthen their allegiances, prestige, and political standing. As Bremmer (2020) argued, being first in creating a successful vaccine will give states critical leverage and geopolitical advantage. This is because vaccines are string trade tools. Unfortunately, all countries require the vaccines but are unable to manufacture them. Although, it is no longer a matter of national pride as some countries associated vaccine procurement with the same. Vaccine nationalism is now influenced by the desperation of countries to go back to pre-pandemic levels of economic activity. Thus, vaccine related geopolitics will be crucial in shaping international relations. Despite getting a vaccine, physical human networking and international travel will not resume normally for some time. Hence, the covid-19 vaccine will be used as a foreign policy and diplomatic tool by states, well beyond its intended application of human health.

Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that a team of Russian scientists have developed the Covid-19 vaccine called Sputnik-V (Burki 2020). Putin claimed that the vaccine works 'quite effectively, helps develop strong immunity, and has gone through all the necessary tests.' Nonetheless, there are extensive concerns regarding the viability of the vaccine. When the vaccine was approved, they

had not started the phase 3 trials, nor had they published any results of the trials conducted. This signified that Russia's approval of the vaccine was simply to be the first in the race which appeared to ignore any or all scientific standards (Ramscar 2020). The reality of the 'vaccine race' is that it is a highly politicised one. Throughout the pandemic, the United States has had a very aggressive vaccine nationalistic policy (Bremmer 2020). They have launched Operation Warp Speed, a public-private partnership, in an attempt to produce and deliver around 300 million doses of safe and effective vaccines by January 2021 (Department of Health and Human Services 2020). The US has made several attempts to acquire most of the world's supply of the vaccine. They have already purchased around 100 million doses of the vaccine under development from Pfizer and a German biotech company (Pfizer 2020). The Trump administration's Operation Warp Speed may be beneficial in expediting the manufacturing of a vaccine. However, this Operation, underpinned with vaccine nationalism and protectionist policies will have detrimental effects in the future. This is because vaccinating a state or a specific geographical area will not contain the spread of the vaccine. Due to the highly globalised world, we live in, the virus can be transported very easily is able to mutate into different strains.

Reports about Russian scientists and elite members of the Russian society receiving and testing the vaccine have emerged (Bremmer 2020). Despite concerns about serious risks being raised by experts, both the countries have gone forward with the usage of vaccines. In addition, Russia asked the Venezuelan President Maduro to test the vaccine (REUTERS 2020). Considering Russia lent billions of dollars to the Venezuelan government, it seems that Venezuela would feel obligated to seek volunteers and test the virus in the country. This is the perfect example of how the covid-19 vaccine is being used as a tool to influence international relations and foreign policy of countries. Despite the Russian vaccine being first in the market, political leaders should be cautious that the vaccine race is not a zero-sum game. Even though Russia was the first to enter space during the Cold War with Sputnik, it was the United States that won the space race. Thus, the one who declares victory doesn't necessarily win the race (Ramscar 2020). In this situation, it needs to be acknowledged that the consequences of these few participants in this race for a vaccine will fall on billions of people. This situation may place significant pressure on leaders to put political agendas aside and uphold scientific findings. However, in the covid-19 pandemic, vaccine nationalism and 'my country first' ideology is on the rise.

Vaccine nationalism is symbolic of the state's lust for power, and this is blinding them. States and governments need to realise that a collective effort is required to exit this crisis safely. Given the precariousness of the current international world order due to the coronavirus, there is only one chance at getting the vaccine right. Funding the vaccine and acquiring the doses is not where the problem ends (Bremmer 2020). Vaccine hesitancy and mistrust in vaccines is on the rise. In 2009, when Australia developed the vaccine for the swine flu virus, it had imposed export restrictions (Bollyky & Bown 2020, p. 103). The country demonstrated the 'my country first' ideology by focusing on self-immunisation and

protecting itself first. The frenzy created by the ongoing pandemic will cause governments and populations to make untenable medical decisions. The worst possibility is that a well-developed and researched vaccine is available, but the population is too scared to take it (Bremmer 2020). This might be further exacerbated by dissent that is so commonly espoused by anti-vaxxers. However, with persistent lockdown, restriction and border closures, citizens are losing stamina and are moving toward getting the vaccine. Fortunately, proving this wrong. However, the

As the vaccine race escalated, the world of medicine, economics, politics, and diplomacy drew in on one other (Fidler 2020, p. 749). A 'my country first' ideology has been guiding states towards protectionist policies (foreign and domestic) causing self-interest to prevail over collectivism. Hence, furthermore dividing the world and bleeding into conflict. As long as vaccine nationalism shapes foreign and diplomatic policies of states, cooperation will be difficult, Politics and the thirst for power influenced by the vaccine race will end up doing more harm than good. Now that the vaccine has been released, countries are scrambling to score doses. Since, only selective few countries have the infrastructure to manufacture these vaccines, governments are moving towards diplomatic ties with manufacturing countries. As a result, the global order is shaping and the politics during and post pandemic are drastically changing.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anushree is a third year Bachelors of Arts student majoring in politics and international studies student hailing from India. She is very interested in researching about the role of religion in politics and the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on international relations. She uses her spare time learning Spanish in hopes to live in Spain some day. She is an avid reader, with strong interests in Russian politics.

NATIONALISM - CONSTRUCTED, CIRCUMSTANTIAL AND VULNERABLE: AN ANALYSIS OF COVID NATIONALISM

ANUSHKA SINGH

Abstract

This essay is a comprehensive analysis of nationalism as a medium to exert power and its vulnerability thereof. Selected sources incorporate theoretical frameworks relating to the long-standing idea of the constructive nature of nationalism. The aim is to underline how different means are instrumental in modulating nationalism under different circumstances, with special emphasis on nationalism during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Introduction

In this essay, I shall conduct an in-depth analysis of nationalism as a medium to exert power and its vulnerability thereof. For this purpose, I have incorporated into this analysis, theoretical frameworks relating to the long-standing idea of the constructive nature of nationalism, substantiated by theories highlighting banal nationalism, ontological foundations of nationalism, as well as the situational and instrumental nature of nationalism. My aims are twofold: first, I will establish the constructed nature of national identification and second, I will underline how nationalism can be modulated under different circumstances by virtue of being a constructed phenomenon. These aims will help me further advance my assertion that nationalism is a vulnerable means of exerting power. Finally, I shall be using the contemporary case of nationalism during the Covid-19 pandemic to illustrate the circumstantial nature of nationalism, which further supports my previous assertion that nationalism is a vulnerable force.

Constructivism in national identity formation

The nation is constructed and maintained as "the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time" (Anderson 1991, p. 3). National identities are continuously created and manipulated, and there are continuous processes at work giving legitimacy to the concept of nationalism. Othering is one such process. Through the process of othering, a person or group comes to characterise some other persons or groups as being different from them- an "other" (Dawson et al 2020, p. 206). Several forms of identity like race, class, gender, as well as ethnicity and nationality are constructed via this process. Identity creation therein involves construction of symbolic boundaries from ethnic, racial or national 'others', and these boundaries are sustained through the employment of othering instruments like

stereotyping and hierarchisation (Wuthnow 2017, p. 257-259). Furthermore, other agents contribute to the construction and maintenance of national identities including ontological orientations wherein the logic of nationalism is sustained by the embeddedness of ideology in practice (Kapferer 1993, p.199, 212-213). Thus, national identity is chiefly constructivist in nature.

Other characteristics of nationalism such as instrumentalism and the situational nature of nationalism also amplify the reasoning of nationalism being a constructed phenomenon. Instrumentalist theories imply that when economic and/or power disparities exist between classes, groups or regions, elites attempting to alleviate relative inequality or sustain relative advantage, diagnose the disparities as resulting from certain cultural or linguistic distinctions, thereby giving certain socio-cultural attributes political and moral meaning as markers of national identity (Hechter 1986). Furthermore, this instrumentalist approach has also been able to identify the situational nature of identity formation by explaining that ethnic or ethno-national groups claiming to be ancient communities of set cultural boundaries and shared ancestry can turn out to be nothing more than "recent communities with fluid boundaries arising from new economic and political situations" (Brown 2004, p.280).

However, the question, which has been posed by scholars like Billig, is why do we not forget our national identity outside of explicitly nationalistic affairs like state coronations or big sporting competitions, where flags are waved and national victories jubilantly celebrated by thousands (Billig 1995, p. 47)? Billig's concept of banal nationalism has turned our focus to the routine reproduction of nationalism in states, and introduced everyday nationalism as an approach to observe how national identities are maintained as well as manipulated in everyday social practices. We have established that the nation is not something that just objectively exists but is rather constructed and maintained. The concept of banal nationalism also signifies the nation as a "cognitive frame through which people apprehend social reality and construct routinized strategies of action" (Bonikowski 2016, 429). It therefore provides people with an everyday identity and an existential utility. In this way, national identities are continuously constructed and reproduced "by ordinary people doing ordinary things" (Fox and Ginderachter 2018, 547).

Having established nationalism as a phenomenon based on the principle of constructed national identity, I shall now argue that this very argument of constructivism accounts for the vulnerability of nationalism as a means to exert power. Because nationalism is a constructed phenomenon, it is subject to changing circumstances, which often determine the extent to which nationalism can be used by states as a means to exercise power. Therefore, to further

demonstrate how ideas of nationalism remain vulnerable to evolving circumstances, I shall analyse the Covid-19 situation, and the related rise in nationalism and internationalism in the world in general, and the European Union in particular.

Covid 19- Nationalism vs. Internationalism?

As Covid-19 brought the world to a standstill, speculations ran wild as to whether state reactions to the pandemic might result in a global increase in nationalism, or conversely, lead to increased global solidarity and internationalism (Beiber 2020, p.1-2). States' initial reactions– from the closure of borders and travel restrictions, to the application of othering processes and exclusionary politics, and the subsequent inducement of fear amongst people– has made the case for rising power of nationalism stronger, as "people look to support their own communities" (Beiber 2020, p. 1). People are repeatedly reminded that the nation-state is the only entity not only capable, but also responsible for channeling resources and ensuring the safety of its citizens. Thus, nationalism is emerging as the phenomenon needed to fight such a "colossal threat" as all "nationals" look to their respective states for help (Ozikirimli 2020). Moreover, Covid-19 border restrictions have given states the power to construct national narratives of otherness wherein 'outsiders', i.e., migrants and refugees, as well as borderland neighbours have been categorised as the new threat. Thus, the result of strict border restrictions, travel ban, and other trade-related policies in response to Covid-19, as well as the increasingly distorted state narratives of outsider danger, is proving to be a dangerous rise in nationalism, which can hinder international cooperation on other important issues (Alden 2020).

However, the opposite argument could also be made. A world-wide pandemic makes for a shared global experience. It could also be argued that the common enemy in this case is some invisible, indiscriminate virus, and not some other nation, race, or group (Beiber 2020, p. 1). This might in turn undermine the use of nationalism as a means of employing power due to promotion of greater cross-national solidarity and cooperation. Border restrictions have also been resisted as an imposition on social and economic ties with neighbours (Opilowska 2016, p. S583-594). Moreover, new forms of internationalism, such as 'nationalist internationalism', might also impact the extent of power available to the states to employ the forces of nationalism. Nationalist internationalism postulates the idea of cooperation between nationalist states and emulation of similar policies by them, and a study by Givens and Mastur (2020, p. 228) suggests that this phenomenon has been on rise during the pandemic. Thus, even within nationalistic regimes, the potential of nationalism is limited by principles of collaboration. Consequently, the inability to confront the pandemic within the confines of the nation-state, and the subsequent need for cooperation, proves the relative vulnerability of nationalism as a means to exert power by the state.

In the context of the European Union, post-nationalist scholars had previously elaborated on the emergence of multinational states and the consequent 'Europeanisation' process wherein a collective European identity is constructed depending on the balance of pluralism and shared experiences, within a universal political and economic framework (Diekhoff 2016, p.). However, the pandemic immobilised such regional collaboration as the forces of nationalism gained ground. Since, territorial borders are still recognised by nation states as the first line of defence, and used as a control mechanism to protect national interests in any threatening situation, border restrictions were imposed in the European states as well (Opilowska 2020, p. S597). In addition to this, restrictions against member states on the export of essential amenities like medical supplies, not only undermined the common market and economic relations, but also jeopardised the notions of unity and solidarity within the EU bloc (Beiber 2020, p. 7). Thus, the relatively 'borderless' Europe suddenly saw provisions that not only restricted territorial borders, but also deepened social and economic boundaries.

Moreover, nationalistic temperaments led to increased ostracism of the perceived 'other' as well as escalation of ontologically grounded nationalistic ideologies. For instance, Viktor Orbán, Hungary's prime minister, indicated that the virus outbreak is connected to immigration, a core feature of his politics since 2014. Acting on such rhetoric, his government shut down the already stringent asylum system without presenting any proof of the connection (Inotai 2020). This advances Kapferer's idea of incorporating into practice, ontologically rooted nationalist ideologies (Kapferer 1993, p.199). Additionally, far-right European parties including the Alternative for Germany (AfD) and the Austrian Freedom Party (FP) have also attributed the pandemic to the alleged threat from refugees and migrants, and demanded repressive action directed directly at these (Jansen 2020). The Roma became recipients of targeted discrimination in Central Europe, where they were blamed for spreading the disease (FRA 2020). Consequently, intense othering processes ensured that foreign subjects, including both commodities and individuals, are portrayed as harmful and disruptive in a majority of nations.

