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**1 Introduction from the
Editors in Chief**

**COMPARATIVE
POLITICS**

**3 Feelings of Country
Inferiority**

Investigating a Novel Predictor of Negative Immigration Attitudes in the Nordic Countries

Oona Lagercrantz

**14 An Exploration of the
Electoral Systems of Hong
Kong**

Representation and Governance

Irvin Tsun-On Ng

**INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS**

**23 The End Of The Post-Cold
War?**

An Analysis of Russia's Invasion of Ukraine and its Insights into Epochal Change and Continuity

Ben Brent

32 Sino-Sudanese Relations

The Implication of China's 'Africa Strategy' on Conflict and Economic Decline in Sudan, 1989-2019

Razan Elshazali

**POLITICAL
PHILOSOPHY**

**42 Three Questions on Political
Representation**

Jack Yu-Jie Chou

**POLITICAL
SOCIOLOGY**

52 Pressured to 'Pass'

Performance, Surveillance, and Medicalisation Explored as a Trans Sociology

Dani Hidalgo-Anguera

**58 Capabilities, Capture and
Coercion**

Analysing the Political Economy of Kidnap-for-Ransom Offences by Pastoral 'Bandits' in Northwest Nigeria

Osaremen Iluobe

76 Closing the Indigenous Gap

What can a Symbiosis of Du Boisian Sociology and Indigenous History Offer?

Magnus Oakes

84 Beyond Anthropocentrism

Interrogating the Roles of Language, Power, and Ideas in Maintaining Animal Exploitation

Finn Sadler

**POLITICAL
STAKEHOLDERS**

93 Defending Democracy

Parties as the Agents of Resilience and Adaptation Against Delegitimisation

Jacob Hougie

**104 'How Much Can She (And
the Rest of Us) Take?'**

A Critical Analysis of the Role of the Print Media in Narrative Creation during the Truss Premiership

Katherine Macdonald Smith

Introduction from the Editors in Chief

As the Cambridge Journal of Political Affairs enters its seventh edition, it has begun to evolve in a more professional direction, while maintaining its core commitment to academic rigour. In the context of a rapidly changing political environment, the Journal remains an essential element of the undergraduate landscape at Cambridge. We have adhered faithfully to our pioneering system of utilising undergraduate editors to peer-review articles written by their fellow undergraduate students. We aim not only to cultivate agency among the next generation of academics, politicians, and citizens, but also to bring their fresh perspectives to the table. Collaborating more deeply with several faculties at Cambridge, as well as initiating a launch-event, are just some of the ways we have worked to permanently integrate the journal into the academic landscape. For the first time, we have also introduced a special section on Political Stakeholders, in order to seize on recent political and academic developments. It has been our absolute pleasure to produce this issue, touching on a wide variety of relevant issues that, we hope, will help us all understand what it means to be ‘political.’

Much like the previous issue, we received many submissions from undergraduates from all around the world. We are immensely honoured that the Journal has begun to receive more international attention, as well from students here at Cambridge. All of the authors, as well as everyone who expressed interest in submitting to the Journal, are absolutely the beating heart of the whole process. We whole-heartedly thank them for trusting us with their work and allowing this venture to continue for another issue.

Our board of Managing, Senior, and Junior editors have worked incredibly hard during a busy term to deliver valuable feedback to authors, as well as to ensure academic style and structure. We cannot express how grateful we are for all of the hard work they have put in to produce this issue.

Once again, Sai Hou Chong has been our Graphic Designer, making this the fourth issue that he has produced in our instantly recognisable style.

This issue will be the second that will be physically published, on a larger scale than Issue Six, and we hope that it will soon be more widely available for a greater audience as the Journal becomes more established.

The articles in this issue deal with a particularly broad range of topics which we hope will inspire readers to think about the ‘political’ more broadly. They are a testament to the great breadth, and depth, of thought amongst the undergraduate population.

Oona Lagercrantz starts off the Comparative Politics section with a fascinating analysis of attitudes towards immigrants in the Nordics, focusing on a YouGov poll conducted in 2016. She draws on the data to explore the link between a general feeling of pessimism and support for the radical right, and that this might best find its expression in attitudes towards immigration. Irvin Tsun-On Ng examines the Hong Kong electoral system to understand how binomial electoral systems operate in contrast to the PR system. Hong Kong provides a unique case-study for the author, where the former was implemented in preference to the latter. The article comes to some surprising conclusions about the representation that might be afforded by alternatives to PR.

The International Relations articles take different approaches to the discipline, showcasing the strengths and weaknesses of different interpretive models. Ben Brent shifts us towards

Europe, attempting to draw deeper conceptual lessons from Russia's recent invasion of Ukraine. Rather than seeing this as part of a new development in international relations, the author places them into the context of growing polarity on the international level, and a slow decline of US hegemony. The author sees the war as a useful tool to understand how power relations on the international stage operate and have evolved over time. Razan Elshazali then focuses in on Africa, through a comprehensive study of China's influence in Sudan. While the author does not contest some of the negative aspects of China's relationship with Sudan, they do question Western assumptions of China's role as an irresponsible actor. The article finds that China's diplomatic arsenal is far more subtle and nuanced than tropes around foreign development would have us believe.

Moving onto Political Philosophy, Jack Yu-Jie Chou pursues an in-depth analysis of political representation. The article works through the questions of what representation is, who does representation, and finally how representatives should act. The author sketches out a theory of representation which places heavy emphasis onto how the representative should act publicly, in order to ensure that the people, as 'crowd', are represented sufficiently without dominating political decision-making.

Political Sociology was the most popular category this year, and reflects the continuing broad interests of our authors. Dani Hidalgo-Anguera begins this section with a coherent investigation of 'passing' in the trans and gender diverse community. Utilising Judith Butler, among others, the author explains why passing is in fact a harmful ideal for the community, although its production is perhaps an inevitable result of a strict gender binary. Osaremen Iluobe follows with an illuminating exposé of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria. Countering the existing literature, the author examines the complex relationships between Nigerian state capacity and the development of pastoralists in the region, with far-ranging conclusions. Further on, Magnus Oakes takes on the mammoth task of extending Du Bois' theories of colonisation to the field of indigenous history. Racial capitalism and double consciousness have surprising merit in that latter field, and in fact indigenous history has much to offer Du Bois' theories themselves. Finally, Finn Sadler closes the section with a radical examination of how animal exploitation is maintained. Linguistic analysis is paired with social critique to explain how animals are characterised as irrational 'others', ripe for exploitation. The article thus centres on language as a crucial factor in maintaining anthropocentric norms, which entrench societal approaches towards animals.

This brings us on to the special section of this issue, Political Stakeholders. The way in which different institutions, organisations, and interests approach politics is a fundamental part of understanding how the discipline works in practice. Jacob Hougie begins this section with an analysis of the increased critique of the political party as a vehicle for democratic politics. Through theoretical and practical analysis, the author maintains that political parties should remain at the heart of the political process, arguing for their unique ability to manage conflict and adapt to changing circumstances. In the final article of our seventh issue, Katherine Macdonald Smith turns our attention to the media; specifically, how that institution perpetuated certain narratives of the recent Liz Truss premiership. The author contends that newspapers, especially tabloid, were a critical tool in creating a gendered image of incompetence that defined Truss' period in government. Considering a broad range of factors, the author demonstrates why the media remains a critical part of our discourse.

As usual, the Journal covers an impressive range of topics that should, at the very least, challenge our preconceptions of what it means for us to act, and to know, politically. We sincerely hope you enjoy this seventh issue of the Cambridge Journal of Political Affairs.

Evelyn Burr and Luka Murphy
Editors-in-Chief

Feelings of Country Inferiority: Investigating a Novel Predictor of Negative Immigration Attitudes in the Nordic Countries

Oona Lagercrantz

This article analyses the predictors of negative immigration attitudes in the Nordic countries, drawing on theoretical work on populist, radical-right parties. It uses quantitative methods to analyse data from over 4,500 people, collected by the YouGov-Cambridge Centre for Public Opinion Research in 2016. In a novel contribution to the literature, the article finds a statistically significant association between feelings of country *inferiority* and anti-immigration attitudes in Sweden, but no such relationship in the other Nordic countries. Based on these findings, the article suggests that the link between nationalism and societal pessimism—established in the literature on radical-right parties—needs to be taken into account in the literature on immigration attitudes. Moreover, the article suggests that the relatively high levels of immigration to Sweden in recent years might play a mediating role in the relationship between feelings of country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes, whilst acknowledging that more research is needed to draw substantial conclusions.

INTRODUCTION

There are unprecedented levels of migration in the world today and simultaneously widespread public discontent towards it, causing conflict and political contention (United Nations 2020). The Nordic countries—Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden—are no exception.¹ They have all had considerable immigration in recent decades, but Sweden stands out, due to its (now former) liberal asylum rules (Pettersen and Østby 2013). During the peak of the Migrant Crisis in 2015, Sweden received 1,600 asylum applications per 100,000 people, compared to Norway and Finland with 590 and Denmark with 390. By comparison, the EU average was 250 per 100,000, and the UK received only 60 per 100 000 (Connor 2016). Sweden processed over 200,000 asylum applications between 2015 and 2017, whilst Denmark, Norway, and Finland each processed around 30,000 (Eurostat 2023). Each of these countries also have prominent populist, radical right (PRR) parties who espouse nationalistic, anti-globalisation values and firmly oppose immigration (Ausserladscheider 2019; Nardelli and Arnett 2015).

In Sweden—the country which is the main focus of this article—immigration has been sharply criticised by the Sweden Democrats, a PRR party that received a fifth of the national vote in 2022. The Sweden Democrats present themselves as the party ‘*för alla som gillar Sverige*’ [for everyone who loves Sweden] (Sverigedemokraterna 2023). But they nevertheless portray Sweden in deeply pessimistic terms as a country characterised by shootings, terrorism, sexual violence and ‘hate crimes’ against Swedes (Sverigedemokraterna 2017). As the leader of the party Jimmie Åkesson claims, ‘*Massinvandringen har förstört vårt land*’ [Mass immigration has ruined our country] (Åkesson 2021). To legitimise this view, the Sweden Democrats often draw upon international rankings, comparing Sweden to other countries. For instance, they have pointed out that Sweden currently has the second highest number of deadly shootings per capita in Europe (Selin 2021; BRÅ 2021). Sticking to empirical truth is not always important, though; for example, in 2018 they falsely claimed that Sweden had the longest waiting times for healthcare in Europe (Kudo 2018). Overall, the Sweden Democrats frequently emphasise Sweden performing worse than other countries.

The aim of this article is to empirically investigate whether a variable it terms ‘feelings of country inferiority’ influences immigration attitudes in Sweden, and whether the effect of this variable differs between other Nordic countries. This variable is measured based on

¹ Iceland is also a Nordic country, but is not included in this analysis due to a lack of data.

individual responses to a question asking how people feel about their country, compared to other countries. In particular, the article examines whether there is a statistically significant relationship between feelings of country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes in Sweden and its neighbours, when controlling for established explanatory variables.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The statistical relationship between feelings towards one's country and immigration attitudes is an understudied area of research, as Jeong (2013) points out. There are, however, certain established concepts and empirical findings in the literature. A distinction is typically made between feelings of patriotism and nationalism. On this account, nationalism is defined as the feeling that one's country is superior to other countries and often involves an ethnic element. Patriotism, on the other hand, is understood as feelings of pride towards one's country, including its democratic institutions, but does not involve devaluing other countries. Notably for the purpose of this article, the literature to date has repeatedly shown that nationalism is related to negative immigration attitudes, whilst the effect of patriotism is not significant or linked to positive attitudes (De Figueiredo and Elkins 2003; Green et al 2011; Jeong 2013). For instance, in a study of the link between national feelings and immigration attitudes among American citizens, Jeong (2013) finds a significant positive association between levels of nationalism and anti-immigrant sentiments. In the study, nationalism is defined as the 'belief in the superiority of one's nation,' and the measurement of the nationalism variable includes the level of agreement to the statement: 'America is a better country than most others' (Jeong 2013, 1467).

A link between feeling that one's country is *worse* than other countries and negative immigration attitudes has not been studied. Indeed, based on earlier literature, such a link would appear both counterintuitive and implausible. However, the existing literature on country feelings and immigration attitudes struggles to explain why an anti-immigration party such as the Sweden Democrats would invoke feelings of country inferiority so strongly. The growing literature on supporters of populist radical right (PRR) parties is more useful for explaining this phenomenon and can be used to theorise a potential link between country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes. This literature suggests that nationalism and negative immigration attitudes are not incompatible with negative evaluations of one's own country. Indeed, there is considerable evidence showing that nationalistic PRR supporters feel dissatisfied with the current state of their countries, often due to immigration concerns (Inglehart and Norris 2016). For instance, Hochschild (2016) has shown that Tea Party voters in America feel they are 'strangers in their own land,' in part because of recent immigration, and are thus convinced by the slogan 'Make America Great *Again*'. This kind of negative evaluation of one's country is also expressed by the Sweden Democrat slogan: '*Sverige ska bli bra igen*' [Sweden shall become good again] (Sverigedemokraterna 2023). Relatedly, Steenvoorden and Hartevelde (2018) show that high levels of individual 'societal pessimism' is a significant predictor of PRR support in Europe. In their measure of societal pessimism, Steenvoorden and Hartevelde (2018, 35) include responses to the statement 'For most people in this country, life is getting worse.' Although lacking a comparative dimension, feelings of country inferiority have many similarities with societal pessimism. Hence, it is plausible that a relationship similar to that between societal pessimism and PRR support exists between country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes in Sweden.

Steenvoorden and Hartevelde's (2018) work is also useful for theorising how the strength of a potential relationship between feelings of country inferiority and immigration attitudes might vary between the Nordic countries. Steenvoorden and Hartevelde (2018, 44) find that societal pessimism has a larger predicting impact on PRR support in the Nordic countries than in other European countries and theorise that this may reflect the level of 'actual institutionalisation' of change in the Nordic countries. The example Steenvoorden and Hartevelde give is the higher degree of institutionalisation of gender equality in the Nordic countries than in other European countries. This more visible change, they suggest, can incite greater feelings of societal pessimism among people opposed to gender equality, who tend to vote for PRR parties.

Relatedly, Steenvoorden and Harteveld (2018, 44) suggest that the actual institutionalisation 'creates more space for political actors to mobilise on nostalgia against such developments.' This theory can be used to hypothesise differences between the Nordic countries in the predictive power of country inferiority on immigration attitudes. It suggests that countries with more visible immigration will have a stronger relationship between country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes, because people who dislike immigration become more pessimistic about their country as they witness immigration occurring. This hypothesis is also supported by studies showing that the larger the size of the immigrant group within a country, the more that immigrants will be perceived as a threat by natives (Quillian 1996). Hence, it is likely that the relationship between feelings of country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes will be stronger in Sweden than in the other Nordic countries, as the former has experienced greater immigration in recent years.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Two hypotheses, alluded to in the section above, are investigated in this article. Firstly, based on the literature demonstrating a link between societal pessimism and PRR support, it is hypothesised that:

H1a: There will be a significant positive association between feelings of country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes in Sweden, independent of other explanatory variables.

Secondly, based on theories on the effect of visible change in strengthening the association between societal pessimism and PRR support, and on the effect of the size of immigration on perceptions of threat, it is hypothesised that:

H2a: The association between feelings of country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes will be stronger in Sweden than in Denmark, Finland, and Norway, independent of other explanatory variables.

DATA AND RESEARCH DESIGN

The data used in this article is drawn from a survey on attitudes towards globalisation conducted in October 2016 by The YouGov-Cambridge Centre for Public Opinion Research. It surveyed over 20,000 people across 19 countries, including over 4,500 respondents in the Nordic countries: Sweden with 1,519 responses, Denmark with 1,013, Finland with 1,007 and Norway with 1,005 (Smith 2016). Data on Iceland was not collected in the survey, hence the term 'Nordic countries' used in this article refers only to Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden. The survey is suitable as it includes questions on immigration attitudes and feelings of country inferiority, as well as a variety of other variables considered key predictors of immigration attitudes in the literature. The data is also considered credible and with low risk of sampling bias, due to the expertise of the collaborating institutions orchestrating the survey.

The method of data analysis is binary logistic regressions, done separately for each of the Nordic countries. This method is suitable due to the dichotomous nature of the dependent variable and the individual-level data being studied, clustered across a small number of countries. Each of the four regression tables contains three models, the first including the variable of interest, and the latter adding demographic characteristics and social and economic beliefs as controls. The models present coefficients in the forms of odds ratios, standard errors, statistical significance at a <0.05 level and a goodness of fit for each model using Nagelkerke pseudo-*R*-squared. All values are rounded to three decimals.

The dependent variable of the study is individual attitudes towards immigration. This variable is constructed based on the survey question: Overall, do you think immigrants from other countries into (country) have a positive or negative effect on the country? As the article is interested in predicting negative attitudes, responses are recoded into a dichotomous variable, with 'Positive or neutral' = 0 and 'Negative' = 1. Measuring immigration attitudes in this

way—based on the perceived effect of immigration—is one of the most common methods in the literature on immigration attitudes and is therefore deemed suitable (Dražanová et al 2022).

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The variable of interest concerns feelings towards one’s country and is labelled ‘country-feeling’. The survey used is useful in constructing this variable, as it contains the question *Which ONE of the following best describes the way you feel about (country)?*, with the response categories including feelings that one’s country is ‘the best in the world,’ ‘better than most other countries,’ ‘as good as most other countries,’ ‘not as good as most other countries’ and ‘the worst country in the world.’ These categories are recoded into three categories, to measure feelings of country inferiority: ‘Worst in the world,’ ‘Worse than most,’ and the reference category ‘As good as most or better.’ This coding allows for an examination of whether the degree of country inferiority impacts its predictive power. A problem with the category ‘Worse than most,’ however, is that very few people expressed these feelings: in the Norway sample only five people, in Finland six and in Denmark only two. Only Sweden had more responses, at twenty-eight. Caution in the interpretation of this category is therefore important. Moreover, some caution is also necessary with interpretations of the ‘Worse than most’ category, with only seventeen responses in Norway, forty in Denmark, seventy-two in Finland and one hundred and forty-five in Sweden.

The regressions models include control variables, to avoid omitted variable bias and allow for a more precise understanding of the relationship between country inferiority and immigration attitudes. In models 2 and 3, the demographic characteristics gender, income, employment, age, and education are added. Male gender, low income, unemployment, older age, and lack of university education have all been associated with negative immigration attitudes and are therefore included (Markaki and Longhi 2013; Dražanová et al 2022). When preparing the data for analysis, variables for each country are coded in the same way. Age is treated as continuous, measured in years. Gender and education are coded as dummy variables, measuring male/female and whether a person attended university. However, the income variable in the Norway data was constructed differently from the other countries, with only three income brackets compared to the other countries with eleven brackets each. As a result, the Norway income variable is made into a dummy variable with ‘Less than NOK 300,000’ as the reference category, whereas income is treated as continuous in the other countries. The employment variable was also constructed differently in Norway. It lacked the categories ‘Unemployed,’ ‘Retired’ and ‘At home’ included in the other datasets, combining them all in the blanket category ‘Not employed.’ ‘Retired’ and ‘At home’ are combined into the category ‘Not employed’ in Denmark, Finland, and Sweden, but this category is crucially different from that in Norway because it does not include unemployed people. Hence, ‘Not employed’ is used as the reference category in Norway (including unemployed people) whereas the other countries have the reference category ‘Unemployed.’ Another issue with the employment variable across all countries is that it combines unskilled and skilled workers in one category, thereby not allowing for different attitudes towards immigration between the two: differences that have been recorded in the literature (Markaki and Longhi 2013).

Studies have also shown that social and economic beliefs can predict immigration attitudes, and these are therefore added as controls in model 3. The model includes variables on beliefs about foreign direct investment (FDI), the effects of globalisation, protectionism, and the importance of shared culture, which have all been linked to immigration attitudes (O’Rourke and Sinnott 2006; Karakas, Kim and Mitra 2021). The variables ‘FDI’ and ‘Trade’ are dummy variables, measuring whether a person thinks FDI is acceptable or unacceptable and if countries should meet their own needs or if it is fine that they rely on imports, respectively.

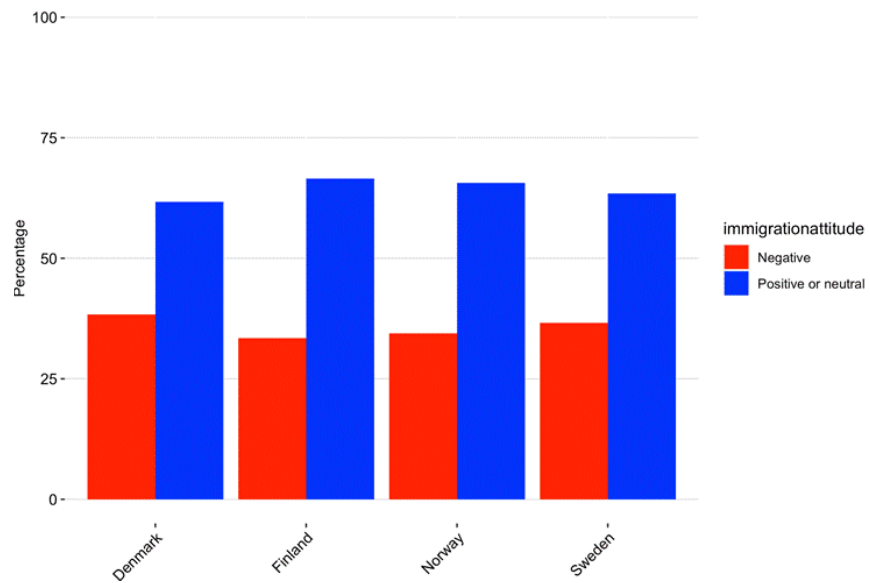


Figure 1 | Attitudes towards immigration by country.

The variables ‘Inequality’ and ‘Shared culture’ are based on the Likert scale, and treated as continuous, with 5 recoded as representing strongly agree and 1 as strongly disagree in all countries. ‘Inequality’ measures levels of agreement that globalisation has mainly benefitted the wealthy and ‘Shared culture’ measures levels of agreement that having a shared culture makes a country stronger. Finally, across all variables in all the countries, ‘Don’t know’ and missing responses are coded as non-applicable.

ASSUMPTIONS

The data is checked for the assumptions of binary logistic regression analysis. Firstly, it is confirmed that the dependent variable is binary. Logistic regressions also assume a linear relationship between continuous predictors and the log odds of the dependent variable. This is checked in R, using `ggplot2`, for all continuous variables: income, age, shared culture, and inequality were checked for each country. The line of best appeared linear in all cases, confirming the assumption of linearity. Furthermore, as the data does not include higher-level units such as region and the only meaningful clustering—country—is taken into account by analysing each country separately, it fulfils the independence assumption. Finally, all explanatory variables are tested for multicollinearity and show a VIF less than 5, meaning multicollinearity is judged not to be an issue.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Figures 1 and **2** show the distribution of the dependent variable and the variable of interest in each of the Nordic countries. The Swedish sample has similar levels of negative immigration attitudes to the other Nordic country samples but a noticeably larger proportion who express feelings of country inferiority. Moreover, only small sections within each country sample express feelings of country inferiority, compared to the proportions who express negative immigration attitudes.

To examine whether feelings of country inferiority and immigration attitudes are related in Sweden and if this relationship differs from other Nordic countries, the variables are cross tabulated in **Table 1**. **Table 1** shows that among those who express feelings of country inferiority in Sweden, large majorities have negative immigration attitudes. For instance, 68.1% of those who think Sweden is worse than most countries express negative attitudes to immigration; a proportion that rises to 78.6% among Swedish respondents who expressed that Sweden is the worst country in the world. Similar relationships between feelings of country inferiority

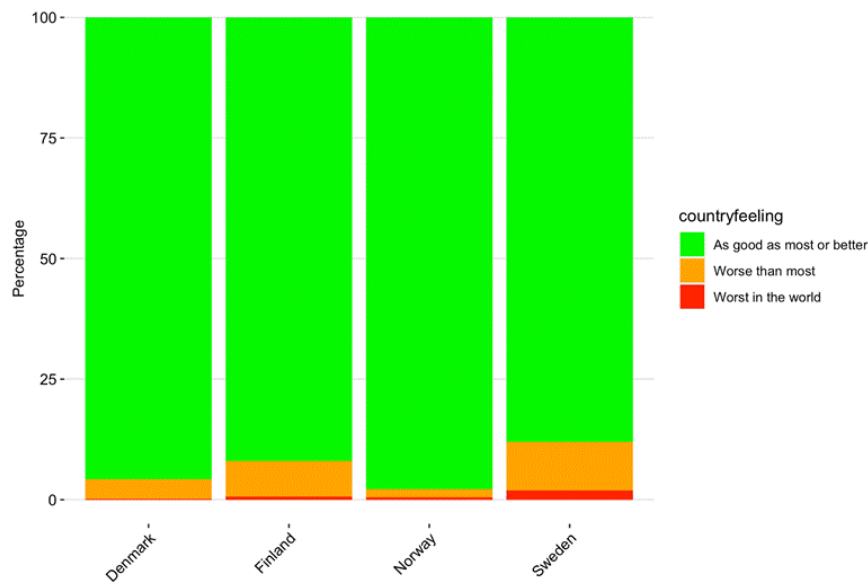


Figure 2 | Feelings of country inferiority by country.

and anti-immigration attitudes also hold true in Norway, but not in Denmark or Finland. Nonetheless, **Table 1** does not say anything about the statistical significance of these relationships—in other words, if they can be reliably generalised to a larger population—or if they arose due to other explanatory factors. For these purposes, inferential statistics are necessary.

INFERENCE STATISTICS

Beginning with the main country of interest, **Table 2** shows that the variables measuring feelings of country inferiority are positive and highly statistically significant, at a <0.001 level, across all three models in Sweden. Stronger feelings of country inferiority also have a stronger positive effect. Notably, model (3) in **Table 2** shows that the odds of having negative attitudes towards immigration are approximately 3.5 times higher if a person feels that Sweden is worse than most countries and 8.5 times higher if they feel that Sweden is the worst country in the world—compared to people who think Sweden is as good as most countries or better—controlling for demographic characteristics and social and economic beliefs. Overall, the relationship between feelings of country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes is highly significant, positive and cannot be accounted for by the explanatory variables, thus strongly confirming **H1a**.

To assess **H2a**, the regression on the Swedish data is compared with the other Nordic countries in **Tables 3, 4, and 5**. Crucially, these all show that the variable feelings of country inferiority do not gain statistical significance when controls are added in any of these countries. The category ‘Worse than most’ is significant and positive in model (1) in both Finland and Norway, at a <0.05 level and 0.01 level, respectively, but not in Denmark. In Finland, this feeling is associated with 84.5% higher odds of holding negative immigration attitudes and in Norway this rises to 5(4.769) times higher odds. But these relationships can be accounted for by demographic factors and social and economic beliefs and their significance therefore disappears in models 2 and 3. However, it should be emphasised that the lack of data on feelings of country inferiority makes it difficult to draw conclusions. With regards to the ‘Worst in the world’ category in Denmark and Norway, the standard errors in models (2) and (3) are non-existent or extremely high, respectively, reflecting the lack of responses. Overall, though, the lack of significance of any of the country inferiority variables when controlling for other factors in **Tables 3, 4 and 5** makes it clear that the relationship between country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes is stronger in Sweden than in the other Nordic countries. Accordingly, **H2a** is supported.

	Positive or neutral	Negative
Sweden: worse than most	31.9	68.1
Sweden: worst in the world	21.4	78.6
Norway: worse than most	29.4	70.6
Norway: worst in the world	40.0	60.0
Denmark: worse than most	51.4	48.6
Denmark: worst in the world	50.0	50.0
Finland: worse than most	53.6	46.4
Finland: worst in the world	40.0	60.0

Table 1 | Relationship between country inferiority and immigration attitudes

There are many other notable findings in the data, although not directly related to the hypothesis. For instance, Sweden stands out because income is significantly positively correlated with negative immigration attitudes, controlling for other variables. Sweden is also the only country where the variables ‘Trade’ and ‘Inequality’ are significant, at a <0.05 and <0.001 level, respectively. Furthermore, controlling for other variables, being male is a significant predictor of negative immigration attitudes in Sweden and Denmark, at a <0.001 level of confidence, but not significant in Finland or Norway. Denmark also stands out as the only country where age is significantly associated with negative immigration attitudes. Several types of employment categories are also statistically significant in both Denmark and Norway, but direct comparison between them is difficult as the variables are coded differently based on the survey design. In terms of similarities, the variables ‘FDI’ and ‘Shared culture’ are highly significant and positive in all countries. University education is highly significant in model 2 across all countries, but this significance disappears in all countries when social and economic beliefs are taken into account in model 3. Finally, model 3 for each country accounts for between a low 21.3% of the variation in the dependent variable, in Norway, to a high 32.7% in Finland. Whilst not negligible, this suggests that there is nevertheless considerable variation left unexplained by the models.

DISCUSSION

The findings in this article add to research on the predictors of negative immigration attitudes in the Nordic countries. Indeed, many of the differences noted above are particularly interesting and merit further studies. For instance, one such further research question is why gender is a highly significant predictor of anti-immigration attitudes in Sweden and Denmark, but not in Finland or Norway. Nonetheless, the discussion below is concerned with the findings related to the specific hypotheses of the article.

The confirmation of **H1a**—the demonstration that feelings of country inferiority are significantly associated with negative immigration attitudes in Sweden—presents an original contribution to the literature on immigration attitudes. A similar relationship has not been directly theorised or demonstrated before. Nonetheless, the finding is consistent with the literature on PRR supporters, a group typically opposed to immigration, who often harbour feelings of unease and dissatisfaction with the state of their countries (Steenvoorden and Harteveld 2018). Indeed, the finding can add to this literature by showing that pessimism among people opposed to immigration can involve a comparative element, involving the feeling that one’s country is worse than other countries.

The confirmation of **H1a** also presents a challenge to the earlier literature on the relationship between national feelings and immigration attitudes. It disputes the established finding within this literature that nationalism—defined as feelings of country *superiority*—is

Explanatory variables	Sweden: Immigration attitude		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Country feelings			
Country: Worse than most	4.717*** (0.191)	5.266*** (0.220)	3.473*** (0.259)
Country: Worst in the world	8.107*** (0.465)	7.096*** (0.571)	8.650*** (0.696)
Demographic characteristics			
Gender: Male		1.881*** (0.138)	1.933*** (0.173)
Income		1.016 (0.028)	1.084* (0.035)
Employment: Not employed		0.907 (0.403)	0.640 (0.496)
Employment: Student / apprentice / trainee		0.434 (0.454)	0.462 (0.558)
Employment: Office worker		0.758 (0.391)	0.487 (0.482)
Employment: Skilled / unskilled worker		0.893 (0.383)	0.537 (0.478)
Employment: Self-employed or Other		1.317 (0.418)	0.773 (0.519)
Age		0.991 (0.006)	0.999 (0.007)
Education: University		0.575*** (0.144)	0.744 (0.170)
Social and economic beliefs			
FDI: Unacceptable			2.005*** (0.195)
Inequality			1.335*** (0.067)
Trade: Open			0.692* (0.177)
Shared culture			1.298*** (0.062)
Constant	0.452*** (0.063)	0.637 (0.438)	0.060*** (0.655)
Observations(n)	1,341	1,116	852
Nagelkerke pseudo R ²	0.092	0.161	0.258

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table 2 | Logistic Regression, Sweden

Explanatory variables	Denmark: Immigration attitude		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Country feelings			
Country: Worse than most	1.536 (0.336)	1.880 (0.405)	1.456 (0.544)
Country: Worst in the world	1.622 (1.416)	0.00000 (535.411)	0.00000 (535.411)
Demographic characteristics			
Gender: Male		1.391* (0.158)	1.519* (0.211)
Income		0.992 (0.034)	0.983 (0.043)
Employment: Not employed		0.694 (0.367)	0.336* (0.477)
Employment: Student / apprentice / trainee		0.589 (0.387)	0.456 (0.512)
Employment: Office worker		0.635 (0.348)	0.487 (0.448)
Employment: Skilled / unskilled worker		0.813 (0.372)	0.617 (0.485)
Employment: Self-employed or Other		0.244** (0.504)	0.148** (0.603)
Age		1.019* (0.008)	1.020* (0.010)
Education: University		0.602** (0.168)	0.689 (0.212)
Social and economic beliefs			
FDI: Unacceptable			2.388*** (0.230)
Inequality			1.010 (0.099)
Trade: Open			0.941 (0.304)
Shared culture			2.064*** (0.112)
Constant	0.617*** (0.069)	0.421 (0.448)	0.025*** (0.823)
Observations(n)	933	760	560
Nagelkerke pseudo R ²	0.003	0.082	0.236

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table 3 | Logistic Regression, Denmark

necessarily related to negative immigration attitudes (De Figueiredo and Elkins 2003; Green et al 2011; Jeong 2013). However, the confirmation of H1a merely challenges the claim that nationalism defined in this way is always related to negative immigration attitudes. For one, the lack of significance of the country inferiority variables in Denmark, Finland and Norway means that a link between nationalism—defined as feelings of country superiority—and anti-immigration attitudes in these countries is not implausible, although conclusions cannot be drawn from this study. More importantly, the finding that feelings of country inferiority predict negative immigration attitudes in Sweden does not mean that nationalism is not at play. Rather, it suggests that a more nuanced understanding of the intersections of nationalism, pessimism and country inferiority is warranted. Instead of assuming that nationalism is inherently associated with positive feelings towards one’s country, it would be useful for future studies to take into account the negative emotive aspects of nationalism, including feelings that one’s country has been damaged or betrayed. For example, it is plausible that a Sweden Democrat voter could believe that Swedish people and traditions are superior and therefore oppose immigration, yet simultaneously feel that Sweden is inferior to other countries due to the level of recent immigration to Sweden.

The confirmation of H2a—the finding that country inferiority is not significant in Denmark, Finland, and Norway—is an equally important result. It shows that feelings of country inferiority only predict negative immigration attitudes in certain contexts, and relatedly, that there may be particular characteristics or trends in Sweden that explain why the relationship exists there. A plausible explanation might be the fact that Sweden has witnessed more visible immigration changes in recent years than the other Nordic countries. As Steenvoorden and Hartevelde (2018) suggest, this visible change likely makes it easier for PRR parties such as the Sweden Democrats to spread the narrative that immigration has effectively ‘ruined’ the country. If this explanation is correct, there is a case of reverse causality between the dependent variable and the variable of interest in the study—in other

Explanatory variables	Finland: Immigration attitude		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Country feelings			
Country: Worse than most	1.845* (0.253)	1.629 (0.284)	1.553 (0.358)
Country: Worst in the world	3.288 (0.916)	2.178 (1.047)	3.193 (1.338)
Demographic characteristics			
Gender: Male		1.186 (0.166)	0.984 (0.211)
Income		0.998 (0.047)	0.973 (0.057)
Employment: Not employed		0.923 (0.296)	1.019 (0.389)
Employment: Student / apprentice / trainee		0.393* (0.431)	0.612 (0.563)
Employment: Office worker		0.482* (0.359)	0.471 (0.449)
Employment: Skilled / unskilled worker		1.141 (0.287)	1.367 (0.382)
Employment: Self-employed or Other		0.955 (0.408)	1.802 (0.515)
Age		0.988 (0.007)	0.985 (0.009)
Education: University		0.454*** (0.227)	0.592 (0.275)
Social and economic beliefs			
FDI: Unacceptable			1.773** (0.217)
Inequality			1.117 (0.100)
Trade: Open			0.885 (0.232)
Shared culture			2.487*** (0.121)
Constant	0.469*** (0.075)	1.058 (0.394)	0.021*** (0.727)
Observations(n)	898	746	609
Nagelkerke pseudo R ²	0.011	0.091	0.327

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table 4 | Logistic Regression, Finland

Explanatory variables	Norway: Immigration attitude		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Country feelings			
Country: Worse than most	4.768** (0.537)	2.856 (0.628)	1.612 (0.668)
Country: Worst in the world	2.988 (0.916)	3,541,237.000 (484.922)	3,420,777.000 (473.301)
Demographic characteristics			
Gender: Male		1.151 (0.166)	1.413 (0.209)
Income(NOK): 300.000 – 699.999		1.337 (0.283)	1.205 (0.351)
Income(NOK): 700.000 or more		1.460 (0.296)	1.648 (0.371)
Employment: Student / apprentice / trainee		0.139** (0.671)	0.151* (0.843)
Employment: Office worker		0.501** (0.249)	0.476* (0.307)
Employment: Skilled / unskilled worker		0.730 (0.247)	0.745 (0.307)
Employment: Self-employed or Other		0.800 (0.299)	0.911 (0.356)
Age		1.001 (0.007)	0.999 (0.009)
Education: University		0.573** (0.171)	0.806 (0.214)
Social and economic beliefs			
FDI: Unacceptable			2.497*** (0.227)
Inequality			1.118 (0.096)
Trade: Open			0.975 (0.223)
Shared culture			1.481*** (0.092)
Constant	0.503*** (0.071)	0.667 (0.440)	0.049*** (0.780)
Observations(n)	921	722	528
Nagelkerke pseudo R ²	0.016	0.097	0.213

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table 5 | Logistic Regression, Norway

words, feelings of country inferiority are caused by people holding negative attitudes towards immigrants—with the necessary condition for the relationship to hold being high levels of visible immigration to a country. In other words, immigration levels might be playing an intermediary role in the relationship observed in the Sweden dataset.

Future research could usefully explore these findings in more depth and investigate potential causal mechanisms. For instance, to statistically test whether the size of recent immigration impacts the relationship between country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes, multilevel regression models would be suitable. With a larger sample of countries, research could test whether group-level characteristics, such as immigration size, impact the relationship between country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes. Drawing on longitudinal surveys conducted before and after a period of significant immigration to an area would also be useful. Furthermore, alternative hypotheses explaining the relationship between feelings of country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes could be explored. For instance, perhaps it is not the level of immigration as such that matters, but rather the framing of immigration within a country. Regardless of the actual number of immigrants within a country, the idea that immigrants have ruined the country—for instance, through terrorism, stealing resources, corrupting morals and so on—can be more or less widespread. To test this theory, one could examine the particular narratives surrounding immigration in different countries, whilst controlling for the size of immigration.

Another potential explanation for the findings is that people who feel that their country is worse than other countries are more likely to be negative towards any political decisions in their countries. Hence, people who dislike Sweden are more likely to dislike its policies which allow for relatively high levels of immigration, whereas in countries with more restrictive immigration policies such as Denmark, Finland and Norway, people who dislike their country are less likely to also dislike immigration. To assess this hypothesis, it would be necessary to include controls on people’s views about their country’s political decisions.

Moreover, this explanation is linked to another possibility, namely that the relationship between country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes reflects a group of highly pessimistic people who share these views. Individuals with high levels of pessimism might pick the most negative response to any question, expressing both country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes. Personal pessimism may thus work as a confounding factor, causing a false association between country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes to arise. However, the fact that only Sweden has a significant association between country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes works against this explanation, as it is unlikely that Sweden has particularly pessimistic people. Nevertheless, controlling for personal pessimism in the study would have increased the reliability of the results and reduced the risk of omitted variable bias. Indeed, in measuring the link between societal pessimism and PRR support, Steenvoorden and Hartevelde (2018) make sure to include controls on life satisfaction to stop personal pessimism from influencing the results.