There are banal instances as well which are enforcing nationalism in the time of pandemic. This is exemplified in the case of Denmark, where naturalisation was briefly halted during the pandemic because of the naturalisation law requiring a handshake while granting citizenship resulting in a de facto suspension of naturalisation, since social distancing norms did not allow handshakes (Strittmatter 2020). An additional example of banal nationalism during the pandemic involved not accommodating minority languages in provision of Covid 19 warnings and guidelines (Bieber 2020, p. 7). Thus, the banality of these instances gives more power to the forces of nationalism.

Nevertheless, by virtue of the constructivist disposition of these nationalising phenomena, nationalism remains a particularly vulnerable means for states to exercise powers. As previously illustrated, the coronavirus pandemic has once again shown how the concept of a borderless Europe is not particularly resilient, but rather quite susceptible to crisis. However, in the case of Europe, Opilowska's (2020, p. S597) study shows that the boundary restrictions and the constructed nature of nationalistic discourse thereof, could not resist the collective experience and perception of the European people, especially those in the borderlands, for whom people from the other side of the border were close neighbours and not strangers or 'others'. Additionally, interference with people's everyday collective experience of the cross-border travel and business due to national authorities' decisions regarding border regulations elicited strong reactions from the borderland people who mobilized as a symbolic attempt at demonstrating solidarity across borders.

Thus, the idea of vulnerability of nationalism is evident from the European example of people's protest to border restrictions despite contradictory state narratives. Despite the fact that processes of othering and other constructivist phenomena like banal nationalism were used to solidify and fuel ideals of nationalistic discourse during the pandemic, nationalism proved to be a vulnerable force for the states in Europe. This is because these ideals remained continually challenged by European people's contradictory understanding of collectivism, as well as their different expectations of a banal collective experience.

Conclusion

In this essay, I have demonstrated the constructive nature of nationalism, using theories of instrumentalism, banal nationalism, othering and ontological nationalism. I also underline how nationalism modulates under different circumstances, with special emphasis on nationalism during the Covid-19 pandemic. Ultimately, it is established that nationalism is constructed and ubiquitous– which means it can take form in a variety of ways, there is no single way to predict particular outcomes with accuracy (Beiber 2020, p. 2). In the case of the pandemic as well, it is difficult to anticipate how the pandemic and government reactions would influence nationalism. This is my exact contention as well– amidst all sorts of uncertainty, nationalism remains susceptible to different variable factors and thus, proves to be a vulnerable means to exert power by the state.

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AUSTRALIA'S ECONOMIC RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR THE FUTURE

ABBY SIMOS

The COVID-19 Pandemic exposed longstanding social and economic disparities within Australian society, forcing the Australian Government's reactionary and necessary response to curb the spread of the virus. Australia's swift and effective response to the global pandemic allowed the country to move back to a post-COVID-19 normal by the end of 2020 and in the early half of 2021— at least within the confines of its own borders and depending on the state you live in. The economic response of implementing JobKeeper and JobSeeker payments were practical incentives for people to stay at home, attempting to curb the spread of the virus. These payments rapidly reduced poverty rates in households across Australia. However, when these payments ended, it presented a new set of problems regarding the degree of welfare provided in Australia. As the current economic order perpetuates inequality, it is essential for the political discourse to discuss how to move forward in the post-COVID-19 era.

The nature of the recession induced by the COVID-19 crisis is unlike the nature of previous economic recessions. Periods of extreme stress on financial markets and institutions during the pandemic were dissimilar to those of the Global Financial Crisis, which was caused by other market failures such as the downturn in the US housing market (RBA 2018). The COVID-19 economic recession has been caused by a global pandemic. The health risks posed to the world forced governments to lockdown their countries and halt several industries. Businesses and offices were closed, non-essential domestic travel was restricted, and international borders were shut indefinitely; all of which are main drivers of economic activity and growth. As a result, millions of people were, and continue to be, without work within businesses deemed non-essential or unable to remain employed in struggling businesses. In July 2020, the Australian unemployment rate was 7.5%, an increase from 5.2% in March 2020 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020). Similarly, Canada's unemployment rate reached 10.9% in July 2020, while the United States reached 10.2% at the same time (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020). Some individuals, predominantly in white-collared professions, are working from home, moving business out of city centres. In contrast, essential workers, including health care professionals such as doctors, nurses, and aged care workers, were required to continue working during the pandemic. Frontline medical workers in every country have dealt with the burden of protecting citizens, and have brought attention to the inequalities within their healthcare systems.

Further, as described by Adkins and Konings (2020) the commentary on the COVID-19 crisis as a 'great leveller' with no discrimination between 'the rich and the poor' has been problematic in understanding and representing the true social and asset-based inequalities exacerbated by the pandemic, and the fragility of this position in a post-COVID-19 world. While it is true that no one is immune to the virus, frontline health workers are disproportionately more exposed to the virus than those working within their own homes (Adkins and Konings 2020). These workers are often paid on a paycheck to paycheck wage structure, and are often disproportionately represented by women and other minority groups (Adkins and Konings 2020). Ironically, those that are being praised for their sacrifices in protecting people against COVID-19 are the victims of asset-based inequalities (Adkins and Konings 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the fragility of the global economy and the unsustainability of the neoliberal policies and practices that have been heavily endorsed and relied on in the modern world. Worldwide, the precariousness of this dynamic has been epitomised by healthcare inequalities, with many countries not having enough personal protective equipment for their frontline workers, under-equipped hospitals and inaccessible healthcare. In March 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) had assisted 47 countries in securing and receiving Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for those in the medical field, further estimating that production of PPE would need to increase by 40% to meet the demands of the pandemic (WHO 2020).

Governments have been confronted with difficult decisions, both in handling the health and economic crises, and in rebuilding moving forward. Unlike traditional strategies that have succeeded in yielding an economic boost after a recession, the world cannot return to normal until the medical crisis has been adequately handled through vaccination (Spies-Butcher 2020). This level of interdependence between the virus and the economy has revealed the fragility of a There Is No Alternative (TINA) neoliberal economic approach to the economic world order (Spies-Butcher 2020). TINA suggests that limited government involvement is integral to ensuring market flexibility (Spies-Butcher 2020). However, the magnitude of government intervention in the economy for a strong economic response to the pandemic has shown that there are other alternatives when governments intervene. The need for governments to curb activity during this health crisis has shown that governments can reorganise the economy towards a socially determined goal (Spies-Butcher 2020). This was evident in the disaster payment initiatives of JobSeeker and JobKeeper, as well as state-based disaster payments, that allowed people to stay at home while ensuring some form of financial income, to decrease the spread of the virus. Government intervention was needed to a certain degree, and it was critical to Australia's successful response during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Australia's JobSeeker and JobKeeper payments were necessary interventions to ensure the continuation of economic activity during a period of sudden and extreme downturn. The 'COVID supplement' was added to the existing welfare payment Newstart and relabelled as 'JobSeeker'. Additionally, JobKeeper was set up for businesses who were still operating and employing people, but

with a significant reduction in their turnover. These payments were set to end in September 2020, before the extent of the crisis and the longer lockdown periods pushed the end date into early 2021, with a reduction in payments over time. Having not altered the payments in over 20 years, the sudden increase has lifted Newstart and Youth Allowance households out of poverty, with statistics modelling a reduction from 67.3% of households falling in poverty, to just 6.8% after the increased payments (Phillips, Gray and Biddle 2020). This strategy, a form of Keynesian economics, hopes to see this money and activity injected back into the economy in order to increase spending and demand. It has also been modelled that the household poverty gap, without the COVID intervention, would have increased from $593 per year to $1685 per year in 2020 (Phillips, Gray and Biddle 2020).

However, the intention of the Newstart payment is to provide financial support to those who experience unemployment in the short-term, as an incentive to find paid employment to contribute to the economy. Therefore, continuing with the increased payments would be counter-intuitive to this logic. This is often contested and debated, with many people arguing that the level of the payments are too low to cover basic living costs and too low to begin seeking work (Phillips, Gray and Biddle 2020). The stagnation has been justified using 'wedge politics' that has framed those on Newstart or other welfare payments as 'undeserving' because of their lack of active contribution to the economy (Spies-Butcher 2020). The benefits of schemes like the JobKeeper and JobSeeker payments are numerous, but the costs of running the program per year makes it difficult to continue running the payments at an increased level. JobKeeper alone is estimated to have cost the Australian Government $90 billion (Australian Government Treasury 2021).

As COVID-19 lockdowns continued, more people were encouraged to support and buy local goods. While this supports local businesses and decreases the amount of emissions from transportation, it changes the nature of imports and exports in Australia. Australia is the largest exporter of coal in the world, as well as a large exporter of agriculture including beef, barley and wine (NS Energy 2020). Working to change this import-export dynamic could be seen as a form of protectionism in the ever-globalising world. However, buying locally will see class solidarity, meaning increased support for Australian business owners and increased employment for Australians as people buy from Australian producers (Stilwell 2020). It will also allow Australia to be less vulnerable and more resilient, which is an important goal not just economically but politically, with the Department of Defence releasing a Strategic Update in June 2020 outlining the need for Australia to become more resilient as the Asia-Pacific region becomes increasingly hostile (Australian Department of Defence 2020). This will require new and innovative solutions to work, and to transition 'old economy' jobs into the new jobs that are environmentally stable within the economic climate (Stilwell 2020).

aThe rapid response to the economic and social crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic reveals that seemingly unsolvable problems can be dealt with through political will and the politicising of

people's needs. The Australian Government's policies reflected this prioritisation of the population's needs and succeeded in curbing the spread of the virus while simultaneously changing the poverty landscape in Australia. However, unlike a traditional capitalist crisis, this economic crisis cannot be fully resolved until the medical crisis is over, and there are no guaranteed predictions of when that will be. One thing has been abundantly clear in academic research over this period - a return to normal is not possible.

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WHAT DOES THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC MEAN FOR AUSTRALIA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH SOUTH KOREA?

STELLA FINLAY

Abstract
Since early in the COVID-19 pandemic, Australia and South Korea were grouped by the media as leading states during the crisis. Their respective models for managing the rapid spread of coronavirus, with comparatively low infection and death rates, resulted in the heralding of their successes. This invited nation-branding opportunities, which was successfully pursued by South Korea and comparatively lacklustre on Australia's part. This positioning of the two states provided a new environment to readdress their bilateral relations that have been falling for over a decade. This essay will argue that there is a need to address Australia and South Korea's relationship in a manner that recognises the value and potential strength in this security relationship, on par with other states in Southeast Asia. Emerging from the pandemic, Australia should pursue increased regional communication to create strong and peaceful future ties.

Australia and South Korea have both experienced a reinvigoration of their positive image over the course of the pandemic and it is apparent that their bilateral relationship is in urgent need of similar attention. Falling diplomatic relations in both states, particularly from Australia's side, has resulted in a lack of interest and assumed confidence in each other's continued cooperation (Patterson 2021). Though Australia once positioned South Korea as among four countries it wished to build stronger relations with, this sentiment has evidently not been pursued in recent years (Australian Government 2017, p. 4). This essay will demonstrate how both states have curated their respective image during 2020 to a point where they now represent highly capable countries, able to lead effectively during crises. The new international standing of these two middle powers during a time of international crisis puts both South Korea and Australia in the position to renegotiate their bilateral relations. It will be argued that there is a need and opportunity to reassess this relationship during 2021 with a focus on the importance this security relationship presents to each state.

The Australia-South Korea relationship has 60 years of history behind it and has been maintained by joint interests in security, economic stability, and regional peace (Parliament of Australia 2021). Despite both state's expressing the importance of the bilateral relationship, action has not matched these sentiments in recent years. The former Australian Ambassador to the Republic of Korea

and North Korea, Bill Patterson, offered the critique that neither country engages on a level befitting the relationship's value (Patterson 2021). Past agreements such as the *Australia-South Korea Security Statement* of 2009 fall under different strategic contexts in the post-pandemic world of 2021 and it can be argued the relationship needs to be adjusted in kind (Lee 2021). One of the motivations for signing the 2009 security agreement was "balancing against China's rise" which seems to have maintained priority in South Korea but is less of a focus for Australia, which has repeatedly clashed with China (Lee 2019, p. 451). Given high levels of Australian public distrust of China (*ABC* 2021) and Australia's linking strategy with the US (Cha 2020) the diplomatic approach has shifted since the 2009 statement. Comparatively, South Korea maintains its role as a bridging nation 'bridge nation' (Robertson 2021) between the United States and China, indicating that the countries are diverging in their approach to China. Being 12 years since the last official diplomatic visit from either country (Robertson 2021), 'reinvigoration' is needed for the future of the Australia-South Korea bilateral relationship.

The COVID-19 pandemic presents a unique opportunity in how Australia can improve its relationship with South Korea. Australian foreign policy commentary frequently argues that this development needs to come from Australia, which is said to have neglected the relationship during the 2000s (Cotton 2013, p. 597). From the perspective of South Korea, Australia's image has fallen to merely a mirror-state of US policy (Robertson 2021). Without efforts to improve Australia's standing in South Korea, it is likely to be left behind particularly, in the context of 2020 when South Korea experienced a revitalisation of its own image on the international stage. For Australia to be recognised as a serious security partner to South Korea, the country needs to utilise strategies applied to strong relations with Japan and Indonesia to encourage closeness with South Korea once more (Patterson 2021). It is evident that Australia's nearsighted diplomatic approach to bilateral relations with South Korea needs to be amended, and the global pandemic may provide the conditions necessary for this development.

South Korea and Australia's ability to act swiftly in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic has created strong and capable images of the states at a global level. This was particularly evident in the face of media coverage claiming that great powers such as the US and the UK lagged several steps behind South Korea's response (CNN 2020). Support from international institutions and media contributed significantly to the legitimation of this positive image of South Korea. At the conclusion of 2020, the WHO commended South Korea, citing innovative solutions, transparent leadership and public trust as just a few merits of the state's response (WHO 2020). As early into the pandemic as April 2020 the *New York Times* identified positive commentary from US politicians and health officials hailing the success of the South Korean model, contributing to growing positive perceptions in the West (*New York Times* 2020). This positive media coverage may be encouraging a shift from discussions on South Korea

focusing solely on the security dilemma on the Peninsula, with greater consideration into the country's other merits (Robertson & Gerszberg 2021).

Emerging out of 2020, Seoul has endeavoured to secure the success of this positive image through nation branding initiatives. Nation branding, which allows states to curate their image in the minds of foreign populations (Fan 2010, p. 98), has been utilised by South Korea during the pandemic to diversify its national image. Nation branding has been a key focus of Seoul since the establishment of the Presidential Council of Nation Branding in 2009 set on curating South Korea's image on the international stage. Much of this nation branding has focused on the cultural export of the Korean Wave (*Hallyu)* which has contributed significantly to the state's image overseas and been used to achieve foreign policy goals abroad (Lee 2020, p. 4-5). The pandemic provided a new nation-branding opportunity focused on public diplomacy, through aiding foreign nations, and soft power, through the export of the Korean model of battling the health crisis.

By April 2020, South Korea's image was of a model democratic state that did not require widespread lockdowns or harsh restrictions on movement to achieve success against COVID-19 (Lee & Kim 2020, p. 9). The practical success of South Korea's model of combatting COVID-19 was leveraged in nation branding by labelling these public health strategies as the 'K-Quarantine' model. To facilitate engagement internationally, a K-Quarantine Exhibition was organised in November of 2020 which allowed for the promotion of South Korea's quarantine industries abroad (K-Quarantine EXPO 2020). This model was positioned in antithesis to China's authoritarian COVID-19 response in an effort to enrich South Korea's image as a strong liberal democracy (Robertson & Gerszberg 2020). Branded like other hyphenated Korean culture exports (K-Pop, K-Dramas etc.), the K-Quarantine initiative gained legitimacy with global leaders from France and Sweden seeking advice from President Moon Jae-in on the South Korean measures proven to best the virus (Rich et al. 2020). Through utilising nation branding Seoul was able to transform positive action into a positive and respectable image on the international stage.

Early into the pandemic, Australia's COVID-19 success received similar positive media coverage from news outlets such as *The New York Times*, *Forbes,* and *CNN*. The extensive state lockdown in Victoria and determination of its citizens was identified as a particular success by Chief Medical Advisor to the US President, Dr Fauci (Zhou 2020). However, arguments have been made that, unlike South Korea, much of Australia's success was circumstantial owing to the island's expansive area and relative isolation of major cities compared with the densely populated Peninsula of Korea (Zhou 2020). Furthermore, Australia's nation-branding attempts have been undermined by mishaps including in July of 2020 when the country's new brand logo was launched and held surprising resemblance to images of the coronavirus (Karvelas 2020).

Comparatively, South Korea's handling of the pandemic is viewed throughout the world as an exemplary model of 'flattening' an outbreak without an expansive shutdown of civilians and the economy (Kim et al. 2020, p. 568). Australia's positive image resulting from containing the pandemic has faced significant contestation through 2021's continuous lockdowns and the country's highest regression in 30 years (Khalil 2020). Other issues, including the rising epidemic of mental health issues owing to lockdown conditions (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2021), and the mismanagement of the vaccine rollout (*BBC* 2021) have undermined early expert judgement on the supposed success of Australia's COVID19 policy.

Similarly, South Korea's pandemic leadership has received critique particularly over the use of technology to monitor the movement of its citizens. This use of technology has received criticism from Human Rights Watch over infringing the right to privacy, which in some cases resulted in the public harassment of infected individuals (Human Rights Watch 2020). The image of South Korea this far is being further threatened in the face of South Korea's current COVID-19 Delta outbreak (*The Korea Times* 2021*).* With increasing cases and only 13% of the eligible population fully vaccinated (Korean Disease Prevention and Control Agency, 2021) the future of the K-Quarantine nation brand and South Korea's image as a leader in crisis may begin to lose credibility. Despite these points of criticism, there are similarities between both cases as well as opportunities to learn from each other's success, and mismanagement, of the post-pandemic strategy.

While it is easy to be pessimistic about the relationship between South Korea and Australia, 2020 appeared to mark a shift in foreign policy commentary's view of the bilateral relationship and support for its strengthening moving forward. Prior to the pandemic, the majority of Australian foreign policy commentary focused on the security dimension of the Korean Peninsula and the neglect of the state's bilateral relations (Robertson & Gerszberg 2020). This demonstrates how Seoul's image has often been overshadowed by the broader North Korean issue from Australian perspectives. Seoul's pandemic response has reminded Australian leaders of the regional and international importance of South Korea, revitalising the image, and presenting opportunities for bettering the bilateral relationship (Corben 2020). Furthermore, this positive image contributes to Australia as well, with the two states frequently being commended for their COVID-19 responses.

The future of Australia-South Korea relations are also fraught by international developments beyond COVID-19, particularly when it comes to how they are perceived by the international audience as they respond to China's rise in the Indo-Pacific. International consensus already appears to be that South Korea has overemphasised its balancing strategy at the detriment of US relations and sticking strong to this course of action may negatively impact the state's image abroad (Boto 2021). In

comparison, Australia's somewhat antagonistic approach indicates there is much to learn from South Korea in endeavouring to maintain a civil relationship with China (Storey 2020). With their respective trade dependencies estimated at 43% for Australia and 29% for South Korea in 2020 (Heath 2021) it is here that they could serve to learn from each other's approach to China (Cotton 2013, p. 619). Given the security dilemma with China and the US, there is a growing need for Australia to consider South Korea properly as a nation with a highly educated populace and a key power in both the regional and global order (Campbell 2011, p. 127).

While experts have agreed that the Australia-South Korea bilateral relationship has gone downhill in past years, this does not mean that there is no hope for revitalising engagement between the states. The circumstances presented by the COVID-19 Pandemic have presented valuable opportunities in how both Australia and South Korea are viewed abroad, and by each other. The shift in international image and their unique success in handling the health crisis of COVID-19 has placed both states in a position where more meaningful engagement is possible. For Australia in particular, there is a need to reassess commitment to its relationship with South Korea, to restore it to similar levels of engagement as seen with Indonesia and Japan. Protecting this relationship will likely serve Australia well as the world moves forward out of COVID-19 into other dynamic issues such as the China-US tensions. Though there is still much work to be done, both states are in the position post-pandemic 2021 where increased bilateral communication should be pursued to create strong and peaceful future ties.

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ANTHROPOLOGICAL COMMENTARY

BURIAL RITES AND PANDEMIC POLITICS: HEALTH, MOURNING AND RELIGIOSITY IN A TIME OF MASS DEATH

JESSICA EWERT

Coronavirus has catastrophically altered the way humans interact and practice religiosity, and importantly, how we can mourn and tend to the dead in line with health requirements (Greene & Bloomfield 2020). The wave of death from COVID-19 has forced citizens, governments, and religious leaders to question long-held tradition and ritual, with an "unprecedented cultural cataclysm" for burial rites (Mikles 2021, p.3). Legislation enacted by governments and health advisory bodies across the globe has advocated the use of face masks, social distancing and lockdowns that deter mass in-person gatherings to prevent contagion (Barker et al 2020). Accordingly, The World Health Organisation advised the living should not touch or kiss the dead to prevent the spread of disease (Frayer et al 2020). For some religions the handling of the body helps to determine the journey to the afterlife, which further affects the mourning process.

Grief is a natural response to loss. It allows the living to acknowledge the death of loved ones; most often by people who have played an integral role in our life (Shear 2012). The way death is handled differs not only from person to person, but also between communities, nations and religions. To date, over 4.5 million people have died worldwide, with a global 7-day average of around 600,000 active cases as of September 2021 (Worldometer 2021).

While the world watched the devastating death toll rise in India earlier this year, cemeteries and crematoriums in the country ran out of space (Mikles 2021). The majority of India's population are Hindu, who prefer to cremate the dead, while the minority Muslim population, around 15 per cent, favour burial practices. Although cremation is strictly forbidden in Islam, in March 2020, Mumbai authorities announced all COVID-19 bodies must be burned to prevent the spread of disease (Frayer et al 2020). Following the intervention of a Muslim politician, the order to cremate bodies was withdrawn and Muslims were allowed to follow Islamic practice (Frayer et al 2020).

Tradition holds that Hindus, Jains and Muslims must cremate or bury loved ones within 24 hours of death. Not only was there a shortage of people to carry out these practices, but the rapid death rate and fast-paced nature of ritual contributed to the current crisis. Consequently, families turned to bribery

in order to carry out traditional mourning practices (Mikles 2021). There is also the fear that proper religious procedure was not been followed and the consequent effects on the 'afterlife' (Chourdy et al 2018). A Muslim death *doula* (someone who assists in the dying process) explained there are "rights afforded to people in death, just as someone has rights afforded to them while they're alive" (Hegarty 2020, p.2).

In May 2021, the Indian capital, New Delhi, converted public parks and parking lots into sites for mass cremations of Hindus, Sikhs and Jains (Sharma 2021). Images of mass COVID-19 deaths have become a defining point of the pandemic and are particularly confronting for those in the West where social norms favour individuality in death (Holleran & Gould 2021).

Aside from the impact to burial practices, social distancing guidelines have also drastically changed services to celebrate the deceased's life (Omonisi 2020). Fortunately, with the advent of the internet, mortuary religious services persist online via live streaming (Testoni et al 2021). Yet despite the usefulness of technology, mourners report strong feelings of loneliness and deep sadness, craving the warmth and closeness captured at in-person assemblies (Testoni et al 2021).

Problematically, in a case of faith versus the state, some churches in the United States have attempted to sue governments, insisting congregations are an "essential" service, claiming "religious liberty" (Baker et al 2020, p.366). Some have taken to the Supreme Court, and been denied, namely *South Bay United Pentecostal Church v Newsom (2020),* which did not want to follow social distancing restrictions at public gatherings (Baker et al 2020). This highlights the impact of religious and health leaders working together rather than apart (Dwoskin 2021).

However, Gaughn et al (2020, p.5) purports that there is a role for "religious leaders and centres of faith" to collaborate with public health institutions to "disseminate information surrounding public health risk". Religious bodies are well placed to engage with communities from a position of trust, with cultural and linguistic ties that could reduce risks of COVID-19, and any future pandemics (Gaughn et al 2020). Thus, the unprecedented challenges to burial rites presented by Coronavirus present an important avenue to explore how health guidelines can be maintained while upholding societal values and norms.
Kowalczyk et al (2020), explains that spirituality in the context of healthcare is becoming increasingly important and is a relatively new area. Taking the concept of cultural relativism (the ability to understand a culture from its own boundaries and not the standard of one's own) and applying it to the context of religious practice, burial rites and pandemic health guidelines – requires a bridging of tradition and science in order to prevent the spread of a deadly virus, while meeting religious expectations (Singer 1999).

Globalisation and migration have contributed to the diversity of religious practice and ritual around the world. Despite the drastic changes to every-day life during the pandemic, religion remains a constant that people rely on in life and death. For many religions burial traditions cannot be compromised. Yet, the unprecedented, ongoing events of 2020 highlight the need for religious leaders and health bodies to work together, with a willingness to adapt tradition, for survival, while respecting diversity burial rites for different faiths.

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POLITICAL COMMENTARY

THE CHALLENGES COVID-19 HAS POSED ON MULTILATERALISM

PADMO WIDYASENO (WIDY)

More than a year has passed since the world went into a standstill due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the global effort to curb and minimise the spread of COVID, there is little hope that the pandemic will subside in the near future. In fact, in some nations such as Indonesia and Taiwan, the pandemic has actually gotten worse. Almost every country in the world has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in some capacity. According to the WHO, the virus has claimed approximately 4.8 million lives as of October 2021, which is in fact only about 2% of total cases. However, the primary significance of the COVID-19 pandemic is not its fatality or virality, but the impact that it has had on society worldwide.

COVID-19's impact on the world has been immeasurable. From its epicentre in China, it rapidly spread across the globe in a matter of months. This alarming situation brought about widespread social distancing and lockdown policies, in which interactions, activities and gatherings were restricted. This significantly transformed people's way of living, as both their work and leisure activities have been suspended or adjusted in order to comply with these policies. While office workers were still able to work at home, those who work in the retail, service or industry sectors were forcibly laid off since their jobs involve interactions with other people. This has led to a substantial rise in poverty and unemployment during the pandemic, which has become another worrying issue for governments to handle. In Indonesia for example, 74% of respondents to a survey said that their household income declined due to the pandemic (UNICEF, 2021). Moreover, the poverty rate in the country rose from 3.5% prior to the pandemic to approximately 8% a year onwards (UNICEF, 2021).