The article has some limitations. A limitation related to the data is that the respondents may not have answered truthfully, as immigration views are a highly sensitive topic. Data on relevant control variables such as personal pessimism and views on domestic politics were also not included in the survey but would have made the results more reliable. Neither were measures of a person's ethnicity, potential immigration background, or data on frequency of interactions with immigrants, all of which would have been useful to add as controls. Furthermore, the small number of people overall who expressed feelings of country inferiority in the Nordic countries made the statistical inferences less reliable than would have been ideal. Finally, it could be argued that this small sample size is in itself reflective of the relative insignificance of the issue of feelings of country inferiority as a phenomenon. But the fact that these feelings are expressed by a minority does not mean that they cannot have a political impact, or that they are not expressed by influential politicians. Moreover, feelings of country inferiority are more widespread in other countries, with for example 21% of people expressing these feelings in France and 37% of respondents in Vietnam, which points to the broader significance of studying feelings of country inferiority (Smith 2016).

CONCLUSION

This article has furthered research on the predictors of negative immigration attitudes in the Nordic countries, analysing survey data of over 4,500 people. In a novel contribution to the literature, the article theorised and tested a relationship between feelings of country *inferiority* and negative attitudes towards immigration, drawing on research on populist radical-right supporters and societal pessimism. Through binary logistic regressions it was shown that feelings of country inferiority are significantly positively associated with negative immigration attitudes in Sweden, independent of other explanatory variables. This finding challenged the established relationship between nationalism—measured as feelings of country *superiority*—and negative immigration attitudes in existing literature. Relatedly, the article emphasised the importance of a more nuanced understanding of nationalism, including its intersections with feelings of pessimism and inferiority. However, a significant relationship between feelings of country inferiority and negative immigration attitudes was not found in Denmark, Finland, or Norway when controlling for other explanatory variables. This suggests that conditions found in Sweden, but not in the other Nordic countries, can explain this relationship. It was proposed, among other potential explanations, that the level of immigration to Sweden might play a mediating role. Finally, areas for further research were suggested.

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An Exploration of the Electoral Systems of Hong Kong: Representation and Governance

Irvin Tsun-On Ng

While there is extensive academic literature on the two most commonly used electoral systems—the single-member district (SMD) and the proportional representation system (PR system)—less research has been done on comparing the binomial electoral system and the PR system. This paper seeks to fill the gap in academic literature by exploring whether the binomial system is inferior to the PR system in terms of representation, and whether the binomial system is prone to producing less political parties in the legislature as compared to the PR system. This research paper will study the natural experiment of Hong Kong, where the list-PR system was abolished by Beijing in 2021 and was replaced with a binomial electoral system. Contrary to the general understanding of the academic literature, the study finds that a binomial system does not produce a less representative electoral outcome, nor does it produce a less fragmented parliament.

INTRODUCTION

While there is extensive academic literature on the two most commonly used electoral systems—the single-member district (SMD) and the proportional representation system (PR system)—there is very little study on comparing the binomial electoral system and the PR system. The lack of study on the binomial electoral system is partly because it is not as commonly adopted as SMD and PR so there are limited cases for scholarly investigation. However, the binomial electoral system—in which there are two constituencies per electoral district—can be regarded as the middle ground between SMD and PR because its district magnitude is higher than SMD but lower than most of the cases under the PR system. As such, this research seeks to fill the gap in academic literature by answering two important questions about the binomial electoral system. Firstly, is the binomial system inferior to the PR system in terms of representation? Secondly, is the binomial system prone to producing less political parties in the legislature as compared to the PR system?

To answer these two questions, this paper will adopt an observational study of the natural experiment of Hong Kong. Since the transfer of the sovereignty of Hong Kong from the UK to China in 1997, Hong Kong had long run its election for the directly-elected constituencies of the Legislative Council (LegCo) under a list-PR system. This list-PR system was abolished by Beijing in 2021 and was replaced with a binomial electoral system for all the directly-elected constituencies. This paper will compare how the two electoral systems have shaped the representation of pro-Beijing citizens in Hong Kong and how they have shaped the fragmentation of the legislature. The reason that this study will only focus on pro-Beijing legislative councillors is that there have been evident political crackdowns on pro-democracy politicians since 2020. Therefore, focusing only on the pro-Beijing group can eliminate the unwanted impacts of Beijing's suppression of dissent to the natural experiment. In other words, this paper will only focus on the competition *within* the pro-Beijing camp as opposed to the competition between the pro-Beijing camp and the pro-democracy camp. As the support rate of the pro-Beijing camp is relatively static and its supporters have always constituted around 40% of the wider society, this natural experiment is expected to accurately capture the impacts of the change in the electoral system (Kaeding 2017, 161).

Contrary to the understandings of the academic literature, this research finds that the binomial system does not produce a less representative electoral outcome as compared with the list-PR system. Nor is it more conducive to governance by producing a less fragmented LegCo. The rest of this research paper will be structured in three parts. The first will be a literature

review to develop the theoretical hypotheses on how the two types of electoral systems may influence representation and governance differently. Then, this paper will discuss the use of observational natural experiment as an appropriate research method, and the details of the case of Hong Kong in the research design. The final part of the paper will compare the levels of representation and fragmentation of the LegCo of Hong Kong under the list-PR system with that of the binomial system, and will provide a conclusion.

THE BINOMIAL AND PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION SYSTEMS

The binomial electoral system is a system in which each electoral district elects two parliamentarians, meaning that the fixed district magnitude is two. In practice, different political parties usually submit their lists of candidates for the election to compete for the two seats in an electoral district. This system was only implemented in a small number of countries across history. One of the countries that previously adopted the binomial system is Chile, in which the system was imposed by Pinochet's military dictatorship. Huneus (2015) conducted a case study of Chile and found that there were enormous deficiencies in this system, such as over-representation of the largest minority and more intense competition *within* parties than between them. As it is very difficult for the largest party to win more than double the amount of votes of the second-largest party, each party would tend to win only one of the two seats. In nearly all of the electoral districts in Chile under the binomial system, one seat was allocated to Concertación and the other to Alliance for Chile (Huneus 2015). As such, the main competition between candidates is about their positions on the lists, but less so between the lists (Huneus 2015).

Moreover, the binomial system can be detrimental to fully fledged representative democracies because of the exclusion of small parties and the over-representation of the second-largest party. Before the electoral reform in 2015, the Alliance for Chile—the second-largest party—gained nearly the same influence as the largest party in the Chilean legislature (The Economist 2015). The binomial system also renders smaller parties underrepresented, as was the case with the Communist Party in Chile before 1973 being completely excluded from the parliament (Huneus 2015). Apart from Chile, Poland also has a short history of adopting the binomial electoral system. Kaminski (2001) suggests that the introduction of this system to Poland was mainly to manipulate the electoral results so that the Polish United Workers' Party could maintain its electoral advantage. Although there are abundant disadvantages of adopting the binomial system, it is not completely without its worth, as Siavelis (1997) found that the binomial system encourages the formation of coalitions because smaller parties have to cooperate and gain wider support for a higher chance of entering the legislature. In short, the binomial system may prevent extreme party fractionalisation.

As for the PR system, there has been extensive understanding of its advantages and disadvantages in the academic literature. The PR system is a multi-member district electoral system where the seats of each district are allocated based on the proportion of votes each party or each list receives. As such, most of the votes in an election affect the final results, and only a very small number of votes are potentially 'wasted'—even under a system of non-transferable vote—as compared to the SMD and binomial systems. Duverger's law holds that a PR system tends to lead to a multi-party electoral result while the SMD system is likely to produce a two-party outcome. Since smaller parties can more easily enter the legislature under PR, this system prevents the tyranny of the majority. Lijphart (1991) found that countries that adopt the PR system tend to have better democratic performance. Gallagher and Mitchell (2005) also contend that the PR system is very strong in accurately representing the electorate's views. Therefore, the biggest advantage of PR is its democratic representation.

While the PR system is generally regarded as one of the best electoral systems, it also has its defects, namely an accountability issue and the fragmentation of parliament. There is usually a trade-off between representation and accountability in different electoral systems (Carey and Hix 2011). As the PR system has a tremendous advantage in proportionality, it faces challenges in making the elected politicians directly accountable to its voters, especially when it is a closed-list PR system like the one in Hong Kong before 2021 (Gallagher and

Mitchell 2005). As aforementioned, the PR system is conducive to allowing various small political parties to enter the legislature, so it creates challenges for the governance and passing of bills in the legislature. This is evident in the example of the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, which always has more than ten political parties in it. In addition, the PR system may potentially lead to executive-legislature deadlock under a presidential system, and may lead to difficulty in the formation of effective governing coalitions under a parliamentary system (Linz 1990). For example, in the case of Israel, the Lapid Administration was formed by an eight-party coalition, which could not reach consensus on policy issues. As such, the PR system is conducive to democratic representation but has its disadvantages in governance, especially when the district magnitude is high, and the threshold is low (Carey and Hix 2011).

Based on the aforementioned literature, this research hypothesises that the binomial system is more disproportionate and inaccurate in democratic representation, but more effective in governance, than the PR system. In terms of democratic representation, the binomial system usually under-represents the most popular party, over-represents the second most popular party, and stamps out all other smaller parties. On the contrary, under the PR system, the seats for every electoral district are allocated based on voters' preferences as long as the political parties pass the threshold. As such, the first hypothesis contends that the binomial system produces more misrepresentation of voters' views as compared to the PR system. On the other hand, with regards to governance, the low likelihood of small parties entering the legislature under the binomial system means that they tend to form coalitions or integrate into one large party. The magnitude of each electoral district is fixed at two, so the number of political parties in the legislature is often less than that under the PR system but higher than that under the SMD system. Therefore, the second hypothesis posits that the binomial system, in generating a smaller number of political parties in the legislature, can promote effective governance.

NATURAL EXPERIMENT AND THE CASE OF HONG KONG

A natural experiment is the most suitable method to compare between the binomial system and the PR system, because as aforementioned, the binomial system is relatively new and has been adopted in only a small number of countries over a short period of time. Given the very limited amount of data on the binomial system, it is not very meaningful to run a large-N regression analysis to measure the correlation between the binomial system and electoral representation, as well as the correlation between the binomial system and the effectiveness of governance. As such, the best methodological approach is to investigate a particular case in detail to understand the causality between electoral systems and representation, as well as electoral systems and the fragmentation of legislature. However, there are two big potential problems of adopting natural experiment in this study. The first concerns the causal identification. As there are many factors which may affect the representation and governance outcomes of Hong Kong, it is difficult to confirm that the different performances of governance and representation before and after 2021 are due to the change in electoral system and not other potential variables. The second issue is about the external validity of the research results. As this research only focuses on one single case, Hong Kong, how can the research outcome be generalisable? This research will tackle both of these problems.

The first problem is related to different factors, such as Beijing's suppression of pro-democracy movements and the silencing of dissent which may influence the democratic representativeness and the governance of Hong Kong. These factors include the imposition of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (commonly known as the 'National Security Law') in 2020 and the political reform by Beijing in 2021. Beijing's aim in imposing these changes was to stamp out pro-democracy politicians from the LegCo, who are regarded as 'unpatriotic'. As the political reform imposed by Beijing not only included the change in electoral system but also a change in the composition of the LegCo and the establishment of the Candidate Eligibility Review Committee to vet aspired candidates, these factors may have influenced the results of the LegCo election in 2021.

To eliminate the unwanted effects of these variables, this research will only compare the electoral results of the pro-Beijing camp for the directly-elected constituencies of LegCo before and after 2021. Kaeding (2017, 161) points out that the pro-Beijing and pro-democracy groups have always maintained a consistent level of support in Hong Kong. Support for the pro-Beijing camp has always been around 40% of the whole society and the level of support for pan-democrats has always been around 60%. This feature of the political landscape has been tested time and again, as demonstrated in, for example, the election for District Council in 2019, in which the pro-Beijing group received 41.32% of all the votes and pan-democrats won 57.44% of all the votes (BBC 2019; Chan 2019). Similarly, in the 2016 LegCo elections, the pro-establishment camp won 40.17% of the total votes while the pro-democracy camp received 55.02% (Registration and Electoral Office 2016). Given the consistent level of support for the pro-Beijing group, this paper will only compare the electoral results for the pro-Beijing candidates so that Beijing's crackdown on dissent will not have any unwanted impacts on the research. In terms of the Candidate Eligibility Review Committee and the reform on the composition of the LegCo, these reforms have extremely little impact on the competition among pro-Beijing political parties in LegCo elections, as these policies were designed to specifically target those viewed as 'unpatriotic'. Focusing only on geographical constituencies of LegCo elections can also eliminate the unwanted impacts brought about by the reform on the composition of LegCo. As such, the levels of representation of pro-Beijing groups before and after 2021 should accurately capture the impacts of the change in the electoral system.

Another important issue is about the external validity of the research results. There are a lot of unique features of Hong Kong that may affect democratic representation and governance performance. For example, Lee (2020) and Ma (2017) both found that the Liaison Office in Hong Kong (LOCPG) plays an active role in coordinating between the different pro-Beijing political parties in LegCo elections. Its coordination work on behalf of Beijing may influence the electoral outcomes in Hong Kong. In addition, LOCPG also facilitates or even participates in the policy discussion between the pro-Beijing executive branch and the pro-Beijing lawmakers, which may have influenced the governance of Hong Kong. As these factors are unique to the case of Hong Kong under the constitutional order of 'One Country, Two Systems', it is inevitable that they pose a challenge to the generalisability of the research results. Nevertheless, this research develops the two hypotheses by deduction after reviewing literature on different cases around the world, such as Chile and Poland, which adopted the binomial system before. As such, this research tries to minimise the negative impacts on external validity due to the methodological approach of natural experiment.

The data of this research are obtained from the website of the Registration and Electoral Office, a department of the Hong Kong Government. In order to compare the representational outcome of each pro-Beijing political party, for the 2012 LegCo election and the 2016 LegCo election, the total number of votes received by each pro-Beijing party is divided by the total number of votes the pro-Beijing camp earned. This is to calculate the proportion of votes each pro-Beijing party received relative to the total votes that the whole pro-Beijing camp received. Take the 2016 LegCo election as an example. The Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong (DAB) received 16.68% of the votes for geographical constituencies (Registration and Electoral Office 2016). This figure (16.68%) is divided by 40.17%, the proportion of votes the pro-Beijing camp received for geographical constituencies in that election (Registration and Electoral Office 2016). In other words, this paper focuses on the proportion 41.52% ($16.68\% / 40.17\% \times 100\%$), which is the percentage of votes that the DAB won competing with other pro-Beijing political parties. The figure 41.52% will then be compared with the proportion of directly-elected constituencies that DAB held relative to all the directly-elected constituencies that the pro-Beijing camp held. The calculation method is the same: dividing the number of directly-elected constituencies DAB won (7 seats) by the total number of directly-elected constituencies the pro-Beijing camp obtained (16 seats), resulting in the number 52.94% (Registration and Electoral Office 2016). Then, this paper will compare the proportion of votes (41.52%) with the proportion of seats (52.94%) for DAB in the LegCo election of 2016 and come up with a margin of misrepresentation. The purpose of

doing this is to facilitate a comparison between the LegCo election results of 2012 and 2016 with the results of the LegCo election of 2021, in which the pro-democracy candidates were barred from running, and the composition of LegCo had changed. The summary of the data and calculation results are summarised in the Appendix for reference.

FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

REPRESENTATION

The research results show that the binomial system does not produce a less representative LegCo for the pro-Beijing parties compared to the PR system, meaning that the first hypothesis is not established. In the first place, there is no evident under-representation of the largest party under the binomial system. As shown in **Table 1**, the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong (DAB), the largest pro-Beijing party, won 51.43% of the votes and was allocated half of the seats in the 2021 LegCo election under the new binomial system. The two figures (51.43% and 50%) are very close and thus indicate that the largest party was not under-represented. If we compare DAB's results across the LegCo elections of 2012, 2016 and 2021 (**Table 1**), it is evident that the misrepresentation under the PR system was similar to the misrepresentation under the binomial system. Under the PR system, DAB secured 52.94% of seats by 47.40% of votes in 2012 so the difference between the two figures was 5.54%, which is even higher than the 1.43% difference under the binomial system. In the case of the 2016 LegCo election, DAB won 43.75% of seats by 41.52% of votes, meaning that the difference was 2.23%, which is not lower than 1.43% as this research hypothesised. As such, there is no evidence that the largest pro-Beijing political party is under-represented under the binomial system.

In terms of the second-largest party, the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions (HKFTU), there is also no indication that it is much more over-represented under the binomial system. HKFTU secured 15% of the seats with 14.53% of the votes in the LegCo election of 2021. The difference was only 0.53%, meaning that the impact of over-representation is minimal. If we compare the level of over-representation under the binomial system (0.53%) with the level of misrepresentation under the closed-list PR system of 2012 and 2016, it is clear that the misrepresentation of HKFTU was even worse under the PR system. In 2012, HKFTU was over-represented by a margin 1.1%. In 2016, HKFTU was underrepresented by a margin 0.65%. In other words, the binomial system did not render the second-largest party under-represented and thus did not produce a less representative legislature.

Another hypothesised argument is that small parties would be marginalised and would not get elected under the binomial system, but this natural experiment also demonstrates that this argument may not be correct. In the LegCo election of 2021, for example, a lot of small political parties such as the New Prospect for Hong Kong, Professional Power, Roundtable, etc. all got some directly-elected constituencies (Cheng 2021). While none of these parties is either the largest or second-largest, all of them are also represented in parliament. For example, New Prospect for Hong Kong, a small political party that seeks to represent those who immigrated from mainland China to Hong Kong (established less than three years before the LegCo election of 2021), fielded only one candidate and won a seat under the binomial system with 23.97% of the votes (Cheng 2021; Registration and Electoral Office of Hong Kong Government 2021). This demonstrates that political parties that represent minorities do not seem to be excluded due to the binomial electoral system. According to **Table 1**, one-fourth of all the directly-elected constituencies was secured by non-traditional political parties in the LegCo election of 2021. This figure is much higher than the proportion of seats small parties won in the LegCo elections of 2012 and 2016. As such, the evidence does not fit with the hypothesis that small political parties would form coalitions or be excluded from LegCo under the binomial system.

In short, there is neither evident under-representation of the largest party, over-representation of the second-largest party, nor exclusion of small parties as expected under the binomial system. The first hypothesis of this research is thus rejected.

	Proportion of votes to total votes of pro-Beijing camp in LegCo election of 2012	Proportion of seats to total seats of pro-Beijing camp in LegCo election of 2012	Proportion of votes to total votes of pro-Beijing camp in LegCo election of 2016	Proportion of seats to total seats of pro-Beijing camp in LegCo election of 2016	Proportion of votes to total votes of pro-Beijing camp in LegCo election of 2021	Proportion of seats to total seats of pro-Beijing camp in LegCo election of 2021
DAB	47.40%	52.94%	41.52%	43.75%	51.43%	50%
HKFTU	16.55%	17.65%	19.40%	18.75%	14.53%	15%
NPP	8.81%	11.76%	19.24%	18.75%	11.35%	10%
Liberal Party	6.31%	5.88%	2.46%	0%	(Did Not Send Any Candidate)	(Did Not Send Any Candidate)
BPA	(Not Applicable)	(Not Applicable)	5.70%	6.25%	(Did Not Send Any Candidate)	(Did Not Send Any Candidate)
Other pro-Beijing parties	20.93%	11.76%	11.58%	12.50%	22.69%	25%

Table 1 | Comparison of Electoral Results on Representation (Geographical Constituencies Only)

(Registration and Electoral Office 2012; Registration and Electoral Office 2016; Registration and Electoral Office 2021) (See Appendix 1 for the details of calculation)

FRAGMENTATION OF LEGCO AND THE IMPACTS OF GOVERNANCE

The research results also show that the second hypothesis—that the binomial system would create a less fragmented LegCo and is conducive to governance—is wrong. As aforementioned, this research only compares the intra-pro-Beijing camp competition. According to **Table 2**, although the total number of political parties among the directly-elected constituencies was smaller (eight) under the binomial system than under the proportional representation system (twelve and thirteen)—seeming to suggest that the hypothesis is correct—this difference can be attributable to reasons other than the electoral system such as the establishment of the Candidate Eligibility Review Committee in 2021 and the imposition of the National Security Law since mid-2020. As such, for assessing the impacts brought about by the change in electoral system, this essay will only compare a fixed political spectrum as a controlled variable for the research. **Graph 3** is a simplified version of the political spectrum in Hong Kong. For the sake of comparison, this essay will only focus on how many political parties were and are in LegCo on the left side of the vertical line of the graph because pro-democracy parties (in yellow) were all excluded in the LegCo election of 2021.

According to **Table 2**, the binomial system has created eight political parties in LegCo following the election of 2021. This number is higher than the numbers of pro-Beijing parties created by the closed-list PR system in 2012 and 2016 respectively. The number of pro-Beijing political parties in the LegCo was five following the election of 2012, and it was four following the election of 2016. While the political system in Hong Kong resembles presidentialism, and there are both radical pro-labour (e.g. Federation of Trade Unions) and very pro-business (e.g. Business and Professionals Alliance & New People's Party) parties in the legislature, it is evident that the binomial system does not prevent fragmentation of the legislature within the pro-Beijing camp due to a lower district magnitude compared to the PR system. Many policy issues such as the abolishment of the offsetting mechanism of the Mandatory Provident Fund still posed challenges to the functioning of the political system due to the fractionalisation of the city's parliament although all political parties were pro-Beijing after 2021. Therefore, the binomial system does not produce a less fragmented LegCo compared to the PR system. The second hypothesis is thus rejected.

	Total Number of Political Parties among Directly-Elected Constituencies (Excluding all independent lawmakers)	Total Number of Pro-Beijing Political Parties among Directly-Elected Constituencies (Excluding pro-Beijing independents)	Total Number of Pro-Democracy Political Parties among Directly-Elected Constituencies (Excluding pro-democracy independents)
LegCo 2012-2016	12	5	7
LegCo 2016-2020	13	4	9
LegCo 2021-2025	8	8	0

Table 2 | Total Number of Political Parties Among All Directly-Elected Constituencies in LegCo

(Registration and Electoral Office 2012; Registration and Electoral Office 2016; Registration and Electoral Office 2021)

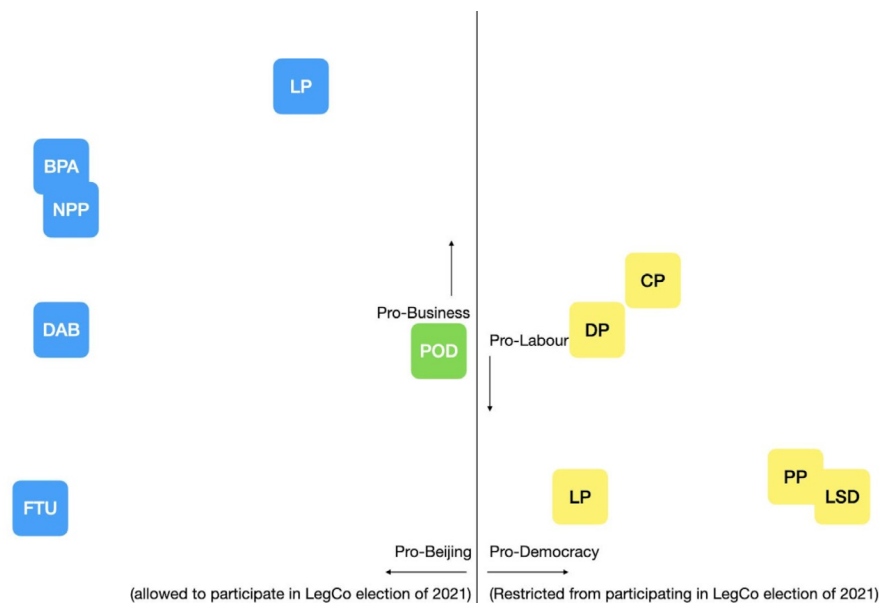
POSSIBLE EXPLANATION OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS BY OTHER FACTORS

While the research results seem to repudiate the general understanding of electoral systems in academic literature, they are not without their limitations. Although the research design tries to minimise the impact that other variables have on the dependent variables, the results can possibly be explained by other factors. In fact, the Liaison Office in Hong Kong (LOCPG) may have actively prevented any electoral outcome of misrepresentation and may have intentionally manipulated the electoral results of 2021 to allow more parties to be in the LegCo. Lee (2020) points out that LOCPG can discipline and coordinate nearly all the pro-Beijing elites in Hong Kong. Beijing often uses the rhetoric of ‘improving the political system’ to describe and justify the political reforms imposed unilaterally by the central government to stamp out pro-democracy politicians from sharing power. Thus, the possibility of Beijing manipulating the results by coordinating between the different pro-Beijing political parties through LOCPG is not too far-fetched. The purpose of manipulating the electoral result of 2021 was to propagandise Beijing’s rhetoric that launching crackdown on dissent ‘improved’ the political institutions and political situation in Hong Kong. If backdoor coordination between pro-Beijing parties occurred through the LOCPG, it would not have been difficult to portray the binomial system as representing the pro-Beijing electorates’ views accurately due to the relative stickiness of the political stances of most Hong Kong people. Encouraging the formation of more pro-Beijing political parties to run for the LegCo election of 2021 would also align with Beijing’s narrative that the reform did not silence people with diverse views. Therefore, the research results discussed in this paper could have been influenced by the backdoor work of the LOCPG.

Another possible explanation is the change in political culture. The institutional change was not the only political change after the anti-extradition bill movement. Before 2019, most of the political contestation in the city was between the pro-Beijing camp and the pro-democracy camp. Under this political culture, many pro-Beijing capitalists, middle class and labour had less incentives to build different political parties but joined the few traditional pro-Beijing political parties to compete with pro-democracy politicians. However, after the imposition of the National Security Law in 2020, democracy movements were suppressed. This may have encouraged the different pro-Beijing groups with varying interests and policy preferences to form their own political parties. As such, the change in political culture might have influenced the representation and fragmentation of the LegCo.

CONCLUSION

Traditional academic literature contends that the PR system represents electorates’ views more accurately than its binomial counterpart. However, the PR system is also more prone to creating a fragmented parliament as compared to the binomial system. While Beijing



Graph 3 | Political Spectrum in Hong Kong

unilaterally imposed a political reform in Hong Kong in 2021, changing the system of the LegCo election from a closed-list PR system to a binomial system, this essay adopts the case of Hong Kong as a natural experiment for a comparison between these two types of electoral systems. The research results found that the binomial system did not over-represent the largest party nor under-represent the second largest party. The binomial system also did not reduce fragmentation of LegCo due to a usually smaller district magnitude. In short, the results demonstrate the exact contrary of the understanding of academic literature.

While the research results should raise some doubts on the comparative strengths and weaknesses of different electoral systems, they should not be taken as a complete repudiation of the traditional understanding of the two types of electoral systems because of the inevitable flaws on internal and external validity. Some unique characteristics of Hong Kong such as the special role of LOCPG in the city’s politics and the change in political culture after the anti-extradition bill movement may have had some impacts on the representativeness and the fragmentation of the legislature. In the future, further research should be conducted through large-N regression analysis if possible, to render the findings of this research more generalisable, or potentially reject them altogether.

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APPENDIX

	Proportion of votes received	Proportion of votes received to total votes pro-Beijing camp received	Number of seats received in LegCo	Proportion of seats received in LegCo to total seats pro-Beijing camp received
DAB	20.22%	47.40%	9	52.94%
HKFTU	7.06%	16.55%	3	17.65%
NPP	3.76%	8.81%	2	11.76%
Liberal Party	2.69%	6.31%	1	5.88%
BPA	(Not Applicable)	(Not Applicable)	(Not Applicable)	(Not Applicable)
Others	8.93%	20.93%	2	11.76%
Total (pro-Beijing camp)	42.66%	100%	17	100%

2012 LC election - Results for Geographical Constituencies (under PR system)

(Registration and Electoral Office of Hong Kong Government, 2012)

	Proportion of votes received	Proportion of votes received to total votes pro-Beijing camp received	Number of seats received in LegCo	Proportion of seats received in LegCo for pro-Beijing camp
DAB	16.68%	41.52%	7	43.75%
HKFTU	7.83%	19.40%	3	18.75%
NPP	7.73%	19.24%	3	18.75%
Liberal Party	0.99%	2.46%	0	0%
BPA	2.29%	5.70%	1	6.25%
Others	4.65%	11.58%	2	12.5%
Total (pro-Beijing camp)	40.17%	100%	16	100%

2016 LC election - Results for Geographical Constituencies (under PR system)

(Registration and Electoral Office of Hong Kong Government, 2016)

	Proportion of votes received	Number of seats received in LegCo	Proportion of seats received in LegCo for pro-Beijing camp
DAB	51.43%	10	50%
HKFTU	14.53%	3	15%
NPP	11.35%	2	10%
Liberal Party	0%	0	0%
BPA	0%	0	0%
Others	22.69%	5	25%
Total (pro-Beijing camp - all seats of LegCo)	100%	100%	100%

2021 LC election - Results for Geographical Constituencies (under binomial system)

(Registration and Electoral Office of Hong Kong Government, 2021)

The End of the Post-Cold War: An Analysis of Russia's Invasion of Ukraine and its Insights into Epochal Change and Continuity

Ben Brent

Marking the culmination of tension, Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 has been deemed an epoch-defining moment. With the return of war to mainland Europe, substantively divided along an updated Russia/West binary, the conflict has been perceived as the end of the post-Cold War international order. This article will challenge the prominence of this assertion. An analysis of the conflict's first twelve months reflects upon the relative insights into contemporary relations of power and the foundations which structure them. Rather than marking an epochal shift, this article maintains that the war constitutes the culmination of a transition to a new, 'post-post-cold-war order'. It facilitates the retrospective placement of this transition onto the Georgia-Russia conflict of 2008. Additionally, differentiation between relations of power (and the changing nature of power itself) can be revealed alongside underlying structural continuity. Revanchist ambition has coincided with the decline of US hegemony and the emergence of competing and ill-defined polarities. This increased obscurity echoes interconnection, an enlarged non-aligned movement, and the increased assertiveness of alternative geopolitical actors, such as China. Yet, hierarchies have continued to permeate the system's anarchic foundations, proving both material and racial in nature. Thus, offering a point of retrospective comparison, this article assesses the war's insight into the respective relations of power which have differentiated and shaped the contemporary and post-Cold War periods. It does so alongside the exposure of the foundational continuity which prescribes them.

Marking the culmination of tension, Russia's invasion of Ukraine on the 24 February 2022 has been deemed an epoch-defining moment. With the return of war to mainland Europe, substantively divided along an updated Russia/West binary, the conflict has been perceived as the end of the post-Cold War international order. Despite the contemporary prominence of this assertion¹, this article challenges the aforementioned temporal continuum as the basis for conceptualising the post-Cold War international order. Instead, understanding the period to constitute a distinctive balance of power between Russia, the US and the post-Soviet states, this article suggests that, beginning with the Soviet Union's dissolution, the epoch concluded with the Georgia-Russia war in 2008.

These temporal parameters do not suggest that Russia ever assumed a position of benignity. Indeed, its opposition to the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was widely noted. Rather, it reflects on the relations of power whereby, throughout the period, Russia lacked the means to exert itself. The war against Ukraine, building on the 2014 annexation of Crimea and an increased assertiveness toward territorial reconstruction, was rooted in historical causal factors and not immediate geopolitical developments. Consequently, this article will argue that Russia's war with Ukraine represents a manifestation of the transition away from the post-Cold War order. The conflict does not, in its own right, represent change, but, through retrospective comparison, provides evidence that the era concluded in 2008 in correspondence with changing relations of power. Beyond revealing temporal change and an evolving balance of power, entering a 'post-post-Cold War international order' (herein referred to as the contemporary order), the war against Ukraine enables a foundational analysis of the international system's underlying structural continuity. At a substantive and theoretical level, the war in Ukraine reveals relations of power and the foundations which structure them.

¹ See Hiroshi Nakanishi (2022) 'The impact of the war in Ukraine on the global system', *The Japan Institute of International Affairs*, 29 September.

Structurally, and developing from the post-Cold War period's conceptualisation, this article will explore the balance of power that guides the international order. It will demonstrate that Russia's contemporary employment of revanchist ambitions corresponded with the decline of US hegemony and the emergence of competing and ill-defined polarities (Porter 2020, 125). Retrospective comparison affirms that the post-Cold War period represented a distinctive balance of power rather than ideational uniformity. Further, this article will argue that the war exposes the paradoxical structural foundation of the international order which, proving both anarchic and hierarchical, guides these evolving power relations. One state's relative ability to act anarchically and pursue self-interest is prescribed by its socially conditioned position in the informal hierarchies. Whilst a transforming power balance marked a distinctive conclusion to the post-Cold War order, foundationally, the underlying hierarchies have remained. Notably, this refers to not only material but racial hierarchies.

Therefore, this article maintains that Russia's war against Ukraine represents a culmination in the transition away from the 'post-Cold War international order', along the conceptualised balance of power framework. Not only does it, through retrospective comparison, reveal the relations of power which distinguish and shape both the contemporary and post-Cold War periods, but it also offers insight into the foundational continuity which prescribes them.

CONCEPTUALISING THE 'POST-COLD WAR INTERNATIONAL ORDER'

From the collapse of the Eastern bloc and its Soviet overlord between 1989 and 1991 came the emergence of the post-Cold War international order. The order's initial decade saw Francis Fukuyama optimistically declare the 'end of History', with US liberal democracy deemed the final and accepted form of government (Fukuyama 2012). Yet, rather than being characterised by a uniform ideational transformation, as the Communist system inwardly imploded, the epoch was characterised by a shifting balance of power toward US unipolarity, with its temporal framework shaped accordingly. These relations of power dictated Russia's actions toward both the US-led West and the post-Soviet states within Eastern Europe.

Fukuyama's narrative reductively mischaracterised the international order, conflating a hegemony of power with ideational dominance. For instance, the NATO-Russia Founding Act of 1997, which paved the way for NATO's expansion into Eastern Europe (Rynning 2015, 542), did not, as Fukuyama's disciples have sought to present, suggest a Russian endorsement of a universal liberal ideology. Instead, it reflected Russia's incapacity to counteract US-led encroachment, a consequence of politico-economic frailty. Put another way, post-Soviet Russia was not ideationally accommodating of its own accord, and, consequently, the Cold War's aftermath is better expressed through relations of power which prescribed the relative capacity for action. Indeed, the 1997 Act coincided with high Russian debt and an unstable and inflationary currency, ultimately leading to a multi-billion dollar International Monetary Fund (IMF) support package. Accordingly, the 'liberal international order', as the post-Cold War period is often synonymised with, was only liberal in so far as the balance of power impeded opposition.

In actuality, the post-Cold War order's power imbalance and NATO's encroachment into historically Russian spheres of influence only strengthened Moscow's resistance to incorporation. Echoing Alexander Wendt's constructivist argument that state behaviour is guided by both power and emotions, Russian resistance proved revanchist. Stemming from a damaged sense of honour (Tsygankov 2014, 270), policy sought to challenge territorial and status losses. This permeating opposition is substantiated by the Russian closure of gas pipelines running through Ukraine in 2006, which occurred in response to Ukraine's 'Orange Revolution'. This revolution saw a disputed and 're-run' run-off election, marred by accusations of fraud, leading to the establishment of a pro-European Union (EU) government. In lieu of Russia's inability to employ military force, the closure of gas represented a demonstration of opposition, highlighting the complicated relationship between Russia and post-Soviet states. Thus, the seemingly 'permissive' Russian state, allowing expansion into its sphere of influence, did not reflect a post-Cold War ideational incorporation, nor did it suggest support for Eastern Europe's integration with its Western counterpart. Instead,

and in contrast to the 'End of History' thesis, it reflected the imbalanced relations of power, specifically characterised by Russian frailty. It was this imbalance that shaped the nature of the post-Cold War international order.

Accordingly, although Russia's war against Ukraine provides the opportunity to retrospectively substantiate these characterising assertions, this article maintains that the post-Cold War period concluded with the 2008 Georgian war. The deployment of Russian military force in this conflict represented a decisive response to the US's proposed membership of Georgia. More broadly, the invasion echoed the assumptions of offensive realist theory, whereby Russia, within the Hobbesian and anarchic state of nature (Mearsheimer 2018, 134), sought to maximise its power by pre-emptively asserting hegemony within its near-abroad region.

Although, as alluded to above, Russian opposition to the US-led security architecture was present throughout the period (Asmus 2009, 218), 2008 provided the first example of post-Soviet Russia enacting border changes through military activity. This, in conjunction with their targeting of the Georgian-based western-owned oil pipelines during the conflict (Rich 2012, 94), embodied the conclusion of the post-Cold War order. Evolving relations of power and a decline in US unipolarity transcended Russia's characterising inability to exert influence.

Therefore, whilst Russia's war against Ukraine may appear as part of the continuing genealogy of the post-Cold War order, the invasion in reality represents the *culmination* of a distinctive transition to a new order along changed parameters of power. The assertion of a definitive transition perhaps cohabits problematically with the title's specific emphasis on the war in Ukraine. However, a comparison of the current and previous engagement between Russia, the West and the intermediate post-Soviet states offers an opportunity to retrospectively substantiate the notion that the epoch has concluded and to reaffirm its characterising facets. For example, when compared to the aforementioned 2004 Orange Revolution, the 2014 revolution, replacing the pro-Russian Yanukovich, led to the annexation of Crimea, foreshadowing Russia's eventual invasion in 2022 (Casier 2018, 112). The unique context, whereby Russia retained the Sevastopol Naval Base within Ukraine's sovereign territory, remained largely unchanged. Given that the lease's finite nature ensured that tension permeated consistently, the key difference was Russia's increased assertion of power.

Similarly, although some scholars have led a rebuke of NATO activity,² emphasising its responsibility for instigating the conflict in Ukraine, it cannot be deemed *the* causal factor for triggering the war. Whilst NATO policy may have exacerbated tension, both France and Germany had previously vetoed Ukrainian membership in 2008. Accordingly, these factors challenge the suggestion that the war against Ukraine stemmed from NATO-led geopolitical developments. In doing so, they affirm that differences in the assertiveness of Russian policy were, instead, a consequence of the shifting balance of power. Russia's limited participation in conflict during the post-Cold War period thus reflected a lack of power, and not an absence of desire. This highlights that the post-Cold War order was defined in nature by relations of power, rather than ideational harmony and a common subscription to liberal ideals. This analysis demonstrates through retrospection that the period concluded before the present conflict. Beyond reflecting on the past and its respective temporal parameters, as will be explored below, the war against Ukraine reveals the evolving balance of power as the international order enters a new 'post-post-Cold War' epoch.

THE POST-POST-COLD WAR EPOCH

Ultimately, the shift in the location and relative equilibrium of power under the contemporary international order has made relations less binary and defined. Indeed, the emerging consequences of Russia's war against Ukraine have highlighted this increasing complexity, with power 'shared' between multiple actors. Fundamental to this phenomenon is increased economic interconnectivity which has shaped both the contemporary and post-Cold War international orders.

² See the writings of, for example, Mearsheimer (2014) 'Why the Ukraine crisis is the West's fault', *Foreign Affairs*, 18 August

As the Communist bloc collapsed in on itself, free-market liberal economic theory expanded from the West. Although interconnectivity predated the end of the Cold War, the fall of the Iron Curtain truly entrenched integration. Even if the 'liberal' ideational aspect has since subsided in dominance, proving reliant on the aforementioned unipolarity of the post-Cold War epoch, its corresponding interconnections continue to prescribe economic engagement. This is because supply chains are dispersed around the globe, with multinational corporations transcending territorial demarcations in their manufacturing processes. Consequently, originating in the interconnectivity of the post-Cold War order, the contemporary balance of power has become increasingly ill-defined, with, in this case, Europe and Russia being mutually reliant on one another. This interdependency provides a partial explanation for the EU's muted response to Russia's annexation of Crimea, with EU-Russian trade reaching \$437 billion in 2012 (Menon and Rumer 2015, 122). Whilst subsequent Western sanctions against Russia have been remarkably stronger, interconnection has, nonetheless, ensured mutual damage. For instance, the freezing of \$350 billion worth of Russian assets and their expulsion from the SWIFT financial system has proven consequential (Atlantic Council n.d.). By limiting transactional efficiency, the action severely curtailed the access of Russian banks to the international markets. Yet, this accumulation of economic sanctions, both coercive and remunerative in nature, has been superseded by the importance of one factor — energy. Global price rises and instability, corresponding to European sanctions, culminated in Putin's decision to close the Nord-Stream 1 pipeline, nominally under the guise of damaged infrastructure. This illustrates the critical and mutual dependence between the EU and Russia. Whilst the former required energy supply, the latter leant on the European energy market as a foremost source of capital (Gabuev 2015, 3). Notably, this structural instability caused by energy interlinks was present throughout the post-Cold War order. However, its significance has only manifested after the period concluded, corresponding to Russia's increased capacity to exert itself.

Moreover, within Europe itself, the relative strength of interconnectivity has eroded previous clarity over the demarcation of power. Whilst the EU has uniformly implemented sanctions, its impact has been asymmetrical. Compared to Belgium's 22.2 per cent, Slovakia receives 78.4 per cent of its oil from Russia (Statista Research Department 2022). Accordingly, not only is the balance of power increasingly ill-defined between the West and Russia but, within the former, disparities of power exist. This suggests the redundancy of traditional balance of power theories as they produce overly simplistic, binary models which are incompatible with current relations. Thus, although Russia's war against Ukraine does not demonstrate a complete transition away from Western power, it points toward a new, complicated balance. The geo-politicisation of the world economy, entrenched in the post-Cold War order, has ensured that interconnectivity has impeded the clarity of contemporary demarcations of power.

Importantly, Russia's war against Ukraine has undermined the liberal school of thought centred on economic dependency theory. Grounded in the logic of interconnectivity, the theory argues that conflict proves increasingly unlikely due to the mutual economic incentive for peace and stability. Whilst the war affirms the analysis of the conflict's consequences, its existence undermines the presumed economically-incentivised avoidance, alternatively suggesting that nationalist tendencies and revanchist desires supersede economic rationalism (Mearsheimer 2018, 128; 205). This revelation points toward a tension that, even if economic interconnections transcend nation-state parameters, the latter continues to constitute the system's primary political actor. Accordingly, it can be argued that the war against Ukraine points to a second balance of power, one between nation-states and supranational actors. Put another way, the war reveals relations of power between atomistic nation-states and the institutional framework that guides their operation.

In this instance, the war highlights the inefficacy of international bodies, with institutions such as the United Nations (UN) unable to broker peace agreements or sanction Russia (which possesses a veto on the Security Council). Again, by comparing this current

incapacity to the post-Cold War 'high-point' of international legislation³, it can be seen that international enforcement mechanisms were never, in isolation, effective. The key differential was the US's relative unipolarity. Similarly, internationalist cooperation, which defines liberal ideals, manifested not due to uniform support but via the skewed balance of power which inhibited opposition. Thus, the current difficulties affirm that a change to the balance of power has arisen with the unique success of the prior period having stagnated. Consequently, despite entrenching economic interconnectivity, the post-Cold War order failed to supersede nation-states in favour of international institutions. Power, over liberal ideational conformity, is thus retrospectively confirmed to have been the explanatory and defining factor in the comparative internationalist success of the prior period.

Both the tension between economic interconnections and the political primacy of nation-states, and the growing complexity of relations of power can be viewed through the war's instigation of a grain crisis. In the first months of the war, Russia maintained a naval blockade on Ukrainian exports out of the Black Sea. Although a UN-backed grain deal is in place, it remains dependent on Russian cooperation. This affirms the UN's limited enforcement mechanisms and illustrates that the nature of conflict itself has shifted - a consequence of post-Cold War integration, with local disputes inflicting global ramifications. Indeed, the resultant rise in wheat prices has had a dire impact on the world's poorest regions. Sub-Saharan Africa imports 85 per cent of its produce, one-third of which originates from Russia or Ukraine (IMF Blog 2022). Moreover, supply chain considerations, whether that be food or energy, have led to an increasingly unaligned 'third movement'. On 2 March 2022, countries representing fifty-nine per cent of the world's population either abstained or voted against a UN Resolution condemning Russia (Cliffe 2022). This desire for neutrality echoes the need to 'hedge bets', with countries reliant on both Russia and the West, again a consequence of economic interconnections. This further repudiates any notion of binary poles of authority and, through retrospective comparison, places emphasis on the relative clarity of the post-Cold War order's US-led unipolarity. In part, the obscurity of the current balance of power can be attributed to the conceptual challenges of contemporary political science, with limited temporal distance from the events in question inhibiting retrospective analysis. Yet, to date, mutual reliance, coupled with diverging capabilities within the West itself and the need for non-aligned parties to seek neutrality, points to the emergence of an increasingly obscure balance of power. This comparatively links the post-Cold War's relative clarity to its balance of power, defined through US unipolarity.

A final point of consideration for this complicated balance of power is the rise of China and its response to Russia's war against Ukraine. Foundationally, China's economic growth, itself intrinsically linked to global economic interconnections, has undermined US hegemony, providing an alternative position for third-party states to align with (Ikenberry 2020, 271). This increased assertiveness and turn toward overt market intervention roughly coincided with Russia's resurgence which marked the end of a unipolar balance of power and the post-Cold War order. During the 2014 conflict in Ukraine, Russia sought to mitigate the impact of Western sanctions, signing a \$400 billion deal to export gas to China (Gabuev 2015, 1). This pivot was affirmed in a 2022 meeting between their respective heads of state and has led some to argue that the balance of power shifted toward bipolarity in a 'new cold war' (Eran and Magen 2022). However, an argument for bipolarity overstates the extent to which the two countries are aligned. Despite refusing to condemn Russian action, Chinese-owned telecommunications company Huawei has suspended operations in Russia for fear of secondary US sanctions (Al Jazeera 2022). Not only does this erode the theorised binary bipolarity but also, just as with Russia, it highlights that China cannot fully detach itself from the US-led West's economic reach. Some would therefore claim a transition toward multipolarity⁴. Yet, as explored above, these poles are not clearly defined and separated. Economic interconnectivity and the role of non-aligned states ensure that the current balance of power is better expressed as complex and ill-defined, compared to the multipolar connotation of a neat and binary division of power.

Thus far, it can be seen that Russia's war against Ukraine has both revealed the

³ Described as a 'high-point' for international legislation and cooperation, the post-Cold War period witnessed the signing of supranational treaties such as the Responsibility to Protect doctrine in 2005.

⁴ See, for example, Christopher Layne (2011) 'This Time It's Real: The End of Unipolarity and the Pax Americana', *International Studies Quarterly*, 56:1, 203-13

contemporary balance of power and offered a reflection on the nature and temporal parameters of the previous post-Cold War order. This period's encouragement of economic integration led, in the long run, to increased complexity via mutual reliance, multiple possible poles of power and a growing non-aligned majority. Implicitly, and through retrospective comparison, this current lack of clarity contrasts with the post-Cold War's well-defined US unipolarity. Indeed, an analysis of change and continuity, especially with regard to the strength of, substantiates the characterisation of the post-Cold War as a distinct relation of power. This affirms that the apparent liberal ideational dominance was not reflective of universal endorsement, instead proving a consequence of US hegemony. Further, it highlights that the war in Ukraine constitutes the *culmination* of a transition away from this epoch into a period ironically defined by its ill-definition. Put another way, the war highlights the complexity that defines contemporary relations of power, and comparatively characterises the post-Cold War order as a distinctly demarcated power balance. This characteristic temporally prescribed the period. These revelations highlight that although the war against Ukraine has arisen subsequently to the complex international order in question, a comparative and retrospective analysis reveals the nature of both the post-Cold War and contemporary period. This undermines the alternative conceptualisation that the war in Ukraine represents the end of an epoch in and of itself. Yet, beyond just reflecting on the balances of power, the war also offers the opportunity to reflect on the systemic foundations which prescribe them.

FOUNDATIONAL CONSISTENCY

Underlying the episodic transition between the post-Cold War and contemporary international order is a paradoxical and continuous relationship between anarchy and hierarchy. Described as a Hobbesian state of nature, traditional IR theory presents nation-states' pursuit of self-interest within a system of anarchic equality as the foundation of the international order. That said, despite the formal sovereign equality that is enshrined in international law through the UN charter, informal hierarchies continue to persist. Indeed, the relative ability to act 'anarchically' and pursue self-interest is prescribed by one's position within these underlying hierarchies. To stress, continuity within this ordered anarchy does not undermine the aforementioned temporal framework for the transition between epochs. Instead, beneath these shifts in power relations, there is a foundational consistency to the international order's nature, with nation-state action largely determined by their relative hierarchical position, or strength at any given time.

For instance, the war against Ukraine offers a distinctive comparison to the US's 2003 invasion of Iraq. Echoing Schmitt, who defines sovereignty as 'he who decides on the exception' (Benton 2010, 283), the US's then hegemonic position enabled Washington's redefinition of sovereign equality in line with its self-interest. Employing international law, which stemmed from the peace terms of the prior Gulf War, Iraqi sovereignty was made conditional on its upholding of the disarmament obligations of Resolution 678 (Murphy 2004). This 'organised hypocrisy', as Stephen Krasner (1999, 15) describes it, to justify the violation of formal sovereignty, echoes both the constructivist arguments that sovereignty is socially conditioned and contingent, and the poststructuralist ontology that this contingency rests on power. Not only does this affirm that foundational characteristics, including 'sovereignty', are the product of social construction (Biersteker 2002, 245), but the relatively muted opposition to their *ultra vires* action also illustrates that a country's hierarchical position guides its anarchic capacity.

Through a comparison of the Iraq war and the Ukrainian conflict, underlying structural continuity of the international order can be substantiated. Although the US's unopposed dominance has subsided, Washington's competing efforts against the Russians to define Ukrainian sovereignty have persisted. Whilst the US has, albeit hypocritically, affirmed sovereignty through an external and territorially defined parameter, the Kremlin has sought to erode Ukraine's foundational legitimacy. Putin, in a 2021 speech, claimed that Ukrainians had been 'taken away... from their historical motherland' (President of Russia 2021), undermining sovereignty by asserting a shared lineage. Even if the notion of sovereignty has shifted, both the Iraq and Ukrainian wars have been argued along socially constructed parameters. On a

similar point, even if the US's strength has diminished relative to Russia, the capacity to assert definitions of sovereignty remains contingent on hierarchical positioning. Anarchic action and hierarchy are consistently interlinked. Thus, beyond reflecting on current relations of power, the war in Ukraine, through case study comparison, reveals the underlying foundations which frame them. These socially conditioned and informal hierarchies have permeated both the post-Cold War and contemporary international orders, shaping the relative ability to act anarchically.

One particularly consistent informal hierarchy of power that continues to shape the anarchic pursuit of self-interest is that of race. The disparity in the extremity of opposition to Russia's war against Ukraine compared to the US's in Iraq proved a partial consequence of the former targeting white Christian Europeans. Rather than race, one could argue that this disparity is, again, a consequence of material differences in power, with the US retaining the capacity to violate sovereignty. However, the relatively limited opposition to Russia's 2015 intervention in Syria, coinciding with the heightened tension in Ukraine, emphasises that the international concern over the latter assumed a racial dimension. Whilst Russia was expelled from the G8 for annexing Crimea, the subsequent G7 body did not sanction its military support for the Syrian regime which had carried out a chemical attack on its population. This hypocrisy is affirmed by the different linguistic and political reactions to the corresponding refugee influxes. For example, reporters, when analysing Ukrainian refugee movements, have been quoted stating that they 'look like any European family' and that this 'is not a developing, third world nation, this is Europe' (McCloskey 2022, 140). This problematically appropriates a hierarchy to the victims of war, normalising tragedy within other regions whilst sensationalising the plight of white, Christian Ukrainians. Most evidential in exposing underlying racial axes is the replication of this racialised discourse within official policy. The EU's 'Temporary Protection Directive' provided residence to any Ukrainian national for twelve months and led to the assumption of 8.1 million Ukrainians within half a year (Venturi and Vallianatou 2022). The same member states have only permitted one million Syrian refugees, despite the conflict entering a second decade (Hankir and Rabah 2022). Put summarily, in spite of changing surface relations of power, both the post-Cold War and contemporary international orders exhibit underlying continuity through the perpetuated informal hierarchies of race.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, despite falling outside the period under analysis, Russia's war against Ukraine, through retrospective comparison, reveals the nature and temporal parameters of the previous post-Cold War international order. Offering a reflection on change and continuity, it illustrates relations of power and the underlying foundations which prescribe them. The collapse of the Soviet and Eastern Blocs rooted the post-Cold War order's characterising nature in a distinctive balance of power. This period concluded with the instigation of Russian action against Georgia, with the event representing a successfully revanchist Russian operation to reassert Russia within its near-abroad region.

This argument undermines assertions of a liberal ideational consensus and is substantiated by the war in Ukraine. Diverging responses to the 2004 and 2014 revolutions, the latter of which proved a precursor to the 2022 invasion, in spite of contextual continuity, illustrate the key differential to be Russia's relative strength. Ultimately, this points toward the fact that the post-Cold War order did not reflect ideational uniformity, nor did it convey a willing Russian benignity towards its eastern European neighbours. Instead, the previous 'permissiveness', whereby the US-led West encroached into Russia's historical sphere of influence, represented an imbalance of power, with US hegemony complemented by Russian frailty.

Furthermore, the Ukrainian conflict affirms the post-Cold War's nature and temporal scope in comparison to the increasing complexity that defines contemporary relations of power. Stemming from increased economic interconnectivity, the geo-politicisation of the world economy has created a mutual reliance between Russia and Europe, specifically centred on energy security. This has shifted power toward a less defined and binary position, which is further pronounced given the diverging reliance within the West itself, the growth of China

and a non-aligned movement of states. These factors, reflecting a shared vulnerability and the interlinking of power, have, in turn, impeded the clarity of contemporary demarcations. Thus, by affirming the contemporary order's characteristics, the war comparatively highlights the nature and temporal boundaries of the post-Cold War period through clear differentials.

Yet, beyond the comparative illustration of difference, the war against Ukraine has exposed underlying continuities which have guided power relations. Reflecting constructivist and poststructuralist arguments, the war reveals the international order to be both anarchic and structured by socially conditioned hierarchies. The competing definitions of sovereignty offered by Russia and the US relay the socially constructed and hierarchical nature of international order. Given that the assertion of sovereignty definitions proves contingent on one's relative strength, it can be seen that one's hierarchical position prescribes their capacity to act anarchically in their self-interest. This underlying continuity extends beyond the material disparities of power, to that of race. Indeed, the different discursive and political responses to the Ukrainian war, compared to previous conflicts, illustrate a 'hierarchy of victims' along racially determined binaries. Therefore, Russia's war against Ukraine can be seen, via retrospective comparison, to reveal the nature and temporal parameters of the post-Cold War international order. Whilst it emphasises a distinctive transition in the balance and nature of power relations, it also reveals underlying continuity with regard to the order's foundational structure, guided by socially conditioned hierarchies.

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Sino-Sudanese Relations: The Implication of China's 'Africa Strategy' on Conflict and Economic Decline in Sudan, 1989-2019

Razan Elshazali

The 'rise of China' in Africa is presented as a major threat, both to Western interests and to Africa itself. It is a widespread concern that China 'traps' African nations into unfair commitments, and that China's heavy investments on the continent actually hinder Africa's development. This paper argues that China's relationship with Sudan under Omar al-Bashir's dictatorship (1989-2019) hindered long-term economic development (specifically sustained GDP growth), focusing on how China's economic, military and diplomatic engagement exacerbated internal conflict and bolstered the regime. By focusing on peace as a necessary pillar of economic development, the paper traces how China's relations with Sudan aggravated decades of conflict, notably in Darfur and South Sudan.

Yet, the narrative of China as an irresponsible, self-interested actor is misguided, evident in the maturation of its 'subtle' diplomacy. There was not one distinct 'Africa strategy', rather, China's course of action changed over time, as it became more committed to securing peace in Sudan. This underreported role as a facilitator and negotiator of peace is often dismissed, despite the gains China made at the time. This is coupled with the large-scale infrastructure projects which ultimately did increase productive capacity in the short run, despite benefits being disproportionately enjoyed by elites in Khartoum. By deconstructing the negative portrayal of China as an ill-intentioned actor, we are also drawn to question the paternalistic representation of African governments as oblivious, passive and naïve. Both views stem from Eurocentric understandings of where knowledge and expertise must be located within global power hierarchies. Thus, it is more meaningful to understand China's relationship with Sudan as a means for the Sudanese government to secure its own interests by gaining access to Chinese funds and support. By considering peace and conflict, we find that, although China did contribute to short term economic growth through its infrastructure projects, this was outweighed by the negative economic consequences of its resource extraction in Sudan, and by the diplomatic and military aid it lent to al-Bashir to pursue blood wars.

INTRODUCTION

China's growing engagement with Africa has been subject to much scrutiny, and the 'rise of China' has been presented as a major threat, both to Western interests and to Africa itself. Chinese foreign policy is heavily guided by the tenets of non-interference and respect for sovereignty, which has proven alarming due to the 'widespread governance concerns' (Carmody 2016, 26) linked with China's aiding of authoritarian governments. China's economic endeavours in Africa have similarly been presented as a concern, with the broad view that China 'traps' African nations into debts for political leverage (Martina and Brunnstrom 2022). On the other hand, Chinese and African sources depict China's investments as mutually beneficial, contributing to prosperity through infrastructure and FDI. Thus, there is a dichotomy between these two representations of China on the continent.

This paper argues that China's relationship with Sudan under Omar al-Bashir's dictatorship (1989-2019) hindered long-term economic development (specifically sustained GDP growth), focusing on how China's economic, military and diplomatic engagement exacerbated internal conflict and bolstered the regime. The al-Bashir regime was detrimental to economic development; the period saw GDP growth fall from 7% to -2.7% (World Bank 2021), as well as bloody wars and ethnic conflicts, including the Darfur genocide and the secession of South Sudan. The Chinese government, as well as a range of Chinese companies, were seminal to the 'changing peace and conflict dynamics' of the time (Saferworld 2012, 16) and were important

stakeholders in the policies pursued by al-Bashir. China was influential in the changing 'trajectories' (Large 2009, 613) of conflict and armed violence through its economic interests in Sudan, military cooperation and diplomatic policy, which ultimately contributed to and prolonged economic decline in the country.

By focusing on one nation in depth, we can understand the complexities and nuances of what is misrepresented as China's single, homogenous 'Africa strategy'. The reality is far from this, as there does not exist a set roadmap for China's engagement with Africa; rather, we find that China's relations and economic impacts differ from one country to another. China's involvement in Africa is context-specific; thus, considering one case study in depth, evaluating the advantages and drawbacks to that involvement, is insightful. These insights can be extended and compared with other nations in Africa while avoiding the dangerous assumption that Africa is a monolithic entity.

This paper focuses on Sino-Sudanese relations, and their economic implications, for a number of key reasons. Firstly, China and Sudan enjoy a historical and philosophical partnership grounded in a shared sense of anti-imperialism, as symbolised by the figure of 'Chinese Gordon'. This political rhetoric is a 'unique, special relationship' (Large 2009, 613), as General Gordon served the British Empire in both China and Sudan, where he was eventually killed by Mahdist rebels. The shared history of anti-imperial struggle is highly salient, and frequently referenced and commemorated by both nations. Secondly, focusing on Sudan presents us with unique insight, as the country during our period of study was almost entirely economically isolated from the Western world, leaving China as the main and uncontested beneficiary of the government. Sudan was placed on the US list of State Sponsors of Terrorism in 1993, followed by sanctions in 1997 (US Department of State 2021). This allows us to draw out the effects of China more narrowly, as it operated largely uncontested by the US as the largest economic partner in Sudan. Lastly, the link between China and Sudan's dictatorship gained media notoriety particularly with the 2008 Olympics, during the height of the Darfur Genocide, in which we saw international pressure on China to stop aiding al-Bashir.

The structure of the paper is as follows, providing a historical analysis of China's involvement. We will firstly explore China's direct contributions to instability, through its oil investments, in which self-interest for oil revenues dictated the ethnic cleansing and displacement of thousands of individuals. Subsequently, the focus will be on examining the military, diplomatic and economic strategies that China employed to shield and bolster el-Bashir's regime. By doing so, China enabled the regime to persist in its war tactics, perpetuate genocide, and siphon funds away from crucial public services.

Next, we will deconstruct the narrative of China as an irresponsible, self-interested actor by highlighting two ways in which China attempted to promote economic growth in Sudan. Firstly, the maturation of their sovereignty policy in Sudan will be examined; over time, China shifted to a peacekeeping commitment, pressuring the Sudanese government to end its wars. Secondly, China's large-scale infrastructure projects in Sudan will be analysed, revealing their positive contribution to the potential future growth of Sudan. Furthermore, the economic impacts of conflict and instability in Sudan, and China's role therein, will be discussed. Finally, we will address the significance of dispelling the Western portrayal of China as a threat to Africa and the paternalistic perspective that portrays Africa as being naive and lacking the ability to manage its own affairs. The international system is in itself a formalised Orientalist system (Qadeer 1981), through which developmental discourse privileges the perspective of the West. This is seen through discussions on Sino-African relations with the use of terminology such as 'trapped', which connotes the child-like, naïve qualities of African nations at the hands of China. Thus, Western paternalism is a contemporary manifestation and continuation of the colonial West's civilising mission; to 'save' Global South nations from themselves, to guide them according to western norms of right and wrong.

CHINA AND SUDAN RELATIONS

Firstly, we will explore two distinct ways in which China hindered economic development in Sudan. We will discuss how its direct oil extraction exacerbated conflict dynamics, by

displacing local communities and fuelling inequalities. We will then consider the ways in which China aided the regime militarily, diplomatically and economically allowing the regime to escalate its wars with little repercussions of international law.

The US imposed sanctions of 1997 and 2007 pressured Western nations into ending their operations in Sudan, due to the regime's cited human rights abuses in Darfur, alleged support for Osama Bin Laden and involvement in terror activities in East Africa. Grounded in its sovereignty-based political framework, China's 'no strings or interference' policy was highly attractive to al-Bashir, which contrasted the 'confrontational pressure politics' of the West (Large 2009, 615). China was 'insulated' from this political pressure, and thus continued its engagement with Sudan, acting as a 'commercial, military and diplomatic beneficiary of Western sanctions in Sudan' (Natsios 2012, 63).

Oil was at the heart of China's relations with Sudan, and Chinese investments in this sector made it an important stakeholder in the internal affairs of the Sudanese government (Large 2009, 615). China's activities in this sector date back to the early 1990s, and in 1996 it bought 40% of the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company (Human Rights Watch 2003). These investments embedded China in a web of 'enduring violent internal instability' (Large 2009, 610), which in turn made China a politically significant domestic actor. This foregrounds our argument that China has hindered Sudan's long-term economic growth, as China's pragmatic drive to extract oil and protect its material interests hindered long term economic development in two ways: firstly, through the direct socioeconomic impacts of this extraction on local communities, and secondly through bolstering al-Bashir's regime.

OIL: THE EFFECTS OF CHINA'S DIRECT RESOURCE EXTRACTION IN SUDAN

China's investments in oil and its direct resource extraction hinder long-term economic development by displacing and destroying local communities, concentrating wealth in the core and exacerbating inequality. This contributes to internal conflict, as we see that Chinese oil investments were cited by rebel groups in Darfur and South Sudan as sources of major discontent, which made China part of the central government's desire to politically consolidate the peripheries through brute force. This was crucial to 'sharpening' the existing discourse of marginalisation employed by Darfurian and South Sudanese rebels against the government in Khartoum (Large 2009, 618). Rebels saw China as inextricably linked with the violence of the state, which 'brutality architected' the displacement and ethnic cleansing of thousands (Large 2009, 618).

This is evidenced by the series of conflicts that arose due to Chinese oil operations and the attacks they faced. These companies seized land, destroyed property, intensified land disputes, 'despoiled the environment and failed to provide jobs' to the local community (Carmody 2016, 32). Locals targeted these oil operations, such as the abduction of 9 Chinese workers in Southern Kordofan in 2008, near oil-rich Abyei. The 'lack of local benefits' (Large 2009, 618) from oil revenues and underdevelopment were major arguments made by the militias, which shows the deep involvement of China in the cited reasons for conflict, underscoring the negative economic and social impact of China's dealings in Sudan.

Similarly, the division of oil revenues was a large contributing factor in the Sudanese Civil War. Efforts to control oil-rich areas were coupled with extreme armed conflict, hence the fierce criticism of oil companies (from the US and the West, but also from China, India and Malaysia) for their role in oil exploration and armed violence in Sudan. While Western companies were pressured into withdrawal, China remained in operation in Sudan. It continued operating in areas which were brutally 'cleared of civilians and rebels' (Saferworld 2012, 29). This shows China's complacency in facilitating armed violence against marginalised groups in the country, particularly in Darfur and South Sudan, which was a major contributing factor to internal conflict and the breakup of the country. Through its resource extraction, China exacerbated existing tensions between the central government and periphery, oil-rich parts of the country, contributing to civil war. As put by a local activist, 'when the government ethnically cleansed people to clear oil passages, Chinese companies would come later. This was done for Chinese interests' (Saferworld 2012, 31).

Overall, China became party to the armed violence of the central government through its oil operations, which was seminal to the marginalisation of local communities. China was perceived by local actors as negatively contributing to the dynamics of conflict, and these grievances suggest that instability would have been less likely if China had not aligned itself with the regime's brute force. The lack of local benefits and underdevelopment of periphery regions in Sudan due to Chinese-led oil investments shows the divisive impact of China's economic engagements, and how it is difficult to separate 'economic and political activity' from one another (Natsios 2012, 61).

CHINA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Secondly, China hindered long-term economic development in Sudan by bolstering the authoritarian regime, providing al-Bashir with the a) military, b) diplomatic and c) economic support necessary to consolidate his power. Without China's support, it is unlikely that he would have been able to do so amidst international sanctions. China often went against these sanctions and leveraged its position in the UN Security Council to enable al-Bashir to bypass the punitive measures of the UNSC's mandate, thus exacerbating conflict.

MILITARY

China has been heavily criticised for its role in providing arms and military equipment to al-Bashir, which were used in Darfur against civilian populations. It directly violated UN arms embargoes (Sudan Tribune 2008) by transferring weapons to non-state actors such as the Janjaweed, who carried out ethnic cleansing in Darfur. China sold over US\$55 million worth of small arms to Khartoum during the height of the abuses in Darfur, supplied almost 90% of Sudan's small arms each year, helped construct 3 ammunition factories in Khartoum and provided US\$100 million worth of Shenyang and F7 fighter jets (Saferworld 2012, 21). These military resources were coupled with training from the Chinese military; this material and moral cooperation between China and Sudan magnified the scope of war, as well multiplying the casualties and collateral damage. The arms provided by China allowed the Sudanese forces to pursue larger targets, escalating war and intensifying conflict (Carmody 2016, 32), thus hindering the economy.

DIPLOMATIC

China was also instrumental in lending al-Bashir the diplomatic support needed to shield his regime from the resolutions of the UN Security Council. China 'leveraged its position in the UNSC' to impede the council's efforts to stop the Sudanese regime's human rights abuses (Natsios 2012, 61). While China had the potential to contribute meaningfully to negotiations in the UN, it threatened to use its veto to ensure resolutions attacking al-Basahr were dismissed or amended. China consistently abstained from resolutions regarding Darfur, such as the ICC Resolution in 2005. Thus, China's diplomatic policy 'diluted' genuine intervention from occurring, such as a proposed oil embargo (Saferworld 2012, 17), which ultimately made China an obstacle to humanitarian intervention in Sudan. It is likely that China's oil interests contributed to its diplomatic orientation, to protect its heavy material investments. Overall, China's position in the UNSC largely hindered the peace process and diluted any effective action from being taken to end the conflict. This prolonged al-Bashir's regime, and allowed him to continue without the threat of repercussion.

ECONOMIC

China also provided the Sudanese government with the financial ability to purchase large amounts of firearms, despite existing evidence that they were being used to displace local populations for 'oil exploration and production and later to commit atrocities in Darfur' (Saferworld 2012, 1). Over 60% of oil revenues from China were used on military spending, and China also facilitated 'easy financing' for firearms (New America Foundation 2008). Overall, China's military, diplomatic and economic policies shielded and empowered the regime in Sudan, exacerbating the intensity, scope and prolonging of conflict by resisting international

pressures on al-Bashir, which was disastrous for economic growth.

PEACE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In brief, China's direct resource extraction, and its military, diplomatic and economic support of the regime have hindered economic development in Sudan; conflict, civil war and instability have been exacerbated. Now, the particular economic implications of the above will be discussed, drawing on existing theory on the effect of war on economic development. China's shielding of the government prolonged intense internal conflict, such as the genocide in Darfur. It also prolonged the economic mismanagement of the regime and the diversion of funds from crucial public services to military goals.

War can be seen as a reversal of development (Strauss-Kahn 2009), as the consequences of violent conflict on economic growth are negative for a variety of reasons. Violent conflict exacerbates poverty, destroys infrastructure, and harms financial and human capital through death and fleeing outside of the country. In addition, it channels resources towards armaments, which weakens institutions and public sectors through reduced funding. In terms of growth rate, one year of conflict can reduce growth by 2.5%, and as wars average at 7 years, economies can shrink by 15% due to war (Strauss Kahn 2009). By that same token, peace, which can be briefly defined as a 'socio-political environment without violence, conflict and war' (Santhirasegaram 2008, 808) promotes economic development. The literature on peace and economic growth is rich (see cross-country review in Santhirasegaram 2008), and it concludes that both are closely intertwined, mutually reinforcing one another; peaceful conditions generate economic growth, and economic growth provides the stability needed to reduce the risk of violent conflict.

Let us now consider Sudan, and how China's involvement hindered economic growth. Decades of conflict under al-Bashir were disastrous for economic growth, and it is evident that economic crisis was a large factor in the unrest which saw his overthrow in 2019. Statistics on the holistic economic impact of the regime are not yet available, however, we can examine the effects of one specific conflict to illustrate this point. The conflict in Darfur alone cost \$90 billion from 2003 to 2017; this sum accounts for the destruction of villages and infrastructure, inhibited economic growth and the 'loss of lifetime earnings for the war victims plus costs of peacekeeping operations' (Vision of Humanity 2014). There have been over 300,000 casualties, 3 million displacements and thousands of villages torched in the conflict, as well as millions of dollars in crops and livestock destroyed. While the conflict in Darfur was the largest, the regime also pursued armed violence in the war with South Sudan, unrest in the East, and elsewhere. Thus, we can assume that the overall, holistic economic cost of all conflict on Sudan is much higher. China's arm in the Darfur genocide, as well as in empowering the regime, thus harmed the economy through prolonging and escalating conflict.

In addition to the direct economic consequence of destruction, the regime's prioritisation of war in the national budget had adverse consequences on the public sector. Sudan spent 'far more lavishly on guns than on butter' (Vision of Humanity 2014), with estimates that the government spent over 70% of its budget on security and the military, compared with only about 1% on health and 2.3% on education (Dabanga Sudan 2016). Overall, the cost of war was 'an unaffordable drain on Sudan's resources' (Vision of Humanity 2014). Thus, China's role in facilitating the conflicts in Sudan, and the exacerbation of instability, is highly significant in contributing to the economic crisis which Sudan faced due to heavy military spending and destruction.

CHINESE PEACEKEEPING AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

This part of the paper will consider how certain events caused an alteration in China's approach to al-Bashir, and how China's 'subtle' diplomacy actually contributed considerably to a facilitation of peace. China's role in this is often underreported and dismissed, as it operated in a manner distinct from traditional Western pressure politics. Arguably China attempted, to some extent, to contribute to bringing about peace in Sudan, as well as economic development through large-scale infrastructure projects for future growth. While the dominant portrayal

of China is as an exceptional threat that contravenes Western norms, in reality China's policy in Sudan matured and shifted over time in response to the internal challenges it faced.

It can be seen that major domestic events in the late 2000s led to an observable shift in China's foreign policy with Sudan; The 'PR disaster' of the 2008 Olympics and the immense international pressure on China, the previously mentioned attacks on Chinese oil workers, and the growing threat of internal coups in Sudan (Natsios 2012, 64). These prompted higher political engagement by China, which can arguably be seen as a 'transcendence' and maturation of its sovereignty principle (Large 2009, 620). China began to 'influence without interfering', by pushing a 'gentle diplomacy' directive (Large 2009, 619); this took the form of close consultations behind closed doors with political elites and al-Bashir himself, in order to persuade him to end the conflict. This is significant to our question, as it allows us to evaluate whether China as passively supported Sudan as is often argued by Western media, looking at the commitments China made to peace, and in turn economic development.

PEACEKEEPING

By focusing on the change in China's approach to peace, we can see that China began to encourage settling the conflict in Darfur from 2004 onwards (Gaafar Karrar Ahmed 2010: 6). The most noteworthy example of China's commitment to peace is evident through the deployment of Chinese troops as UN peacekeepers in Darfur, which al-Bashir initially deeply opposed. It is likely that it was a phone call from China's Hu Jintao, at the encouragement of President Bush, which persuaded al-Bashir to accept the peacekeeping operation (Natsios 2012, 66). It was the largest peacekeeping force in history, with 25,000 troops sent to the area. This example is also significant in highlighting that, contrary to popular belief, China and Western powers can cooperate in trying to achieve the shared aim of resolving conflict, and that Chinese goals can indeed align with those of the international community.

Another shift from the existing norms of Chinese policy can be seen through the public criticism by Chinese government officials of the regime in Sudan. This materialised in Jintao's 'Four-Point Principle on Solving Darfur', which was committed to improving the situation in Darfur (China Org 2007). These examples show that China is not as complacent as often made out to be – through 'reasserting their position' in relation to al-Bashir and resisting his wishes (Large 2009, 620), it made attempts to restore peace and stability, minimising the effect of economic crisis.

Ultimately, however, we cannot overemphasise the difference in China-Sudan relations over time. Despite international pressure on China, it did not 'decisively transgress' (Saferworld 2012, 21) the limits of what it potentially could have done to promote peace and economic development in Sudan. The maturation in China's policy can also be seen as self-contradictory; while China played a large role in initially fuelling violence and in aiding the regime to carry out its wars, it also began to diplomatically support the peace process when it became apparent violence would risk its investments. This contradiction is most strikingly illustrated through the fact that Chinese peacekeepers were being attacked by Darfur rebels wielding Chinese firearms. This shows that their contributions to peace were arguably too little, too late, as the initial role it played in undermining peace evolved dangerously. While China contributed by providing personnel to keep peace and engage in positive efforts such as demining, it paradoxically maintained an incautious arms policy which exacerbated conflict.

INFRASTRUCTURE

While China's investments in Sudan, and Africa as a whole, are regarded with deep suspicion, the accounts by Chinese and Sudanese stakeholders are highly encouraging, highlighting the positive effects of investments and the benefits of trade on economic development in Sudan. This Sino-Sudanese school of development finds that infrastructure projects are key to securing sustainable economic growth by benefiting from the potential power and water resources generated by dams. 'Headline infrastructure projects' (Natsios 2012, 66), such as the Merowe Dam, have been built and led by the Chinese government and commercial agencies. This US\$1.5 billion project provides water for irrigation and has doubled the supply

of electricity in Sudan. The dam is the largest hydropower project by dimensions in all of Africa, and is necessary for the growing population of Sudan, and the growing demand for electricity as the population urbanises (Saferworld 2012, 23). Chinese sources also highlight their effort to encourage social development and combatting poverty. The China Foundation of Poverty Alleviation provides US\$9.3 million to build and maintain medical facilities in Sudan (Saferworld 2012, 24), and other initiatives range from the donation of school buildings to the building of cross-country routes (Belt and Road Research Platform 2021). We see a philanthropic dimension to China's dealings in Sudan, built on the rhetoric of their philosophical partnership.

However, there have also been criticisms of the approach taken by China regarding infrastructure, and the impacts they have on conflict dynamics in Sudan. While the Merowe Dam benefits the population through irrigation and electricity, the construction displaced 60,000 people from the area and there was violent suppression of resistance (University of East Anglia 2015). Similarly, there was violent conflict with the construction of a dam in Kajbar in 2007, with 4 casualties and tens of injuries (International Rivers 2011). It is necessary to consider how these infrastructure projects can simultaneously improve economic development through their immediate benefits, while also bearing negative impacts on local communities through intensification of armed conflict and government suppression. In addition, infrastructure is similarly embedded with discourse of core-periphery inequalities, as government corruption meant that revenues were concentrated in the hands of the few, with local communities, especially in Darfur and the South, not reaping the rewards of these profits.

Overall, China's peacekeeping efforts and huge investments in infrastructure have fostered a duality of interpretations, which shows that assessments of economic development are not as straightforward as assumed. While both examples contribute, at least in some way, to a commitment to peace and providing economic benefits to Sudan, they also expose concerning economic outcomes. It is therefore worthwhile to argue that Chinese investments benefit Sudan in the short term, through increased productive capacity and access to resources such as electricity, yet the benefits of this are disproportionately felt by existing elites.

REPRESENTATIONS OF CHINA AND AFRICA

To conclude, we will briefly discuss the prevailing assumptions and constructions of China and Africa. While China is represented as a threat with 'malicious intent', Africa is regarded through a Western paternalist lens as naïve, susceptible to being 'fooled' by China (Yang 2021). These paternalistic attitudes are harmful and have material consequences for Africa. They shape the global system, and intervention policies, as Western nations and institutions occupy a 'saviour' role which relies on the apparent incompetence of Global South nations. Paternalistic language contains 'elements of domination', as the international system aims to 'solve' the problems in Africa, without knowing or caring about the viewpoint of Africans; most intervention occurs without consent, 'against the will of intended beneficiaries' (Barnett 2012). Thus, it is important to discuss how representations of Africans as naïve are both harmfully patronising and consequential for international governance.