One of the most prominent impacts of Covid-19 was how it revamped the way we handle crises themselves. During global crises such as this, world leaders would usually gather and form resolutions to tackle the problem at hand. This is a process known as multilateralism. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has made this process more challenging than usual. This is related to the inherent characteristics of multilateralism and also the uniquely extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic. Due to these challenges, critics have questioned the effectiveness of multilateralism for dealing with global issues. These sentiments have existed even prior to the pandemic, as Professor Mark Beeson claimed back in 2015 that there were already doubts about how effective such institutions are in actually dealing with the

recurrent economic crises that plague the international system. The pandemic has only strengthened the claim of those who questioned multilateralism before it.

The first characteristic of multilateralism which has become an obstacle for tackling Covid-19 is the norm-setting process. During multilateral negotiations, states conclude with resolutions that would apply to every country involved in said negotiations. However, this is ineffective when it comes to Covid-19, as the pandemic-induced problems that each country faces vary from one another, leading to differing priorities. Some will choose to focus on reducing the number of cases, whereas other countries might prioritise economic recovery. There are numerous factors that determine which repercussions a nation decides to focus on. Countries with a high number of cases are likely to prioritise preventive measures, vaccines and healthcare equipment. This is especially the case for countries with a relatively small population, as a significant population loss would be detrimental for the country's future. It would be less of a threat for countries with a greater population as there are simply more people that the virus won't kill off. These governments could potentially prioritise economic recovery if they consider their economic condition to be a more significant problem. Countries with a low infection rate are likely to take the same stance. The governments of these nations will prioritise the issue affecting the whole nation (the poor economy) instead of one that only affects a fraction of the population (the virus). If the participating countries still insist on making resolutions that apply to all the nations involved in the multilateral negotiations, it will result in very superficial measures which don't end up being effective at all.

Multilateral conferences are also known for their lengthy negotiations. In normal circumstances, it would take weeks or even months to finalise the resolutions. While this flaw could be excused in a period of normality, it is problematic when dealing with a pandemic as nations want imminent action to curb the virus. Covid-19 is infamous for how swiftly it spreads. Thus, policies and actions to reduce the escalation of the disease must be implemented quickly in order to prevent the disease from infecting a large number of people. The higher the number of cases is in a country, the more difficult it is to prevent the spread. Another problem that needs an immediate response is the social distancing induced economic recessions that almost every country is experiencing.According to the International Monetary Fund, many countries are experiencing declines in their GDP. In the worst-case scenario, global GDP could shrink by 0.9 per cent in 2020 (UN, 2020). The drop off in GDP means that poverty and unemployment will increase in these countries, which will negatively affect their economy in the long run. Thus, these countries would want resolutions to be found immediately so that their economy is not harmed any further. Overall, the time-consuming nature of multilateral negotiations is another reason why Covid-19 has become a challenge for multilateralism, as lengthy negotiations are unsuitable for a time when immediate action is needed.

In addition, I would also like to propose some solutions to tackle the challenges that Covid-19 has posed on multilateralism. Even though the pandemic has made it very difficult to conduct multilateral negotiations, it is still imperative that international diplomacy continues. Through a combined pool of resources, there is a better chance of defeating the virus. First, there is the issue of the "lowest common denominator" policy of resolution-making in multilateral negotiations. This policy exists so that safe resolutions could be made that would apply to all countries involved in the negotiations. Furthermore, it prevents countries making risky and controversial resolutions that could potentially upset another nation (Shambaugh 2016). There are some solutions to get around this. Countries could choose to negotiate specifically with nations that experience similar problems to them and/or have a similar background. Being selective with the countries a nation chooses to negotiate with would help reduce the number of states involved in the conference. With a lesser number of states involved and a shared vision, resolutions could be passed quicker. There would be less time spent debating and arguing over the outcomes since all of the nations involved are in agreement to each other. To counter the challenge of social distancing, multilateral conferences could be conducted digitally. World leaders could hold their discussions over digital conference platforms such as Zoom, Skype and Google Meets instead of meeting in person. This prevents contact between the world leaders, thus maintaining the social distancing policy. It also circumvents the issue of travel restrictions. World leaders no longer need to travel to a certain country with a travel ban to negotiate, but they can do so while staying in their own country. It is also more cost-effective as there would be no need to organise aspects such as hospitality and accommodation, which is ideal in a time when funds are limited. However, a limitation of digital conference platforms is that it is reliant on internet connection. If the internet connection, for whatever reason, is faulty, it would be a significant inconvenience. Currently, with vaccination rates on the rise, we are beginning to see a return to in-person multilateral conferences. The recent UN Summit in New York was conducted in person with social distancing protocols. With more and more people getting vaccinated, we might see a return to in-person negotiations in the near future.

In conclusion, the Coronavirus pandemic has brought an unprecedented challenge to international diplomacy, particularly multilateralism. It has made conducting multilateral negotiations difficult due to the lengthy nature of multilateralism and the "lowest common denominator" policy of resolution setting. However, with the recent upturn in vaccination rates and the general number of cases gradually dying down, we might begin to see a return to multilateral negotiations in the forthcoming post-COVID world.

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OPINION

DERELICTIONS OF DEROGATIONS: THE HUMAN RIGHTS DEROGATION SYSTEM IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

JOEL DUGGAN

As counterintuitive as it may seem, the preservation of human rights in international law requires a framework which facilitates regulated violations of certain rights in times of emergency. Global human rights law achieves this through including derogation clauses in treaties which specify when, why and how a state may legally infringe upon human rights. Despite the obvious importance of this, the derogation system is profoundly underutilised, underdeveloped and, in some respects, quite broken. Its ineffectiveness generally and during COVID-19 specifically serves as strong evidence of its structural failures, yet in revealing these failures the pandemic has promoted discourse on much-needed reform. Significantly, the chaotic, uncoordinated nature of the human rights system has undermined its ability to attain an equilibrium between reliability and sovereignty, thus failing to incentivise active, universal participation. This is reflected in the lack of guidance provided to states during the pandemic, with states adopting diverse suites of lockdown policies only occasionally with permission from treaty bodies. The solution to these shortcomings must involve a development and fortification of the enforcement system, ensuring the states are held more accountable through binding structures of notification, supervision and adherence that strengthen connections between states and multilateral institutions. Only then can the derogation system fulfil its ultimate purpose of promoting human rights to the greatest extent possible.

Human rights derogations aim to reduce human rights violations relative to the level of violations that would have occurred without such a mechanism. They need to balance certainty and flexibility with the potential for abuse, requiring an established normative baseline for derogations and their purpose. Yet, the system's haphazard structure of overlapping treaties and conflicting obligations has facilitated an environment where formal derogations are too difficult, risky and undeveloped to be wilfully pursued by most. One need look no further than the fact that not even thirty of the 172 states parties to the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) have enacted a formal derogation under the process outlined in Article 4, which has been unfavourably noted by the United Nations Human Rights Committee (2020). The Committee additionally note that even among derogating states, there was

a failure to adhere to the obligations of "immediate" notification, articulated in ICCPR Article 4(3) and CCPR General Comment No. 29 Article 17. Nor was "sufficient and precise information" about the specific derogations and their justifications provided, a requirement also articulated in ICCPR Article 4(3) and CCPR General Comment No. 29 Article 2. Helfer (2021, 25-32) contends that this is because of perverse incentives ingrained in the legal structure that discourage state participation in the derogation process. Namely, the multitude of treaties all with different rules and rights make it virtually impossible to legally derogate from every treaty. Also, an evolution of jurisprudential interpretation of these treaties by bodies including the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and UNHRC has expanded non-derogable rights and positive obligations, leading to compliance being more rigorous and thereby less desirable. Furthermore, the principle of proportionality codified in ICCPR Article 4(1), which asserts that derogations must be "to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation", requires treaty bodies which can efficiently evaluate conformity. Yet these treaties lack a mechanism for engaging derogating states and it is common for years to elapse before tribunals complete assessment of a derogation's legality. It is no wonder, then, that during times of crisis, states are more concerned with domestic considerations than navigating the chaotic maze of the derogation regime, usually forgoing the process altogether.

Epitomising this disorder of the derogation system is the manner in which many states have failed in maintaining the human rights structure's integrity during COVID-19. Pandemic responses have varied, but most have involved restricting human rights. However, the derogation system has played a relatively insignificant role in guiding these restrictions, meaning that the absence of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation process has undermined the broader commitment of states to human rights. In Australia specifically, scrutiny of human rights compliance has been inadequate due to complications arising from its federal system (AHRC 2021), as lockdowns were managed at the state level but the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) and other international bodies can only monitor at the national level. More broadly, an issue rampant across state responses is the failure to uphold the non-discrimination principle outlined in ICCPR Article 4(1). Lebret's (2020, 9-12) research has examined the French government's COVID-19 policies and found that they arguably violate the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) by neglecting the situation of abused women, as well as discriminating against prison detainees and the elderly by intensifying confinement and not supplementing it with important quality-of-life policies. The lack of an effective monitoring mechanism means there is no obligation for states to be comprehensive and intersectional in their pandemic response, although bodies such as the IACHR may pay empty homage to intersectionality (Rodríguez 2021). The most egregious example of discrimination and rights violation, however, lies in Hungary and Viktor Orban's Fidesz governent. Fidesz, using the pandemic as a pretext, seized unrestrained executive power through a state of emergency and employed it to restrict asylum, interfere with the media, strip LGBT rights, reject a domestic violence bill, and further marginalised the Romani (Human Rights Watch

2021). Although the Authorisation Act granting these emergency powers was temporary, a new law was adopted to enable similar authorisations in the future. The Council of Europe Secretary-General has gone so far as to issue a letter to Hungary informing them of their ECHR violations (Pejčinović Burić 2020), but no other treaty bodies Hungary is party to have done so. What this suggests is the need for tightening the entire global human rights law regime through clear guidelines and comprehensive monitoring processes and swift, effective consequences for illegal derogations.

Helfer goes into further detail about the reforms necessary to fix the derogation system, specifying that it must be improved in terms of embeddedness, engagement, information, timing and scope. Only through overhauling the system to consolidate and centralise it with these principles ingrained can its deficiencies be adequately ameliorated. The main theme running throughout Helfer's (2021, 33-40) proposals is that of strengthening the connections between the domestic and the international. For one thing: codifying the treaty notification requirement in domestic procedure to ensure embeddedness and having treaty depositories confer directly with governments and provide advice to increase engagement would give countries more incentive and support to meet their treaty obligations. Additionally, popularising the inclusion of context, justifications and sunset clauses in derogations to enhance information spread, punishing late notification with invalidation and incentivising early notification to improve timing, and considering more deeply the role of derogations within treaties, particularly newer ones, to guarantee an appropriateness of scope would also be important steps in strengthening the role that human rights treaties play politically. The situation in Hungary and elsewhere highlights the fact that when states are left to determine their own human rights policy, there is substantial risk of violation and oppression. As things stand, the derogation regime is a mess states do not want to deal with and the only way to amend this is to organise it more efficiently and effectively so that they are *compelled* to engage with it and *incentivised* to do so in good faith.

Ultimately, it is only this strengthening of compulsion and incentive that can ensure an adherence to treaty requirements of derogation. The anarchy inherent to the international system means that when states have the opportunity to shirk obligations in a ploy to consolidate power, they will take it -- as COVID-19 responses have demonstrated. Thus, states require binding rules and strict consequences which align human rights protection with the national interest because otherwise human rights will always remain secondary considerations.

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GENERAL

STRUCTURES, SUBJECTS AND COLONIAL VIOLENCE

KEAGAN Ó GUAIRE & KATHERINE NEWMAN

Abstract
This article responds to a brief exchange between Barkawi (2011) and Aradau (2012), which debated the value of using 'violence' as a referent object in Security Studies theory. Our contribution explores understandings of colonial violence in the structuralist works of Veracini and Wolfe as well as the post-structuralist and psychoanalytic works of Achille Mbembe. We briefly outline their theoretical frameworks and highlight their applicability in our shared area of expertise: the Troubles conflict in the north of Ireland. Despite our focus on Ireland, we aim to show that Mbembe, Veracini, and Wolfe are broadly applicable across the many different subfields within IR, and we canvas them here to encourage further engagement with the violence of colonisation as we thaw from the stasis of Covid-19.

In this article, we investigate the ideas found in an exchange between Barkawi and Aradau in *Millennium* in 2012. The exchange centred on the possibility of centring war and violence as the referent objects of International Relations theorising and has received limited attention in theoretical literature since. In opposition to Barkawi's (2011) attempt to disentangle war from security discourse, Aradau (2012) argues that the two are entrenched. Aradau's argument centres on the strengths of securitisation theory for understanding the relationship between routinised violence and politics. She proposes that rather than limiting our theoretical focus to war, focusing squarely on violence would allow us to understand the force which makes war possible (2012, 114). If we are to accept Clausewitz's (1993, 87) maxim that war is politics by other means, or even Foucault's (2003, 12) inverted "politics is war by other means", Aradau offers 'violence' as the force which flows between the two – regardless of their sequencing. She thus argues for an analysis of the force which flows over, under and through Barkawi's Critical Studies of War (Aradau 2012, 112-123). Absent from her argument, however, is an extended engagement with the metaphysical violence of colonialism, which we believe should be central to any analysis of international politics as we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic. Below, we briefly offer two broad avenues for exploring violence through a postcolonial lens: initially through the structuralist approaches of Veracini (2008, 2010, 2011, 2015) and Wolfe (1999, 2006, 2016), and then via the works of Achille Mbembe (2019b; 2020; 2021), which offer a critique of the violent structuration of colonial political subjectivities.