While China does engage with authoritarian regimes and there are legitimate reasons to criticise its dealings in Africa, this criticism often stems from a Eurocentric view of global politics. Presenting China as a threat means that many of the positive contributions it makes in Africa go unnoticed or are interrogated with suspicion. Details of China's funding and mediating of the Sudanese Civil War with IGAD, cooperation with Western envoys in the peace process, and efforts to pressure the Sudanese government through 'subtle' diplomacy are 'not at all nearly as reported on' as the support of China for al-Bashir (Verjee 2016). It is important to recognise that this can be a common narrative which overlooks the nuances and maturation of China's policy in Sudan. By understanding this complexity, we can see how China both improves and hinders economic development in Sudan, as a single project can be understood in a variety of ways. They have multiple impacts which need to be considered alongside other socioeconomic factors, such as how Arab Sudanese people in Khartoum and political elites may benefit more from China's investments in the country, while these same

projects displace and ethnically cleanse those in Darfur and the South. We can also see that China's policies have had unintended negative consequences, as highlighted by the paradox of Chinese peacekeepers being attacked by Chinese firearms.

In addition, the narrative framing China and the West as irreconcilable enemies is dangerous, as it presents both countries as having unaligned values. This is not the case, as both countries have worked together to secure peace, such as Bush and Jintao directly. Interestingly, China's 'soft' diplomatic pressure arguably complements and functions in accordance with the aims of Western civil society. Where Western troops are 'untrusted', Chinese troops continued peacekeeping in difficult conditions (Verjee 2016). This shows that there is a role for China in securing peace in spaces which the West is unsuited to fill. Overall, China is a complex actor which at times pursued self-defeating policies, contributing both to conflict and peace.

This is coupled with widespread Western paternalism when engaging with Africa, specifically the passing of judgement on Africa's 'liberty of action, as justified by referring to the welfare of the coerced' (Igbogbo 2020, 9). The view that China hinders economic development in Africa is often tackled from this angle, as African nations are referred to as being 'trapped' by China's economic diplomacy, and Africans are constructed as passive actors who do not know where their best interest lies. The language used in the media often is highly patronising, suggesting that African leaders are 'worryingly' oblivious to China's supposed agenda, or that they are not competent enough to fully understand the terms of contracts they sign (Josephs 2023). These literary examples from Western media are a continuation of imperial era civilising missions, through which Western state discourse is privileged vis a vis the Global South. Through this paternalistic language, African nations are infantilised and represented as needing Western guidance and protection. Thus, through arguing that China hinders economic development in Sudan, we must acknowledge the agency of the government; China did not march into the country and exploit it, but rather the process of resource extraction and intensifying instability can be seen as part of the Sudanese government's exercise of its agency. The regime sought to secure its own interests, and its relations with China were the result of negotiations, deliberations, and choice.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, while China did contribute to some form of economic development in Sudan through its investments, infrastructure and attempts to secure peace in the country, the consequence of its resource extraction and support for al-Bashir's regime ultimately enabled an economic crisis which Sudan is yet to recover from.

China hindered the long-term economic development of Sudan in two distinct yet related ways. Firstly, through its resource extraction and oil operations, China played a large role in the displacement and destruction of local communities to make way for various projects. This exacerbated existing tensions and conflict, as any dissent was met with the brute coercive force of the state. Secondly, China's support of al-Bashir's regime contributed to the prolonging and intensification of violent conflict, as well as to the government's funnelling of revenues to continue its wars. By providing the regime with firearms and training, alongside diplomatically shielding the country from accountability and sanctions, China lengthened and increased the scope of the war, and convoluted attempts to secure peace at the UNSC. In addition, China enabled the regime to bypass international sanctions, providing them with the financial tools and support necessary to survive.

While we see an evolution and maturation in China's policy over time, through a commitment to mediating the peace process, these efforts were undermined by China's other endeavours. China's initial complacency in Sudan's abuses and military support undercut its peacekeeping operations, as China's firearm policy frustrated their approach to peace and made it harder to negotiate. The peacekeeping effort *could* be seen as retrospectively beneficial to aiding economic development by securing peace, however, the damage and destruction of war in Darfur and South Sudan had already occurred on a large scale. Similarly, while China's infrastructure projects have significantly economically benefited Sudan, such as expanding

the productive capacity of the oil sector, the development of irrigation infrastructure and the generation of electricity, these efforts similarly did not sustain any sustainable form of growth or widespread benefits. These projects were linked to the concentrated wealth of the elites and the displacement of local populations, which itself had negative economic effects and intensified the conflict. The cost of Sudan's war has been catastrophic, and even 4 years after toppling al-Bashir's regime, the country is still dealing with the consequences socioeconomically.

By focusing on Sudan, it becomes evident that aspects of this experience can be compared with China's engagement elsewhere in Africa. By considering violent conflict, we can see that Chinese investments and resource extraction have been linked to outbreaks of conflict in other African nations, such as Zambia (Carmody 2016, 33). Sino-Zambian relations have also come under heavy scrutiny, as China's 'non-interference' policy 'exacerbated authoritarian tendencies' by providing no strings finance to the regime (Matfess 2018). Zambia is the 3rd largest recipient of Chinese investments in Africa, a fact which has generated discontent among anti-government Zambian groups, as these transactions with China were shrouded by the regime. There was also growing anti-China sentiment among the masses, who resented the unsafe working conditions within Chinese factors, and the alleged influx of Chinese nationals who were stealing jobs (Jalloh and Wan 2019). Zambia is an important source of copper, and the extraction of this resource by Chinese mining companies has triggered several pay riots in the past, many of which have led to shootings and assassinations (Reuters 2010; BBC 2012). This contentious political atmosphere saw a series of mass protests erupt following elections in 2016, exacerbated by the ongoing debt crisis. Zambians took to the streets against what they saw to be the undermining of the country's sovereignty by 'selling' state-owned companies to China, and the redirection of funds into the hands of government elites. This period also saw extreme government repression of riots, similar to the state violence seen in Sudan.

Thus, similar to the Sudanese case, Chinese investments in Zambia exacerbate existing patterns of corruption and government repression. China's 'no strings' financial policies bolster authoritarian leaders and fuel riots and resentment due to resource extraction. While the Zambian context features other dimensions, particularly in regard to Sudan's more pronounced core-periphery, ethnic divisions, there are similarities in their experience with Chinese resource extraction and state corruption. Thus, this study of Sudan provides a coherent, chronological account of the ways in which China can exacerbate cycles of violence by bolstering authoritarian regimes, which can be drawn upon to examine the economic effect of violence growth elsewhere in nations with heavy Chinese investments. China's foreign policy was guided by notions of mutual benefit and non-interference, and the economic implications of this can be extended to situate China's interaction with other African countries within existing political processes.

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Three Questions on Political Representation

Jack Yu-Jie Chou

What is political representation?

It is the gist of democratic state theory. A democratic state is premised on the concept of the people, yet this 'people' must be an abstract one to make theoretical sense and can only exist in reality through political representation. Meanwhile, the existence of the people's representative can only be ascertained by its calling of procuring public order by making and suspending law.

Who is a representative?

The parliament, the monarch or 'the concrete crowd' may each proclaim to be (the representative of) the people and procure public order in their own ways. In normal times of liberal democracies, the struggle for representation is merely latent and the parliament is the closest to the representative, while the concrete crowd is withheld by the institution of liberal democracy.

How should the representative act?

This is the classic debate: whether the representative should act according to either the represented's expressed wishes or its own understanding of the best action to pursue. The dichotomy's essence is one of the law as authority and as verity. Yet the conclusion drawn from either pole is that the representative should act publicly: it should not consider the wishes or interests of fractions lesser than the people. This notion is applicable not only to the parliament but also to the monarch in its office and the concrete crowd as citizens, otherwise they lose their representative quality. The critical subtext of this essay is a polemic against the vulgar notion that the supreme legitimacy in democracies belongs to the concrete crowd; the concrete crowd is at most a representative, which enjoys no primacy and it wrongly claims directness.

Nowadays almost all countries proclaim to have representatives, for almost all countries proclaim to be democratic. Political representation links the people with the state and legitimises the latter's coerciveness and the state's legitimacy is embodied and concretised by the representative's acts of producing the law. The concept of representation itself infers legitimisation and thus by inspecting the normative constraints on the representative's acts, it is to ascertain when and whether this legitimisation is present. But I must primarily address a question before considering the representative's acts: *what is representation?* One may begin from its literal meaning: to re-present, or to make present again of something absent (Pitkin 1967, 3, 8-9). Yet this barely helps. The term 'representation' has been used so commonly in various contexts, it is too easy either to employ an oversimplified behavioural formula of 'A represents B if A does x and B does y'¹ or to deem some other concepts (e.g. trusteeship, agency or commission) as representation. While the former's problem is to treat the concept of political representation too superficially and thinly,² the latter suffers the danger of talking past each other. It is difficult to reach a true consensus if one talks about trusteeship, while another commission.

In this essay, I aim to address the primary question of *what is representation* by pointing out that political representation cannot be fully understood without recognising its role within the concept of a democratic state. Its status as an inevitable part of democratic state theory is my starting point for answering the second question: *who is a representative?* Then, I turn to the final question: *how should the representative act?* These are the three questions on political representation.

Yet, besides scholarly interest, what is the significance of the three questions? That is, in what particular light should this essay be read? While I propose a general theory of political

¹ For example, Pettit (2010, 426) defined representation as such: A represents B iff A, with B's authorisation, purports to speak or act for B.

² Where the concept of political representative is defined by a formula of representative's behaviour, scenarios beyond the context of public affairs and the state may be problematically included, and the concept's uniqueness may be overlooked. For example, Pettit (2010, 427) regarded proxies in committees as an illustration of representation.

representation, this is at the same time a polemic against the vulgar (in the original sense of the word) notion that the supreme legitimacy in a democracy belongs to, as termed in this essay, ‘the concrete crowd’, i.e. the multitude that materially exists in either an election, a plebiscite or simply the streets. This crowd often looks too much like the people itself, and the people does theoretically and literally have the supreme legitimacy under the doctrine of democracy. Thus, if one chooses not to defer to the crowd, he may more easily condemn the crowd’s demands as being ludicrous or vile; yet the issue of legitimacy would ostensibly fidget him. However, the flaw in this fallacy is precisely that, while the concrete crowd resembles the people, it is not the people itself. Instead, as I argue, the concrete crowd at most represents the people, just as its parliamentarian opponent proclaims to do. Therefore, not only does the crowd not enjoy a superior legitimacy derived from its wrongly assumed primacy or directness, it faces the same normative constraints on its acts due to its representative quality. The purpose here is to theoretically withhold the concrete crowd and defuse the latent danger it incurs in democracies.

In Part I, I argue that representation is an inevitable part of a democratic state theory: a democratic state is premised on the concept of the people and this people must be an abstract one. This abstract people requires representation to exist in reality, while the existence of the abstract people’s representative can only be ascertained by its calling of procuring public order by making and suspending law. In Part II, I argue that there are three common candidates for the representative: the parliament, the monarch and, often mistaken for the people itself, ‘the concrete crowd’. In normal times of a liberal democracy, the parliament is still the closest to the representative. In Part III, I argue that the essence of the classic debate concerning how the representative should act is, as the representative’s calling infers, the dichotomy of the law as authority and as verity. While fundamentally the notion of the law as authority subsumes the law as verity, both poles of the dichotomy indicate that the representative should act publicly: it should not consider the wishes or interests of individuals or fractions that are lesser than the people. In Part IV, I conclude.

I. WHAT IS REPRESENTATION?

An important notion of political representation is that it concerns public affairs and the state, which is the source and apparatus of legitimate coercion (Weber 1946, 3-4). It is hence distinguished from some private ‘representations’—if they can be termed so—that concern individuals in their private capacities (e.g. ‘legal representation’ or ‘business representation’). However, the connection between representation and the state is often simply explained by seeing the former as an instrument of expediency; while the state expands and the population increases, having a congregation of all citizens to decide on every public affair is impractical. Thus, ‘a substitute for the meeting of the citizens in person’ is needed (Hamilton, Madison and Jay 2003, no 52). In order to gather the citizens’ opinions, representation is ostensibly required as a necessary measure—a lesser form of democracy. This perspective of indirect democracy implies that representation is somehow inferior in legitimacy, as a wide gap lies between the citizens, who are primary, authoritative and ‘majestic’,³ and the representative, who is secondary, instrumental and ready to be overpowered and disposed of if the citizens intend so.

Yet this is not genuinely representation but only something lesser, as representation plays a more important role in state theory, a theory answering Rousseau’s (1973, Book I) fundamental enquiry: man is born free and everywhere he is in chains. What can make it legitimate? A democratic state theory is an answer to this inquiry by invoking the dictum that the people should rule itself, i.e. popular sovereignty; the legitimisation of the state’s coerciveness towards the people on the basis of the people’s own authority. While Laclau (2005, 169) rightly noted that the concept of the people is the *sine qua non* of democracy, the very notion of ‘the people’ must first be ascertained. It cannot simply be the mere collective of the majority voters or the current citizens, as they are but multitudes of individuals and fail to achieve the wholeness required by the concept of ‘the people’. These arbitrary multitudes of individuals provide no justification as to why other individuals, who are just as free and

³ For example, Cicero (2004, para 105) noted that ‘majesty...is identical with the greatness of the Roman people’, that is, ‘majestas Populi Romani’.

equal, should defer to them. Instead, 'the people' must be understood as one person formed by all members of all time, so that it can form a single will that is superior to its members' wishes (Hobbes 2014, XVI). That is, 'the people' must be an abstract person, but not a concrete crowd. For instance, 'We the People' in the United States Constitution makes no normative sense if it is understood as the concrete voters in 1789; it must be understood as the abstract *Volk* of the United States, which has existed since then until now. Only until the multitudes abandon their natural separateness within and become a unity can the coercion be legitimised as a member deferring to his union's will. There is no clash of wills between the union and the member, only the union's general will correcting the member's mistaken opinion of that will.

The abstract notion of the people brings out the necessity of political representation: the abstract people's will must be concretised to be known and political representation serves exactly this purpose, i.e. to bring the abstract people physically present by a concrete entity. Thus, representation is indeed literal, that is, to *re-present*: the relationship between the represented, i.e. the abstract people, and the representative is not trusteeship (which is proprietary), agency (which is contractual), or commission (which is managerial)- it is existential (Schmitt 2008, 243), i.e. the representative exists as the abstract people. Representation is thereby more than mere authorisation, for deriving authority is only incidental to representation. A representative is hence not an instrument for procedural purposes; it is to exist as something that cannot be physically present by nature, namely the abstract people. The people as the represented is not simply the collective of citizens in one election; it consists of both voters and non-voters, both persons with and without suffrage. It consists of the present generation and the past and future ones, as it is the constant personality of the state. The people is quite the opposite of absent; it is omnipresent, yet exactly because of its wholeness it can never be physically present by itself. It hence exists only through representation and a claim of one being 'the people', 'the nation' or 'the state' is, whether realised by the claimer or not, a shorthand for being *the representative of* the people, the nation, or the state. It follows that representation is public: the represented is the people as a unity, not fractions and their interests, nor anyone's secret wishes. It is the one general will in unity, whose expression becomes the coercive law, which requires representation and this will belongs to the people and hence the state in order to legitimise the latter's coerciveness.

Representation is also juristic: it is the representative's calling to procure public order, which is achieved by making law and, exceptionally, suspending law. This inherent connection between representation, the people and the law was concisely summarised by Sieyès (2003, I): a 'nation' is a body of associates 'made one by virtue of common laws and common representation'.⁴ Instinctively, the 'public order' procured by the making and suspension of the law refers to the state's protective function regarding its people's safety to prevent a war of each against all: *salus populi* (Hobbes 2014, XXX). Yet more fundamentally, it is to be understood as the concept of *ordre public*, which is, as succinctly summarised in the Siracusa Principles (UNCHR, 1984), 'the sum of rules which ensure the functioning of society or the set of fundamental principles on which society is founded', i.e. a society's posited normality. Only by determining or adjudicating these principles can the representative constitute a legal system, as norms can only be applied in normality, that is, a 'homogeneous medium' (Schmitt 2005, 13) provided by *ordre public*. The *ordre public* sense covers the *salus populi* sense. This calling is not a duty arising from contractual, proprietary or managerial relationships. Rather, it is required for ascertaining the representative's existence. The existence of not the law itself but the public order proves that the representative exists. The representative exists by expressing thus through its acts and these expressions are either to make law within the public order or to suspend law to save the public order. There can be no expression and no system of legal norms without the public order, while the public order must be procured by that legal system and, exceptionally, its necessary suspension. This existential calling thus demonstrates a mutual dependency between public order and law: the law requires the public order to be made, while the public order requires law making and suspending to be maintained and it is only through this reciprocal interaction of public order and law one can ascertain the breathes and expressions of the representative.

⁴ The 'nation' here, as a synonym of the people, is distinguished from its common reference to a shared culture or ethnicity. The gist is the nation's own consciousness of its unity (Schmitt 2008, 261-262).

Therefore political representation is existential, public and juristic. It is not agency, trusteeship or commission. It may be, and apparently has been treated as, analogous to these relationships for descriptive purposes, yet metaphors are no more than metaphors. It is not an implantation of private or procedural relationships to the represented and the representative, but something *sui generis*: representation is the gist of democratic state theory and it is the foundation, rather than the result, of the law.

II. WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE?

By asking *who is a representative*, the most pressing question is not *who is the most representative representative* (which is a question that must be answered with reference to each state's constitution and actual situation) but first and foremost *who can possibly be a representative*. Starting from the concept of political representation as the gist of democratic state theory and its juristic nature, when identifying *who is a representative* it is necessary to inspect bodies who make or suspend law, as by that act they are proclaiming themselves as the representative who declares or determines the people's expression. Several bodies can thus be considered as a representative, subject to each state's constitutional structure. Nonetheless, echoing Aristotle's (1999, Book III) classification of constitutions, three possibilities are considered here, namely the parliament, the monarch and 'the concrete crowd'.⁵

First, the parliament is the obvious candidate, considering its legislative power. One should note that while it must be the unitary people that is represented, it must also be the parliament as a whole that can be considered as the representative. Members or committees of the parliament, regardless of how they are elected, are not representatives individually. For the parliament, what is truly expedient is not representation but electoral designs such as geographic constituencies or parties.⁶ They bear no significance in state theory, and these designs are not entitled to an independent will that constitutes law—unless they proclaim to be not merely a design but (the representative of) the people itself, which is exactly the case in some states where the party is itself the people's representative and hence its will matters. This is to be distinguished from liberal democracies, where parties are purely electoral designs. And if they are mere designs, as a representative of A District or B Party, the elected himself is no representative but merely a member of it and neither the District nor the Party is visible in the representation between the parliament and the people.

Secondly, the monarch may be a representative. This category is not one of chief executives; rather, it enshrines a historical line of self-proclaimed representatives by the heads of state: the monarch, or the Hobbesian-style sovereign, who is a single person, represents the state's unitary personality. Further, from acknowledging that the United States President's 'authority would be nominally the same with that of the king of Great Britain' (Hamilton, Madison and Jay 2003, no 69) to deeming the Weimar *Reichspräsident* the substitute emperor, the *Ersatzkaiser*, there is no difficulty to observe the heredity of such an office from monarchs to presidents, who both symbolise national unity. The president, on whom the national votes are concentrated, may sometimes be deemed as more representative than the parliament, as observed by Marx (1963, II) in his comparison of the French President and the National Assembly. The monarch's candidacy can be seen in two aspects: on the one hand, he often participates in law making, either by promulgation or veto power (Grant 2006, 326). On the other hand, although often restrained by the parliament, he has the prerogative 'to act according to discretion, for the public good, without the prescription of the law, and sometimes even against it' (Locke 1982, 159-160) or even has the discretion to suspend law and declare a state of exception (Agamben 2005, 11-14). These highly symbolic powers illustrate the authority, in its authentic sense of 'prestige', derived from the people by representation: the authority is vested only because the monarch represents the people.

Thirdly, which is often neglected, 'the concrete crowd' may be a representative. It refers to a materially existing crowd participating in a national election, plebiscite, or any movement in the name of 'the people' or 'the nation', acting within or without a given institution. The concrete crowd should not be mistaken as the abstract people itself since it can only be a representative of the abstract people. Like the monarch, the concrete crowd becomes

⁵ This is by no means exhaustive but merely demonstrating the most common candidates. A less usual but not unheard of candidate would be a constituent assembly, which may in reality be either closer to a parliament or to a concrete crowd. However, one may reasonably doubt as to whether any potential candidate, regardless of its name, would find itself utterly different from either of the three common candidates or a mixture of them.

⁶ Federalism is theoretically too much of a complication to be discussed here, save that it can be roughly understood as a union of multiple centralised states. Here, 'geographic constituencies' refer only to those in a centralised state.

representative through not elections but voluntary actions: self-proclaiming, participating, and acting. The concrete crowd makes and suspends law in a less obvious yet far more fundamental and often radical way. The aforementioned view of indirect democracy, i.e. representation as expediency, is exactly the view of the concrete crowd. For the concrete crowd, in an election of legislators there is only a delegation of legislative power—instead of any genuine representation—between itself and the elected. The ones elected are merely instrumental delegates, while the genuine representation lies between the concrete crowd itself and the abstract people: the concrete crowd calls itself ‘the people’ or ‘the nation’, although often not realising this, effectively claiming to be the one true representative of the people. For the concrete crowd who implicitly proclaims to be the genuine representative, the real capacity and the supreme legitimacy of law making and suspending remains within its hands. Within the institution, it exercises this power by acting as electorates to indirectly select committees of delegates or directly interfere through legislative plebiscites;⁷ without the institution, it exercises this power by participating in movements to interfere with the law and the law is sometimes suspended in an absolute sense, when the previous legal system is totally abolished.

This important distinction between the abstract people and the concrete crowd is necessary in order to truly grasp the dispute between Burke and Rousseau, i.e. the dispute between parliamentarianism and participatory democracy. Both theories can be understood under the same framework of political representation, under which a concrete entity represents the represented, i.e. the abstract people; the only issue in dispute is exactly *who is the representative*. On the one hand, a genuine theory of parliamentarianism, i.e. the parliament and the parliament alone represents the abstract people, rightly points out that the concrete crowd is not necessarily involved in political representation. Burke (1999, 11-12) rightly noted that, *if* the parliament is the representative of the one nation, then the concrete crowd, i.e. the constituents, is out of the picture of political representation. He thus distinguished a member of parliament from a member of Bristol and rightly rejected the notion of the latter. On the other hand, a theory of participatory democracy, i.e. the concrete crowd, brings the abstract people present by being the true representative of the people. This indicates that genuine political representation is between the abstract people and the concrete crowd, while the parliament is out of the picture. As noted above, it follows that the relationship between the concrete crowd and the parliament is then something other than representation, namely mere delegation. This is exactly how Rousseau’s (1973, Book III) critique of ‘representation’ should be understood. He argued that ‘the people’, which he actually meant the concrete ‘populace’, could not be represented by the parliament. This is correct, as both entities are concrete and need no political representation. The gist is where he noted that ‘the people’s deputies, therefore, cannot be its representatives: they are merely agents’. This aptly points out where genuine political representation does *not* lie and is also the true antithesis of participatory democracy on the issue of political representation: the parliament’s representativeness, rather than the concept of political representation itself.

Thus, it can be seen that under the same structure of political representation the critical difference between Burke and Rousseau is who represents the abstract people and who is out of the picture. Parliamentarianism contends the parliament in the former and the concrete crowd in the latter, while participatory democracy contends the opposite. Such a dispute reveals the essence of the relationship between candidates of the representative: it is not one of competition (where the issue is who is the *better* one) but of struggle (where the issue is who is the *legitimate* one) This is an important distinction rightly identified by Schumpeter (2003, 271-272) despite his unwise dismissal of the latter.⁸ Regardless of how the concrete crowd, or any other candidate, insists on itself as the one true representative—or rather exactly because of the insistence—the struggle for representation among them is constantly potential. Instances include clashes between parliaments and kings, or congresses and presidents, on the issue of who stands for the state and whenever a crowd becomes impatient with the institution and decides to interfere. The thread of these incidents is every belligerent’s attempt to claim that *l’état c’est moi*, that it is (the representative of) the state and to accuse the others of imposture. The ultimate test of the representative, as Schmitt (2005, 5) contended on the

⁷ Thus, the understanding of legislative plebiscites being an instrument of ‘direct democracy’ is problematic, as the concept of ‘direct democracy’ itself requires reconsideration: the voters in these plebiscites are themselves representative and no more ‘direct’ than the parliament. ‘Direct democracy’ is no more than a battletory of the concrete crowd in the struggle for representation against the parliament, as ‘direct democracy’ in its true sense—the people is present and rules itself—is mythical not only practically but also theoretically in modern states.

⁸ Runciman (2007, 107-108) was close when he characterised ‘objections to the actions of representatives’ as ‘a plausibly competing claim to speak in the name of the person’ (emphasis mine). The problem of this is that, despite his endeavour to distinguish such an account from the Schumpeterian dismissal of representation, he still failed to notice the political, ie struggling, nature of representation. Regular competitions that are common in elections are not struggles for representation, for no true issue of legitimacy is at stake.

issue of sovereign, is who decides on the state of exception. It would suffice here to simply say that, in normal times, such struggles are latent in liberal democracies. In such times, the monarch's role in making law is overpowered by the parliament, while its power to suspend law is too exceptional. The concrete crowd, acting as electorates, only appear briefly once every several years. Hence, the parliament is the most apt candidate for representative in a liberal democracy.

By a particularly illuminating comparison between political and theological theories, one may first note how Tertullian referred to the Son in the Trinity as *repraesentor* of the Father (Vieira and Runciman 2008, 8-9) and one may then see the affinity between the accusation of imposture during the struggle for representation and the concept of Antichrist:

[T]he man of lawlessness ... will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshipped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God (2 Thess, 2:3-4).

Similarly, the concrete crowd will oppose and exalt itself over everything that is called the people, so that it sets itself up in the people's temple, proclaiming itself to be the people. If this perspective of political theology is to be further developed, eventually the liberal way of democracy, including not only its instruments such as free and fair elections but also its underlying principles such as legal-rationality, finds its justification and value as being the *katechon*.

This biblical concept refers to the force which withholds the revelation of the Antichrist (2 Thess, 2:6-7). Meanwhile, liberal democracy restrains the concrete crowd by institutionalising them as nothing but another state organ among other branches. The legalised institution of 'the citizens' or 'the electors' is perceived, subsumed and temporarily tamed by the parliament-made law as merely another constitutional branch, functioning as an electorate or a special legislature. It follows that the absence of free and fair elections is detrimental not because it is undemocratic, but because it is to deny the concrete crowd's institutionalised approach of representation, i.e. acting as a contained electorate and it is at the same time to compel the crowd to resort to far more drastic and unpredictable means. In other words, liberal democracy withholds the concrete crowd from proclaiming to be the representative and denying the legitimacy of the parliament and it withholds the chaos incurred by the outbreak of struggles for representation.

Therefore, although the three common candidates—the parliament, the monarch, and the concrete crowd—may each be a representative under different circumstances, in a liberal democracy the parliament is still the closest to the representative in normal times where there is no apparent struggle, as it is the common body that makes law. Meanwhile, the concrete crowd, who blurs the very concept of representation by blurring the distinction between itself and the abstract people, is withheld by the liberal way of democracy from challenging the parliament.

III. HOW SHOULD THE REPRESENTATIVE ACT?

Concerning *how should the representative act*, a lasting debate, particularly on the representative's behaviour, consists of a dichotomy that goes by several names: delegates-trustees (Christiano 2018, 213), mandate-independence (Pitkin 1967, 144), imperative mandate-free mandate (Sobolewski 1968, 96) or commune-parliament (Marx 1966, III). These names describe the same dispute: the representative should act according to either the expressed wishes of the represented or the representative's own understanding of the best action to pursue for the represented (Dovi 2018). To illustrate this normative question, a scenario may be imagined: when the representative or its member has a yes-no question to answer, what should be considered in order to reach the conclusion? The dichotomy suggests that one either consider what the represented expressly wants or what is best for the represented according to oneself. Here, bearing the nature of political representation as the centrepiece of state theory in mind, it is hoped that the debate may be tackled more precisely and hence settled.

Before discussing the dichotomy, a preliminary step is to ascertain the subjects and objects. First, as contended, the representative should be unitary⁹ and the legislators are only members of it. The representative and its members should share the same criteria for behaviour, as it is unsound to assert that the representative as a whole should pursue the general good while its members should pursue each one's local good. The unitary people is not just an accumulation of comprised portions, as the people's will or welfare cannot be derived from the sum of the portions' wishes or interests—an important distinction between *volonté générale* and *volonté de tous* rightly recognised by Rousseau (1973, Book II). A representative's member, because he is nothing else but a part of the representative, is of public quality, he represents the people as a whole and should act however the representative as a whole should act. Secondly, as stressed repeatedly, 'the represented' does not refer to anything less than the abstract people, be it voters, fractions, parties or constituencies, which are at most electoral designs out of expediency and bear no theoretical weight. Thus, while many might understand their own questions on representation as between the legislators and the constituencies that elect them¹⁰—which are contemplations valuable in their own right—they cannot be answered by the theoretical concept of representation, as constituencies are plainly invisible in the representation between the people and the representative. Thus, one should note that the represented is always the people.

I return to the dichotomy. As contended, neither delegation nor trusteeship should be mistaken for the nature of representation, as they are only metaphors for the representative's behaviour. If so, how should the dichotomy be characterised? On the face of it, it is a wish-interest demarcation, what one expressly wants may not always be rational in the sense that it may not necessarily be in his benefit and when this inconsistency occurs, the normative question arises. Yet this is to miss the forest for the trees. To grasp the essence of the dichotomy, one should be reminded that representation is juristic; it is the representative's calling to procure public order by making and suspending law. The importance of enquiring *how should the representative act* is that its acts become the law. The representative expresses through its acts—literally 'an act of parliament'—and these acts constitute the legal system. *How should the representative act* hence becomes the question of *what should the law reflect*. Should it reflect either the people's will or a reason that can be perceived and pursued by rational beings? Therefore, the dichotomy, is one of will and reason, of the law as authority (the law being legitimised by its source) and as verity (the law being legitimised by its content).

This authority-verity dichotomy echoes Hobbes's (2014, XXVI) famous contention: *auctoritas non veritas facit legem*. It illustrates the law's two facets: as *auctoritas* and as *veritas*, or as authority and as verity. That is, when one seeks legitimacy in the law, one can perceive either *voluntas* or *ratio*, or will or reason. On the one hand, the law is the decision made by the representative—a reflection of its will, which is concrete and particular. On the other hand, the law consists of norms, which are impersonal as they entail a reason and the representative shall, according to its understanding of that reason, express the law that reflects the reason, which is abstract and general. This notion shows the true tension in the dichotomy of *how should the representative act*: to make law as authority. The representative is required to act like the people's mandate, it defers to the people's will, which is the source of all authority, to make law as verity. The representative is required to act independently, so that it may debate within itself, deliberate and eventually come up with a reason.

Hobbes's stance is undoubtedly clear: authority, that is the state's will, makes law, regardless of any reason there might be for the law. Yet one should be cautious about the implication of this line of argument: acting like the people's mandate means that the representative should defer to not a fraction's wishes but the people's will. Thus, it is incorrect to say that because the law is authority, a representative's member should defer to the wishes or interests of his constituency—representation exists only between the unitary people and the representative. Yet a difficulty seemingly emerges if the representative should defer to the people's will: if the abstract people exists only through representation, whatever is expressed by the representative would be the people's will. This notion is explicitly contended by Hobbes:

⁹ The legislative design of bicameralism should be understood as a derivation of federalism (see no 6); nonetheless, even if there exists multiple houses of legislature, this does not contradict the notion that the parliament as a whole, which consists of all houses and other parts, is unitary.

¹⁰ For example, Mansbridge (2009, 369) theorised 'representation' as a model of principal-agent relations, where the constituents are the principals and the elected 'representatives' are the agents.

[T]he commonwealth is the legislator. But the commonwealth is no person, nor has capacity to do any thing, but by the representative, ... and therefore [the representative] is the sole Legislator. (2014, XXVI)

Could this difficulty be circumvented by invoking the idea that there might be more than one representative, or at least more than one candidate for it, and a representative should defer to another's expression? For instance, if the concrete crowd in a movement claims that the people's will should be *x*, does it follow that the parliament, who originally claimed the people's will being *y*, should defer to the former? The fallacy in this attempt is to neglect that the representative's existence lies in its capacity to express its decision. A representative must insist that its own, but no other body's, expression reveals the people's true will. At the moment a representative defers to another's expression, it concedes its defeat in the struggle for representation—conceding it is no longer a representative. So, if the parliament still intends to proclaim itself as the representative its subsequent expressions, no matter how they in substance coincide with the concrete crowd's claim, must be attributed to itself as its own decision. Therefore, on the authority pole of the dichotomy, when one argues that the representative should defer to the people's will whilst it acts, it is not to say that some private or local wishes or interests should constrain it, but quite the opposite. It should not be limited by them because if it does, it loses its quality as the unitary people's representative. Besides this, little or no constraint can be actually imposed upon the representative because the people's will, even if it might not be conceptually identical to the representative's will, can only be expressed by the representative.

On the other end of the dichotomy, acting independently is for the representative to rationalise. Here, the law as a reflection of a reason—be it justice, equity, liberty, or simply *raison d'état*—is legitimate not by its source but by its content. This notion of law is considered as something intellectual and deliberative, a quality that is almost exclusive for parliament (Schmitt 2000, 45). It is not to say the monarch or the concrete crowd can never deliberate. Yet they are supposed to deliberate poorly because they are of an active nature. Contrarily, the essence of parliament is 'public deliberation of argument and counterargument' (Schmitt 2000, 34-35). The parliament room becomes a sanctum allowing reason to be conjured through its members' unrestricted public debate, guaranteed by a particular freedom of speech, namely the legislative immunity, which is not only a prevention of political persecution, but an assurance to the free exchange of expressions which the law as verity requires. This understanding of verity and its method of production is well demonstrated in an argument advanced by Mill (2008, II), showing the relationship between publicity, debate, and truth: public discussion assists the seeking of truths and prevents them from becoming dogmas. Therefore, following this line of argument, the representative should, rather than just have the right to act independently, as it must not allow external wishes or interests to hinder its rationalisation whilst it debates and deliberates. It is not for the representative and its members to contemplate and compromise their private portions of wishes or interests, as they must act as representing the unitary people. Nothing other than reason, be it fractions, parties, or constituencies that have elected the representative's member, has any say when the representative acts.

At this point, does the dichotomy still exist? Both notions of the law dismiss the false claim that the representative or its members should defer to anything lesser than the people itself—this is the unavoidable conclusion once a fundamental point insisted by both notions is recognised. Representation, which is the gist of democratic state theory, exists only between the representative and the unitary people. Meanwhile, the two poles are not irreconcilable to the extent that, whilst the representative is procuring public order, it is at the same time determining and adjudicating fundamental principles. That is, the content of reason, which that particular society is built upon, and all subsequent legal norms, although deriving authority from the people's will, can only be effective if that reason is decided in the first place. The victory of the state in acquiring supremacy within a territory does not only imply *cujus regio ejus religio*, but more fundamentally *cujus regio ejus ratio*. Hobbes's stance in the

authority-verity dichotomy is eventually correct, as it is the authority, namely the people's will, that ultimately prevails and subsumes the verity. Yet even in the most decisionist Hobbesian state, an underlying instrumental reason exists in the law—the rationality in the law is to fulfil the purposes of the state's will (Tuori 2011, 62); that is, reason exists in even the most authoritative law. This Hobbesian sort of reason is not necessary, for the content of reason may very much appropriately be justice, equity, or liberty. The point is that, these contents are chosen and determined by the people's will—they are introduced by authority and with that posited reason, the deliberative representative may then debate and deliberate upon it. Whether one perceives the law as authority or as verity, the answer to *how should the representative act* is effectively the same: the representative and its members should not allow private or local considerations to affect them when they are acting. Failing to do so would lead to loss of representative quality in that body who proclaims to be the representative.

While the question of *how should the representative act* has most commonly been directed to the parliament, there is no reason why it should be confined to it. It is true that the law made by active representatives, the monarch and the concrete crowd, is something much closer to authority than to verity and in that case, which is usually exceptional, they are not expected to debate and deliberate but to simply act. This difference is embodied in the law's two different facets, yet it does not affect the public quality of representation: all representatives, including the active ones, should not contemplate privately or locally. For the monarch, this is nothing novel: the concept of office has long existed in order to understand public power in contrast to something personal. For instance, the monarch has two bodies: one as king, which is private and one as crown, which is public (Loughlin 2006, 63-64). However, for the concrete crowd, it would be something worth reminding, as this notion and their representative, i.e. public, quality, is often neglected. They should acknowledge that they are not acting as private or local persons with their private or local wishes or interests, but as the representative's members, citizens whose civic duties are exactly the result of citizenship's representative quality (Loughlin 2003, 70). There should not be any private or local person in a national movement, plebiscite, or election, but only public citizens, who together act as a representative and the representative should not, and indeed does not, consider the wishes or interests of any individual or fraction that is lesser than the people. The representative should act publicly.¹¹

IV. CONCLUSION

What is representation? Who is a representative? How should the representative act? These are the three questions on political representation I have attempted to answer in this essay.

WHAT IS REPRESENTATION?

Representation is the gist of democratic state theory. It is the key to legitimising the state's coerciveness, as the abstract people, which is the *sine qua non* of democracy, requires representation to be present in reality. Representation is existential: it is a particular form of the abstract people's existence, rather than mere authorisation. Representation is public, it is the relationship between the representative and the unitary people. Representation is juristic: it infers a calling of procuring public order by law making and suspending and only through this calling one can ascertain the representative's existence.

WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE?

The parliament, the monarch, or the concrete crowd may each be a representative under different circumstances. The gist is that the three common candidates may each proclaim to be (the representative of) the people and hence make or suspend law in their own ways. The concrete crowd, whose representative quality is often neglected, makes or suspends law by acting as an electorate or in a movement. In other words, at those moments, it is, or proclaims to be, a representative. Struggles for representation are always potential among the candidates; yet in normal times of a liberal democracy, such a struggle is merely latent and the parliament is the closest to the representative, while the concrete crowd is withheld

¹¹ One might, like Mill (1962, 206-207), spot how the design of a secret ballot may hinder the required publicity. Besides mere expectation, we are unable to scrutinise whether an attending person is acting publicly while voting secretly.

by the institutions of liberal democracy.

HOW SHOULD THE REPRESENTATIVE ACT?

The representative should act publicly: it should not consider the wishes or interests of any individual or fraction that is lesser than the people. This is the conclusion drawn from either side of a classic debate: the representative should act according to either the expressed wishes of the represented or its own understanding of the best action to pursue for the represented. The essence of this dichotomy is one of the law as authority (the law being legitimised by its source) and as verity (the law being legitimised by its content). On the authority pole, the representative should defer to the people's will. Thus, the wishes or interests of anyone lesser should not constrain it. On the verity pole, the representative should debate and deliberate independently according to a reason. Thus, it should not consider anything other than that reason. Ultimately, the authority pole subsumes the verity pole, as the content of reason is posited by the people's will, yet reason exists in even the most authoritative law. The conclusion is inevitably that the representative should act publicly, and this is applicable not only to the parliament but to all representatives. Both the monarch in its office and the concrete crowd as citizens should act publicly, otherwise they lose their representative quality.

This theory of representation is a polemic against the vulgarity that permeates liberal democracies, the apocalyptic assertion that there is no higher supremacy than the concrete crowd. The theory proposed here is itself an attempt to subsume and contain such vulgarity into the structure of political representation and the vulgar into the office of political representative, so that the crowd, which cannot be eliminated and yet must be restrained, 'is neither excluded from voting, lest it should seem disdainful; nor is it made too effective, lest it should be dangerous' (Cicero 1829, Book II, XXII).

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Pressured to ‘Pass’: Performance, Surveillance, and Medicalisation Explored as a Trans Sociology

Dani Hidalgo-Anguera

This article aims to problematise the idealisation of passing in both the trans and gender diverse (TGD) community and the medical field that holds epistemic privilege over the TGD community. Through an exploration of Butler’s concept of gender-as-performance, this paper finds the idealisation of passing as contributing to a reinforcement of the gender binary, despite TGD existence broadly being considered otherwise. Through a further elaboration on the mechanisms of regulation and normalisation that drive TGD people to surveil, and in turn normalise themselves—both in the form of social and physical discipline, this paper concludes that passing is, in itself, a harmful ideal for TGD people and society in a broader sense, and is a mechanism of control, rather than true freedom, for TGD communities. Although it is concluded that passing as an ideal is problematic, I caveat that it is a realistic desire that comes as a symptom of a society with an oppressive and rigid gender binary, and attempts to challenge this binary must come from areas beyond simply the rejection of passing.

INTRODUCTION

Trans and gender diverse (TGD) people comprise a group that is under increasing scrutiny, surveillance, and marginalisation in modern society. An increasingly common theme within TGD communities is finding ‘passing’—meaning to pass as cisgender—to be an end goal of social and medical transition. Drawing heavily on the ideas of Butler in relation to gender performance and construction, Foucault’s concept of power, and Garfinkel’s microsociology—especially in relation to accounting and breaching within social interaction, this paper aims to problematise passing, and more specifically the conditions that create a desire to pass for TGD people. Through an examination of how gender as a performative system contributes to and is shaped by a hegemonic system of gender, we begin to find issues in the idealisation of TGD gender conformity. We further explore how this is constructed through the role of external influence, and, in turn, internalised knowledge of gender, that pushes TGD people to surveil and normalise themselves as part of the constructing process of their own gender identity. Applying these concepts, this paper then moves on to criticise the medical field as an instrument of cis-normative knowledge production and in turn discipline of the TGD body, before ultimately concluding passing as a concept that, although beneficial for the individual, is symptomatic and reinforcing of a binary gender system, that contributes to the oppression of TGD people more widely. As such, this paper concludes the idealisation of passing as an outcome within TGD communities and the medical field more widely as problematic, although noting that it is symptomatic of a wider system of gendered power.

GENDER TROUBLE AND IDENTITY UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Key to understanding the construction of gender identity in TGD people is to consider gender in non-essential terms, and rather as an externalised performance. For Butler (2006), gender identity is constructed as an individual performance influenced and constricted by an existing hegemony of the binary sex system. As such, despite a claimed existence of a gender ‘essence’ in the individual, gender is rather constituted by the gendered expressions that are claimed to follow on from it (Butler 2006, 25; 31–32). In this sense, gender is considered to be constructed by its own expression, with the communication of gender through behaviours, language, and appearance constituting gender itself (Butler 2006, 33). Within Butler’s non-essential

understanding of gender, we can quite clearly view the role of internal identity construction and the external influence on this process, and in turn, the role of ideological forms of power in how individuals ‘do’ gender (Butler 2006, 22; Carey 2022, 28). The most prevalent ideology in the background of gendered logic is the heterosexual matrix, which posits a hegemonic understanding of gender as binary, embedding certain modes of appearance, behaviour, and language with the culturally intelligible meaning of either being ‘man’ or ‘woman’ (Brickell 2006, 93). Using a post-structuralist approach, we can understand that beyond any institutional creation of meaning, individual gender performances not only are influenced by, but create, reinforce, and reshape the heterosexual matrix, by way of giving authority to the hegemonic logic of a binary gender system when abiding by the meaning it assigns to gender in a ‘coherent’ fashion (Morgenroth and Ryan 2020, 1124–1125). This also opens up the possibility of subverting the hegemonic understandings of gender through creating incoherency, or for Butler, ‘gender trouble’ (Butler 2006, 24). In this sense, we can view gender in an interactionist framework, where the symbolic interaction of gendered individuals is the main contributor to the construction of gender ideals and gender roles and its policing in the form of Garfinkel-like systems of background expectancies. Underlying expectations of social norms and practices—in this case relating to gender coherency—have individual behaviour, and encourage punishment for those who cause gender trouble in the form of accounting (Garfinkel 1967, cited in Quéré 2011, 13). Of course, this is not to discount the role of institutions and more ‘top down’ forms of enforcing gender conformity, but instead to place a larger focus on the individual interactions that contribute to a hegemonic discourse on gender and to the pressure to conform to gender roles. The understanding of gender we have established in this section, as a performance, that is communicated and enforced in a primarily decentralised manner, is key to the argument of this paper and the following section. This notion allows us to problematise the idealisation of passing as the desired outcome for TGD people as a reification of an existing gender system (Jones 2020, 63) that continues to oppress the TGD community and beyond.

Passing, simply defined, ‘refers to the process whereby a person adopts the guise of a different group's member in relation to one's race, gender, nationality, or sexual orientation’ (Dias et al 2021, 691). For the TGD community, passing entails being recognised as their gender identity, and further, in the case of binary trans people, being seen as cisgender. Key to understanding the desire to pass, then, is an understanding of identity construction as an externalised process that requires recognition. A major role in the construction of gender identity is the identification process, which through one projects themselves into a group that requires a culturally defined, intelligible meaning (Hall 2003, 277). This requires the adoption of meaning-imbued practice, costume, and language that communicate externally one's own identity in an intelligible fashion (Dias et al 2021, 696). This identity is then under continual surveillance by other individuals performing and accounting within the knowledge system of the heterosexual matrix. Beyond an external communication, however, I propose that TGD people also experience an internalised gender surveillance in the construction of their own identity, where an incoherence between themselves and a culturally generated, generalised other's perception of gender ideals, creates internal distress, felt as shame – or psychologically labelled as gender dysphoria. We may also view this external process as akin to Du Bois' concept of double consciousness in regard to race, with TGD people viewing themselves through a cis-normative lens, that compels them to pass as a ‘desirable’ cis identity, although with the added level of this recognition being a form of identity affirmation (Anderson et al 2020, 56). This combination of the intra-psychological surveillance of one's own gender identity, and external surveillance and consequence for gender incoherency in the form of accounting – which manifests itself in malicious misgendering, discriminatory practices and at extremes, actions of hate, creates a strong desire to pass as a relief from legitimate physical and psychological harm. Passing is strongly associated not only with decreased discrimination externally (Lerner 2021, 264), but also a reduction in rates of mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety (To et al 2020, 7–8). This paper is not seeking to challenge the notion that passing is a benefit to TGD people on an individual basis—but rather seeks to problematise

the practice as a community idealisation, and an as externally enforced solution to the distress TGD people feel. Passing creates an issue in that in conforming to these culturally generated categories of gender, as discussed above, TGD people reinforce this rigid understanding of gender (Dias et al 2021, 693; 700), that includes the notion that gender must follow on from sex, through the process of medicalisation, as discussed in more detail below. Furthermore, the practice of passing subjects TGD people, as well as cis people, to even stronger systems of gender surveillance and rigid gender boundaries, with TGD identity at risk of being discredited should they step outside of the ‘acceptable’ boundaries of gender. For Butler, TGD existence in itself challenges the heterosexual matrix (Butler 2006, 24; Anderson et al 2020, 48), but I argue that, in the sense that power is always adaptive, the creation of significant pressure on TGD people to conform in culturally intelligible ways to the existing system of gender, in order to gain not only external, but also self-recognition of gender identity, is a form of normalising power that seeks to bring binary TGD identities back within this gender matrix by forcing a ‘normal’ gender performance, or embodiment, epitomised by the medicalisation of binary trans experience.

One may argue that non-binary persons present a challenge to this argument, in that their very existence challenges the notion of a gender binary, and that their refusal to conform to one of the binary gender categories presents a significant subversion of the heterosexual matrix in a way that binary trans people do not (Nicolazzo 2016, 1174). To this argument, however, we may note that although an advancement on binary challenges to the hegemony of our current gender epistemology, non-binary identities still fall prey to the same regulatory and surveillance-based practices as binary identities do, with similar internal and external pressure to conform to a supposed ‘middle-line’ or ‘third gender’ of androgyny, in both behaviours and appearance (Nicolazzo 2016, 1182) which in turn struggles to truly escape the gender binary, but rather balances traits into a third category (Taylor 2019, 200–201) (Galupo et al 2021, 108). Most notably, though, there is a severe lack of literature on non-binary people and the ways in which they perform gender, construct their identity, and in turn their impacts and relation to, the heterosexual matrix. This gap should begin to be addressed in order to gain a greater understanding of these concepts more broadly.

MEDICALISATION AS DISCIPLINE OF THE TRANS BODY

In a Foucauldian sense, we can understand the body generally, and more specifically the TGD body, as a vital site of power relations, in that it is subjected to forms of societal discipline via the conceptualisation of a norm and an other, ultimately culminating in a level of self-surveillance to remain within the norm, akin to Foucault’s panopticon (Foucault 1975, 138). Surveillance, of course, must begin with some criteria—one cannot define what is outside of the norm without a norm established—and so surveillance operates as a clear tool of power for an authority that establishes and adapts this norm. In order to exert this power over the body most effectively, this authority needs to present these norms—referred to by Butler as the heterosexual matrix—as a strictly hegemonic view of the body and physiology, as to ensure there is a stable enough universalism around conceptions of the body in order to allow for a clarity of criteria, and in turn effect, of both internal and external surveillance against this criteria. In doing so, we can understand these hegemonic views with regard to self-surveillance as taking on the views of a generalised other, similar to Mead’s conception of the social self (Mead 1934, 247, cited in Adams 2003), and so are internalised in the minds of TGD people. In ‘post-traditional’ societies, the epistemologies that are used to surveil against no longer derive their universalism from a divine or holy text—but instead are most strongly replaced in the form of scientific, ‘rational’ knowledge that not only naturalises but eternalises a condition of the body beyond any level of reflexivity. Butler (2006) notes how in turn, this separates the social element from the body in regard to sex, with a ‘natural sex’ created that is ‘pre-discursive’. In understanding this, we can understand the hegemony of scientific understanding regarding the body as providing effective authority for the purposes of Foucauldian discipline on TGD bodies—this conception of the body is established in order to be measured against some norm, and in turn controlled, providing a ‘medically useful

space' (Foucault 1975, 144).

Within this, we must also understand the danger in that these views, in being presented as hegemonic, continue to reproduce themselves in the very scientific knowledge that informs medical practice and medical conceptions of norms. This concept has already been explored in regard to patriarchy—Martin (1991)'s paper notes how gender-based ideals have affected the research into the biological process of fertilisation, with the sperm being presented as active, and the egg as passive, in line with patriarchal understandings of gender. It is important to consider then not only how this research is shaped in its conception by hegemonic understandings of gender and sex (and thus gendered bodies), but also in how this research further entrenches these understandings as part of an 'immutable' biology that presupposes any and all social analysis, but is instead a natural order in its own right (Butler 2006, 13). In doing so, we understand that medical knowledge of the body gives further authority to power-constructed views, and in turn, it is in part this authority imbued knowledge, that informs the construction and performance of gender-coherency as discussed in the first section, with medical knowledge informing social practice. These views, in turn, become rather than vertically imposed, horizontally imposed, via means of social and self-surveillance. Following on from this understanding of the body as a site of discipline, deriving from a 'scientific' authority that is both created by and reproduces hegemonic understandings of the body, especially with reference to sex—we can now apply this to explore more directly how the medicalisation of the trans experience, fuelled by the desire to pass, affects the TGD community in a social and psychological sense.

First and foremost, we find that the majority of sociological literature on TGD highlights this medicalisation of trans experience as a commonplace ideal. In the UK, the process of legal recognition of gender identity requires multiple medical consultations, and a diagnosis of 'gender dysphoria' (King et al 2020)—a clear institutionalised process in which the medical field is handed authority over the TGD body. Once again, this stems from an understanding of TGD experience as being outside of the hegemonic sex/gender norm, and thus being trans becomes pathologised. In simpler terms, something is viewed to have 'gone wrong' as TGD people break with the hegemonic understanding of sex as binary and its impact upon gender as just the same. This Foucauldian idea of the 'deviant' in turn creates not only a conception of TGD experience as a disorder to be treated (Giami 2022, 5), but also grants the authority and epistemic privilege of the medical field over TGD identity in its whole (Pearce 2018, 28).

This medicalisation, in turn, becomes the dominant view of TGD people—as a 'problem' to be solved, deriving from the pre-discursive and 'universal' understanding of sex as being an immutable fact, making complete social transition 'impossible' without medical transition, and thus creates pressure to transition in order to reclaim some degree of normality amidst being marginalised. Once more, this comes down to a level of surveillance of the body—in which gender discourses present certain expectations of the 'normal' body for that gender, and in doing so, creates the means by which to punish those who transgress those norms with social exclusion or irrecognition. In Goffman's terms, the TGD body becoming stigmatised or devalued, which in turn creates social rejection—the TGD body becomes a discrediting factor, and in turn, not only creates external rejection but internal anxiety. As such, the TGD body becomes an object of Foucault's self-surveillance and in turn discipline, with the TGD person objectifying their body and comparing it to the hegemonic ideal of a gendered body, leading to shame and in turn a desire to normalise their body (Wang et al 2020, 731–733). We may also consider how binary transgender people may feel a 'double' effect in their desire to embody the idealised body of their gender, with both surveillance against the ideal of a cis body for their trans identity, and that of a hyper-feminine/masculine body within their gender. This suggestion is reinforced through this finding in other groups, such as Carey (2022)'s study, which found a double effect in the idealisation of thinness in a group of female runners, for their identities both as runners and as women, constituting a desire to embody the discourses they were exposed to in both communities (Carey 2022, 28; 35). In either case, we can problematise the desire to pass, and to conform to an idealised gendered body, in that TGD people then feel pressure to undergo procedures such as facial feminisation surgery,

that conform to epistemologies of the gendered body, constructed by, and reproductive of: the oppressive dominant ideals of gender. Externally, though we must consider how this entire process is often navigated in medical institutions which adopt a medicalised conception of TGD existence that is hostile to gender non-conformity, and which paints 'passing' as the ultimate goal of the TGD experience and so delegitimizes TGD people who fail to conform to the gender binary (Grzanka et al 2018), as well as reifies an oppressive gender structure. Once more, this is not to question the success of medical transition in reducing gender and body dysphoria (van de Grift et al 2017; Dubov and Fraenkel 2018, cited in Grzanka et al 2018, 17), but rather to understand this TGD experience as a symptom of medically reinforced, hegemonic understandings of sex, gender, and the expectations/effects this has on the body, or in other words, we may understand gender dysphoria in relation to the body as a 'cultural' illness contingent on the society it exists within (Cockerham and Scambler 2021, 34).

Perhaps the greatest evidence of the problematic nature of the medicalisation of TGD bodies, and its reciprocal relationship with binary ideals of gender, is the care or lack thereof, provided for non-binary bodies. Although primarily, we find that care provided and guidelines for it are few and far between, with a lack of clear practices, we also find that the care available trends towards the removal of gendered features such as breasts (Friedman et al 2023, 12), as is aligned with the social notion above of this trend towards androgyny as an idealised non-binary body. Which, once more, fails to escape gender surveillance, but rather adapts to create a gender 'middle ground' between the binary. As was found in the section above, though, there is an overwhelming lack of literature on the medicalisation of non-binary bodies, and on non-binary healthcare in general, and as such, we cannot definitively say whether non-binary bodies are subject to the same discipline in order to normalise as binary trans bodies are. We can, however, see a slight pattern of trend towards androgyny in care, and so may suggest that, pending further research, normalisation towards a 'middle' gender may be at place.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, this paper has problematised the idealisation of 'passing' in TGD communities and the medicalisation of TGD bodies that reinforces that. Through an exploration of gender as non-essential, and having both centralised and decentralised modes of enforcement, we have found that individual actions and community desires can be subject to scrutiny in how they affect and are affected by the heterosexual matrix, as it is these actions that constitute the shared intelligible meanings of gender. As such, we have found that the act of 'passing' is inherently a political act that fails to subvert these hegemonic understandings of gender, and in doing so, not only reinforces gendered ideals, but also upholds cis-normativity, further delegitimizing those who do not transition to perform their chosen gender—such as those who do not voice train, wear 'gendered' clothes, and even medically transition. This idea has been further explored through problematising the medicalisation of TGD experience, which has become the dominant producer of knowledge over TGD life, as being shaped by, and further reinforcing a cis-normative ideal, that views TGD people as a problem to be solved—with medical transition being a means by which to assure they do not effectively challenge the heterosexual matrix.

As has been made clear throughout this paper, these conclusions do not come as a means to criticise the individual action of passing—for it is recognised that for reasons of safety, mental health and freedom from discrimination, social and medical transition is crucial to the individual well-being of TGD people, and is within TGD communities, highlighted as a source of joy and self-congruence. Rather, these conclusions come from a stance of criticising the conditions by which this has become a compulsory TGD experience—i.e. the prevalence of the heterosexual matrix, or any other name given to the current hegemonic understandings of gender and its relation to sex in the modern world. In turn, this paper moves that challenging these discourses, in the form of causing 'gender trouble' and a removal of medical transition and 'passing' as a compulsory ideal in TGD communities, would broadly benefit TGD experience, lessening both external and internal discomfort felt by these communities.

These ideas could be taken on by further research into improving TGD healthcare by incorporating the social understanding of gender into medical practice, and in turn, demedicalising TGD experience. Of course, this also requires research into how to change the social conditions that produce the psychological experiences of TGD people—this may be further explored in both the psychological and sociological field, with an active focus on how social order can be challenged—although this paper notes this as an already saturated field. It is also important to note that throughout this paper there has been a noted lack of research found on non-binary identities. As suggested, with these identities seemingly the best positioned to challenge these gender binaries, further research in fields such as queer theory, that specifically foreground understandings of gender surveillance, performance, and normalisation through a non-binary understanding, would potentially be the most beneficial to achieving these aims and furthering sociologies' understandings of this concept. This paper, alongside future explorations of these themes and beyond that begin from the point of TGD experience, may be considered a 'trans and gender diverse sociology'.

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Capabilities, Capture & Coercion: Analysing the Political Economy of Kidnap-for-Ransom Offences by Pastoral 'Bandits' in Northwest Nigeria

Osaremen Iluobe

What are the main drivers of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria? This article deviates from existing literature on the phenomenon by delving into the capability failures of both pastoral bandits and the Nigerian state, while also examining the socio-cultural dynamics inherent within this phenomenon. First, I utilise Amartya Sen's Capability Approach to shed light on how socio-economic conditions in northwest Nigeria hinder the developmental capabilities of pastoralists, thereby driving some to commit kidnap-for-ransom offences as a means of economic survival. Second, I assess the role played by the political economy of land and climate change in driving these offences. Third, I examine the governance capability failure of the Nigerian state, framing it within the context of 'softened sovereignty' in the northwest region thereby challenging the prevailing Ungoverned Spaces Theory (UST). Lastly, I explore how the socio-cultural capabilities of pastoral bandits, such as their network capabilities and nomadic lifestyles, facilitate their engagement in kidnap-for-ransom offences. By providing a comprehensive analysis encompassing capability failures, governance shortcomings, and socio-cultural dynamics, this study advances an understanding of the complex drivers behind kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

'This banditry has become a northwestern scourge!' (TVC News Nigeria 2020)
- Nasir El-Rufai, Governor of Kaduna State

The severity of the threat posed to the Nigerian state by kidnap-for-ransom offences committed by bandits in the northwest of the country has inspired me to write this essay (See **Figure 2**; Rotberg & Campbell 2022). Northwest Nigeria consists of seven states (see **Figure 3**), all of which are predominantly populated by the Hausa and Fulani ethnic groups. It is estimated that up to 30,000 bandits and 100 separate gangs operate within the region (Barnett, Ahmed Rufa'i and Abdulaziz, 2022, 50), and people of Fulani ethnicity are believed to make up the majority of bandits in the region (Oyero 2021). Despite being predominantly semi-nomadic pastoralists and owning around 90% of the country's livestock (Abbass 2014, 331), poverty, neglect, and other factors have led some Fulani pastoralists in northwest Nigeria to resort to kidnapping (Abdulaziz 2021). Against this contextual backdrop, I have decided to focus on kidnap-for-ransom offences by pastoralists in northwest Nigeria and I will use the term 'pastoral bandits' to describe individuals who commit such offences having once assumed pastoralism as their everyday occupation.

One can plausibly claim that kidnap-for-ransom offences by pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria constitute a severe danger to the personal security of many people in the region. This is evidenced by the fact that bandits in the northwest of the country are responsible for the internal displacement of 200,000 residents across the region (Ojo, Oyewole and Aina 2023, 19); the deaths of over 8000 people since 2010 (International Crisis Group 2020), and the abduction of 3,672 persons in Zamfara State alone between 2011 and 2019 (Osasona 2021, 10). The economic costs of banditry in the northwest are also acute. Fear of being kidnapped has

created a situation where farmers across the region have abandoned their land en masse. For instance, in Katsina State, up to 5,884 farmlands that cover up to 58,330 hectares have been abandoned by farmers because of kidnapping fears (Ojo, Oyewole and Aina 2023, 20). Given that 2.9 million people in northwest Nigeria are 'critically food insecure' (UNICEF 2023), the kidnap-for-ransom crisis in the region has made matters worse by driving food inflation (Mohammed 2021), thereby contributing to the cycle of precarity that many people in the area find themselves.

Given the extent of the problem, bandits committing kidnap-for-ransom offences have been subject to intensified academic, political, and media observation. They have been described as 'Warlords' (Barnett 2021); 'Merchants of terror' (Adeyemi 2022a; 2022b), and have recently been designated as 'Terrorists' by the Nigerian government (Ochojila 2022). Amid the controversy concerning how bandits ought to be understood, Osasona (2021, 2) notes a 'problem of definitional haziness' surrounding the discourse on bandits in northwest Nigeria. This indicates a lack of sound understanding that is characteristic of much of the academic literature on the matter. Hence, I contend that it is important to understand the *drivers* of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria as this matter has not been afforded the attention that one would expect considering the ever-growing scale of the problem. I aspire not only to address the gap in the existing literature but also to make a significant contribution to the scholarly discourse surrounding the insecurity crisis in Nigeria as a whole (see Okoli 2022).

RESEARCH QUESTION: WHAT ARE THE MAIN DRIVERS OF KIDNAP-FOR-RANSOM OFFENCES BY PASTORAL 'BANDITS' IN NORTHWEST NIGERIA?

This article asserts that the 'capability failure[s]' (Alkire 2002, 156) of both pastoral bandits and the Nigerian state, alongside the socio-cultural capabilities of the former, constitute the main drivers of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria. In particular, this study identifies the *'developmental'* (Sen 1999, 260) and *occupational* capability failures of pastoral bandits, as well as the *governance* capability failure of the Nigerian state, as the specific forms of capability failure propelling this phenomenon.

To start, I will assess the role played by the *developmental* capability failures of pastoral bandits in driving kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria. I will take a novel approach that is different from what has been discussed in the existing academic literature by using Amartya Sen's Capability Approach (hereafter CA) to elucidate how socio-economic circumstances in northwest Nigeria have curtailed the developmental capabilities of pastoralists to 'lead freer and more fulfilling lives' (Sen 1997; 1960). Hence, it is my contention that certain pastoralists are compelled to engage in kidnap-for-ransom offences as a means of economic survival.

Chapter 2 of this article will analyse the roles played by the political economy of land and climate change in driving kidnap-for-ransom offences by pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria. By doing so, I will provide a comprehensive analysis that takes into account the *longue durée* when discussing the phenomenon. In this chapter, I will argue that the misgovernance of land and climate change have resulted in the *occupational* capability failure of pastoral bandits which has consequently driven kidnap-for-ransom offences.

In Chapter 3 of this essay, I will examine how the Nigerian state suffers from *governance* capability failure which is consequently driving kidnap-for-ransom offences by pastoral bandits. I will frame the governance capability failure of the Nigerian state as owing to its 'softened sovereignty' (Clunan and Trinkunas 2010) in the northwest of the country. By making this argument, I will directly challenge Ungoverned Spaces Theory (hereafter UST) which has recently emerged as a popular explanation for banditry in northwest Nigeria (Okoli and Abubakar 2021; Ojo 2020). I will argue that the softened sovereignty of the Nigerian state in the northwest has given rise to bandits as political actors in parts of the region. Consequently, this has enabled the commodification of political relations within territories controlled by bandits, leading to kidnap-for-ransom offences. In addition, to explain the dynamics behind the political economy of kidnap-for-ransom offences, I will draw upon Shortland's (2019) protection theory (hereafter PT).

In Chapter 4 of this essay, I aim to present a new evaluation of how pastoral bandits, despite their capability failures, are able to engage in kidnap-for-ransom crimes by drawing upon their socio-cultural capabilities. Specifically, I will argue that the capabilities engendered by the nomadic lifestyle, mobility, and networks among pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria give way to advantages that allow them to carry out kidnap-for-ransom offences in an adept manner.

It is important for me to clarify that kidnap-for-ransom is one of many activities that pastoral bandits have resorted to. Still, cattle-rustling, armed robbery, and murder are also activities that pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria engage in (Ojo, Oyewole and Aina 2023, 2). However, this article has sought to refine its focus on the drivers of kidnap-for-ransom offences because the phenomenon has recently emerged as the primary enterprise pursued by bandits in northwest Nigeria in recent years (Toba-Jegede 2021).

Although my research is centred on kidnap-for-ransom offences committed by pastoral bandits, I acknowledge that it is important to avoid the mischaracterisation of the Fulani ethnic group. As such, it is crucial to note that not all bandits are Fulani, and not all Fulani are bandits. Despite the apparent nature of this statement, some existing literature (Omilusi 2016) implicitly engages in ethnic misrepresentation of the Fulani. Therefore, one must be aware of the dangers of perpetuating harmful ethnic stereotypes by falling into 'a single story about Fulani pastoralists' (Moritz and Mbacke 2022). Additionally, it should be noted that the Fulani are among those most affected by banditry in northwest Nigeria (Shehu 2022b).

DEFINING KIDNAP-FOR-RANSOM OFFENCES IN NORTHWEST NIGERIA

Given the nature of this question, it is essential for me to outline the nature of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria. First, it is important for me to highlight the exceptional nature of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria. The region has the highest rate of kidnap-for-ransom offences among Nigeria's 6 Geopolitical Zones (see Figure 3) and victims vary from schoolchildren (see Busari, Princewill and Abrak 2021) and ordinary citizens (see Adeyemi 2022a; 2022b) to local congregation leaders (see Gabriel 2021).

Due to the lack of data, this thesis is unable to assert the extent to which kidnappings in northwest Nigeria are targeted. However, it appears that bandits commit kidnap-for-ransom offences with the primary aim of attaining ransom in order to buy weapons and fund their operations. This was stated by a bandit who was behind the kidnapping of 317 schoolchildren from the Government Girls Secondary School in Jangebe, Zamfara State in 2021 (BBC 2022). Additionally, I have gathered from my research that kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria are either *spontaneous* or *organised*. Spontaneous kidnappings refer to situations where bandits unexpectedly attack individuals in public areas, subsequently taking them captive and holding them for ransom. On the other hand, organised kidnappings pertain to scenarios where bandits carry out kidnap-for-ransom offences within areas they have established control over. In these cases, ransom payments function as protection payments within the protection racket organised by the bandits.

In Chapter 3, where I examine the role of governance capability failure in driving kidnappings in northwest Nigeria, I will draw on instances of organised kidnap-for-ransom offences. Meanwhile, in Chapter 4, while assessing the socio-cultural capabilities of pastoral bandits, I will utilise examples that illustrate spontaneous forms of kidnap-for-ransom offences. Thus, I will provide a full analysis of kidnap-for-ransom as it is manifested in northwest Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review looks at the range of academic scholarship that has sought to identify the main drivers of kidnap-for-ransom offences by bandits in Nigeria. The review begins by assessing the literature that positions socio-economic factors as the main driver of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria. It then goes on to analyse the academic literature that purports and challenges the validity of UST in accounting for kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria. The review concludes with an assessment of the literature that looks at the effects of climate change and the political economy of land in driving kidnap-for-ransom

offences.

LITERATURE ON KIDNAP-FOR-RANSOM OFFENCES BY BANDITS IN NORTHWEST NIGERIA

Theories of state failure, such as the UST (Ojo 2020), and economic deprivation, such as Relative Deprivation Theory (hereafter RDT) (Ejiofor 2022), dominate the academic literature on the drivers of kidnap-for-ransom offences by bandits in northwest Nigeria. Indeed, there is an ongoing debate among scholars about which of these two factors is a greater driver of the phenomenon. According to Ejiofor, kidnap-for-ransom offences by bandits 'owes not so much to ungoverned spaces but to the ethic cum material grievances of some pastoralists who have taken to criminality for survival and who pinpoint discrepancies between what they had, what they have, and what they think they should have' (2022, 111). Similarly, Nnam and Ordu (2020) position socio-economic marginalisation as the primary driver of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria. The scholars claim that the socio-economic conditions in northwest Nigeria are causing frustration and anger among individuals which is consequently driving kidnap-for-ransom offences (2020, 4).

The insights offered by these works are crucial as they allow one to recognise the ways that socio-economic deprivation plays an instrumental role in determining the agency of actors in relation to kidnappings in northwest Nigeria. This is because literature that privileges the role played by economic deprivation implies that kidnap-for-ransom offences are the result of social immobility that arises from a lack of opportunity available to individuals, thus instrumentally influencing the behaviour of actors (Nnam and Ordu 2020, 5; Ejiofor 2022, 86).

While the literature that prioritises the explanation offered by RDT offers valuable insights into how socio-economic circumstances drive kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria, I argue that solely relying on RDT is insufficient to provide a comprehensive explanation. One must consider how bandits are, in spite of their deprivation, adept at committing kidnap-for-ransom offences. That is to say, it is necessary to understand how relative deprivation is accompanied by other factors that are driving kidnappings in northwest Nigeria. Accordingly, this essay will utilise Amartya Sen's CA to undertake a more comprehensive evaluation of the various factors that are driving kidnappings in northwest Nigeria, which surpasses the insights provided by proponents of RDT. Moreover, I will continue to make use of the notion of 'capabilities' to examine how the capability failures of pastoral bandits interact with other socio-cultural factors, thereby enabling them to proficiently commit kidnap-for-ransom offences.

As mentioned, proponents for the primacy of ungoverned spaces theory (hereafter UST) as an explanation for kidnappings by bandits in northwest Nigeria also exist aplenty. According to Ojo (2020), Okoli and Ugwu (2019), the existence of ungoverned spaces in northwest Nigeria is the major driver of kidnap-for-ransom offences in the region. This is because these spaces supposedly allow bandit groups to operate without restraint, consequently enabling the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) that are used in kidnappings. Indeed, Ojo highlights the arguably consequential fact that 'out of the 1,978 overall entry points across the country [Nigeria], 84 are legally approved while 1,894 remain illegal entry points that exist across the borderlands' (Ojo 2020, 102). Hence, proponents of UST believe that effective governance of all spaces is the most critical measure that the state can take to curb kidnappings in northwest Nigeria (2020, 77-110).

While it is true that the governance capability failure of the Nigerian state has played a role in driving kidnappings in northwest Nigeria, as implied by UST, I maintain a dissenting position from proponents of this theory who contend that the region is 'ungoverned' and consequently susceptible to kidnap-for-ransom offences. Indeed, we can scrutinise the applicability of UST by drawing on empirical cases. In 2021, a notable kidnapping of 317 schoolgirls from the Government Girls Secondary School in Jangebe, Zamfara State took place merely four minutes away from a military checkpoint (Busari, Princewill and Abrak 2021). As this incident did not happen in a remote area that is insufficiently governed, it raises questions regarding the effectiveness of UST in explaining the prevalence of kidnap-for-ransom offences

in northwest Nigeria. Therefore, I argue that an alternative and more satisfactory explanation than UST is required. As such, I will use SST to correctly describe the governance capability failure of the Nigerian state in the northwest.

The academic literature on kidnappings in northwest Nigeria has largely neglected the significant contributions of the political economy of land and the impact of climate change in generating occupational capability failure among pastoralists which has, in turn, driven kidnap-for-ransom offences. For instance, the disruption to the lives of Fulani pastoralists, caused by land misappropriation—which has limited the availability of pasture for livestock (International Crisis Group 2020, 7); as well as the ‘severe’ level of land desertification in five out of the seven states in northwest Nigeria (Ani, Anyika, and Mutambara 2021, 162), are matters that I believe warrant academic attention. In order to comprehensively understand the main drivers of kidnappings for ransom in northwest Nigeria, it is crucial to avoid the issue of myopic presentism that pervades the current academic literature on the topic (see Ahmed Rufa’i 2018). To achieve this, a thorough investigation into the long-term impact of climate change and the political economy of land on the occupational capabilities of pastoralists is imperative.

This literature review has examined the frameworks through which kidnap-for-ransom offences are commonly understood in northwest Nigeria. The following section will seek to demonstrate the validity of the factors that I have identified as the main drivers of kidnap-for-ransom offences by pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria. To reiterate, these are the developmental and occupational capability failures of pastoral bandits; the governance capability failure of the Nigerian state, and the socio-cultural capabilities of pastoral bandits in the region.

METHODOLOGY

This thesis was shaped by engagement with various secondary sources, academic journals, and semi-structured online interviews with academics, researchers, journalists, and politicians, all of whom have an interest in, or expertise on kidnappings in northwest Nigeria. I managed to secure 14 interviews with participants in this bracket by way of email, and I used snowball sampling to widen my access to prospective participants. I managed to secure three non-academic focused interviews with Nigerian citizens wherein we discussed their experiences of living in Nigeria and the issue of kidnappings on a national level. Of those I interviewed, only two persons can trace their origins to northwest Nigeria specifically and these two individuals admitted that they had not visited the region for a considerable period of time. In this respect, the interviews I conducted were primarily useful for my contextual understanding when conducting research and are therefore used sparingly in this essay. Interestingly however, all of the individuals I interviewed who have lived in Nigeria shared that they avoid the seven states in the northwest region as much as possible due to the prevalent kidnapping situation. This illustrates how the issue of kidnap-for-ransom in the northwest region has far-reaching implications for Nigerians beyond the region, as it limits the mobility and sense of security among citizens across the country.

I conducted semi-structured interviews, allowing the interviewees to freely discuss topics they deemed relevant, without confining their responses to specific questions. Academic researchers who were interviewed for this essay gave written permission to be referred to by their name and position in their respective institution(s). The aim of this primary research was to enable me to better understand the main factors that have played a role in driving kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria.

BRINGING CAPABILITIES BACK IN

I will use Amartya Sen’s CA and the discourse of capabilities as my conceptual framework in my analysis of the main drivers of kidnap-for-ransom offences by pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria. Because Sen’s CA is primarily concerned with well-being, opportunities, and freedom of choice so as to ensure that an individual can live a ‘good life’ (Sen 1999, 14), I contend that it provides a useful perspective for understanding the topic of this article.

Central to Sen's CA are the notions of 'capabilities' and 'functionings' (Sen 1999). Capabilities refer to a person's opportunities to achieve states of being if they choose to (Roebyns and Byskov 2011). Meanwhile, functionings are the capabilities that a person realises, such as a state of being well-nourished, well-educated, or income secure (Roebyns and Byskov 2011). In Chapters 1 and 2, I will argue that among the main drivers of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria are the developmental and occupational capability failures of pastoral bandits. The notion of capability failure refers to the lack of opportunities that an individual has to realise any given capabilities and subsequently achieve states of functionings (Alkire 2004, 156). Therefore, by making these arguments in Chapters 1 and 2 respectively, I will provide an analysis of the ways that pastoral bandits are deprived of the opportunities, and thereby *real freedom*, to accumulate the necessary capabilities that would make committing kidnap-for-ransom offences less economically and politically appealing for pastoral bandits.

I will 'stretch' the idea of capability failure in Chapter 3 of this essay, wherein the term will assume a more flexible definition that is intended to serve a descriptive purpose that captures the governance failure of the Nigerian state. Therefore, to summarise, Chapter 1 will focus on the developmental capability failure of pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria. Chapter 2 will pay attention to the occupational capability failure of pastoral bandits in the region. Chapters 3 and 4 of this essay will not explicitly use Sen's CA, but I will maintain the discourse of 'capabilities' to explore how the governance capability failure of the Nigerian state, as well as the socio-cultural capabilities of pastoral bandits, are driving kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria.

I am aware of the fact that Sen's CA is contentious (Sugden 2006; Pogge 2010). Additionally, given that Sen does not provide us with a formal list of capabilities against which one can assert the capability status of persons, unlike Nussbaum's capability approach (2011), I am necessarily required to take on the onus of evaluating the capability failures of pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria against metrics of my own choice. However, I regard this as an advantage. As Sen notes, any assessment of capabilities ought to be contextual (Sen 2005, 157) because the pre-listing of capabilities may serve as a hindrance that prevents one from accounting for the uniqueness of a given context that gives rise to incapacities.

Given this, I have decided to use the intellectual autonomy afforded to me by Sen's CA by adopting the latest Multidimensional Poverty Measure (hereafter MPM) statistics for northwest Nigeria as my benchmark for analysing the developmental capability failure of people in northwest Nigeria. Moreover, I will employ Sen's insights into the effect of employment exclusion on one's capabilities to highlight how pastoral bandits' occupational capability failure, prompted by the political economy of land and the effects of climate change in northwest Nigeria, is contributing to the prevalence of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria.

CHAPTER 1: DEVELOPMENTAL CAPABILITY FAILURE OF PASTORAL BANDITS IN NORTHWEST NIGERIA

Using Amartya Sen's Capability Approach, this chapter will seek to position the developmental capability failure of pastoral bandits as a main driver of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria. First, I will assess the socio-economic situation in northwest Nigeria. Furthermore, I will demonstrate the great extent to which pastoral bandits lack developmental capabilities, and thereby opportunities, leaves them with a limited agency that results in their resorting to kidnap-for-ransom offences.

Overall then, I will imply two things in this chapter. First, in order for kidnap-for-ransom offences to be prevented, the developmental capabilities of pastoralists need to be improved. Second, because of the developmental capability failure of pastoral bandits, kidnap-for-ransom serves as a form of 'social banditry' and economic 'self-help' (Hobsbawm 1969).