Structures and Settler Colonialism

Settler Colonialism is an inherently violent endeavour, and the structural approaches of Veracini and Wolfe lead us to interrogate the ways pre-physical violence generates the phenomenological experience of the colony. Wolfe, for example, argues for a structural understanding of the violence of the settler colonial state which extends and operate long after the initial colonial invasion (2006, 388). From the original force of invasion to assimilatory government policies of multicultural modernity, the aim of the colonial structure is the same: the elimination of the native, physically, socially, politically, and culturally (Wolfe 1999, 2; 2006, 401). Settlement and invasion is inherently based on the "cumulative depredation" of native territory for economic gain which inevitably renders the native superfluous (Wolfe 1999, 2; 2016, 1). This settler colonial violence, both physical and metaphysical, is "at once law-making… and a 'free and ruthless' use of force", embedding violence in the heart of the settler state at the moment it claims sovereignty (Lloyd & Wolfe 2016, 114). Settler sovereignty is based on their violent control and domination of the invaded territory in the New World, while articulating their legitimate claim to that sovereignty via appeals to the power of their ancestral roots in the homeland (the 'metropole') (Veracini 2010, 3). Although Wolfe's primary focus is (rightly) the ongoing genocidal colonisation of Australia (1999, 2006, 2016), we see global applications of his work; for example, in the partitioned six counties of Northern Ireland. The Tudor and Stuart invasion and plantations of Ireland destroyed the political structures, disrupted the social and cultural practices, such as Irish Law, and rendered the population subjugated (Canny 1973, 576; Horning 2013). The cumulative depredation from the Pale of English control was both territorial, political, and social in nature (Connolly 1992, 267-272). With the expansion of English control came the English settler state and the civilising mission of what later became Imperial Britain (Ruane & Todd 1996, 11). Considering this colonial history, we argue alongside Miller (2007) and Clayton (1996) that the Troubles conflict (1968-1998), as well as the persistent post-Troubles political violence in the region, can be at least partly explained by Wolfe's Settler Colonial Theory.[1][2]

Veracini explicitly elaborates on Wolfe's Settler Colonial Theory, particularly in relation to the tripartite relationships between the imperial metropolis, the settler state, and the native peoples (2010). Veracini elaborates on Wolfe's Logic of Elimination by taking Wolfe's argument that elimination is the "organising principle" of the settler state and and suggesting that the settler state is constructed "*against* Indigenous peoples, not *without* them" positioning it as a central problematic of resolving the internal conflict of the states (Veracini 2014, 315; Wolfe 2006, 388). For Veracini, the central intention in the establishment of a settler colony on occupied territory is the elimination of the pre-existing inhabitants:

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1 The Troubles Conflict refers to the violence which emerged in 1968 between Irish Republicans, who sought to destroy partition and create an independent united Ireland, and Ulster Unionists, who sought to cement the Union with Great Britain. The British military and security services also played an influential role, particularly against Irish Republicans.

2 This implicit conception of Ulster Unionists as colonial settlers does not necessitate a positive, acquiescence relationship with the metropolis. Ulster Protestants in Northern Ireland articulate their identity as a British people, in the vein of Scottish and Welsh Britishness. See Southern (2007, xiii).

socially, culturally, and politically, if not always physically (*contra* Wolf 2006, 387-409). Veracini has illustrated the potential in using Settler Colonial Theory to conceptualise relationships in conflict situations such as the ongoing territorial contestation between Palestine and the Israeli state (Veracini 2015, 268-271). He argues that Settler Colonial Theory helps us to understand the temporal dimensions of conflict and violence, the historical developments leading to violence, including those which brought the communities into agonistic contact with one another, and competing claims of indigeneity (Veracini 2015, 268-271). As an example, the Northern Irish state was designed specifically to ensure the political domination of pro-British communities, who wished to maintain cultural-political ties with Great Britain (Clayton 1996, xiii; 1998, 48; Lee 1989, 45).[3] Settler states are premised on violent replacement but its legitimacy is dependent on its disavowal and erasure of this violence (Veracini 2008, 367; 2010, 75). The settler society is constructed as "the ideal society" which is devoid of the violence and disarray of the Old World from which the settlers escaped and as such, the realities of its founding violence must be expunged from history (Veracini 2008, 365). Thus, founding violence is presented as self-defensive and a marker of the sovereignty of the settler state (Veracini 2008, 365; 2010, 78). [4]

Veracini distinguishes Settler Colonialism from the more general term 'colonialism', based on the primacy of the settler community in the generation of the colonising effort in settler colonial states (as opposed to mercantile colonies elsewhere in the British Empire) (Veracini 2010, 6). He highlights the example of the Unionist Orange Order's annual Battle of the Boyne celebrations, where hard-line Loyalists march through indigenous communities, singing victory songs and displaying anti-Irish insignia, as emblematic of this (Veracini 2015, 366). Despite the settler's political hegemony, according to Veracini, the sense that indigenous communities present an existential threat to the settler society (in the form of both violent rebellion and decolonisation) remains at the front of the settler's psyche (Veracini 2010, 81). Invasion and colonisation construct political and legal scripts which continue to inform the relationships between settler and native long after militarised violence is co-opted by the state (Rana 2014, 171). The threat that Indigenous peoples pose to the settler state by their very existence led to institutional violence against, and a lack of legal protection for, Indigenous communities (Rana 2014, 171-175). Loyalist paramilitaries, which sought to secure the position of Northern Ireland under the British Protestant monarch, justified their sectarian violence as a reaction to the threat the Nationalist paramilitaries presented to the security of the state, and the state's unwillingness to challenge them (Clayton 1996, 155).

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3 These communities, who consider themselves British Irish people, tend to identify with Protestantism and political Unionism (i.e. supporting the continued union of Ireland with Great Britain), and claim descent from 16th-century Anglo-Scottish settlers. As such, in this paper and in the broader literature, terms like 'Ulster Protestants', 'Unionists', and 'pro-British communities' are used relatively interchangeably. 'Loyalism' represents a particularly extreme adherence to Unionism.

4 While institutional and structural violence is more easily documented, the "settler common sense' which dictates day to day interaction and reinforces total control over Indigenous populations within the colony has been less of a focus for literature on the subject, according to Rifkin (2013).

The Violence of Subjectivity

Veracini's and Wolfe's structuralist models illustrate the genocidal logic of the colony and locate violence in the pre-physical: the silencing of language, the repression of memory of frontier wars, the brilliant sandstone of Old Arts and the colonial knowledge production they represent. However, the structuralist model rests on the analysis of interactions between more-or-less concrete agents and more-or-less concrete structures, asking of the reader to accept *a priori* moving referent objects before the broader argument can be laid down. Of course, agents are tempered by the structures (and vice versa), representing a break with the Renaissance and Enlightenment Humanism which dominates traditional understandings of violence, but we are nonetheless presented with always-already human subjects whose fuzzy conceptual edges are tempered by *a priori* structures. As we will briefly show below, the works of Achille Mbembe (2017; 2019; 2020; 2021) are a compelling example from a body of theoretical literature which seeks to understand the force of violence which *constitutes* political subjects.

In briefly outlining Mbembe here we necessarily sideline the important works of writers like Butler (1999), Bhabha (1994), Chakrabarty (2000), Gilroy (1995), and Spivak (1990), each of whom offer innovative ways of analysing the subjectivity of violence. Insofar as Mbembe draws on all of these writers, he serves here as a synecdoche of their anti-colonial understandings of violence. For Mbembe, as for Veracini and Wolfe, the logic of the colony is the logic of elimination (for example, Mbembe 2003). However, Mbembe's model goes further than the means-ends rationality of elimination: the colonial superstructure engages in genocidal violence because it is possessed by an indelible drive for sadism – a drive which Mbembe, drawing on Georges Bataille, calls the 'Accursed Share' of the colony (Bataille 1991; Mbembe 2003, 16). Framed this way, the colony is an outlet for the violence which is repressed at the Metropole. For example, there is no ontologically secure Israeli state, he argues, without Israeli state violence against the Palestinian people (Mbembe 2003, 28; 2016, 71). Here again we must be quite clear: Mbembe's critique is of Israeli state policy which has also been condemned by the United Nations, not of the existence of the Israeli state (on this matter, see Assmann 2020). Similarly, quite apart from the financial economic power stolen from its colonies and its involvement in the slave trade, the French state thrived from the 16th century onwards because of its manipulation of a *libidinal* economy, wherein gratuitous violence against non-Europeans solidified a safe European 'inside', separate from those who were made inhuman on the 'outside' (Mbembe 2017, 78-102; 2021, 112-140; see Fanon 1967).

The same process of nihilistic violence ossified White Australia against the objects of its violence. From the first waves of British invasion through to the Liberal party right faction's xenophobic crusade against refugees fleeing wars and economic inequality, the Accursed Share galvanises Australia's place as a global middle power and beneficiary of US allyship. The same *logic* of the Accursed Share,

which solidifies the unity of the metropole, is at play throughout the history of Ireland, most recently during British involvement in our shared specialist area of the Troubles conflict in the north of Ireland (and here we must be very clear that we do not wish to draw a comparison of intensity between the Irish experience of colonialism and the experience of First Nations people in Australia – rather, we suggest a genealogy; a family relationship among the *tactics* of the coloniser, ***not*** a parity of lived experience of colonisation). The Troubles is generally framed in the literature as a struggle between the atavistic (physical) violence of paramilitaries like the IRA against the peace-bringing (physical) violence of the British Army.[5] Conversely, an Mbembean approach to violence would seek to understand the signifying power of pre-physical violence when Thatcher depoliticises paramilitary hunger strikers as petty law-breakers, or when British settlers are allowed to march through indigenous Irish residential areas singing nationalistic anthems and brandishing anti-Irish insignia.[6]

For Mbembe, this interethnic and state violence centres on the atomised, rational individual. Drawing on poststructuralist and psychoanalytic theory, Mbembe argues that western political theory's basic unit of the individual subject is a *product* of violence and a necessary *reproducer* of violence. Much as colonial states maintain their unity and security through unbridled violence against its (non-European) Other, so too is the concretised subject only intelligible when it is paired with and Other-who-is-not-me (Mbembe 2012b, 21; see Fanon 1967, 25-84). Insofar as the process of forming a political agent rests on defining what 'it' *is* and what the Other *is not*, for Mbembe the creation of concrete subjectivity is the creation of the possibility of violence (Mbembe 2003, 18; 2019b, 93-104). Violence denies the freedom of the Other to decide who they are. Moreover, insofar as western political theory assumes a human subject which is separate from (the state of) nature by virtue of its political potential, western political theory is predicated on an originary violence which arbitrarily separates animate life from the body of the Earth, and then separates human life from animal life, and then separates masculine life from feminine life… The foundational maxims of western politics are foundations of separations, repressions, and heavily-guarded borders of what it is to be human: *the immanent possibility of violence* (Glissant 1997, 22; Mbembe 2020, 57-75). We have seen throughout history how this process of making-(in)human reached its logical extreme with the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the genocidal logic of settler colonialism (Mbembe 2017, 156-158). Although Schmitt and Mbembe are normatively opposed, they find no disagreement when Schmitt writes that the foundation of all politics is the distinction between friend and enemy (Schmitt 2007, 26). Mbembe would only add that the foundation of all *western* politics is the violence of the friend-enemy distinction (Mbembe 2016, 79; 2020, 57-71). When Hegel (1977, 124) writes that the spirit of history is the movement of the dialectic, Mbembe would only add

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5 For examples of this style of research, see English (2003); McKittrick & McVea (2012).

6 Mbembe's epistemological approach is most clearly laid out in Mbembe 1999; 2001a; 2001b; 2012a; 2019a. For examples of work which has already begun to explore these foci, see Cash (1996) and Feldman (1991).

that the movement of *western* history, since the first European colonial expeditions, has been the struggle of the dialectic, which positions western states (in our example, Britain) in struggle against their colonised Other (in our example, Ireland) (Mbembe 2021, 8-10).

The end result is Accursed violence against the colonised, which makes a subject of the coloniser. The individual and the international are here collapsed, driven by the same logic of metaphysical violence. At the most basic level, British settlers are able to engage in violence against Irish people because they see themselves as a collection of subjects *who are* imbued with agency and *who are not* Irish objects: *they are not* robbed of political potential. The British government was then able to maintain cohesion at the Metropole through Accursed violence against Irish anti-colonialists in the 1970s and 1980s: calling them 'terrorists', then 'criminals', then allowing them to die in prisons or be shot down in the street by SAS units. To draw out the example even further: there are no deaths in custody without the colony and its Accursed justice system, and the Australian colonial criminal justice system has overseen the deaths of over 470 indigenous people in its custody since 1991.[7] Further still, the hyper-expansion of the neo-colonial extractive industries which have accelerated global warming, and which are bringing about a global mass extinction event, is only possible when we have the basic building blocks of human subjects who are fundamentally separate from the body of the Earth. All of these metaphysical predicates, for Mbembe, are a distinctly Western intervention in the movement of history.