1.1: DEVELOPMENTAL CAPABILITY FAILURE OF PASTORAL BANDITS IN NORTHWEST NIGERIA

In this section, I will establish the context necessary to comprehend the profound degree

to which pastoralists in northwest Nigeria are affected by developmental capability failure, which is a key driver of kidnap-for-ransom offences in the region. The goal of this segment is to substantiate one of my central thesis claims, namely that developmental capability failure is a primary factor driving kidnap-for-ransom offences committed by pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria.

Aligned with Sen's Capability Approach (CA), the World Bank's MPM adopts a comprehensive perspective on well-being, recognising it as comprising multiple factors and circumstances (World Bank 2022). These are income, educational attainment, educational enrollment, drinking water, sanitation, and electricity (World Bank 2022). By adopting the World Bank's MPM as the lens through which I analyse the developmental capability failure of pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria, I aim to demonstrate how socio-economic conditions in northwest Nigeria compromise the agency exercised by pastoral bandits, consequently driving kidnap-for-ransom offences. As highlighted to me by Folahanmi Aina - a Nigerian researcher specialising in security and development studies at the Royal United Services Institute - "Poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment are all things that have taken root in the northwest of the country [Nigeria]" (personal communication 2022). This claim is supported by the fact that the MPM rate in each of the 7 states in northwest Nigeria exceeds 50%. Sokoto State tops the list among states in northwest Nigeria with a rate of 91.1%; this is followed by Jigawa State which has an MPM rate of 89.2%, meanwhile, Zamfara State, ranks third in terms of MPM levels among northwestern states with an MPM rate of 82.2% (World Bank 2022, 4). As for the Fulani pastoralist community in the region, the average person has received a mere 3.02 years of formal education, and only 15% have completed their high school education (Ibrahim et al 2021). The lack of developmental capabilities among persons within the Fulani pastoralist community serves as a hindrance for many to become persons capable of achieving various functionings, or states of being.

This is especially important given the long-term dangers facing pastoralists, such as the misgovernance of land and climate change - as will be analysed in greater detail in Chapter 2 of this essay. Due to the developmental capability failure among Fulani pastoralists in northwest Nigeria, they are constrained in terms of the opportunities available to them, which ultimately affects their well-being and agency. This claim is reinforced by Shehu Rekeb, a bandit leader from Zamfara State, who claimed that "This whole agitation is caused by a lack of education. None of us [pastoralists] here is educated!" (Daily Trust 2021). Furthermore, Umah Mohammed, the chair of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACABAN)—a prominent lobby group for Fulani pastoralists—asserts that the development of educational infrastructure and improvement in human development among Fulani pastoralists are pivotal in order to resolve the kidnapping crisis in the northwest region (Anyadike 2021).

It is crucial to acknowledge the profound implications of the role played by the developmental capability failure of pastoral bandits in driving kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria. To address the previously mentioned 'problem of definitional haziness' (Osasona 2021, 2) while recognising the central role played by developmental capability failure, I propose interpreting pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria as akin to 'Social bandits' (Hobsbawm 1969). Hobsbawm defines social banditry as 'a form of self-help to escape particular circumstances' (Hobsbawm 1969, 29) and I contend that this definition is applicable to bandits in northwest Nigeria, who, because of their lacking developmental capabilities, commit kidnap-for-ransom offences. As such, Hobsbawm's notion is useful in advancing our understanding of the implications surrounding the agency of actors involved in kidnap-for-ransom offences by pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria.

Likewise, Sen's CA allows us to recognise the effects that deficits in the developmental capabilities of persons have on one's individual agency. Sen notes that 'human capabilities constitute an important part of individual freedom' (Sen 2007, 273) and, therefore, believes that we should recognise the varying extents to which persons have agency, especially when accustomed to poor conditions (Sen 1999, 274), as is true of pastoralists in northwest Nigeria. Having taken this into consideration in this chapter, I have sought to highlight the manner in

which pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria lack the opportunities, and thus agency, to pursue alternative livelihoods amid the developmental challenges that they face. It is important for me to state that I am not legitimising kidnap-for-ransom offences. Rather, I have emphasised the instrumental role that developmental capability failure is playing in driving the phenomenon. Consequently, this means that the response of the Nigerian state must address the developmental capabilities of persons in the northwest for the situation to improve.

CHAPTER 2: CLIMATE CHANGE, THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF LAND, AND OCCUPATIONAL CAPABILITY FAILURE

In this chapter, I will examine the long-term factors that have contributed to the *occupational capability failure* of pastoralists in northwest Nigeria which has resulted in some resorting to kidnap-for-ransom offences. Specifically, I will focus on the roles played by climate change and the political economy of land in driving these offences in the region.

I will argue that the combined effects of climate change and the political economy of land have resulted in the occupational capability failure of pastoralists, which is to say that many pastoralists have been constrained in their capacity to make a living from their ‘*ancestral occupation*’ (Shehu 2022a). As a consequence, a considerable number of pastoralists have turned to kidnap-for-ransom as a means of ensuring economic survival, and notably, in response to the political economy of land, to uphold the traditional norms of a pastoral ‘moral economy’ (Thompson 1971).

2.1: CLIMATE CHANGE, OCCUPATIONAL CAPABILITY FAILURE, AND KIDNAP-FOR-RANSOM

In this section, I will account for how climate change has driven kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria by way of facilitating the occupational capability failure of pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria. I recognise that demonstrating the long-term link between climate change-induced phenomena and kidnap-for-ransom offences is a challenge. However, considering that climate change is understood to have adverse effects on the socio-economic resilience of pastoralist communities in different parts of the world (see Abraham and Mekuyie 2022; Ahmad and Afzal 2021), and is taken to be a driver of conflict and insecurity across the Sahel (Ojewale 2022) it would be a mistake to regard the pastoralists of northwest Nigeria as exceptional to its effects.

The impact of climate change in driving kidnap-for-ransom offences by pastoral bandits can be grasped by noting its role in hastening the process of land desertification. For example, Burell, Evans and De Kauwe (2022, 1) note that between 1982 and 2015, approximately 6% of the world’s drylands experienced desertification due to unsustainable land use practices exacerbated by human-induced climate change, leading to the degradation of approximately 12.6% (equivalent to 5.43 million square kilometres) of these drylands. This phenomenon has had detrimental effects on approximately 213 million individuals, with 93%—or approximately 200 million - of them residing in developing nations, such as Nigeria. This claim matches the empirical realities taking place in northwest Nigeria, which is subject to land desertification at an alarming rate in the northwest—it is estimated that 3,500 square kilometres of land is lost every year in the region due to land desertification (CAP 2012, 15). As a result of this, rivers and watering holes across the northwest have started disappearing (Barnett and Hassan 2022, 7) which has consequently led to the loss of cattle for many pastoralists amid the lack of resources required to keep them alive (Ibrahim et al 2021, 6).

The financial importance of this is significant as livestock serves as the primary mode of accumulating and storing wealth for Fulani pastoralists in northwest Nigeria (Ibrahim et al 2021, 6). Considering this, we can acknowledge how climate change has enabled the occupational capability failure of pastoralists which has, in turn, driven some pastoralists to commit kidnap-for-ransom offences. Indeed, because of the loss of wealth that the desertification of land has initiated among pastoralists in the northwest region, Ojewale (2021) contends that it is a key reason why young people join bandit groups when looking to earn a living.

Therefore, it can be said that the occupational capability failure among pastoralists in

northwest Nigeria, resulting from the desertification of land, provides an explanation for the atypical number of kidnap-for-ransom offences in the region (see Figure 4). According to Ahmadu Shehu, a Fulani pastoralist in northwest Nigeria, the loss of cattle among pastoralists in the region has a profound effect on the economic security, self-esteem, and social standing of a Fulani pastoralist in northwest Nigeria (Shehu 2022a). Given this, it becomes increasingly clear to comprehend how climate change, by causing the loss of livestock among several pastoralists in the region, has initiated a type of occupational capability failure that is economically and socially damaging for many. This allows for a finer understanding of how the occupational capability failure of pastoral bandits is driving kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria.

2.2: LAND EXPROPRIATION, OCCUPATIONAL CAPABILITY FAILURE, AND KIDNAP-FOR-RANSOM

In this section of the chapter, I will evaluate the role played by the political economy of land in Nigeria in advancing the occupational capability failure of pastoral bandits, consequently driving kidnap-for-ransom offences in the northwest. Specifically, I will explore how the expropriation of land and underdevelopment of grazing land and routes have compounded the occupational capability failure of pastoralists in the region. Additionally, in the latter part of this section, I will examine how kidnap-for-ransom offences have been partially driven by political actors and the Nigerian state and what implications this ought to have on public policy. Thus, I will imply that a significant portion of the responsibility for reducing kidnap-for-ransom offences lies with political actors by restoring a moral economy of land rights.

To provide an analysis of how the political economy of land has contributed to the occupational capability failure of pastoral bandits, thereby driving kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria, it is crucial for me to highlight the importance of the 1978 Land Use Act. Before the enactment of this law, land use and land tenure were typically regulated by traditional leaders in local communities (Higazi 2022, 74), while in other cases, families and individuals were responsible for such matters (Otty, Chisom and Nnamdi 2021, 28117). However, by ensuring the ‘Power of Governor[s] to revoke the right of occupancy’ (1978 Land Use Act, Section 28), the law granted power over land governance to state governors.

According to the military government led by General Olusegun Obasanjo, the intentions of the 1978 Land Use Act were two-fold. First, the act sought to curb the inflationary effects of land speculation on ordinary Nigerians (Otty, Chisom and Nnamdi, 2021, 28116) and it was also implemented in order to stimulate the acquisition of land by private and public institutions for developmental purposes (Adefemi 2018, 670). As for the impact of this legislation on rural communities, General Obasanjo clarified in a national address that rural dwellers would be able to ‘continue to use land for agricultural, pastoral and residential purposes without any hindrance...[and] their right to continue to farm their lands without any encumbrances and part with their interest at will is assured’ (Francis 1984, 9).

Yet, despite the assurances given during its enactment, the 1978 Land Use Act can be said to have had a negative impact on rural communities. With the allocation of power over land governance to state governors, political actors have been empowered to seize land from pastoralists, resulting in an exacerbation of job losses and economic hardship among pastoralists in northwest Nigeria (Hassan and Barnett 2022, 7). State governors in northwest Nigeria have been known to expropriate land, as exemplified by a case in 2014 when Jigawa State Governor, Sule Lamido, unilaterally approved the transfer of 12,000 hectares of land owned by pastoralists to the Chinese conglomerate, Lee Group (Tukur 2017).

Additionally, in a separate incident of land expropriation by political elites that occurred in 2018, the Kebbi State government arbitrarily assumed control of 14,000 hectares of land (Adebayo 2018), thereby displacing hundreds of pastoralists from their lands. That instances such as these are contributing to the occupational capability failure of pastoralists, consequently driving kidnap-for-ransom offences, is asserted by some pastoral bandits. For example, one leading pastoral bandit based in Zamfara State claimed that by ‘taking over’ land and grazing areas in the northwest, politicians are playing a crucial role in driving pastoralists to commit

kidnap-for-ransom offences in the region (Abdulaziz 2021).

In view of this, the notion of 'eco-colonisation' (Carmody 2011, 121) is a useful tool through which a novel analysis of land expropriation by political actors can be provided. According to Carmody (2011, 121), eco-colonisation refers to situations where 'powerful domestic actors draw on the biocapacity of a given region to serve their economic interests'. The concept of eco-colonisation aptly describes the reality of land expropriation by political actors, thus allowing for an analysis of how kidnap-for-ransom offences arise from competing agencies. While pastoral bandits may lack the developmental and occupational capabilities to fully exercise agency within Sen's CA, they nevertheless resist the expropriation of their land by committing kidnap-for-ransom. Such a view was reinforced by Okoli who succinctly defined bandits in northwest Nigeria as 'Brigands who engage in organised gang criminality as a means of survival or resistance' (Personal communication 2022).

Taking this view forward, it can be said that by expropriating land, political actors have contributed to kidnappings, and viewing the phenomenon in such terms allows one to acknowledge the role played by resistance amid interplays between structure and agency.

Indeed, according to Ahmadu Shehu, a Fulani pastoralist from northwest Nigeria, any effort by external actors to interfere with the pastoral economy 'is considered as a direct challenge to the esteemed cultural values these communities embody' (Shehu 2022a). Considering this, I argue that kidnap-for-ransom offences may constitute the defence of a traditional moral economy in which the land rights of pastoralists were respected by elites. That is to say, due to the role of land expropriation in compounding their occupational capability failure, pastoral bandits may be understood as being motivated and 'informed by the belief that they [are] defending traditional [land] rights and customs' (Thompson 1971, 78). Hence, the prevalence of kidnappings in northwest Nigeria indicates that these offences may be predicated on a 'popular consensus' (Thompson 1971, 79) wherein they are regarded as legitimate by pastoralists in the face of hardships, such as that relating to their land rights.

2.3: MISMANAGEMENT OF GRAZING AREAS, OCCUPATIONAL CAPABILITY FAILURE, AND KIDNAP-FOR-RANSOM

This section of the chapter will explore how the mismanagement and underdevelopment of grazing reserves and routes in northwest Nigeria contribute to the occupational capability failure of pastoralists, ultimately driving kidnap-for-ransom offences. Therefore, this section will continue to explore the role of political actors in driving kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria.

The underdevelopment of grazing land and grazing routes in northwest Nigeria can be attributed to the government's lack of responsiveness to changing realities. Notably, over the past few decades, Nigeria's cattle population has doubled from approximately 9.2 million in 1981 (Kubkomawa 2017, 27) to over 18 million in 2011 (National Bureau of Statistics 2012, 27). Meanwhile, the human population in the country has significantly increased from 45 million in 1960 to 213 million as of 2021 (World Bank 2021). Given these demographic changes, it has become imperative to upgrade the infrastructure of grazing lands and grazing routes across the country. However, successive Nigerian governments have failed to address this issue, leading to the current state of underdevelopment in these areas. For instance, recognising the need to expand grazing reserves in the northwest of the country, the Nigerian government proposed the establishment of 22 million hectares of grazing land as part of the 1975-1980 National Development Plan (Ducrottoy et al 2018, 4). However, by the end of 1977, only 2 million hectares had been acquired and allocated for grazing purposes (Ducrottoy et al 2018, 4). Similarly, Nigeria's National Agricultural Policy of 1988 declared that at least 10% of the country's territory, equivalent to 9.8 million acres, would be allocated for the development of grazing reserves in an attempt to protect pastoralism (Okello et al 2014, 3). Despite this, as recently as 2014, 26 years after the introduction of the policy, only 2.82 million hectares of land had been allocated by the state for the development of grazing reserves (Okello et al 2014, 3).

Given this, I argue that the shortcomings of Nigerian governments have resulted in the 'disemployment' (Comaroff and Comaroff 2016, 44) of numerous pastoralists in northwest

Nigeria. This means that these individuals have been *actively excluded* from their primary form of employment, pastoralism, due to the inability of consecutive Nigerian governments to develop grazing lands and routes in the northwest. As posited by Edgell and Beck (2020, 939), Sen's CA serves as a comprehensive analytical tool for understanding the 'complexities of motivation, powerlessness, and agency' of persons who have been excluded from employment. Sen has also pointed out that exclusion from employment can have far-reaching negative consequences on individual freedom, initiative, and skills, ultimately leading to social exclusion and a loss of other capabilities related to one's economic and emotional well-being (Sen 1999, 21). Drawing on this assertion, it seems that those involved in kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria may be experiencing such consequences. A statement made by a bandit from Zamfara State lends support to this perspective:

Tell me, where can we rear our animals now? Are grazing routes still there? In the rainy season you must walk on roads or take them on rocky paths where they fall and die, [therefore] if you see Fulani resorting to so-called 'terrorism' it's because of this! (BBC 2022)

Amid the lack of access to grazing lands and grazing routes which has, in turn, severely limited their capability to assume their traditional occupation, several pastoralists in northwest Nigeria have resorted to committing kidnap-for-ransom offences and this is a factor that ought to be more accounted for within the existing literature on the topic. Nevertheless, by accounting for such a factor, this chapter has attempted to highlight the retrospective salience of this matter in relation to the occupational capability failure of pastoralists in the northwest region and by extension, the occurrence of kidnap-for-ransom offences. By highlighting the roles played by climate change and the political economy of land, I have sought to position the occupational capability failure of pastoralists as necessitating a *longue durée* analysis to fully understand the contemporary problem of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria. The next section will explore how the governance capability failure of the Nigerian state, manifested in the form of its softened sovereignty in the northwest of the country, is driving kidnap-for-ransom offences in the region.

CHAPTER 3: GOVERNANCE CAPABILITY FAILURE, SOFTENED SOVEREIGNTY, AND KIDNAP-FOR-RANSOM

This chapter will analyse how the governance capability failure of the Nigerian state, as exemplified by its softened sovereignty in the northwest of the country, is driving kidnap-for-ransom offences in the region. I will analyse the political economy of organised kidnap-for-ransom offences, utilising the notion of softened sovereignty to argue that kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria are driven by this form of governance capability failure, *contra* ungoverned spaces. Additionally, I will employ Shortland's PT to demonstrate the realities that underpin organised kidnap-for-ransom offences. **Figure 1** summarises the arguments of this chapter.

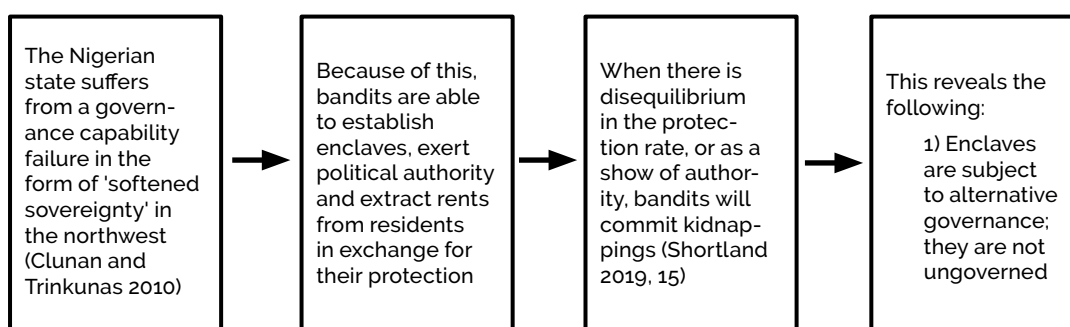


Figure 1 | Applying SST and PT to an understanding of kidnap-for-ransom offences by pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria

3.1: WHAT IS SOFTENED SOVEREIGNTY?

'Softened sovereignty' is a term used to describe a situation wherein the state's 'control over a given area is contested, weak, or effectively absent' (Clunan and Trinkunas 2010, 17). Softened sovereignty theory (SST) is contrasted with ungoverned spaces theory (UST), which is a theoretical framework which views areas that are subject to less social, political and economic control as 'ungoverned' (Clunan and Trinkunas 2010, 17). Both SST and UST are what I refer to as *notions of governance capability failure*. However, I argue that SST better captures the type of governance capability failure that the Nigerian state is subjected to in the northwest region of the country. Thus, I intend to use SST to provide an improved analysis of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria. In doing so, I will simultaneously challenge the paradigmatic hegemony of UST within literature on banditry in northwest Nigeria (see Okoli and Abubakar 2021; Ojo 2020; Onwuzuruigbo 2020). This chapter will demonstrate that northwest Nigeria conforms to the statement made by Clunan and Trinkunas (2017, 17) that 'many so-called ungoverned spaces are simply *differently governed*'.

3.2: THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF ORGANISED KIDNAP-FOR-RANSOM OFFENCES

Evidence of the Nigerian state's softened sovereignty in the northwest of the country is demonstrated by political authority wielded by bandits in areas across the region. The inability of the Nigerian state to exercise governing authority over some parts of northwest Nigeria is illustrated by the presence of bandit groups who have taken control and imposed their own leaders in various areas spanning across the states of Zamfara and Sokoto (Anka 2021; Hassan-Wuyo 2021). As a result, this governance capability failure has contributed to the increasing prevalence of kidnap-for-ransom incidents.

As Adeyemi reveals (2022a), the foundation of the political economy of organised kidnap-for-ransom offences is the breach of a social contract, whereby residents within a given territory controlled by bandits pay fees in return for protection. Given this, I contend that Shortland's (2019) Protection Theory (PT) is a relevant tool to analyse the political economy of organised kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria. According to PT, kidnap-for-ransom offences take place for at least one of two reasons.

Bandits may commit kidnap-for-ransom offences to assert their dominance and display their authority. Alternatively, residents who are unable to meet the stipulated payment rate for protection may fall victim to these incidents. The applicability of Shortland's protection theory in explaining the incidence of kidnap-for-ransom in northwest Nigeria is evident in the events that took place in May 2021 in Dada village, Zamfara State. In this case, bandits who were controlling the village demanded a protection fee of ₦3 million from residents, but when this payment was refused, six people were kidnapped and held until the full ransom was paid (Adeyemi 2022a). My assertion that the occurrence of organised kidnappings in northwest Nigeria aligns with the claims of Shortland's PT is additionally supported by the testimony of a resident of Dankurmi Village, Zamfara State who revealed that local residents are obligated to pay an annual protection fee of ₦1.7 million to bandits in order to avoid being kidnapped (Sahara Reporters 2020).

Indeed, in Zamfara State alone, between November 2021 and August 2022, bandit groups reportedly received N538 million in protection payments from residents (Adeyemi 2022a). Similarly, Alhaji Zubairu Abdulra'uf, a community leader in Kaduna State, disclosed that between ₦300 million and ₦400 million was paid to bandits within two years to ensure the safety of residents (Isenyo 2022). In another instance, residents of Sokoto State paid ₦67 million in protection fees to bandits within a single week (Sahara Reporters 2021). Given the significant sums of money being paid to bandit groups in exchange for protection across northwest Nigeria, it can be concluded that the state is significantly lacking governance capabilities throughout the region. The implications of this are crucial as it raises the question of whether the Nigerian government is satisfactorily upholding its *constitutional* requirement to ensure the security of its citizens (1999, Act No. 24, Chapter 2. Section 14(b)). Furthermore, given that bandits have successfully levied protection taxes on residents across parts of the

¹ See section on 'Defining kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria' for definition of *organised* kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria.

northwest, it can be said that they are political actors to the extent that they conform to the *Tillyian* notion of the state as ‘a quintessential protection racket’ (Tilly 1985, 170).

3.3: UNGOVERNED SPACES OR SOFTENED SOVEREIGNTY?

Despite evidence of the Nigerian state’s governance capability failure in the northwest of the country, I argue that the term ‘ungoverned’ is not an accurate description of spaces in the region. Rather, I contend they are subject to softened sovereignty. As Keister notes (2014, 1), proponents of UST hold that ‘Ungoverned spaces exist because integrating them offers few benefits and may pose high costs to host regimes’. This suggests that in instances where ungoverned spaces arise, the state is a passive actor.

Yet, this is not true for northwest Nigeria. As noted above, the Nigerian state has been actively attempting to counter the authority of bandits across areas in northwest Nigeria, a reality that contradicts the suggestion of UST. Therefore, it would be more accurate to characterise the relationship between the state and northwest Nigeria in terms of softened sovereignty, rather than ungoverned. Additionally, as shown in this section, areas within the northwest that are not controlled by the Nigerian state are not ungoverned, rather, they are governed according to the ‘alternative authority’ (Clunan and Trinkunas 2010, 17) of bandits in the region.

In this chapter, I have explored the role played by the softened sovereignty of the Nigerian state, a governance capability failure, in driving kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria. By facilitating the formation of enclaves controlled by bandits, which are, in turn, governed in accordance with logics akin to Shortland’s PT, the softened sovereignty of the Nigerian state in northwest Nigeria serves to drive kidnap-for-ransom offences by pastoral bandits in the region. This chapter implies that to effectively address kidnappings in northwest Nigeria, the Nigerian state should prioritise restoring its legitimacy and governance capabilities instead of relying solely on a militaristic approach, as is currently the case. The following section will shift the focus from discussing capability failure to examining the socio-cultural factors that contribute to the proficiency of pastoral bandits in carrying out kidnap-for-ransom offences.

CHAPTER 4: SOCIO-CULTURAL CAPABILITIES AND KIDNAP-FOR-RANSOM OFFENCES

In this section, I will provide a novel analysis of the drivers of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria by seeking to account for the ways that the socio-cultural capabilities of pastoral bandits play a role in driving the phenomenon. Through an analysis of the socio-cultural capabilities of pastoral bandits, I aim to highlight that the main drivers of kidnap-for-ransom offences by pastoral bandits extend beyond developmental and occupational capability failures. As I have shown, these factors play a significant role in driving kidnappings, but they do not drive kidnap-for-ransom offences in isolation. Across three sections of this chapter, I will analyse the capabilities engendered by the nomadic culture, mobility, and networks among pastoral bandits. By providing this analysis, I seek to explain how these capabilities enable pastoral bandits to carry out spontaneous kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria.

4.1: NOMADIC CAPABILITIES

It is crucial to take into account how the nomadic culture of Fulani pastoralists in northwest Nigeria (Adebayo 1991) provides many pastoral bandits with capabilities that enable them to actively commit kidnap-for-ransom offences. The nomadic lifestyle of many pastoralists in northwest Nigeria engenders *spatial-epistemic* capabilities, which, in turn, facilitates their evading aerial attacks by the Nigerian Air Force (hereafter NAF), thus enabling their continuation of kidnap-for-ransom offences. Indeed, Ahmed Gumi, an Islamic cleric who serves as a mediator between the bandits and the Nigerian government, has revealed that several bandits have used their spatial knowledge of the northwest region to devise escape routes so as to avoid aerial bombardments conducted by the NAF (Shibayan 2021).

Additionally, the use of discreet rural areas as operational bases, a common practice

among pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria (Malumfashi and Kaina 2021; Barnett 2021), is something that further aids their ability to evade the state's attempts to hinder their kidnapping activities. The ability of pastoral bandits to strategically position themselves in areas conducive to the continuation of their activities can be attributed to their spatial knowledge of the northwest, which is acquired through their nomadic lifestyles and the resulting frequent movements across the region. The significance of this is underscored by the admission of Alhaji Lai Mohammed, Nigeria's Minister of Information and Culture, who acknowledged that the government faces a formidable challenge in eliminating the danger posed by pastoral bandits in the northwest region due to the challenging 'terrain' in which they operate (Sunday 2022).

Therefore, I contend that to better understand kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria, it is essential to examine the spatial-epistemic dynamics that result from the nomadic lifestyle of pastoral bandits in the region. As Foucault argues, power, knowledge, and space are intertwined (1982) and one can acknowledge the utility of this idea when exploring the instrumental role played by the spatial-epistemic capabilities of pastoral bandits in driving kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria.

4.2: MOBILE CAPABILITIES

The mobility of pastoral bandits is an important socio-cultural capability that serves as the means through which bandits put their spatial knowledge to effect, and it also facilitates their kidnap-for-ransom offences. Evidence suggests that bandits in northwest Nigeria often use motorcycles, colloquially known as *Okada*, to commit large-scale spontaneous kidnap-for-ransom offences. For instance, in December 2020, a group of bandits on motorcycles kidnapped 333 pupils from Government Secondary School in Kankara, Katsina State (Omorogbe 2022). Similarly, in July 2021, another group of motorcycle-riding bandits kidnapped 140 students from Bethel Baptist High School in Kaduna (Nwezeh 2021). That motorcycles have emerged as the *modus operandi* for bandits when they commit kidnap-for-ransom offences is worth highlighting as such demonstrates the banality of these offences, which paradoxically, makes them more difficult to tackle.

This is because, despite the introduction of a motorcycle ban in 2019 (Nasiru 2019), kidnappings remain prevalent in northwest Nigeria, thus illustrating the ineffectiveness of the measure in putting an end to such activity. Additionally, the ban may create negative unintended consequences that could exacerbate problems for the northwest. For instance, Aina (2022) warns that the motorcycle ban may lead to job losses in the informal economy, potentially driving more people towards crime, thereby raising the prospects that the insecurity situation in the northwest could intensify. Given this, I contend that the Nigerian government should focus on addressing the fundamental drivers of kidnap-for-ransom offences in the northwest, rather than seeking to restrict mobilities. This would involve implementing measures aimed at improving the developmental and occupational capabilities of pastoralists in the northwest, while also working to restore the legitimacy of the Nigerian state among residents in the region.

4.3: NETWORK CAPABILITIES

An analysis of the drivers of kidnap-for-ransom offences by bandits in northwest Nigeria ought to pay attention to the networks of pastoral bandits, which represent a critical capability that has been largely overlooked until now. This section will explore how the presence of *collaborative* networks between Nigerian and Nigerien bandits, as well as between Nigerian bandits and terrorist organisations, are driving kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria.

According to Ahmed Rufa'i (2018, 69), there exists a 'high level of connection and communication between the Nigerian and Nigerien bandits' which contributes to kidnap-for-ransom offences in the northwest. Evidence to support this claim can be seen from the fact that some of the most prolific bandit groups committing kidnap-for-ransom offences have ties across Nigeria and the Niger Republic. For instance, the 'Black and Standa' bandit group, which comprises 600 individuals from across northwest Nigeria and the Niger Republic, collected approximately F.CFA50 million from ransom payments in a single year

by kidnapping residents in northwest Nigeria (Adeyemi 2022b). Moreover, the suspension of telecommunications services across the states of Zamfara, Katsina, and Sokoto, intended to curb kidnap-for-ransom activity, was rendered ineffective as bandits operating in northwest Nigeria collaborated with groups in the Niger Republic to circumvent the measure (Barnett and Hassan 2022, 15). Therefore, the robustness of the networks between the Nigerian and Nigerien bandit groups is such that despite the Nigerian government's attempts to curb kidnap-for-ransom activities in the northwest, these offences persist and as a result, insecurity remains a problem for the region.

While some scholars have refrained from categorising bandit groups in northwest Nigeria as jihadist entities (Barnett, Ahmed Rufa'i and Abdulaziz 2022), there is, nonetheless, evidence supporting the existence of an 'organised crime-terror nexus' (Okoli and Nwangwu 2022) between some bandit and terrorist organisations. As noted by Okoli and Nwangwu (2022, 7), bandits and terrorist organisations have collaborated across various areas, including arms trafficking, intelligence sharing, and guerrilla training. The collaboration in the latter area is especially noteworthy, given that spontaneous kidnappings employ similar methods to that used in guerilla warfare, such as ambushing. Indeed, the kidnapping of 20 students from Greenfield University in Kaduna, perpetrated by both bandits and Boko Haram (Opejobi 2021), serves to demonstrate the consequential realities engendered by collaboration between bandit groups and terrorist organisations. Furthermore, the kidnapping of 168 passengers from a train running between Abuja and Kaduna by Boko Haram and northwestern bandits (Akinwotu 2022) serves to further support the idea that collaborative networks between these groups are increasingly important in driving kidnap-for-ransom offences in the region.

Overall then, an analysis of the collaborative networks between bandits and terrorist groups is crucial in order to understand the nature of spontaneous kidnappings in northwest Nigeria. Doing so may lead to more effective state responses to the kidnap-for-ransom problem in the region. This is especially true if collaboration between bandits and terrorist organisations intensifies going forward. By exploring the collaborative networks of pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria, we are presented with a better understanding of how socio-cultural capabilities as a whole, provide them with the means to commit kidnap-for-ransom offences and circumvent the state in a proficient manner.

This chapter has explained the importance of socio-cultural capabilities in driving kidnap-for-ransom offences by pastoral bandits in northwest Nigeria. On the whole, the analysis indicates that pastoral bandits are proficient at committing kidnap-for-ransom offences because of socio-cultural factors that endow them with the spatial knowledge, mobility, and collaboration required to commit kidnappings in spite of their lacking capabilities in other areas, and in the face of counter-measures taken by the state.

CONCLUSION

In this essay, I have sought to present, examine and demonstrate a new way of understanding the main drivers of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria. Hitherto, Sen's CA and discourse on capabilities have been absent from all academic interpretations of the phenomenon. By applying this conceptual framework, I have identified new implications that contribute to a better understanding of potential solutions for the ongoing kidnap-for-ransom crisis in northwest Nigeria. Additionally, my attempt to address the specific factors that contribute to the prevalence of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria aims to provide an answer to a pressing question that has yet to be fully explored in the existing research literature.

Despite my use of a novel framework through which we can understand the drivers of kidnap-for-ransom offences in northwest Nigeria, due to practical constraints, this thesis could not provide a comprehensive review of the role played by vigilante 'jungle justice' (Anka 2021) in driving kidnap-for-ransom offences in the region. There are two reasons for this. First, while the role of vigilantes in the insecurity situation in northwest Nigeria has been widely reported, it is unclear what role the different vigilante groups play in driving kidnappings per se. Second, the risk to my personal safety that would necessitate me finding out the extent to

which it is the case meant that a satisfactory analysis of this factor was ultimately impractical.

Overall, this essay provides four new contributions to the literature. First, it highlights the significance of approaching the drivers of kidnap-for-ransom offences through the lens of capabilities. Second, it demonstrates the *empirical* limitations of UST in comprehending the phenomenon of kidnap-for-ransom by bandits in northwest Nigeria. Third, it provides a comprehensive analysis of the role played by climate change and the political economy of land in driving the phenomenon. Lastly, it highlights the need to transcend understanding kidnap-for-ransom in northwest Nigeria as stemming from socio-economic factors and issues of state governance alone, and instead, to recognise the capabilities at the disposal of pastoral bandits that facilitate their involvement in kidnap-for-ransom offences.

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APPENDIX

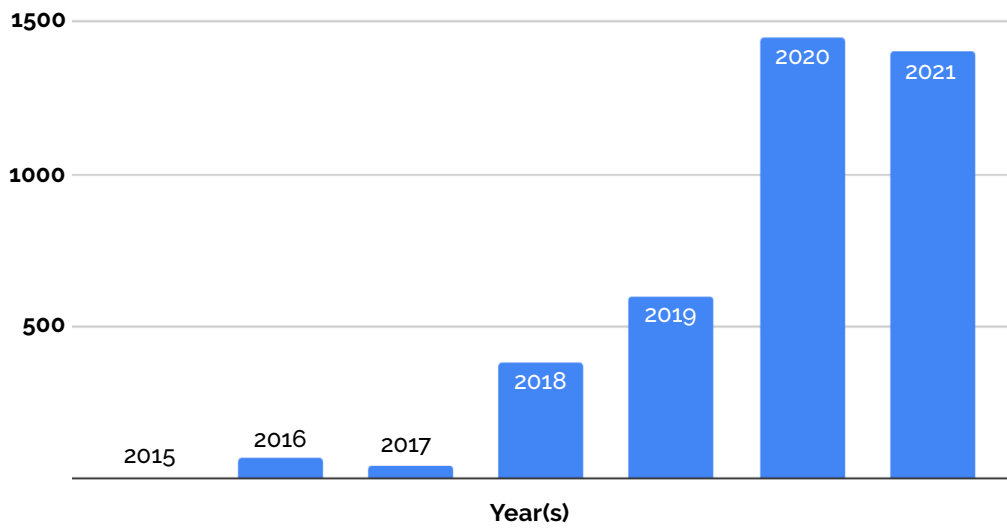


Figure 2 | Number of kidnapping offences in northwest Nigeria, 2015-2021

(Adebajo 2021)



Figure 3 | States in northwest Nigeria's Geopolitical Zone

(Self-illustration)

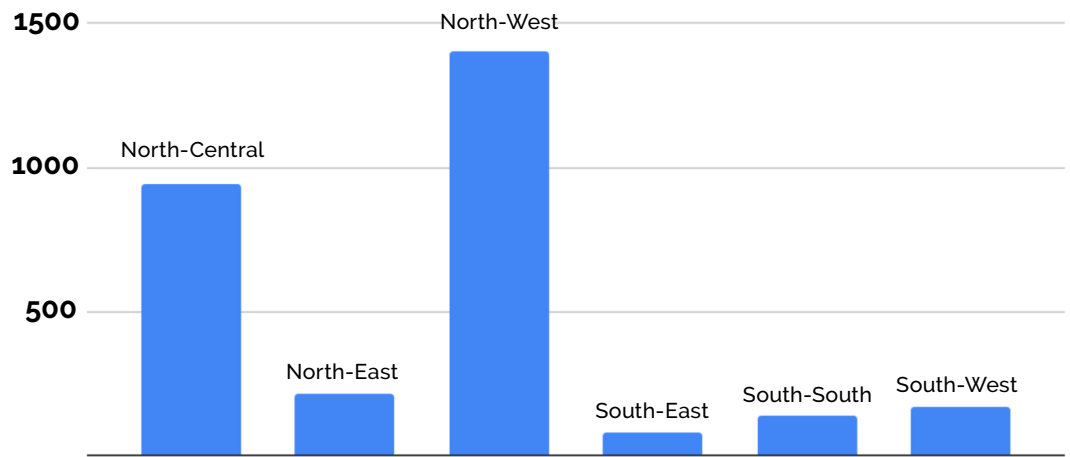


Figure 4 | Number of kidnapping offences across Nigeria's Geopolitical Zones (excluding FCT) in 2021 (Adebajo, 2021)

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Definition
CA	Capability Approach
F.CFA	West African CFA Franc
LGAs	Local Government Area(s)
MPM	Multidimensional Poverty Measure
NAF	Nigerian Air Force
₦	Naira (Nigerian National Currency)
PT	Protection Theory
RDT	Relative Deprivation Theory
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SST	Softened Sovereignty Theory
UST	Ungoverned Spaces Theory

Closing the Indigenous Gap: What can a Symbiosis of Du Boisian Sociology and Indigenous History Offer?

Magnus Oakes

This article argues that, despite the gap in Du Bois own writings, Du Bois' theory of colonialism can be used to analyse Indigenous history to much merit. It argues that an understanding of Indigenous history using Du Bois theories is fruitful for understanding Indigenous history and deepening Du Bois' theories. It discusses the theories that make up Du Bois' main modes of analysis and then applies them to the struggles of Indigenous peoples. It will focus on both Du Bois' economic and psychological theories, namely racial capitalism and double consciousness, and discuss what insights they give us into Indigenous history

INTRODUCTION

Here, it will be argued that Du Bois' theories have much to offer Indigenous history and that Indigenous history has a lot to offer Du Boisian sociology. We will show that the Du Boisian approach is a productive methodology to explore the struggles of Indigenous peoples and that an understanding of those struggles only strengthens Du Bois' theory. This will be argued to be a symbiosis as each will benefit from this proposed relationship. We will use Du Bois' theories of the *colour line* and *double consciousness* as a lens through which to examine the histories of Indigenous people and evaluate what a symbiotic relationship between the two might offer. The Du Boisian framework allows us to challenge norms and assumptions around Indigenous history and much of Indigenous history directly supports Du Bois arguments. In the places where it does not, a symbiosis will be shown not to contradict Du Boisian theory but strengthen it. It will be shown that the Indigenous gap can be closed and that there can be a mutually beneficial relationship between Du Boisian sociology and Indigenous history. We will connect moments and conflicts in First Nation history with Du Bois' rich theoretical base, found both in his published writings and his archive. Throughout this argument, quotes may refer to Indigenous peoples as 'Red', 'Indian' or 'Native Americans'; however, much modern research, including those by Indigenous voices, prefers the term Indigenous so that is we will use in our own writing (Bird 1999). By the term Indigenous we refer to the descendants of the people who first inhabited the North American continent.