Concluding Thoughts: Violence and the All-World

For Mbembe, certainly, but also Veracini and Wolfe, there is a colonial grammar at play which means that the settling subject is only intelligible when paired with a destabilised colonised object. The colonising subject, whether an individual or group ego, simply cannot conceive of itself as being-in-the-world[8] without a colonised object which is caught in the colonial logic of elimination and made into a less-than-human: a becoming-animal (see Deleuze & Guattari 1972; Fanon 1967; Mbembe 2017; 2021). It is with this struggle in mind, which paints itself as interminable, that we close with an ethical imperative to engage with the theoretical works of Mbembe, Veracini, and Wolfe, borrowing from the poet and social theorist Édouard Glissant, a cornerstone of Mbembe's normative writing (Mbembe 2017, 180-181; 2019b, 188). Whereas Schmitt and Hegel – and even more contemporary theorists like Derrida (1967; Hagglund 2004) – see no escape from the economy of violence which dictates western subjectivity, Glissant is more hopeful. For him , if the institution of concretised subjectivity is an

7 According to the Guardian *Deaths Inside* database, at least 474 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have died in state since the royal commission into Aboriginal deaths in custody in 1991. We make no accusations pertaining to intent or negligence on the part of state forces in any of those tragedies, but we are steadfast in our accusation that institutions of state coercion in Australia are necessarily institutions of colonial violence. On this point, see Porter (2019) and Staines & Scott (2020).

8 For more on the metaphysics of presence alluded to here, see Heidegger (2019, 27 & 68).

institution of violence (Glissant 1990, 111-116)[9], It follows that it is not enough to counter the violence of the coloniser, but the coloniser's subject-predicate grammar must also be rejected (Wing 1990). After all, insofar as the subject is defined by the object, the subject *is* the object: the inside *is* the outside. The art of colonisation is to erect a border between the two.[10] Against the colonial subject-object structuration of political life, Glissant envisions a world where each individual celebrates their humanity by realising that their existence is not separable from another's existence; nor is their shared humanity separable from animal life; nor is the earth itself separable from animal or human life (Glissant 1997, 22; Mbembe 2020, 57-75). When we cease to cling to rigid subjectivities, divisions between friend and enemy, nature and culture, and periphery and centre are evacuated of their violent potential (Glissant 1990, 61). We reject the possibility of violence when we accept the intangible relatedness of the world, and Glissant positions this as the end goal of any truly emancipatory project, calling it the *All-World* (Glissant 1997, 22).

We offer this brief exploration of pre-physical understandings of structural and subjective violence as a supplement to Aradau and Barkawi's insightful correspondence on violence, and hope our sketch of Veracini, Wolfe, and Mbembe encourages some further reading of their works, which we consider to be critiques which may lead us towards the *All-World*. Of course, the main objection to our broad argument will be that our engagement with Glissant is naïvely idealistic, and that we should instead focus on short-term praxis: reflect on how much and what sort of aid Australia should contribute to the Indo-Pacific region, or write about Australian mishandling of its policy on the war in Afghanistan. These are important debates, to which others have contributed far more comprehensively than we are able. However, we ally ourselves with a broad spectrum of social commentators – from Beck (2002) to Fisher (2009) to Žižek (2013) – when we posit that the neoliberal West, falsely believing itself to be at the end of history (see Fukuyama 1992), too often loses sight of broader debates about the far-off future: that oasis which Plato and his contemporaries called *eudaimonia* (see Aristotle 2003; Plato 1993). A broader understanding of violence and an extended engagement with Veracini, Wolfe, Mbembe and Glissant points us towards *eudaimonia* founded on anticolonialism, antiracism, and the *All-World*.

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9 This argument is similar to one put forward by Deleuze and Guattari (1972). Glissant, who draws extensively on Deleuze and Guattari, is more explicitly focused on the violence of subjecthood in service of settler colonialism than Deleuze and Guattari.

10 On this point, via a more risk-based framing, see Beck (1992) and Dean (2009).

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GENDER THEORY AND FEMALE COMBATANTS

KATHERINE NEWMAN

Abstract
This essay seeks to illuminate the perception of female roles in conflict, specifically their roles as combatants. It uses Ambivalent Sexism Theory and Anarcho-Feminism to illustrate the ways Western culture conceptualises women and the essentialising of the feminine relationship to violence. Women are widely placed as victims of male violence and in many ways essentially anti-violence. The transgression of this conceptualisation is seen as a transgression of womanhood and impacts the way society understands women in conflict and our capacity to respond to women's violence.

This essay argues that a deeper understanding of the role of women in conflict as combatants would provide a clearer and more complete picture of political violence. Central to this argument are the perceptions of women who engage in political violence and the impacts of these perceptions on their experiences and our understanding of both conflict and women. This essay draws on Ambivalent Sexism Theory produced by Peter Glick and Susan T Fiske (2001) and Anarcho-Feminism. The experiences of female combatants in conflict studies scholarship is undertheorised and is almost exclusively attended to in feminist critical studies which leaves little room for comparison. Feminist theory argues that when women diverge from socially constructed perceptions of femininity their womanhood, sexuality, and agency are called into question. The rejection of traditional roles is seen as a threat to the security of the culture and society from which she comes. Scholarship demonstrates that attempts to escape from traditional gender roles remain a primary motivation for female participation in political violence. However the likelihood of violence as an avenue for escape is undocumented. The lack of attention paid to female combatants has serious implications for the security of the wider society and the efficacy of counter-terrorism policy. Lack of analysis regarding female combatants also impacts the success of post-conflict peace processes, especially regarding demobilisation efforts. The amalgamation of women within a conflict situation into a homogeneous group politicisesgender, while at the same time obscures the political, class, and ethnic divisions within any society. Post-conflict processes which engage in this kind of amalgamation reduce women to their privatised position as outlined by socially defined gender roles which inherently separate them from public spheres of power. This level of exclusion influences the level of attention paid to the effects of conflict on women; civilian or combatant. This essay argues that understanding women's political violence is integral to understanding political violence as a phenomenon and the totality of its impacts.

Ambivalent Sexism Theory consists of two interconnecting concepts: Hostile Sexism and Benevolent Sexism. According to Glick and Fiske, on a cultural level "hostile and benevolent sexism are an interlocking set of beliefs that reflect a system of rewards and punishment that give women strong incentive to accept, rather than to challenge, power differences between sexes" (Glick and Fiske, 2001, p. 117).. Despite the benign connotations of the name, Benevolent Sexism serves to "justify, promote, and maintain gender inequality" and legitimise conventional gender relations and roles" (Glick and Fiske, 2001). The consistent aim of both Hostile and Benevolent Sexism is "maintaining a gender traditional status quo" with the intention to withdraw the protection and affection offered according to Benevolent Sexism, should women diverge from expectations (Glick and Fiske, 2011, p. 532). Significantly for this essay, the protection and affection embedded in Benevolent Sexism is also intended to decrease possible collective resistance through the division of the group, "women" into those who conform and can advance, and those who resist (Glick and Fiske, 2001, p. 148). The differing gender roles are cemented through the durability of gender ideologies which structure men and women's socialisation (Glick and Fiske, 2001, p. 120). This theory acknowledges its heteronormativity and seeks to understand the impact of dichotomous masculinity and femininity as culturally defined on male and female subjects.

Anarcho-feminism as a political ideology poses a direct threat to patriarchal capitalism which places women in subordinate positions. Its focus is on the deconstruction of hierarchical systems which it sees as impeding the ultimate goal of a true democracy that is dependent on true gender equality (Thomas, 2002; Dark Star et al., 2012). Central to the theory is the acknowledgment of intersectionality within female identifying populations, along the lines of race, class, ability, and sexuality and suggest that this is integral to a complete analysis of gender (Dark Star et al., 2012, p. 19). It argues that feminist discourse has been appropriated into capitalist propaganda in order to encourage a diluted and impotent message (Dark Star et al., 2012, p. 21). Anarcho-feminists argue that violent self-defence is uncontroversial in individual instances of violence, but becomes "taboo as an answer to the power conditions that steadily produce this violence" (Dark Star et al., 2012, p. 206). The theory rejects bio-essentialist arguments about feminine nature and argues that patriarchal capitalist structures are violent toward women and enforce victimhood.

Violence is considered to be antithetical to femininity and when women commit violence, it is their femininity and their womanhood that is degraded. In her book on female terrorists, journalist Eileen MacDonald found that women who act violently are guilty of two crimes "using violence, and in the process destroying our safe, traditional view of women" (MacDonald, 1991, p. 4). These crimes are publicly explained as the denigration of violence women's sexuality, gender identity and mental state. They are dismissed as "lesbians," or "excessive feminists," with "elevated levels of testosterone" or traumatic childhoods (MacDonald, 1991; Eager, 2018). This aberrance renders them "less than a

woman" (Eager, 2010, p. 269). This framing, according to Dr. Laura Shepherd, an International Relations scholar, intimates that "violence, then, is something that happens to women, something that is perpetrated by men" resulting in women's protection being left in the hands of men (Shepherd, 2010, p. 155). The reliance on male protection leaves women in a socially "subordinate position of dependence and obedience" (Young, 2005, p. 2). While this perspective of nurturing and non-violence being essentially feminine traits is cross-cultural, it is not "universal temporally or geographically" (Alison, 2004, p. 448). AST highlights the significance of socialised gender roles and the role they play in gender relations, particularly the 'passive' woman and 'active' man.

A mainstream perception of women's motivations for entering conflict fundamentally differ from those that motivate men. Feminist scholarship debates this assumption. Dr Paige W. Eager in her study on female terrorism illustrates that women are motivated by the same complex intersection of factors as men on macro-, meso-, and micro-level variables (Eager, 2010, p. 284). Dr Sjoberg and Caron Gentry, on the other hand, argue that gender-specific motivation is best understood through the "gendered social and political structure of the world" (Sjoberg and Gentry, 2016, p. 28). These socialisations enforce the gender roles which structure gender relations. Given the multilevel and structural nature of patriarchal sexism, these socialisations need not exclude multilevel variables.

Female combatants present as a threat to the generally homogeneous masculine environment of combat. Dr Miranda Alison argues that the challenge that female combatants present to masculinity is "both individual and societal" in nature (Alison, 2004, p. 460). The 'subordinate position' dictated by gender roles provides a level of psychological security, which is threatened with the involvement of female combatants (Alison, 2004, p. 460). This is evident in concerns expressed regarding male status but also personal perceptions of their role as the protectors of women. Alison's interview with 'Teresa', an IRA combatant, on her experiences of male combatants demanding better weapons than female counterparts, and others refusing to work with women because they didn't approve of their involvement, or their concern for the women's wellbeing (Alison, 2004, p. 456). Despite this internal perception of women's ineptness with violence from fellow combatants, externally, perceptions of female fighters competing for their place are described as the opposite of traditional femininity; forgoing warmth, nurture, and empathy for ruthlessness, emotionlessness, and aggression. In her study, Alison questions whether female combatants require this behaviour for success, or whether they are perceived to behave more aggressively because of the broken gender expectations (Alison, 2004, p. 457).

The cross-cultural conception of women as 'the fairer sex' are based on stereotype as opposed to documented research (MacKenzie, 2013, p. 240). According to Dr Megan MacKenzie, a feminist International Relations scholar, these stereotypes can be separated into two camps: those who question women's physical ability to enter combat (can they?), and those who argue violence is against women's

essential nature (should they?) (MacKenzie, 2013, p. 239). Both arguments suggest women lack an innate ability to protect themselves and as such, are in need of male protection. These arguments are found within Edith Szanto's 2016 study of the depiction of women in the Syrian uprising, with the added complexity of ethnicity. The narrative of Syrian women's role in the uprising has been reduced to a dichotomy: as victims in the conflict, or as heroic liberal escapees from misogynistic Islam (Szanto, 2016, p. 307). Their victimization is the primary narrative with their agency only being understood in its opposition to the forces western media have chosen to demonise, namely Muslim men (Szanto, 2016, p. 307). An anarcho-feminist perspective is necessary to understand the intersection of ethnicity and gender in these situations which often involve, not just gender relations, but imperialist and ethnic relations as well.

The fact remains that women do participate in conflict as combatants and their experience as women under restrictive gender roles can be a motivating factor. Some women see liberation movements as a pathway for gender liberation, equality, and female empowerment (Alison, 2004; Scott, 2017). In particular, the social restrictions on women in combat seem to diminish when the conflict is fought within the home territory, raising the question of the empowering nature of engagement with violence (MacDonald, 1991; Alison, 2004). Eileen MacDonald's 1991 study found a recurring element of women's engagement in conflict, with women finding that modern warfare to be physically equalising and saw this as an opportunity to gain access to a level of power that had previously been withheld from them (MacDonald, 1991). This made them reluctant to return to pre-conflict status, despite that being a strong social expectation (MacDonald, 1991). The question remains whether female involvement in military engagements has a destructive effect on the saliency of gender roles. Szanto suggests that this effect, if it exists, is not universal. She highlights the example of the Syrian-Kurdish women's protection units attached for the Democratic Union Party (PYD), in which participation is restricted to unmarried women, "guarantee[ing] the fighter's honour and sexual purity" (Szanto, 2016, p. 310). She suggests that, despite attempts to follow a policy of gender equality, the women in these protection units merely temporarily escape gender norms (Szanto, 2016). This assessment is echoed by Helena Carreiras' sociological study of women in the military forces in western democracies (Carreiras, 2006, p. 10).