THE "INDIGENOUS GAP"

Du Bois is posited to have offered a systematic and comprehensive theory of race (Itzigsohn and Brown 2020, 14). Where his theory of race is notably lacking is in its apparent blind spot to the struggles of Indigenous people (Itzigsohn and Brown 2020, 73). While he does mention Indigenous people intermittently in *Colour and Democracy*, there is a comparative lack of theorisation from Du Bois on this topic (Du Bois, 2007b, 211). This is a gap as his theories operate on a both/and approach to struggles of Black communities and those of the rest of the world (Itzigsohn and Brown 2020, 96). Hence it is a gap that can and ought to be closed.

This is not an entirely novel idea: many have compared the experiences of Indigenous and Black peoples in America, and some have brought elements of Du Bois' thought to the experiences of Indigenous people. Robert Warrior's writing on the intersections of Indigenous and Black experiences in sports and education are interesting (Warrior 2006). Warrior synthesises some of Du Bois' writings on education with parts of the Indigenous peoples'

experience (Warrior 2006, 185). Warrior concludes that that Indigenous and Black experiences are on a 'different, sometimes convergent journey' as each has had different interactions with the same societal forces (Warrior 2006, 194). Kyle Mays' comparative work on the Universal Race Congress (a 1911 anti-racist conference) and transnational progressivism reaches similar conclusions about the potential for symbiosis between Du Bois' writing and the Indigenous experience. May agrees that 'sometimes Black and Native histories flow in parallel; sometimes they intersect; at other times they diverge' (Mays 2013, 258). This is the general academic consensus on the relationship between Black and Indigenous social movements. While some, with Vine Deloria as a notable example, hold that the only real shared experience between Black and Indigenous movements is being against policies created by White people (Deloria 2017), this article will argue that, despite points of diversion and intersection between the Indigenous and Black experiences, the Du Boisian mode of sociology provides a good theoretical base from which to conduct an analysis on Indigenous history. We will further argue that an awareness of Indigenous history can improve Du Bois' theories.

DU BOISIAN SOCIOLOGY

Du Boisian sociology is, at its core, a critique of racialised modernity. It is the argument that 'racialization, racism, colonialism, and coloniality are structuring elements of the modern world' (Itzigsohn and Brown 2020, 187). For Du Boisian sociologists, these are not inevitabilities of human interaction but symptoms of a specific period in human history that must be illuminated and analysed. Du Boisian sociologists argue that modernity and racism are intertwined and that it is this racism in the colour line that is 'problem of the Twentieth Century' (Du Bois 2007a, 3). It is the understanding of racialisation as core to modernity that makes Du Boisian sociology so particularly apt for an analysis of Indigenous history. First Nations' history is crucial to any understanding of racialised modernity as many correctly point to 'discussions about whether the Indians had souls or not' (Maldonado-Torres 2007, 244) as the beginning of coloniality. Du Boisian sociology is therefore well placed to analyse Indigenous history as Indigenous history plays a crucial role in the stories Du Bois is exploring. His theoretical framework will be shown to be ripe for symbiosis.

THE COLOUR LINE AND SETTLER COLONIALISM

Du Bois' theory of the colour line is the argument that modernity is dominated by a structure that separates and divides people through and by race. A brief note of his found in his archive best encapsulates this theory. In it he muses that:

There is a world-wide colour line, it hides behind poverty and class, its methods are old, it is the gravest modern menace, it refuses to recognise civilisation, it is a religion, it is spreading, it must be fought, it must be studied, it must be attacked more. (Du Bois 1919)

What is especially notable about this description from Du Bois is his charge that the colour line 'refuses to recognise civilisation' (Du Bois 1919). The argument that modernity is constructed around the unrecognition of civilisation appears initially confusing but the history of Indigenous and Black Peoples will be shown to support this. Du Bois argues specifically that civilisation as concept is used to other Black people and denigrate their achievements through racialisation. He highlights this bifurcation clearly in *Colour and Democracy* when he argues that 'even black people in India and Africa were labelled as "white" if they showed any trace of progress' (Du Bois 2007b, 34), and the hypocrisy of the hugely varied treatment of mixed-race people depending entirely on their success. This is something that American settler colonists engaged in on a massive scale in their treatment of Indigenous peoples upon arrival. The mass othering and dehumanisation of Indigenous people was, according to the early 19th century historian Francis Parkman, because 'he will not learn the arts of civilisation' (Parkman 1908, 48). This example is just one of many that employ such justifications that strengthen Du Bois' claims about racialisation and colonialism. An analysis of it therefore strengthens Du Bois own arguments by vindicating them.

This othering and denigrating of Indigenous civilisations is still a common occurrence in both Canadian and American politics today. First Nations tribes in Canada are faced with a lack of clean water that, if they were treated like other Canadian citizens, would be viewed as a human rights catastrophe. Instead, because of historic treaties and attitudes towards Indigenous Peoples, some reserves have been on boil water orders for over five years, and in one case, 27 years.¹ This sort of denigration extends into depictions in the media. PragerU (2018), as a part of its attempt to defend American history, published videos only four years ago, accusing First Nations peoples of being violent and barbaric in their treatment of other First Nations peoples and animals. This is a very clear example of a bifurcated treatment and a use of racialisation as a tool. When Steven Crowder denounces Indigenous people as having a lifestyle of 'barbarism and borderline evil', he is performing exactly what Du Bois claimed the colour line relied on almost 100 years ago. For Crowder to accuse them of barbarism, while, in the same video, defending Columbus, who presided over brutality and violence against Indigenous people in his voyages, demonstrates the disingenuous use of civilisation as a conceptual tool for colonial othering (Tinker and Freeland 2008, 26). In fact, the main thrust of the video is to argue that some First Nation tribes were so barbaric that Columbus' rule and invasion was legitimate. Telling this story without any consideration for the 'barbarism' that Columbus himself then engaged in towards Indigenous people, and without defining barbarism, proves Du Bois' point that understandings of barbarism and civilisation are politically useful tools. It supports his argument that these are not neutral terms but things that are used by the powerful to control those they have colonised.

Therefore, Du Bois' sociological tools are useful to the analysis of Indigenous history as the colour line is alive and well, especially in conservative media. If we understand racialisation as a politically impactful decision, using Du Bois' framework, and not a natural observation, this allows us to challenge assumptions and power structures that underline the treatment of Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, a Du Boisian sociology that includes an analysis of the racialisation of Indigenous people is only more persuasive as it can highlight the roots of racialisation better. By closing the Indigenous gap here, we present a more persuasive Du Boisian Sociology that can explore how the colour line has affected Indigenous peoples.

RACIAL CAPITALISM AND PIPELINES

Du Bois' focus on the economic motivations behind the colour line is also useful for our discussion of Indigenous history. He emphasises that the goal of colonialism is 'private profit from low wages of coloured workers and low prices for priceless and unusually desired raw materials all over the Earth' (Du Bois 1954, 3). Du Bois' analytical tools allow us to challenge assumptions regarding the 'development' of Indigenous communities globally. He guides us to cast a critical eye over the economic goals of colonialism, as Du Bois is clear that it is at its core an extractive relationship. Du Bois demonstrates in his archive an understanding that trade and international relations under the colour line, despite being free in theory, can still be deeply exploitative. His most powerful argument for this is his comparison between nominally free nations in post-colonial economic relations and nominally free slaves in post-emancipation America. He writes 'there are many countries which have nominal independence which are under almost as control by other nations as formerly' (Du Bois 1954, 1). He argues that those analysing post-colonial nations are often 'misled by names and thus failing to assess realities' (Du Bois 1954, 1).

This has particular use as a framework when discussing the current construction of natural gas pipelines. The Coastal GasLink (CGL) website, an ongoing natural gas pipeline construction project in British Columbia, provides some good examples.² The website strongly emphasises that CA\$1.5B has been awarded to Indigenous businesses but beyond a few letters they have little evidence for their bold claim that they are 'proud of the strong relationships and agreements' they built. This is because despite 'agreement' being the term used, CGL are on First Nation, in particular Wet'suwet'en, land against the will and the interest of those people. The eviction notice signed, handed to and enforced against CGL is a clear example of this (Wickham 2021). Here, just as Du Bois describes in the post-colonial case, it is easy to be

¹ <<https://canadians.org/fn-water/>>

² <<https://www.coastalgaslink.com>>

'misled by names'. However, if we follow Du Bois example and examine the 'realities', the CGL is a clear threat to the First Nations' way of life. It is deeply damaging to their communities but is being pushed through because it would be very profitable for the Canadian government and natural gas corporations. As the Wet'suwet'en chiefs state in their eviction letter, there are clear threats to the First Nations way of life posed by both the ecological damage of pipeline construction and the threat of 'man camps' (Wickham 2021). Hence, in examining the realities of economic relations, and not being misled by names, it becomes clear that the external presentation of an agreement and mutually beneficial relationship is a lie. It is instead an extractive relationship in which Indigenous land is being defiled for economic gain by the Canadian government. Therefore, the Du Boisian framework leads us to challenge the presentation of Indigenous–settler relations.

However, Du Bois' economic framework is somewhat limited in this case as he does not appear to have the tools to discuss the specific difficulties of First Nation struggles in Canada. What is especially notable about First Nation sovereignty is that while it is technically acknowledged in Canada by the *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia* case, Indigenous peoples do not have even have all the rights afforded to the post-colonial states that Du Bois theorises. While the Supreme Court of Canada eventually found and established the right to 'Aboriginal title', they came to no conclusions about question of self-governance (*Delgamuukw v. British Columbia* 1997). This means that while Du Bois offers us an economic framework that is generally useful, it lacks specificity for the First Nations struggles as, in Du Bois' focus of analysis, the post-colonial subject is at least afforded self-determination in theory. Indigenous people instead have their attempts at sovereignty further limited by policies imposed by internal colonial institutions like the Bureau of Indian Affairs that Du Bois' theories do not explore.

This is a qualitative difference between the experiences of Indigenous peoples and others, but Du Bois' own blind spot on this issue does not preclude his theory from being useful. His pre-existing analysis emphasises prioritising economic relations over symbolic ones, and this leads us to challenge the presented picture of current Indigenous–settler relations regardless of Du Bois' own lack of discussion on the issue. A Du Boisian analysis can investigate the complexities of Indigenous–settler inter-governmental relations precisely because Du Bois constructed a framework to examine the myths of post-colonial economic relations. Here then, a symbiosis is productive as Du Bois methodologies are well suited to the challenges facing Indigenous peoples.

LAND

Du Bois' analysis, however, does not emphasise the displacement of land that is a crucial element of the Indigenous struggle. While he does discuss the theft of land and its illegitimacy as a form of income, he fails to acknowledge who the land was taken from when he says that Black labour 'made this land rich and prosperous' (Du Bois 1960, 2). This misses the importance of, as Tuck and Yang describe it, 'land [being] recast as property and as a resource' (Tuck and Yang 2012, 6) as a process instead of an essential characteristic of land. This is a key part of the 'entangled triad structure of settler–native–slave' (Tuck and Yang 2012, 1) that Tuck and Yang place as crucial to understanding settler colonialism. Du Bois' theories do not meaningfully consider the Indigenous part of this triad, leaving the colour line theory somewhat analytically stunted. This does not render it worthless as an analytical structure outright, but by not theorising the importance of land, Du Bois misses ways to strengthen his argument. Indigenous theorisations of 'place-thought' (Watts 2013) place land as animate and internally connected to the production of knowledge, in contrast to Western understandings of land as inanimate and separate from knowledge. This would only strengthen Du Bois arguments about modernity and the colour line being attached to the 'refusal to recognise civilisation' (Du Bois 1919) as presenting alternative epistemological structures that have been erased by colonial thought patterns supports and develops his argument. The experiences of First Nations' people clearly can be integrated in a mutually beneficial way into Du Bois' arguments: a colour line that properly considered the role of Indigenous people would only be more convincing in its discussion of racialised modernity. It is, therefore, clear that Du

Bois' theories can be used to better understand the struggles of Indigenous people and that, in turn, Indigenous struggles can be used to better understand the world.

DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS

Du Bois' theories of the psychological side of colonialism can also form a useful symbiosis with Indigenous history. Double consciousness as a concept was constructed by Du Bois around his own experiences of racialised subjectivity as a Black man but it also is relevant to discussions of First Nations' experience of racialisation. It will be demonstrated that, while Du Bois' psychological theories require some *stretching* to incorporate Indigenous experiences, they still have much to offer and that a stretched double consciousness is more impactful. By *stretching*, we mean the application of theory beyond its originally intended target in the Fanonian sense (Fanon 1986).

It is first important to establish what Du Bois' theory of double consciousness is. For Du Bois, racialisation operates through a variety of psychological structures that influence the thoughts of the racialised people. Double consciousness has three major components: 'the veil, twoness and second sight' (Itzigsohn and Brown 2020, 28), but we will focus on *the veil* and *second sight* as these are the most relevant areas to our discussion. The veil is the internal, psychological one-way mirror between the races that creates the 'double self' of an American and a Black person, and second sight is the different vision, both of themselves and wider society, that is afforded to racialised people (Du Bois 2007a, 14).

Double consciousness as an analytical tool can also be applied to Indigenous peoples, even though, we will argue, it is experienced in somewhat different ways and therefore requires some stretching. In essence, there is a difference, as the veil between White and Indigenous is constructed differently than that between Black and White. This creates a more complicated double consciousness, as Black theorists do not have to deal with the concept of indigeneity and how it can muddy double consciousness. As Tuck and Yang highlight, indigeneity has a 'subtractive nature' (Tuck and Yang 2012, 13). This nature, and moves to innocence, all work to create a less clear distinction between Indigenous peoples and settlers. This challenges their identity in different ways to that experienced by Black people, as settlers do not claim to be Black to protect their complicity in the colonial project. This is not a problem for Black theorists as the question of Black identity is contested differently. The source of this difference in treatment is the specific importance of settler nativism to the colonial project. Blackness is not treated in this way because Black people play a different role in colonial relations.

Deloria conceptualises this by arguing that Indigenous and Black people are both animals to the 'Whites' but Black people were considered 'draft animals, Indians wild animals' (Deloria 2017, 83). For Deloria, 'the white is after Indian land and resources' whereas the problem for Black people 'is not one of legal status, it is one of culture and social and economic mobility' (Deloria 2017, 83). This points to a different construction of the veil as Whites must be able to construct Indigeneity in a way that legitimates their occupation of Indigenous land but still construct a veil of sorts. Deloria shows this in saying that, from their conversations with White people and their Indigenous ancestry, 'evidently most tribes were entirely female for the first three hundred years of white occupation' (Deloria 2017, 9), because everyone who claimed Indigenous heritage would claim to be related to a princess. This is not therefore a genuine construction as White people do not actually want to be Indigenous, they want to fulfil certain myths about 'Indian princesses'. This is therefore a different veil to that experienced by Black people: it manifests itself beyond the claims of ancestry and into policy. This lack of a 'one drop' rule for Indigeneity is emblematised in the exception to the Racial Integrity Act that Tuck and Yang discuss (Tuck and Yang 2012, 13). By allowing exceptions to one drop rules only for those who claimed 'one-sixteenth or less' of Indigenous blood the American veil made clear its complicated relationship to whiteness and indigeneity (Racial Integrity Act 1924). This sort of ideological belief that being Indigenous is a 'stage of development' legitimates policies like that that proposed by Pratt of 'kill the Indian, and save the man' (Pratt 1892). The veil for First Nations' people is therefore a distinct but analogous experience due to the different roles that Black and Indigenous people have played and do play in colonial

power matrices.

AN ANALOGOUS VEIL

However, Du Bois' concept of the elements of double consciousness, and particularly the veil can still apply to indigeneity and the experiences of Indigenous people despite the different construction of race. It is notable that Deloria begins his manifesto with a discussion of the power of White presentation and understanding of Indigenous people. He feels that 'our foremost plight is our transparency', and that the unrealities of White understandings of Indigenous experiences 'face us as Indian people' (Deloria 2017, 8). This echoes Du Bois' concept of the veil as a 'one way mirror' (Itzigsohn and Brown 2020, 28). For both Du Bois and Deloria, their existence is coloured by the perceptions of White people and those perceptions have real weight. Deloria describes the frustration of 'experts painting us as they would like us to be' and how this makes being Indigenous 'in a very real sense to be unreal and ahistorical' (Deloria 2017, 8). This mirrors Du Bois expressing the sadness 'of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity' (Du Bois 2007a, 14). In both cases, their views of themselves are deeply coloured by the opinions that White people hold of them.

This is the veil as it projects White people's own opinions of Black or Indigenous people onto them. Hence, there is an analogous veil experienced by Indigenous people. It has different projections and fosters different myths, but it still performs the same function. Independent of Du Bois' theorisation, Indigenous voices echo his sentiments about their own struggles for liberation. The opinions of White people foster reflection that Indigenous actors must struggle against. This example shows that Du Bois theory has use beyond Black experiences, despite not being really intended as such. This should be viewed as a success of Du Bois and evidence that there is much to be gained from a symbiotic relationship between Du Boisian theory and Indigenous history. Closing the gap here proves that the theory of the veil is applicable regardless of race. It supports the argument, against Deloria, that there is common ground between Black and Indigenous as they have analogous experiences. Therefore, again, Du Bois' theories can gain from including and being aware of the different permutations of racial myths as his sentiments are echoed independently by Indigenous theorists.

SECOND SIGHT

Furthermore, the concept of second sight can also be applied to the knowledge that Indigenous people have, especially around environmental issues. Second sight for Du Bois was not just an expression of Black people seeing themselves through others' vision, but also a gift that allowed Black people to see social truths that may be obscured for others (Itzigsohn and Brown, 2020, 32). For Du Bois, second sight allows racially excluded people to see beyond the veil and is an analytical method that prioritises lived experiences (Itzigsohn and Brown 2020, 42). This sort of vision, which gives racially excluded people the ability to see past obfuscating forces, can be extended to the experiences of Indigenous people. Importantly, this is not essentialism, but a theory by Du Bois that those who are racially excluded may be best posed to theorise relations without the distorting effects of the veil. We will link this to the epistemic exclusion of Indigenous knowledge as by highlighting where Western and Indigenous epistemic traditions diverge, the second sight of Indigenous peoples becomes clearer.

Particularly around discussions around climate, there are many cases of epistemic exclusion of Indigenous theories that eventually are proven to be the most beneficial. This is a process that Kyle Whyte describes: 'Indigenous peoples see their knowledges as containing important insights about how to negotiate today's environmental issues' (Whyte 2017, 157). Their relationships to nature, Whyte argues, involve more reciprocity and this affords them, in the Du Boisian sense, a second sight. The history of controlled burns in America is one of the best examples of this. Initially banned in 1850 by the Federal Government, the traditionally Indigenous practice of small, controlled fires has, over time, been re-entered as a government wildfire prevention strategy (Levy 2005). Whyte provides many examples of this sort of Indigenous second sight, wherein Indigenous groups see beyond the veil and recognise the failures of more extractive policies around the environment (Whyte 2017).

Therefore, the second sight of Indigenous people allows them to see the flaws of the American government's relationship to nature.

Second sight is a useful concept then in supporting Indigenous perspectives. It helps to explain the excluded nature of traditional Indigenous forms of knowledge and its applicability on Indigenous perspectives proves the validity of Du Bois' psychological tools in being used beyond Black communities. Furthermore, the specific nature of Indigenous people's second sight shows that the concept of second sight can go beyond simply the epistemological. There is a deeply practical element to Indigenous knowledge around the environment that ought not just to be reduced to a sort of vision. Ongoing programs in Canada point to the use of traditional forms of Indigenous knowledge not just in theorising the climate crisis but monitoring and preventing its damages (Landrie-Crossland and Morse, nd). Hence, Du Bois' framework has value to the Indigenous experience, and value is added to his framework through an inclusion of Indigenous experiences in his models.

Double consciousness as a concept is therefore, despite some areas where it must be 'stretched', a useful tool in analysing the Indigenous experience. It gives us tools to think about racial alienation and the ways that it can influence the unconscious. The surprising echoing of Du Bois' theories by unconnected Indigenous theorists speaks to the analytical strength of his theories and their usefulness in discussions of race. His tools here equip us to challenge epistemic exclusion and better understand the effects of racial alienation. Unlike in his economic theories, the lack of inclusion of Indigenous people into his models should not be considered a gap in the same sense as his economic theories. There is little left unexplained before the inclusion of Indigenous history and voices as his theories here purport to be more specific to Black people, but their explanatory power is improved by considering racism's general psychological effects. It enables us to see the veil in its different forms and consider how systems of racialisation manifest across different racial myths. A Du Boisian sociology that is equipped, through symbiosis, to explain the different manifestations of racialisation is only a more useful one.

CONCLUSION

It is therefore clear that Du Bois' methodologies and analytical structures can achieve symbiosis with Indigenous experiences. In this symbiosis we can find a stronger Du Boisian sociology that is better equipped to explain beyond the Black experience. Hence, while Du Bois himself misses parts of the Indigenous experience, his methodology and analytical structures can be very useful in discussions of Indigenous history. In both his economic and psychological analysis, points of interesting overlap can be found. Additionally, Indigenous history itself is clearly very useful to Du Bois' own arguments. Despite the different experiences of First Nations people, their struggle supports Du Bois' arguments. They enable a deeper understanding of the roots and contours of American racism and enable Du Boisian sociologists to better claim to have comprehensive models of racism.

With a deeper appreciation and understanding of Indigenous experiences, Du Boisian sociology is only improved. Du Bois can enrich our study of Indigenous history, while Indigenous history can enrich his theories. A Du Boisian sociology that properly accounts for and theorises the stories of Indigenous people is a sociology that can far better explain and justify its claims about racialised modernity. Du Bois himself states that 'there is but one coward on earth, and that is the coward that dare not know' (Du Bois 1898, 23) and to not know the stories of Indigenous people's is certainly cowardly.

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Beyond Anthropocentrism: Interrogating the Roles of Language, Power, and Ideas in Maintaining Animal Exploitation

Finn Sadler

This paper critically examines the roles of Western linguistic and ideational norms in their supporting and legitimising of groups that perpetuate the exploitation of animals. This paper contains two sections. First, it examines the subject/object dichotomy, which positions humans as 'subjects' on account of their perceived moral agency and rationality whilst consigning animals to the status of 'objects' on account of their perceived irrationality and lack of moral agency. The section defines the 'subject' and discusses how specific manifestations of the subject/object dichotomy in language reinforce the anthropocentric ideas that contribute to a cultural acceptance of animal exploitation. In the second section, the paper synthesises a Foucauldian definition of 'rationality' with a Latourian approach to social relations and examines ideational norms that portray animals as irrational, along with the scholarly arguments supporting this thesis. The section concludes that adherences to anthropocentric norms and biases distort the framework within which these arguments are made. When applying a more appropriate framework, there is sufficient reason to conclude that animals are, in fact, rational. The paper closes by highlighting the importance of linguistic analysis in deconstructing anthropocentric norms and advocates for further research in this field through comparative methods.

INTRODUCTION

In October 2019, the multinational grocery and general merchandise retailer, Tesco, began airing an advertisement for their new range of plant-based sausages as a part of their 'Food Love Stories' campaign (Tesco 2019). Soon after its release, the advertisement was condemned by many representatives of the United Kingdom's (UK) farming industry as an attempt to demonise the industry (NFU 2019), which placed the advertisement at the centre of public debate in the UK as the topic made national headlines and received coverage on some of the country's most prominent television talk shows (The Independent 2019; This Morning 2019).

The advertisement itself depicted a young girl telling her father that she does not 'want to eat animals anymore'¹, prompting the child's father to buy Tesco's new range of plant-based sausages to prepare a non-meat meal for his daughter (Tesco 2019). The point of contention that members of the farming industry had with the advertisement pertained to the language used, with a representative of the National Farmers Union (NFU) arguing that 'the wording in the advert was totally unnecessary', 'I mean, why not just have a little girl saying "I'm not really keen on eating meat anymore"', the representative reasoned (This Morning 2019). The level of backlash that the advertisement received from the farming industry simply for using one word ('animals') in the place of another ('meat'), despite the fact that there is no real difference between 'eating meat' and 'eating animals'², highlights how important language choice is in order for the animal farming industry to maintain their control of societal and cultural norms.

Despite being what seems like a minor linguistic shift, the use of the word 'animals' in place of 'meat' challenges the animal farming industry's attempts to create a disconnect between consumers and the reality of animal slaughter, regardless of whether this was Tesco's intention. As Joy (2009) correctly identifies, the animal farming industry depends on concealing animal farming practices and preserving a disconnect between these practices and the

¹ The quotes regarding the advertisement and the NFU's response are from video sources. See the bibliography.

² Whilst it is true that the equivalency between 'eating meat' and 'eating animals' is not universal and is instead influenced by geographic and cultural contexts (Yates-Doerr, 2015), the advertisement under scrutiny is targeted at a mainstream British audience, which for whom, this equivalency holds true.

consumer to achieve financial success. Therefore, anything that threatens the preservation of this disconnect also threatens the financial success and profitability of the industry as a whole, creating an incentive for the animal farming industry to protect itself against these threats. One of the means by which the animal farming industry does this is by discursively constructing a social, political, and cultural atmosphere that legitimises their existence and contributes to the preservation of the disconnect upon which their existence depends.

Fundamentally, this paper argues that societally engrained anthropocentric beliefs often serve as the intellectual justification that leads us (human beings) to mistreat animals for our own gain. This is argued through a systematic close inspection of specific cultural and linguistic norms that are both produced and reproduced by the animal farming industry, academia, and other groups that have an interest in maintaining the exploitation of animals. This paper hopes to contribute to the existing literature in this field by deconstructing various specific manifestations of some of the supporting sub-narratives that work to uphold anthropocentric belief systems and, consequently, the cultural acceptance of animal exploitation.

Whilst it is the case that in recent years, linguistic analysis as a practical research method has enjoyed a modest surge in popularity within the field of critical animal studies (see Merskin 2022; Almiron, Cole and Freeman 2015), the existing literature has scarcely examined the specific manifestations of various discourses that are to be discussed in this paper. Moreover, the core findings of this paper, by virtue of its fine-tuned scope, carry pertinent implications for how we might form representations of animals and the animal farming industry in the media, advertising, and academia in the future. It should also be noted that in its analysis, this paper will maintain a focus on the English-speaking West. This paper recognises that there is a diverse range of perspectives and discourses in this region by virtue of its heterogeneous cultural makeup (Banks 1986) and that anthropocentrism is indeed challenged by certain groups in the West (for example, The Vegan Society 2021). However, this paper will solely contend with the dominating, mainstream narratives within this region that reflect and perpetuate standard practices concerning how animals are most typically treated in these societies (for example, their use as food, clothing, and entertainment). This choice has been made in accordance with the established scope of the paper as a critique of anthropocentric norms and beliefs.

It is also true that this choice of scope may (i) limit the universality of the arguments and findings presented in this paper due to the often differing historical and social contexts of non-Western non-English-speaking societies; (ii) allow for the overlooking of valuable insights or approaches to the subject matter from these societies; and (iii) preclude criticism of non-English languages and non-Western manifestations of anthropocentrism. However, this focus has been chosen in accordance with the high level of influence that the English-speaking West has had and continues to have on the non-English-speaking, non-Western world through its wide-ranging and ever-increasing number of cultural exports (Nmah 2018; Petras 1994; Beck, Sznajder, and Winter 2003; Melitz 2016). Consequently, it is often argued that the West is most responsible for how animals are treated globally (Szűcs et al. 2012) and as such, this paper will focus its criticism on the West. This scope has also been chosen to reflect the nature of media organisations, advertising agencies, and academic journals, of which the majority are based in, and geared towards, the English-speaking West (Investopedia 2019; Majidi 2023; Canagarajah 1996). Moreover, through its focused examination of English-speaking Western societies, this paper also aims to serve as a reference for future researchers interested in conducting comparative analyses of anthropocentrism. As such, the findings and arguments presented herein hope to provide a valuable framework for exploring analogous subjects within non-English-speaking, non-Western societies in the pursuit of a more all-encompassing literature.

SECTION 1: THE SUBJECT/OBJECT DICHOTOMY

1.1: DEFINING THE *SUBJECT*

Numerous scholars working in the field of critical animal studies have noted that the subject/object dichotomy remains a powerful discursive motif central to maintaining the prevailing

narrative of anthropocentrism in society (Lindgren and Öhman 2018; Nocella et al 2014). This binary achieves this, it is argued, by positioning humans as ‘subjects’ on account of their perceived moral agency and rationality whilst consigning animals to the status of ‘objects’ on account of their perceived irrationality and lack of moral agency (Lindgren and Öhman 2018). To move beyond the confines of this dichotomy in our understanding of the nature of our relationship with animals, we must carefully define what the subject is. Defining the subject allows us to accurately deconstruct the subject/object dichotomy and identify how exactly it manifests in and upholds the anthropocentric narrative.

A comprehensive exploration of the subject began with the German idealists as an attempt to build upon Hume’s (1739) radical scepticism.³ Perhaps most notably of the idealists, Hegel argues that the subject is constituted by ‘the process of reflectively mediating itself with itself’ (1807, 9). Through this dialogue, the subject understands and makes sense of its own existence and the world around it. The subject establishes a relationship between its constituent perceptions, integrating them into a coherent whole. Thus, for Hegel, the subject is that which is capable of having a subjective and unique experience.

In his essay, ‘What is it like to be a bat?’, Nagel (1974) expands upon Hegel’s definition, proposing that explaining subjective experience is beyond the reach of scientific inquiry due to the requirement of an objective perspective for scientific understanding. For Nagel, it is not possible for us to know what it is like to be a bat because we cannot objectively measure and consequently understand what a subjective experience is. Whilst Nagel’s argument offers valuable insights that complement Hegel’s conception of the subject, it also invites criticism. Dennett (1993), a cognitive scientist and philosopher, suggests that Nagel overlooks the potential insights that the field of animal cognition can provide in understanding the intricate behaviours, sensory perceptions, and cognitive processes of animals. In this sense, for Dennett, we indeed can gain some understanding of what it is like to be a bat through animal cognition. Whilst Dennett’s much-needed critique does well to address the extremity of Nagel’s argument in its total exclusion of animal cognition, Dennett’s argument leans towards another extreme by suggesting that we can understand the experiences of a bat solely through animal cognition. Clearly, animal cognition can provide insights into the revealing of and understanding of the faculties that animals may possess, such as bats’ faculty of echolocation (Dennett 1993) or the function of cortical activity profiles (Atkins 1993). However, whilst these cognitive insights allow us to consider *how* bats think, they do not allow us to consider what bats think. The limitation lies in our inability to objectively comprehend their subjective experiences, which should caution against making normative judgments about these experiences.

In conclusion, this paper, henceforth, adopts the understanding of the ‘subject’ as discussed previously, which is that of an entity capable of experiencing the subjective aspects of consciousness. It follows that this definition encompasses humans and extends to the perspectives and cognitive processes of non-human animals too.

1.2: THE SUBJECT/OBJECT DICHOTOMY AND THE ANIMAL FARMING INDUSTRY

The subject/object dichotomy plays a central role in maintaining the disconnect that the animal farming industry requires to legitimise its existence and continue its operations. By positioning animals as the ‘object’ devoid of moral value and humans as the ‘subject’ endowed with rationality and moral value, the dichotomy creates a hierarchical relationship between humans and animals that functions to justify the exploitation of animals and, consequently, the existence of the animal farming industry. As is the case with many ideas that function to support controlling groups (Foucault 1980), this framework is communicated to society via pervasive linguistic norms. In fact, many scholars have emphasised the key role that language plays in the ‘othering’ of marginalised groups, including animals (see Freeman 2009; Stibbe 2012; Glenn 2004; Dunayer 1995). Therefore, it follows that analysing the discourse and linguistic norms that reinforce this dichotomy is likely to be the most effective means by which we can deconstruct the subject/object dichotomy and identify how it manifests in society.

³ Radical scepticism refers to the belief that knowledge does not exist and, therefore, absolute certainty about anything is never justified.

A term commonly used within the animal farming industry and society as a whole to describe animals raised for agricultural purposes is 'livestock'. 'Livestock', a word that first appeared in the 1520s, is etymologically derived from a combination of the adjective 'live', in this case denoting animal, and 'stock' (Etymonline 2016), denoting something that is purposed to generate profits for the owner. The use of the term 'livestock' in exchange for 'animals' implies that farmed animals are to be primarily regarded as commodities used for monetary gain, reinforcing the objectification inherent in the dichotomy. Whilst in the context of animal farming, it is the case that the existence of animals is purely defined by their ability to generate profit, as that is the nature of the industry; However, when profit is prized as the sole priority, aspects that are important to the wellbeing of an animal are likely to be disregarded, as the animals are viewed as objects that do not require any sort of attention that the human subject does. It is this rationale that leads intensive battery farms, for example, to minimise the personal space, medical care, and general attention available to the animals that they house (Glenn 2004).

Perhaps it is also the case that the use of the term 'livestock' within the farming industry acts as a means to preserve the disconnect between the industry's farmers and the animals they exploit. In other terms, farmers within the industry do not feel as though they are exploiting living beings but instead objects of no moral value because of how the term 'livestock' has discursively constructed their social environment and attitudes to be one of disregard toward animals. This disregard benefits the industry, as such a disconnect is likely to encourage farmers to minimise spending on welfare in pursuit of higher profits overall. This phenomenon is well documented by various researchers, such as Kılıç and Bozkurt (2013), who find a positive correlation between farmers' perceptions of animal welfare and the actual welfare standards that farmers impose. As such, continuous language use purposed to undermine the subjectivity of animals is likely to result in a stronger disconnect between farmer and animal, resulting in a lack of animal welfare standards.

The term 'livestock' also serves a function in mainstream society, implying that these animals exist wholly for human use, prioritising their economic value rather than their intrinsic value as living beings, as subjects. This objectification of animals as 'livestock' contributes to a discursively constructed cultural acceptance of their use as products which frames animal products such as meat or dairy as commodities rather than the result of the exploitation of a being with individual experiences. It is this very disconnect that the animal farming industry depends on, for it facilitates the cognitive dissonance required to wilfully fund the exploitation of animals whilst also claiming to love them, as is the case with the vast majority of consumers of animal products (RSPCA 2022; FSA 2014).

Terms such as 'processing', which is used by the farming industry to euphemistically describe the process of slaughtering animals and cutting apart their bodies, are often used alongside 'livestock' (see Koller and Braunegg 2015) to reinforce the objectification of animals further and consequently preserve the disconnect between consumers and the reality of animal farming. Such a term creates the impression that the slaughtering of an animal is merely a clinical procedure that need not warrant an emotional response, for such an emotional response is likely to threaten the disconnect and, consequently, the profitability of the animal farming industry. Similarly, terms such as 'pork' and 'beef' as opposed to 'pig meat' and 'cow meat' further serve to mask the immediate connotations of slaughter associated with terms like 'pig meat' or 'cow meat'. These terms, ultimately, reinforce the notion that animals exist as commodities for human use and consumption, a notion inherent to the subject/object dichotomy.

1.3: THE SUBJECT/OBJECT DICHOTOMY OUTSIDE OF THE ANIMAL FARMING INDUSTRY

Though most easily observed within the context of animal farming, the subject/object dichotomy exists in many domains of society, deeply embedded in our institutions, social conventions, and language. Whilst it would be beyond the breadth of this paper to examine all dwellings of the subject/object dichotomy, a comprehensive analysis of the domains of society that most pertinently reinforce the subordination of animals would ensure a succinct

exploration, nonetheless. As such, this section will delve into the influence of language itself⁴ in maintaining the oppression of animals.

Merskin (2022) correctly notes that whilst the gradual move away from human binary pronouns represents a progressive change in how humans are categorised, the comparatively far slower progress that is being made in how we categorise animals serves as a testament to how little we regard them as beings worthy of fair treatment. It is not uncommon to hear humans use the pronoun ‘it’ to describe an animal, particularly when that animal’s sex is not known. It would be highly unlikely, on the other hand, to hear a human refer to another human in this way because the notion that humans are subjects and not objects is firmly concretised in society, to the extent that it would likely be perceived as highly disrespectful to objectify another human like this. However, this same reasoning is rarely extended to include animals, resulting in a continual normalisation of language that actualises and reinforces living beings as belonging to the category of object rather than subject. The natural consequence of this subordination to the status of objects is the continued exploitation and oppression of animals because, due to their lack of subjectivity, they are deemed not important or valuable enough to provide fair treatment. In this sense, pronouns, therefore, become ‘epistemic tools that link the [un]said, the suppressed, the taken for granted, and the unnoticed’ (Cowley 2021, 406) in constructing the realities of animals.

Whilst investigating linguistic norms is an effective means of deconstruction, scholars such as Almiron, Cole and Freeman (2015) argue that the English language itself should also face scrutiny for its inherent encouragement of language use that results in the subordination of animals. Plural nouns that are transposed in meaning into common nouns used to describe entire groups encourage the subordination of one group and the promotion of another. For example, Almiron, Cole and Freeman assert that ‘referring to non-human species as “animals” in the aggregate objectifies them, removes any individuality, and plays into the hegemonically speciesist institutions that survive and profit from their bodily parts and their deaths.’ (2015, 44). However, we are bound by the language we use and cannot overcome the tendency in the English language to aggregate individuals resulting in the objectification of a particular group. Nevertheless, it is important to remain critical of the embedded anthropocentrism inherent in our language despite our incapability to escape it (Almiron, Cole and Freeman 2015).

SECTION 2: THE NOTION OF ANIMALS AS IRRATIONAL

2.1: DEFINING AND DECONSTRUCTING RATIONALITY

Similarly to the subject/object dichotomy, the notion that animals are wholly irrational is often expressed dichotomously too, opposing the inverse view that humans are, by virtue of species, wholly rational, at least far more so than animals. Whilst this dichotomy is not reinforced through linguistic norms to the extent that the subject/object dichotomy is, the notion of animal irrationality remains a prevailing narrative within academia (see Davidson 1982; Sousa 2004; Evans 2013). In particular, this narrative, through the observation of animal behaviour and human behaviour, epistemologically constructs the idea that the differences between animal and human behaviour are substantial enough to prescribe animals as irrational and humans as rational. The wide acceptance and deep-rooted nature of such a narrative in academia and society at large provide humans with another justification to perceive themselves as superior and consign animals to an inferior status, advancing the dominance of anthropocentrism as an ideational norm in society. As such, it is necessary to interrogate the notion that animals are irrational and examine a taxonomy of scholarly arguments that argue in its support. Defining what we mean by ‘*rationality*’ allows us to decide on the scope and allows for a more fine-tuned analysis.