The durability of women's subordinate position complicates the effort to curtail female engagement in political violence in three key ways. First, visible women's participation in extremist groups is a propaganda point for their recruitment, making them appear more acceptable in public opinion (Scott, 2017, p. 295). Second, women who have committed violent acts are victimised and excused for their actions based on the assumption that they were deprived of agency in the act (Sjoberg and Gentry, 2016; Scott, 2017). Third, practically, the public perception of female innocence restricts security forces in their ability to engage in preventative measures - such as searches – with women as they would with men (Alison, 2004, p. 457). This is despite the documented increase in female

recruitment for political violence (Scott, 2017, p. 292). This aligns to the BS concept in AST and its impact on public perception of women's incapability and has serious consequences for security.

Understanding the female experience in combat is also integral to successful peace processes. Shepherd's work on the United Nations Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) reinforce expectations of women as inherently peace-making and stabilizing (Shepherd, 2010, p. 152). This does not equate to elevating women to leadership positions, however, with the singular exception of the representation of their gender (Shepherd, 2010, p. 153). As Shepherd notes in her analysis of disarmament demobilisation and reintegration programs, "The IDDRS seem to expect rather a lot of women, in return for a limited amount of formal political power"(Shepherd, 2010, p. 153). Women within post-conflict transformations are amalgamated into a singular social unit with homogenised experiences throughout the conflict, political ideologies, class, racial and sexual identities and categorised as both civilian and victim (Shepherd, 2010; Cook, 2016). This is particularly stark given recorded class disparities, as Szanto highlights, with women in working class, poor families being more likely to enlist into the Kurdish women's protection units she studied (Szanto, 2016, p. 309). While women are not unique in experiencing poverty motivating their radicalisation, the combination of poverty and economic restrictions due to gender could increase the likelihood of that radicalisation (Scott, 2017, p. 290). The assumption that there is an archetypal female representative to represent 'women's interests' in post-conflict reconstruction suggests all women's political interests align, a suggestion rejected by feminist scholarship (Shepherd, 2010, p. 150). Shepherd argues that these IDDRS processes reinforce gender roles through the "organisation of individuals into productive domestic units" (Shepherd, 2010, p. 150). These criticisms of international institutions align with Anarcho-feminism criticisms of the innate violence and suppression of women.

The centrality of women's victimhood in conflict resolution and transformation processes minimises the space for the rehabilitation of female combatants. The expectation of the remarginalisation of female combatants to gendered social roles is factored as a necessity in post-conflict social reconstruction (Alison, 2004, p. 458). The stigma of having broken tradition and diverged from social expectation impacts the social and personal rehabilitation of women and with a lack of intervention from international peace processes, former combatants are unlikely to receive help in demobilisation (MacDonald, 1991, p. 238). Helena Carreiras points to a cultural forgetting process of women's participation in conflict, until they are required again (Carreiras, 2006, p. 9). Women are presented in specific ways in international peace discourse and these representations shape the way policy then shapes women's lives (Cook, 2016, p. 354). An anarcho-feminist critique is the lack of acknowledgement of the structural causal factors of participation in political violence, and as such creates the inability to effectively engineer a positive peace inclusive of all involved.

In conclusion, this essay argues that on a practical and theoretical level, understanding women's roles as combatants is essential to understanding gender in conflict. Feminist study specifically seeks to bridge the gap in scholarship which so often leaves women's experiences under-theorised. Mainstream conceptions of women in conflict are based on the socialised understanding of women's essential nature, which does not allow for the feminine and the violent to coincide. As such women's experiences of violence fundamentally diverge from men's, and yet there are no provisions for them within post-conflict reconstruction and peace processes. Their needs are rarely met with the reinforcement of traditional gender roles, which can be a primary motivator for engagement in political violence in the first place. Ambivalent Sexism Theory and Anarcho-Feminism have provided important understandings for motivations towards political violence and the ways that gender roles restrict women's ability to be full participants in conflict and in peace. Women have always participated in conflict, but the motivations, needs, and experiences of these women have been ignored. This complicates peace processes, and reinforces hierarchical patriarchy, silencing, dismissing, and restricting women from the public (and hence) political sphere.

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LOBSTERS, LOCAL ECONOMIES, AND THE LIBERATION OF UIGHUR MUSLIMS IN XINJIANG DETENTION: A COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF THE US-CHINA TRADE WAR

LEELA GRAY

Abstract

A cost-benefit analysis of the US-China trade war on the international political economy. The rapid economic rise exhibited by China since the 1980s has been met with political resistance by many states, most notably by the US. As Thucydides prophesies, when the rising power of China is met with the established power of the US, conflict is inevitable. This fate, coupled with the anti-communist sentiment of the US, sets up the context for the costly trade war ensued in 2018 by the Trump administration. This essay seeks to understand the different costs and benefits of the US-China trade war both in the short and (projected) long term. This essay examines China's strategically placed tariffs and subsidies, smaller state economy booms, and US trade sanctions of China's ethnic genocide on Uighur Muslims. It should be noted that this essay was written in April of 2021, therefore figures and analysis are aptly understood within this time frame.

In a close analysis of the Trump administration's trade war with China, it is clear to see that the many costs outweigh the benefits within both nation-states and the wider political arena. In this essay, I will be discussing the political and economic effects of the US-China trade war. I will begin by briefly explaining the rise of China's dominating international presence, the resulting 'China shock', and the persistent anti-communist and anti-China US agenda – all of which contributed to the causes of the trade war. Thereafter, I shall discuss the significant economic cost of US tariffs on Chinese imports on the US economy in contrast to the modest economic damage inflicted upon China due to its strategically placed tariffs and subsidies. In explaining the benefits of the trade war, I discuss US workers in the unskilled import-competing sector who are advantaged by the Trump administration's protectionist policies, as well as smaller economies benefiting from trade diversion. However, as other scholars note, these benefits are predicted to be short term and affecting small populations. Finally, I will discuss the US sanctioning of China due to the ethnic genocide of Uighur Muslims in its Xinjiang province, examining the international benefit this generated. However, the Trump administration's lack of commitment to this stance coupled with China's resistance to changing its national policies suggests the limited reach of this perceived benefit.

China's rapid economic rise since the 1980s has shocked the global market, causing tensions between the established power of the US and the rising power of China. As Autor, Dorn, and Hanson (2016) contend, the 'China shock' was felt particularly by Western states. This is due to the significant

economic effects on local labour-market outcomes as a result of China's growing trading presence (Autor et al 2016, 211). The 'shock' can be largely attributed to China's history. Most notably, the Opium Wars (1839-1842), The Great Leap Forward (1958-1962), and the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) left China impoverished and politically fragile (Autor et al 2016, 234). Economic isolation under Chairman Mao Zendong placed China on the periphery of the global economic market. However, the appointment of Deng Xiaoping in 1978 saw major economic reform of decentralization and liberalization that kickstarted the most rapid accumulation of wealth in human history (Autor et al 2016, 234). Between 1998 and 2007, productivity in China's manufacturing sector grew at the rapid rate of 8% per year (Brandt et al 2012, 339). As a result, China's increase in productivity saw its share of world manufacturing exports grow from 2.3% in 1991 to 18.8% in 2013 (Autor et al 2016, 209). Meanwhile, since 1975 the US has observed a persistent trade deficit both overall and with most of its trading partners. As Shan (2019) contends, this trade deficit is a result of US domestic expenditures exceeding GDP for the past 20 years, resulting in negative net exports (Shan 2019, 104). The trade-market rise of China and fall of the US is coupled with the theoretical fate of Thucydides' trap, which predicts inevitable war when an emerging power threatens the position of an existing power. Therefore, the Trump administration's enactment of a trade war can be viewed as an effort to stifle China's rise (Moosa 2020, 49). As a result, China and the US have enacted several rounds of retaliating tariffs, costing an estimated $108 billion to the US GDP and 0.25% of China's real GDP (Oxford Economics 2021, 7; Ferraro & Leemput, 2019).

The economic costs of the trade war weigh heavily on the US compared to China, failing to meet the Trump administration's aims of reducing the US trade deficit. Instead of narrowing the trade gap, the imposed tariffs have seen a 12% widening of the US trade deficit in 2018, and a further 8% in 2019 (Liu & Woo 2018, 322; Shan 2019, 101). When the Trump administration first raised tariffs on Chinese imports in 2018, Chinese exports to the US increased by $34 billion while US exports to China decreased by $10 billion. Further, while China's exports to the US in 2019 reduced by a mere 4%, US exports to China shrank by 24% (Shan 2019, 100). The reason for the lack of reduction in US imports from China is because China has a high market-share in the production of many US imports, namely 'processed intermediate goods' (e.g., iPhones and consumer drones) that are technologically sophisticated with a low elasticity of substitution - meaning it is much harder to source similar priced items from other trading partners (Cigna et al 2020, 14). Consequently, China did not seek to lower its commodity prices and the US was forced to absorb it's imposed tariffs into higher prices for US consumers, resulting in a 'deadweight' economic loss (Nicita 2019, 13; Shan 2019, 102). Evidently, the trade war did not have its intended impact on China, in actuality enlarging losses of the US trade deficit. While the US method of imposing tariffs on all Chinese exports proved unproductive, China's strategic placement of tariffs and subsidies shielded Chinese consumers from the costs of the trade war. According to a study conducted by the Peterson Institute for International Economics; since the

beginning of 2018, China has raised the average tariff rate on US imports from 8% to 21.8% while lowering the average tariff rate on all its other trading partners from 8% to 6.7% (Shan 2019, 102). Further, China placed tariffs only on US imports that could be sourced at similar prices from other trading partners. When encountering US items that weren't easily interchanged, China actually lowered duties on such items (Shan 2019, 102). This means that China's import costs have fallen despite engaging in a trade war with the US. To more closely understand China's method, take for example the lobster market. In July 2018, China imposed a 25% tariff on US lobsters while cutting tariffs on Canadian lobsters by 3%. As a result, US lobster exports to China dropped more than 50% while Canadian lobster exports doubled (Walcott, 2020). In effect, Chinese consumers are paying less for lobsters caught in essentially the same waters (Shan 2019, 104). While US consumers and companies bear the brunt of the costs of tariffs; direct impacts on China's economy are modest, estimated at a mere 0.25% reduction of real GDP (Ferraro & Leemput, 2019).

While most groups lose out as a result of the US-China trade war, trade diversion has benefitted smaller regional economies as well as US workers in the import-competing sector. Increases in import tariffs shifted production focus from export sectors to import-competing sectors, of which suddenly faced less competition. This shift in export demand and competition has resulted in an estimated 245,000 job losses in the US (Oxford Economics 2021, 4). The effects of job losses and decreased export demands has also led to a depression of consumption and innovation in the US economy (Lechthaler & Mileva 2018, 24). As Autor et al. contend; in response to a trade shock, lower-wage employees experience larger proportional reductions in annual and lifetime earnings in comparison to their higher-wage coworkers (2016, 235). While this is true among most sectors, Lechthaler and Mileva (2018) explain that US workers in unskilled import-competing industries benefited from Trump's protectionist policies. Import tariffs boosted consumption, competition, and demand in the unskilled import-competing sector, increasing unskilled workers' political support for protectionism (Colatone & Stanig 2017; Lechthaler & Mileva 2018, 26). As Lechthaler and Mileva contend, workers in the unskilled-intensive sector experienced meaningful gains in consumption in the short run, becoming clear benefactors in a trade war typically thought of as being bad business for all (2018, 26).

Trade diversion as a result of tariffs has led the US and China to substitute import commodities from alternative ('third-party' countries) trading partners, leading to the growth of smaller economies. For example, Taiwan is estimated to be the largest beneficiary of the US trade diversion of electronic appliances, generating almost $4.2 billion in additional exports in the first half of 2019 (Nicita 2019, 11). Meanwhile, China's import substitution mainly regards agricultural products alternatively sourced from Chile, Argentina, and Brazil (Subbaraman et al 2019). While this provides a rise in export demands and competition for smaller economies, the overall effects to the international economy longer term predict stagnating growth, depressing innovation, and job loss (Nicita 2019, 13; Autor et al 2016, 228). Research

conducted by Cigna et al reveal that the 'third-party country' local economy benefits of trade diversion do not absorb the cost of the trade war (2020, 13). The rise of economic nationalism that fuels protectionist policies are seen to lower trade, inflate prices for consumers, and decline support for globalization. Evidently, some groups benefit from the US-China trade war. However, most of the labour force and international economy suffer losses that present too large of a cost to counterbalance.

Despite economic coercion the US achieved in pressuring China to change its trading practices, the same use of sanctions for human rights protection via China's ethnic genocide in the Xinjiang province has been less effective. China's attempt to assimilate the Uighur population of Xinjiang has been exposed by human rights activists as a breach of international law due to the systematic rape, torture, and "massive confinement" of Uighur Muslim people (Fallon, 2019). In launching a trade war, the US demanded not only that China reduce its trade barriers, but also change its national policies surrounding its Uighur Muslim minority (UN News 2021; Lukin 2019, 40). In an effort to sanction China's treatment of Uighur Muslims, the US also banned all cotton and tomato products exported out of the Xinjiang province out of concerns that these commodities are made with forced labour (Swanson 2021; Aljazeera, 2021). The US sanctioning approach to pressure China into changing its national policies represents a benefit to the international community. State actors in less powerful political and economic positions are encouraged to stand with the US approach rather than risk standing alone. As a result, Britain, Canada, and the EU imposed sanctions on Chinese government officials over the persecution of China's Uighur population (Bourke 2021, Leeuwen & Tillet 2021). However, China has consistently denied these human rights abuse claims and imposed retaliating sanctions on opposing states (Leeuwen & Tillet 2021). Another cost of the trade war which also concerns the Uighur population of Xinjiang is that the Trump administration held off on imposing further sanctions to China due to the concern that it would affect trade negotiations. The Trump administration prioritised securing China's reduction of trade barriers over advocating the human rights of the Uighur Muslim population - securing one aim at the expense of another (Reuters 2020). The lack of commitment to the US stance on China's treatment of its Uighur population is reflective of the US turning a blind eye to human rights abuses of important trading partners such as Saudi Arabia and North Korea (Crowley 2020). Instead, the US stance on China can be viewed as prominently motivated by an attempt to stifle China's economic rise towards the regional hegemon. The selective activism of the US reveals its primary motivation for the trade war: economic advantage. The US imposed sanctions on China's treatment of its Uighur minority positively influenced other state actors to act on China's human rights abuses. However, the US did not achieve its trade war aim of persuading changes to China's national policies and ultimately put aside it's human rights concerns in order to achieve trade negotiations that advantaged the US economy.

Ultimately, the costly effects of the US-China trade war outweigh the benefits, as global economic effects are largely negative and still unfolding. In this essay, I have discussed the costs and benefits of the US-China trade war in each state and within international politics. I have first outlined the financial costs of the trade war upon the economies of the US and China, illustrating the disproportionate impact on the US economy. Then, I discussed the benefits to smaller economies export markets as well as for US workers of the unskilled import-competing sector. Lastly, I examined the benefits of the US trade war stance on China's treatment of its Uighur population. I contend that the US provided an avenue for less powerful states to cooperatively act against China's human rights abuses. However, the Trump administration's dismissal of further sanctions in pursuit of a trade deal reveals a cost towards the prospective freedom of Uighur Muslims detained in Xinjiang. Consequently, the international political economy is constrained by US-China tensions as a cost-benefit analysis reveals the outweighed negative impact to global consumers and Xinjiang Uighur Muslims.

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AN INTERNATIONAL FEMINIST CRITIQUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

OLIVIA MAY BOGVE

Abstract

The founding principles of human rights relies upon their inherent universality and inalienable nature. Intersectional feminism as a central perspective in understanding international human rights has demonstrated the severe limitations to this supposed universalism. This essay will argue that the current international human rights framework is incompatible with the theories and efforts of intersectional feminism. Human rights foundations remain within hegemonically masculinised and westernised ideas and tenets that either ignore or marginally attempt to recognise the intersectional experiences of marginalisation from female identifying and non-binary people, and minority communities. Thus, only through a complete reconstruction of international human rights and their legal frameworks, can intersectional feminism be a central perspective in human rights discourse.

There have been consistent and concerted efforts within the United Nations to produce a model of human rights that incorporate a universal basis of protections and rights. Feminist theorists have argued such protections have considerable gaps in their extent of universalism and have attempted to assist by suggesting the usage of a feminist lens in formulating and improving international human rights law. However, even with feminist perspectives, contemporary human rights law lacks the ability to address the intersectional forms of oppression experienced by global citizens. This essay will argue that the current international human rights framework is incompatible with intersectional feminism. Only with an overhaul of the international human rights structure can an intersectional feminist perspective truly be integrated into a globalised system of protection that provides for women and enbies (non-binary identifying people). Utilising the theories posited by Charlesworth, Chinkin and Wright (1991 & 1995), this essay will establish the lack of universality present in human rights law and their inability to assist female identifying people of diverse experiences and backgrounds. Additionally, the theories of Qreshi (2012), will illustrate how human rights mainly deal with circumstances that involve the public sphere, with states as their primary subjects, excluding women and enbies from discussions of human rights. Lastly, as Kouvo (2008) has analysed, even with greater recognition of the protections and freedoms that are required for women and enbies of diverse lived experiences and backgrounds, human rights remain unsubstantial in their effect. For the purposes of this essay, intersectionality is defined as forms of discrimination and disadvantage that work with each other, rather than as seperate and distinct forms of marginalisation (Crenshaw 1991, p. 1244). As such, an intersectional feminist perspective would entail a recognition of gender discrimination that works with other forms of marginalisation. This

understanding of intersectional feminism, is argued to not be is not compatible with the current system of human rights.

The fallacy that international human rights law is universal, objective and rational has enabled the continued dominance of a westernised, patriarchal construction of rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights [UNHDR] relies on the predication that it is in and of itself universal and the rights it outlines are afforded to all, regardless of "race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status" (1948, p. 6). According to Charlesworth, Chinkin and Wright, the structural basis of international laws and the institutions that create them, come into direct opposition to the assumption of the touted universality of the United Nations and legal frameworks, such as the UNHDR (1991, p. 622). In their analysis of international law, especially pertaining to human rights, there is the consistent westernised notion that legal systems and the law operate in an abstract neutrality (Charlesworth, Chinkin and Wright 1991, p.615). This gives rise to the belief that working within the confines of the law allows for an ahistorical, neutral, and universal process and applicability, whereas reality indicates its deeply westernised ontology (Charlesworth, Chinkin and Wright 1991, p. 643). Paired with the prolific, patriarchal leadership structures of international law institutions that self-reproduce through the exclusion and maintained obstacles for women and enbies from positions of power (Charlesworth, Chinkin and Wright 1991, p.622), the argument for universality is weak, if even plausible. The positionality of women and enbies within this overshadowing power structure instantly reduces their voice and presence in the construction of laws, rights and protections pertaining to them and how they are viewed as human beings in opposition to their male counterparts. Only through an intersectional feminist response can the gaps formed in human rights laws begin to be recognised and addressed.

Furthermore, anyone that experiences intersectional marginalisation is further left without actual representation in international constructions of human rights law (Charlesworth, Chinkin and Wright 1991, p. 625). The recognition of oppressed or discriminated individuals existence is supplanted by a primary focus on who represents the universal human. This prioritisation is in the form of a hegemonic masculine source, ostracising the female or non-binary and intersectional, marginalised other. Charlesworth, Chinkin and Wright (1991, p. 625) extend their argument to focus on the male lived experience and required rights and protections as the universal norm results in female issues and concerns as specialised . These compartmentalised issues, such as sexual discrimination, domestic violence and sexual degradation are reduced to a comparison to the main human rights held within all-encompassing legal doctrines such as the UNHDR and the covenants held in the International Bill of Rights (1948). The dichotomy formed between the masculine and the 'other' catalyses difficulties in adopting intersectional feminist protections and rights for individuals (Charlesworth 1995, p. 104). As groups of specialised needs and concerns are compartmentalised, their ability to converse becomes

limited. As such, the universality of human rights fails to cover feminist intersectionality, or the oppression felt by marginalised groups (Charlesworth 1995, p. 110). Consequently, a reconstruction of international human rights and the institutions that formulate them is necessary for the incorporation of intersectional feminism.

Conversely, D'Amato (1995, p. 843) argues that the separation of laws relating to human rights for all and specifically for women is sometimes the only protection that women are afforded in the face of force or violence. Such critic is useful as it constrains the hypothetical aspect of what reconstructing human rights from a feminist perspective would entail and the risks that could be involved in removing the existing status quo (D'Amato 1995, p. 843). However, such rights for women remain inadequate in their current form due to the lack of intersectional feminist participation in their establishment and can lead to the greater detriment to their lived experiences. This is especially pertinent in the domestic sphere.

The current system of international human rights preferences rights that are related to the public sphere, with the state as the direct creators and participants (Charlesworth Chinkin and Wright 1991, p. 625). Globalisation has paved the way for international institutions and human rights frameworks, with the current world order, providing states the centrality of power (Charlesworth, Chinkin and Wright 2005, p. 28). This is instead of prioritizing individuals, and affording the necessary protections required for a feminist formulation of human rights. The effects of globalisation become significant when focusing on the artificial separation of the public (involving the relationship between the state and the individual) and the private spheres (separate from government regulation with the aim of maintaining personal privacy) that international human rights law interacts with (Charlesworth, Chinkin and Wright 1991, p. 625). Importantly, the lack of governmental intervention in the private sphere has allowed for the perpetuation of oppressive masculine hegemonic practices and hierarchies (Qureshi 2012, p. 3) as female identifying people and enbies remain without protections in the private sphere or the same freedoms as their male counterparts to participate in the public.

Intersectional feminism can be further broadened to acknowledge the structural positionality of women and marginalised communities extends beyond the power dynamics of global institutions. Their subversion is entrenched in everyday life, or the private sphere, and are once again self-reproducing (Qureshi 2002, p. 3). The main domestic discourse that human rights rely upon is the family as the central unit of legal basis, where primarily masculine bodies are legitimised as dominant authority figures (Tesón 1993, p.658). As international law acts on statist terms and discourse, no further scrutiny, or a limited version of scrutiny, is provided to private rights violations, and both mediums remain complicit (Tesón 1993, p.658). The hegemonic and masculine basis of international institutions and their discourse of human rights does not allow an inclusion of an ontological or epistemological feminist construction.

Charlesworth, Chinkin and Wright are limited in their intersectional examination of international human rights. Qureshi has been able to recognise that whilst women overall were disadvantaged by the preference for human rights discourse in the public sphere, female-identifying and non-binary people in marginalised communities or non-western states are more adversely affected (Qureshi 2002, p. 3). The degree of control of the private sphere within minority communities can be beyond the immediate family (Qureshi 2002, p. 3). In many cases it can spread to extended families and even entire communities as they self-regulate rather than relying on government rule (Qureshi 2002, p. 3). The stifling affect upon members of these communities demonstrates the necessity for an intersectional feminist approach to human rights to address the lack of protections afforded to women, enbies and intersectional marginalised communities.

However, in contention with the view that domestic and international institutions and frameworks of human rights are inherently oppressive, Tesón (1993, p. 668) argues such understandings are contrived, and removes the agency of women. From this viewpoint, women are only able to come to an opinion of their positionality in relation to their oppression, and solutions can only be formulated in relation to this oppression (Tesón 1993, p. 668). However, the purpose of reinventing the formulation of human rights involves the direct inclusion of the voice of women and enbies and their intersectional experiences of marginalisation . The shift in focus towards their needs and wants and away from the current structural imbalance would provide a discourse separate to their relationship with the oppressor (Engle 1992, p. 586). However, this mode of discourse needs to be a central consideration, not as an afterthought.

The current construction of human rights has allowed for a gender-inclusive response for protections and rights, yet has also established a marginalising effect on women and cemented dichotomies for non-binary people. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women ([CEDAW] 1979), has been instrumental in establishing a medium that directly deals with the rights of women on an international level. However, its limitations lie in the fact that it deals exclusively within the existing priorities in a heteronormative "militarised economic globalisation," (Orford 2002, p. 283). Further, it has mainstreamed or watered down the critical evaluations presented by feminists of the Bill of Rights (1948). The creation of a separate branch that deals with human rights related to women has had a marginalising effect as they tend to be ignored with preference for other human rights outlined in the UNHDR as universal (Charlesworth 1995, p. 110). Kouvo (2008, p. 43) speaks further to the issue of feminist mainstreaming in human rights, stating that they are often quickly implemented without properly determining the way a certain culture or context may react. Despite an initial interest, they are then shortly dropped as a model to fixing a problem, as other concerns related to security or other political issues become a greater priority. The power that once supported feminist critics of human rights is significantly subdued, under the guise of inclusion in human rights law.

Extending this further, the separation of specialised rights for women only serves to further marginalise those of intersectional experiences of oppression, demonstrating the necessity for an intersectional feminist framework. Nowhere in CEDAW (1979), do the terms race, ethnicity or racial occur, as much as the terms gender, sex, or women in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination ([CERD] 1965). Instead, the rights for those experiencing intersectional forms of oppression are compartmentalised (Kouvo 2008, p. 41). Their voice is silenced, as they are not given a legitimate platform that represents them, elucidating the need for intersectional feminism as a central platform for actuating justice by people in their own discourse (Kouvo 2008, p.47).

Conversely, Engle (1991, p. 591) maintains the critique that any reformulation of human rights called for by intersectional feminists puts the onus on women, and unfairly on women of intersectional experiences of oppression . Rightly, they question the ability of women of intersectional experiences to collectively formulate human rights that are representative of all (Engle 1991, p. 591). They also point out the failure of feminist theorists to take into consideration future conflicts that would occur with differing interests (Engle 1991, p. 599). Engle argues that in questioning the core, we may break it down but then there would be nothing to replace it with; leaving the core standing (1991, p. 610).
In order to establish intersectional feminism in human rights, appropriate measures must be considered as to not overcorrect or become a quick and slapped together fix. Kouvo elucidates that, "if we recognise our power, dare to question our motives, and give priority to consultations with local counterparts … our impact can be positive" (2008, p. 40). An intersectional feminist construction of human rights requires consistent reflexion and continued collaboration with those it hopes to serve.

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