Early attempts to define *rationality* often focused on the perceived intersection of reason with morality (see Kant 1785; Hume 1735). In defining his famous categorical imperative,⁵ Kant asserted that we ought to ‘act only in accordance with that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law’ (Kant 1785, 421). In this sense, for Kant, rational actions are only rational if they are also moral actions done out of a general sense of duty. Whilst Kant’s arguments deserve praise for laying the groundwork for scholarly

⁴ I am only considering the English language in this analysis.

⁵ Introduced in Kant’s *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, the categorical imperative encourages us to act as we would wish all others would act towards each other.

discussions on rationality, and his contribution of the categorical imperative to the field of moral philosophy, it is the case that the strength of his attempt to investigate rationality is weakened by its focus on morality, rather than rationality as a standalone concept. Hume, on the other hand, opposes Kant's arguments, asserting that reason is simply 'the slave of the passions' (1735, 415) in the sense that rationality is only concerned with the most reasonable and effective course of action in achieving a goal, regardless of the moral character of the goal being pursued, and whether it should be pursued at all. This argument is far more effective in investigating the nature of rationality by virtue of its fine-tuned scope, which excludes the superfluous information as to whether a goal is moral or not.

In contemporary philosophy and political theory, investigations into the nature of rationality are often approached through a goals-oriented, Humean framework, with scholars such as Rawls arguing that the most rational decisions are made through a 'veil of ignorance' (1971, 118) representing moral impartiality to allow for a focus wholly on the efficiency of the course of action involved with achieving a goal. Fundamentally, when the subject of morality is excluded from this characterisation of rationality, we are left with the assertion that rationality is the capacity to be guided by sound reason and to act reasonably. It entails having valid justifications for one's actions and decisions.

Whilst with this definition, we may be able to prescriptively evaluate the extent to which another human being acts rationally; it would be misguided to do the same with animals as doing so would be an act of 're-presentation' (Almiron, Cole and Freeman 2015, 45). 'Re-presentation' is a form of *Power/Knowledge* in a Foucauldian sense⁶ in that it allows one group, 'us', to make claims about another, 'them', in order to assert 'our' superiority and 'their' inferiority (Almiron, Cole and Freeman 2015). In this case, for example, if we made a judgement on the rationality of animals by using our definition, we would be applying our human standard of rationality, our human conception of reason, and our human understanding of what a goal is to the behaviour of a being of a different species that is unable to represent themselves because they do not use our language, so we can only 're-present' them ourselves.

Foucault's conception of rationality addresses the issue of re-presentation to some extent. Unlike the scholars mentioned previously, Foucault rejects the notion of universal rationality entirely (Townley 2008), arguing that what we understand to be rationality is determined by historical contexts and shaped by power dynamics. In this sense, rationality is not based on any objective standard of reason. Therefore, for Foucault, prescriptively labelling human or animal beings as 'rational' or 'irrational' has no bearing on anything particularly significant. Moreover, through his genealogical approach, Foucault asserts that rationality is used to reinforce and justify ideologies and dominant discourses that often result in the oppression or exploitation of others (Foucault 1984). The attention that Foucault pays to the prevailing discourses that shape our conceptions of rationality makes his argument compelling. By virtue of being one of the dominant narratives present in human society, anthropocentrism also shapes our conceptions of rationality by encouraging us to judge the goals and processes by which goals are achieved to the standard of human priorities and concerns. Henceforth, when dealing with rationality, this paper will adopt the characterisation of rationality proposed by Foucault, synthesised with the characterisation of rationality as the capacity to be guided by sound reason and to act reasonably.

2.2: 'SOLVING' THE PROBLEM OF ANIMAL RE-PRESENTATION

Whilst Foucault's conception of rationality warrants merit for reasons previously discussed in §2.1, it only addresses the issue of animal re-presentation insofar as rationality is concerned. 'Solving' the problem of re-presentation more fully allows for us to avoid the errors made by other scholars in their characterisations of animal behaviour in our own judgements on animal rationality. As such, it is important that we consider various possible theoretical and practical solutions to the problem of animal re-presentation that extend beyond the notable but limited, Foucauldian approach.

In considering animal re-presentation and animal subjectivation more widely, Candea (2010) argues that the central theoretical question one must consider when examining

⁶ See Foucault (1980)

social relations between species is, in effect, 'what counts as a social relation and who can participate?'. Candea outlines two primary frameworks through which we can answer this question. First, Candea presents what might be considered a more Durkheimian approach to social relations, with an emphasis on social relations as 'relations between subjects, eventually mediated by objects (actual or symbolic)'. This claim very clearly takes a firm position on the ongoing debates concerning animal subjectivity: To treat animals as part of human society is to treat them as subjects and not objects (actual or symbolic). Nevertheless, this approach does not offer a suitable solution to the issue of re-presentation. This approach essentially holds that an animal becomes a subject when it is integrated into human society and interacts with humans. In this sense, the way in which we think about animals and how we conceive of them is wholly dependent on their status as a component of human society. It follows that under this framework, our presentation of animals is subject to the distorting effects of anthropocentric thinking, making it an unworthy approach to solving the issue of re-presentation.

By contrast, Candea also invites us to consider a Latourian approach, which holds that social relations are simply the association of different entities (Latour 2007). One particular advantage of this approach is its disregard for the affective, intentional, and cognitive properties of the 'entities' that it describes; the status of an entity as a subject or object is irrelevant. Whilst the Durkheimian approach encourages us to anthropomorphise animals, this approach, however, encourages us to think of animals, humans and things as existing on the same 'level' by suspending our emphasis on intentionality. Consequently, to understand social relations through this framework we need only examine the effects these various human and non-human actants have on each other (Candea 2010). By virtue of its aversion to the distorting effects of anthropocentric bias, this framework is able to provide a compelling theoretical solution to the problem of re-presentation. Transposing this theoretical approach to a practical one developed during his ethnographic study of meerkats, Candea proposes we practice 'inter-patience' with animals, which advocates for a 'mutual suspension of action'; that is to say, we should not actively interfere or intervene in the affairs of animals that we are faced with, while the animals we encounter do not act either. Inter-patience, in this sense, allows us to consider animals as both different from humans and social actants as the animal influences the behaviour of the human and vice versa; both actants self-suspend their action as a response to one another.

The 'intra-species mindfulness' approach of Moore and Kosut (2014), however, advocates for a slightly different method of how we can move away from the pervasive influence of anthropocentric biases in forming our conceptions of animals. In its essence, this method is a 'practice of speculation about non-human species that tries to resist anthropomorphic reflections' (Moore and Kosut 2014, 520). As such, it advocates that in social interactions with animals, through engaging our senses, we are able to acquire new modes of embodied awareness that help us to confront the reality that 'humans' and 'other' are social constructions influenced by a tacit reliance on anthropocentric biases. Whilst these two approaches appear distant in their ethos (i.e., the former's emphasis on inaction contrasted with the latter's emphasis on creating intersubjectivity), their shared purpose of creating a practical route toward a de-centring of the human self provides a basis for their reconciliation. Through the heuristic surrendering of our anthropocentric inclination to intervene in the affairs of other species, as advocated by Candea's ethics of 'inter-patience', we are able to create a liminal state between both actants, human and animal, characterised by mutual inaction. This state ought to serve as the basis for the practice of Moore and Kosut's 'intra-species mindfulness', through which we can attempt to de-centre the human self and strive to understand the animal actant from a perceptual position liberated from the distortive qualities of anthropocentric bias. Combining these two approaches into one practice (informed by the Latourian model of social relations) helps us to consider and overcome the problem of re-presentation. This is achieved by removing the necessity to make anthropomorphic judgements about the nature of animals for them to qualify as, and be considered as a part of social relations. This combined approach helps us overcome the problem of re-presentation by also creating a social dynamic between

the human actant and the animal actant that naturally facilitates the de-centring from our human selves, a state from which we can begin to engage in speculation about non-human species – speculation that resists anthropomorphic re-presentations.

2.3: SCHOLARLY ATTITUDES TOWARD ANIMAL IRRATIONALITY

In the past, scholarly arguments pertaining to the rationality of animals almost always favoured the position that animals were incapable of rational thought (see Rousseau 1755; Descartes 1637). Philosophers such as Rousseau often argued that animals are simply biological machines enslaved by their desires, unlike humans who possess the reason and complex faculties to overcome becoming slaves to their desires (Rousseau 1755). This argument, of course, fails to recognise that humans are unable to choose their wants and desires in this way either (Skinner 1971), condemning them to the same position as animals, at least in terms of the possession of free will. However, in another attempt to draw an anthropocentric distinction between humans and animals, Rousseau also introduced his concept of ‘perfectibility’ (1755, 17), the idea that humans are set apart from animals by their ability to constantly improve themselves through the developing of civilisation and their insatiable desire for perfection. Whilst it may well be the case that humans possess this faculty, the argument Rousseau makes for this can still be applied to animals, albeit on a smaller scale. Evidence of perfectibility in humans is clear because it is permanent. Humans have built societies and technologies that have left a permanent physical imprint throughout history, whereas animals have not. This disparity is consistent with the differing levels of intelligence between humans and animals, which also accounts for differences in the priorities and needs that humans and animals possess. However, animals exhibit perfectibility far more subtly than humans do; suppose a cheetah is chasing a gazelle, and the gazelle is effectively outrunning the cheetah. When the cheetah makes the decision to speed up to be able to catch the gazelle, they are making use of their faculty of perfectibility. In this sense, the innovation that animals are capable of is restricted to their needs and desires, which, depending on the particular species of animal in question, can significantly differ from the needs and desires of humans. As such, perfectibility in animals is far more challenging to identify than in humans due to its transient, ephemeral nature.

It is the case, however, that Rousseau’s views on animals were influenced by the prevailing philosophical and scientific ideas of his time, so in a sense, it would be unfair to challenge these arguments as if they were made in contemporary years. However, Rousseau’s arguments undoubtedly contributed to the emergence of anthropocentrism as a prevailing narrative within academia; as such, it is still helpful to analyse his arguments, as doing so is also analysing the foundations of anthropocentrism as a motif within academic work.

In more contemporary years, Davidson (1982), argues that a snail, for example, is not rational compared to a human because the snail is incapable of propositional attitudes, such as belief, intention, or shame. This is the case, Davidson argues, because snails are incapable of using language. However, aside from recent developments in ethology indicating that language is not a requirement for rational decision-making (Buckner 2017), Davidson’s argument is limited by its engrained, unjustified, anthropocentric framework. As detailed in §2.1 and §2.2, it is wise to be cautious of the influence of dominating discourses on our conceptions of rationality, as such influence results in a distorted analysis of rationality, making it no longer a standalone concept. Davidson’s application of human propositional attitudes to snails represents an adherence to the anthropocentric narrative, supported by an implicit, unjustified acceptance of the Durkheimian model of social relations. Whilst it may be true that snails are incapable of propositional attitudes, when working with a framework of rationality that has not been influenced by the anthropocentric narrative, there is sufficient reason to suggest that snails are, in fact, rational. Simply the act of a snail endeavouring to eat food demonstrates their rationality insofar as they are being guided by sound reason. They understand the implications of not eating and have judged these implications to be significant enough to want to attempt to prevent them from occurring. It is irrelevant how snails make these decisions, whether they are the product of a complex, conscious logical

chain of reasoning or a biological instinct, the result remains the same: the snail finds food to eat, the snail behaves rationally.

CLOSING REMARKS

Through our analysis, we have examined various linguistic manifestations of the subject/object dichotomy and investigated how they perpetuate the cultural acceptance of animal exploitation. Moreover, we have discussed how dominant ideas around the capability of animals to behave rationally result from an unjustified logic adherent to anthropocentric norms and biases. We have also discussed how these ideas further perpetuate the cultural acceptance of animal exploitation. The primary takeaway from this discussion ought to be that we should begin to recognise the inherent anthropocentrism and speciesism in how we think, talk, and write about animals. Recognising and interrogating these norms will encourage us as a society to develop policies to protect animals against exploitation and to pioneer a future where humans and animals live in harmony with one another, to the benefit of both groups.

Moving away from the anthropocentrism inherent in our language and ideas is, fundamentally, a difficult task. Humans will not want to interrogate their own behaviours that discursively perpetuate the exploitation of animals, partly because the exploitation of animals benefits them. Many humans living in contemporary society enjoy consuming animal products and betting on exploitative sports, for example. As such, further work is needed in not only identifying expressions of anthropocentric norms but also in repairing our broken relationship with animals as a whole and reconciling our desire to advance our species with the rights of other animals to live free of suffering and exploitation. The first step to liberating animals is to convince humans of their value. Only then will societies begin to collectively and critically reflect on how animals are unjustly and needlessly exploited for the gain of humanity.

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Defending Democracy: Parties as the Agents of Resilience and Adaptation Against Delegitimization

Jacob Hougie

Since the development of representative democracy, parties have been a near-universal feature. Yet at the same time, they have been consistently critiqued. Today, they face challenges to their legitimacy as insurgent anti-system parties rise, leading to a return of these old critiques. This article builds on work by Rosenblum and Mouffe, among others, in exploring the political philosophy behind parties and differing perspectives on the purpose of politics. Doing so in tandem with the empirical literature on the contemporary challenges of political parties in Israel and Germany, this article builds a concrete normative and practical justification for the centrality of parties in contemporary politics. The article argues that political parties in partisan conflict are the best tool for creating agonistic politics out of antagonistic conflict; they achieve this by managing conflict rather than ignoring it or letting it remain antagonistic. Further, the article argues that parties are the only practical tool available for governing modern states democratically. Finally, this article challenges contemporary pessimism surrounding political parties by focusing on the historical power of party systems to adapt to changing conditions to win votes and to become more representative and agonistic. Indeed, the rise of new parties, ordinarily considered a sign of decay, should be taken as a sign of the adaptability of party systems.

INTRODUCTION

Political parties have long been the subject of philosophical attacks. Rosenblum (2010) identified three main categories of attack. First, there is the view that parties are divisive, whereby the nation is viewed as a whole, whilst parties are seen as contrary to that. Second, parties are seen as ‘corrupt and corrupting’ because they are either not seeking the true good, are seeking their personal interests or those of ‘special interests’. Third, there is the idea that other means of doing politics are superior because they are more participatory. Today, many of these same concerns have been raised due to a legitimacy crisis of mainstream parties and the associated rise of anti-system parties.

In contrast to these attacks, I will argue for a normative and practical justification of parties and seek to show that the political party cannot be replaced as the organising institution of modern democracy. While parties could be supplemented by or exist alongside other institutions, including direct democracy or deliberative democracy, they should not be replaced. Creating a system without political parties would not properly fulfil the most important role of political parties: managing conflict. Moreover, it cannot and would not be replaced for practical reasons as governing would be too difficult and campaigning too inefficient.

Managing conflict is the most important function of parties because it is a necessary consequence of the plural societies in which we live. As identified by thinkers from Aristotle, Hobbes, and Locke to contemporaries such as Isaiah Berlin, in a plural society of any kind, there are interests and identities that can come into conflict with each other (Aristotle 2016; Crick 2013; Hobbes 2002; Locke 1980; Mouffe 2005). Aristotle successfully articulates the problem when he argues against Plato that it is painful to attain unity in the state because of the natural plurality that exists within states:

since the nature of a state is to be a plurality... we ought not to attain this greatest unity even if we could, for it would be the destruction of the state. (Aristotle 2016, 24)

In a situation of competing interests and identities there are only three options: ignoring conflict by either asserting that there can be consensus around the national interest or allowing a single group or individual to dominate; leaving conflict and risk it escalating into violent antagonism; or, managing conflict. This can be achieved by allowing every group a share of power, and thus creating agonism through system legitimacy, which makes conflict safe because of respect for the system (Crick 2013; Mouffe 2005; Rosenblum 2010). Agonism and antagonism exist on a spectrum between complete opposition to political systems and complete support for the structural status quo, but I refer to them because these terms nevertheless act as useful base points for understanding conflict.

In the first section of this article, I seek to develop a normative justification for parties, arguing against Rosenblum's first and second categories of critiques of parties. As Lipset and Rokkan (1967) theorise, parties help to make conflict more agonistic by representing differing interests and identities, which manifest in the 'cleavages' that parties represent. However, parties also establish norms that manage conflict and keep it agonistic. I progress to give a practical justification for them as the best means for practically doing politics.

In the second section, I argue against the third category of attacks on parties, by showing that parties are the sole effective means of governing democracies. I highlight how neither direct nor deliberative democracy could function normatively or practically without parties or the creation of party-like systems.

In the third section, I consider contemporary problems for parties. Parties do not inherently manage conflict and create norms; one-party states are a key example of this. However, when a democratic system is organised around parties, such parties are strongly incentivised to manage conflict agonistically. Therefore, I will argue that despite fears about a current crisis of representation, parties will adjust to changes in the social context they now face. Thus, they will again become more effective instruments of representation.

Examples from Israel and Germany evidence this. They both act as interesting case studies of the management of conflict when considering new political cleavages. Importantly, I will not use examples from the United States or United Kingdom. This is because the institutional design of the United States changes the nature of its parties compared to those in many other systems (Rosenblum 2019), while in the United Kingdom no significant anti-system party has gained nationwide representation, unlike Germany's *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) and Israeli anti-system parties.

Using the examples of Germany and Israel, I will show that parties are normatively superior in how they treat conflict and practically necessary for organising government and politics. Moreover, I will present how direct and deliberative democracy are ineffective in these regards and are not viable alternatives to parties.

THE THEORETICAL BASIS FOR PARTIES

The following section, discusses the first two categories of attack on parties described by Rosenblum (2010) and offers a positive justification for parties. These attacks are, first, that parties are divisive, and, second, that they are corrupt and corrupting because they represent particular interests. This section will offer a normative defence of parties. I analyse parties as having two positive roles. Their first role, as notably theorised by Rosenblum and Mouffe, is to manage conflict between sections of society in an agonistic way. This creates a sense of legitimacy of the political system amongst the public. Their second role is the practical act of making government effective, primarily by packaging policies into a coherent whole and through long-term organisation.

My normative argument deals with the attacks on parties. The first category of attack described by Rosenblum (2010) is based on the idea of the polity as a unified whole and sees parties as a source of division. This has manifested in many ways, especially one-party rule, populist majoritarianism and theories of mixed government that seek to avoid conflict between parties. The second category of attack is based on the idea that parties represent particular interests that do not serve the national interest. In contrast, my argument offers a pluralistic account of societies and argues that parties are an essential means of managing pluralism.

Thus, this article argues that parties' representation of particular interests is a positive feature.

MANAGING CONFLICT

The most important role of parties is to manage conflict. This is done by harnessing competing interests and identities from human society to produce political, rather than violent, conflict. Mouffe (2005) describes this as agonistic, rather than antagonistic, conflict. In agonistic conflict, groups agree on the political method by which conflict takes place, meaning they exist within it. In other terms, parties grant legitimacy to the system. They play a crucial role in ensuring this legitimacy is granted, while also allowing conflict to play out safely. Most importantly, it is in the long-term interests of a party to accept the democratic political system they exist within. If they refuse to grant loser's consent or refuse to accept checks on their power in government, they risk the opposition doing the same at a later date; this poses a threat to their own power (Rosenblum 2010). Additionally, it is in their interests to have a reasonably broad range of groups voting for them to increase their support. To achieve this, the conflict they represent must be moderated somewhat to appeal to a great diversity of people, which means they are less likely to enact or incite violence. In this way, they help to establish norms of coexistence rather than to delegitimise systems.

Parties have a greater incentive to do this under a first-past-the-post system since it is necessary to get a greater proportion of votes to win any representation. However, even under proportional systems, gaining meaningful power relies on having breadth of support (Rosenbluth and Shapiro 2018). Nonetheless, in no democratic system are parties able to get universal support. This is due to parties managing, rather than removing, conflict. To gain support, they still must put forward policy proposals in ways that positively differentiates them from their opposition (Rosenblum 2010). This means that conflict plays out in elections. Nevertheless, in any system with an elected legislature, parties can continue that conflict within the legislature itself. Crucially this also means voters continue to have some of their opinions represented in politics, encouraging them to grant legitimacy to the system because it can feel fairer (Mouffe 2005).

MAKING POLITICS PRACTICAL

A further crucial role of parties in modern democracy is to make politics practical by facilitating effective government. Parties achieve this in two main ways, namely by packaging policies and through long-term organisation.

Parties package policies together into a platform, in a manifesto or in their rhetoric. This is a fundamental element of party politics. Rather than directly voting on individual policy decisions, voters vote for parties and their leaders, which have policies on many different issues. The significance of this is that, once elected, a government ought to have coherence in its policies. When a party formulates policies, they must consider that they will be judged on the consequences of those policies, so they have to consider how their policies will cohere (Rosenbluth and Shapiro 2018). This facilitates effective governance as it forces parties to balance different competing interests against each other to find an effective policy that works within their framework of policies. Therefore, parties make politics a practical affair because they have strong incentives to package policies together in a coherent way, thus allowing politics to be effective.

The other way that parties make politics practical is through their long-term organisation, which is very effective for political campaigning and electoral participation. As Weber argues, parties are necessary for organising modern politics because they offer a permanent organising capacity for campaigning. Once parties come into existence, it is very difficult to find an alternative within representative democracy because parties are the most effective way to organise political actors to achieve election victories (Sellinger 2019; Weber 1994). Parties therefore perform the significant practical role of organising campaigns through their institutions. However, this also happens through identity; strong partisan identity motivates partisans to participate and vote (Rosenblum 2010). Consequently, parties are not only important as institutions for organising campaigns, but their basis in identity helps to

increase participation in the representative system.

Therefore, there is evidently a strong normative and practical argument for parties as a means of democratic organisation. In contrast to the attacks on parties, this article has shown that in a plural society, parties are a crucial tool for the management of conflict. Moreover, parties have crucial utility as a practical tool of government.

THE RESILIENCE OF PARTIES

In the previous section, I outlined a normative defence of parties against Rosenblum's (2010) first and second categories of attacks on parties. This section targets the third critique, which states that alternatives to political parties are superior because they are more participatory. In detailing the arguments for other forms of democracy, this section will counter this critique, which posits that other means of politics should be used, such as direct democracy through referenda and deliberative democracy through citizens' assemblies. To some extent this already occurs; citizens' assemblies, referenda and other attempts to increase direct participation have all been employed recently within representative democracies (Runciman 2018). However, today, these merely coexist with the party, which remains the organising institution of these democracies since party competition continues and is involved in initiating and implementing many of these initiatives. To show the difficulty of other means of politics, and thus the irreplaceability of parties, I will highlight how these alternatives cannot work. This is because they neither manage conflict nor practically organise politics.

DIRECT DEMOCRACY THROUGH REFERENDA

The most obvious alternative to parties as an organising institution of modern democracy would be direct democracy. In this scenario, instead of parties and their members in office acting as a mediator between the government and the public, voters would collectively have direct control over government through national votes in referenda. The idea behind this, in the version posed by Matsusaka (2022), is that parties do not represent interests and identities because they are unable to do this. Therefore, the only way to ensure that people are properly represented is to enable them to directly influence politics without a mediating actor who might corrupt this process. Direct democracy offers one way of doing this and it appears to be an obvious way of resolving inadequate representation. However, I contend that this would involve treating the symptom rather than the illness. Whilst it is true that parties are still adapting to new cleavages and are working on improving representation, historical evidence suggests that parties can adapt. Therefore, the problem is not that parties are unable to represent people, but rather that they are in the process of doing so, as I will elaborate in the next section on parties in contemporary politics. Using direct democracy would undoubtedly increase the rate at which change happens. Instead of parties having to adapt to new cleavages over time, the change would occur every time there was a vote. However, replacing parties with referenda would cause both normative problems regarding the management of conflict and practical problems of governing.

Direct democracy could not ultimately replace the political party as the organising institution of modern democracy because it would fail, on a normative basis, to manage conflict. As much as it would represent conflict, it would not be as effective in transforming conflict from antagonism to agonism. While parties can generate legitimacy for a system by representing their voters, a referendum can only achieve this if there is alternation in which social groups have their interests represented in the binary outcomes of referenda (Kern and Marien 2018). However, there is a risk that some groups would never be represented, undermining any legitimacy they may grant the system, and thus allowing for antagonistic conflict. Equally, there is also less of an incentive for referendum campaigners to grant loser's consent as they will not have to fight further campaigns. Moreover, the possibility of a 'tyranny of the majority' is more likely under a direct democracy than a representative democracy. This is because rather than having to secure broad support across a range of groups, direct democracy can appeal to each individual (Rosenbluth and Shapiro 2018). This carries a risk of potentially doing so in ways that can oppress minorities, as was visible in the Swiss vote to ban minarets

(Moeckli 2018). This is a long-standing concern that was raised by Benjamin Constant (1998), who argued that a focus on public power as a form of liberty could endanger others because that power can be exercised against minorities and restrict freedoms. He wrote, 'if this was what the ancients called liberty, they admitted [it] as compatible with...the complete subjection of the individual to the authority of the community,' in order to argue that collective forms of freedom reduce the individual's freedom (Constant 1998). This demonstrates how direct democracy would be a normatively bad replacement for representative democracy. Rather than managing conflict, it would simply leave it unrestrained. Unrestrained conflict could damage the legitimacy of the system or allow minorities to go unprotected from the majority. Therefore, direct democracy ought not replace parties because it would be a poor substitute.

Direct democracy not only *ought* not to replace party democracy, instead it is practically impossible for it to do so. Were an attempt made to replace party democracy, two main practical issues would arise: governing would be close to impossible, and campaigning would be inefficient. Both problems would likely lead to the creation of an equivalent to political parties, meaning that parties would not truly be replaced as the organising institution of democracy.

Governing through direct democracy would be incredibly difficult as there is no single authority to direct the bureaucracy on how to implement policy, and as there is no one responsible for the overall coherence of policy. As Weber (1994) argues, responsible individuals are needed to give clear direction to the bureaucracy. Thus, ministers are needed to run departments. A referendum could not easily give specific instructions without recurring referenda or division among supporters on details, which could prevent a referendum ever succeeding (Bellamy, 2018). Moreover, without an organisation to consider the coherence of policies, especially on tax and spend, referenda could lead to legislation with long-term inconsistencies in policy. In contrast, parties have to consider these issues in advance to avoid being held responsible for their failings in future elections and in the media (Rosenbluth and Shapiro 2018; Weber 1994). Consequently, if parties were replaced with referenda, this would have negative practical implications as actual governance would be difficult. The key problems for governance would be the lack of direction for bureaucracies and issues with producing coherent change.

Furthermore, it would be impossible to replace parties with referenda because attempting to do so would in all probability lead to the creation of party-like organisations for campaigning. Ultimately, parties an essential a role in campaigning. In a theoretical party-free direct democratic system, there would have to be regular referenda. In theory, it is possible that for each referendum a new campaign group would form on either side to encourage participation in the referendum and help voters decide how to vote. However, there is a high likelihood that permanent campaigning apparatuses would be established so that new organisations did not have to be repeatedly established and disbanded. There would be a strong incentive to do this as whomever did it first would have a campaigning advantage going forward (Weber 1994). Thus, party-like institutions would likely emerge, each having a general ideology guiding their position for each referenda. This might technically leave direct democracy as the organising institution since voters would still have direct influence on individual policies. However, in reality, the number and frequency of referenda would result in most voters behaving in the way they do today. Namely, they would support a party on the basis of broad ideological principles and then mostly follow that party in its positions. This is also evidenced by this party 'cuing' already happening in many referendum campaigns around the world (Boudreau and MacKenzie 2014).

Therefore, it is not possible to replace the political party with direct democracy as the organising institution of modern democracy. Direct democracy would be unable to manage conflict in the way that party democracy can, especially as attempting to do so would necessitate the creation of party-like institutions.

DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY

Another alternative means of organising modern democracy is deliberative democracy. This entails deliberation by representative samples of citizens with the input of experts (known

as ‘deliberative assemblies’), who decide on policy ideas by deliberating among themselves. Through deliberation and the provision of accurate information, citizens would theoretically be able to find a consensus on solutions to problems (Rosenblum 2010). Thus, deliberative assemblies would produce better results than parties as they are better at finding consensus, as high-quality information would ensure this consensus is reflective of reality rather than of party politics, and as all viewpoints would be included in the process.

In theory, it appears excellent. In reality, it could be dangerous. In deliberative democracy, the goal is not to manage conflict, but to remove it. In seeking consensus, groups of people with shared interests and identities are no longer allowed to win at varying points. Instead, they must seek to find a consensus that transcends those divides. Consensus is not inherently problematic, but it can become a problem when situated in reality. We live in a pluralistic world where finding consensus means that pluralism is ignored in favour of a lowest-common denominator politics, which ultimately satisfies no one. When no one is satisfied, the system loses legitimacy and politics breaks down. This causes similar problems to party convergence: conflict is not adequately represented, people feel they lack choice and they turn to anti-system politics (Cohen 1997; Grant 2021). By embracing consensus rather than seeking to manage the conflict that exists regardless, deliberative democracy would pose a danger to system legitimacy. This poses the opposite problem to direct democracy, which allows too much conflict, but loses the balance between management and representation that parties can achieve.

Moreover, deliberative democracy would likely also necessitate the development of parties or party-like institutions, possibly anti-system ones. Here, the difficulty of communication with bureaucracy is less of a problem. A deliberative assembly has fewer participants than an entire referendum campaign, so its members might be able to instruct a bureaucracy effectively. Instead, deliberative democracy could create a problem with legitimacy. With only a small group of randomly selected representatives (regardless of how descriptively representative that group is), the assemblies would likely struggle to achieve the same level of legitimacy that party governments can achieve. This legitimacy problem is due to there being no clear source of legitimacy: no figure to act with charismatic authority; no long history to grant authority from tradition; and any rational legal authority would be obscured by the unrepresentative processes behind it (Scarrow 2002). Therefore, it might be necessary to use some other process to grant decisions legitimacy. The most obvious one is confirmatory referenda, such as those used in Ireland after citizens’ assemblies on abortion and blasphemy. This may also be able to solve a problem with referenda; the consensus-finding nature of deliberative democracy could help to ensure that the policies put to referendum are coherent. However, as discussed earlier, the regular use of referenda would most likely necessitate the introduction of permanent campaigning organisations, which would resemble parties and which would likely act as a key organising institution of such a democracy. Moreover, the competing legitimacy of deliberative consensus and majoritarian referenda may also lead to conflict, potentially giving rise to anti-system groups that seek to resolve the conflict. Therefore, attempting to replace party democracy with deliberative democracy would be unsuccessful because parties would continue to manifest as part of the legitimisation of the decisions from assemblies or as opposition to the existing system.

Therefore, deliberative democracy could not functionally or normatively replace parties as the organising institution of modern democracy because it would fail to adequately represent conflict and would ultimately necessitate the reintroduction of parties.

THE CENTRALITY AND ADAPTABILITY OF PARTIES TODAY

In the previous sections, this article has offered a normative justification for parties against the three main categories of attacks on parties. These critiques were that parties are divisive, that they are corrupt and corrupting because they represent particular interests, and that other means of politics are preferable because they are more participatory. However, this article has not yet demonstrated that this normative justification can be translated into practice. With growing dissatisfaction around mainstream parties and party leaders, anti-system parties

and politicians have been gaining popularity across the world. In the following section, this article analyses two such countries where anti-system parties have been growing, namely Israel and Germany.

Using these examples, I posit that the rise of these parties is not a danger to democracy. Historically, these party systems have functioned well. There have been many challenges to governments in the Global North, which have caused problems for the legitimacy of governing parties in those countries. However, I argue that anti-system parties, once they gain power, will likely moderate and simply come to represent dissatisfied groups. This illustrates how the rise of anti-system parties is a testament to the adaptability of parties.

In doing so, I hope to present an empirical example of my argument against the attacks on parties by showing their capability in managing conflict in plural societies. Moreover, many of the supposed crises of parties today originate in the existing attacks on parties. The idea that anti-system parties represent narrow parts of society links to the second category of attacks on parties. Additionally, the critique that mainstream parties are insufficiently representative, in turn leading to anti-system parties, links to the third category of attacks on parties. By illustrating that these critiques of contemporary parties are limited, I present the power of party democracy to effectively represent and manage conflict.

Parties' ability to represent the various interests and identities helps to bring legitimacy to a system. Indeed, the general pattern of parties both representing and managing societal conflict has historically functioned well, as seen in post-war Germany. There, a functioning party system was able to transform a country that had only recently been governed by a fascist government, and which remained divided on several key issues, into a pluralistic democracy within ten years. There, parties represented a wide array of people and violent conflict was comparatively rare (Poguntke 2001). This shows that a well-functioning party system is an excellent way to manage conflict, while still representing the variety of interests and identities that exist in society.

Nevertheless, there are still significant concerns about the continued ability of parties to manage conflict in this way. The examples of Germany and Israel highlight some of the problems. In Germany, support for anti-system parties has been rising, with growing support for the 'Alternative for Germany' (AfD) acting as the most recent example. Rather than specific policies, the AfD's rhetoric is its primary problem, as they seek to delegitimise the political system by arguing that it is on the side of the elites rather than the people (Hansen and Olsen 2022). More concerning is contemporary Israel, where politics has shifted into racism, as ethnic cleavages have become more salient. These have led to the election and empowerment of former extremists (such as former Kach member, Itamar Ben-Gvir), who have sought to fundamentally modify the power of the judiciary as a check on legislative and executive power, as well as many other aspects of Israeli politics (The Economist 2022; Tal and Greene 2023). Once again, while there are fair critiques of the Israeli supreme court, the problem lies in the way in which these parties seek to delegitimise the political system and over 30 years of judicial decisions. These examples speak to two main problems, namely poor-quality representation by parties and a consequent loss of system legitimacy. These problems pose a risk to loser's consent as when courts or legislatures make decisions, they are increasingly unlikely to be accepted as legitimate due to such attacks by these parties. This shows the local manifestations of a global trend: the salient cleavages on which parties positioned themselves have been shifting and new ones have become more salient. Exactly what these changes are and why they have occurred is complicated and hard to disentangle. Broadly, cosmopolitan identity is becoming increasingly salient due to increased exposure to global diversity, especially at universities and in graduate industries that are typically more global and thus benefit more from globalisation. This has led to increased polarisation, and a 'Cultural Backlash,' from those who do not share such cosmopolitan identities (Gelephthis and Giani 2022; Gethin et al 2022; Norris and Inglehart 2019; Simon 2022; Weisskircher 2020). Existing parties have struggled to represent these new additional cleavages whilst remaining agonistic.

This has been exacerbated by external factors that have led to a convergence of the economic policies of governments. This limits the range of interests and identities represented

by parties even further (Grant 2021; Mouffe 2005). In Germany, especially from the 1990s onwards, there was a combination of competition from increasingly globalised markets driving economic stagnation, and significantly reduced fiscal potency compared to the Bretton Woods era of 'Embedded liberalism.' This meant that by the late-1990s and 2000s, there was ideological convergence on liberalisations of financial and labour markets, which in turn also increased corporate power to push for further liberalisations (Buggeln, Daunton and Nützenadel 2017; Huber, Petrova and Stephens 2022; Mosley 2003; Odendahl 2017; Zalewski and Whalen 2010). For slightly different reasons, in Israel, the Labour party also had to shift its economic policy, with the oil crisis of the 1970s forcing it to abandon its state socialist economy in favour of a more neoliberal economy in the 1980s. Moreover, the arrival of many Soviet Jewish refugees in the 1980s and 1990s meant that a large number of implacably anti-socialist citizens prevented any return to socialism (Rogachevsky 2020).

Additionally, a slow change has occurred from institutionally 'mass-parties' to 'catch-all' or even 'cartel' parties. This has replaced strong internal democracy with an emphasis on leadership, and appeals are made to all rather than just those with links to their internal democratic institutions. This shift is in part also due to changes in media consumption towards television and social media. This has facilitated such rising policy convergence because personalities can be different even when policy is not. In Israel, this can be seen in two ways. First, parties increasingly select their party lists without primaries (among mainstream parties, this is done by Yisrael Beiteinu, Shas and Torah Judaism). Second, there has been an increased focus on party leaders, with party lists named after the leader rather than the parties involved (Galnoor and Blander 2018). In Germany, this has been compounded by the EU, which has forced governments to accept policies that they otherwise may not have and increased the power of the leadership over the party, due to the executive's role in EU appointments (Krisei 2014; Katz and Mair 2009; Katz and Mair 1995). This left the many who remained committed to alternative economic visions unrepresented, especially those in the former German Democratic Republic, where the socialists remained strong (Weisskircher 2020). This creates an overall picture where existing parties offer inadequate representation and there is general dissatisfaction with the party system as a whole for failing to be sufficiently representative (Studebaker 2022). In turn, this explains the rise of new parties, especially anti-system parties like the AfD, because they seek to use poor representation by the mainstream parties and the resulting voter dissatisfaction to show voters that an alternative party, from outside the system, is needed (Grant 2021). This suggests that there is a problem with parties today, because they are struggling to respond to new cleavages, meaning that new anti-system parties emerge and call for significant reform of liberal democratic systems. Due to their anti-system nature, these new parties fail to adhere to Mouffe's standards of agonism as they do not grant legitimacy to the political process, and instead damage that legitimacy (Mouffe 2005).

Associated with this is the problem that parties are representing increasingly limited sections of society. This problem is visible in Israel, where parties have become increasingly polarised on the issue of using Jewish ethnicity as the basis of the state. Some parties call for Israel to be a state for all of its citizens, while others, such as the recently empowered Jewish Force party led by Itamar Ben-Gvir, see Israel as the national home exclusively for Jewish people. These less inclusive parties have become increasingly unrepresentative of the broader community, instead only representing certain social (not ideological) groups. They have become less 'catch-all,' in who they appeal to, albeit they have not returned to the structure of 'mass' parties (Galnoor and Blander 2018). This in turn could be explained again by changes to cleavages. Poor representation has led people to feel that politics does not work for them, but instead of turning to anti-system politics, they have become apathetic. This apathy explains the decline in voter turnout in Israel from c.78% until 1999 to c.70% since 2000. Similarly, German Federal turnout has declined from c.90% in the FRG in the 1970s to c.75% today.¹ Consequently, party membership has become increasingly representative of solely one set of cleavages, rather than including the multitude of cleavages that structure politics today, thus exaggerating poor representation (Rosenbluth and Shapiro 2018). This in turn means that parties become dominated by an unrepresentative group. Since the salience of certain policy

¹ <<https://v-dem.net/>>

cleavages is associated with social cleavages, it follows that this also empowers specific social groups within parties over others (Lipset 2000). This overrepresentation of certain social groups is a logical explanation why parties, such as the AfD or Jewish Force, advocating for interests of singular social groups (especially majority ethnicity groups, White Europeans and European Jews respectively) over more universal ideological values. The mechanism is that a social group takes control on the basis of ideology, but then operates in its own interests (Rosenblum 2010). This prioritisation of one group over another can, when parties cease to grant legitimacy to the pluralist political process, diminish agonism in favour of antagonism because parties can be more extreme in their identity-based attacks on others.

These problems may suggest that parties are fundamentally failing the principal objectives of both representing and managing conflict. However, this is a temporary problem and the critiques laid out above are based on the false notions in Rosenblum's first and second categories of attacks on parties. Today, it appears that parties are struggling to adjust to new cleavages and to successfully represent broad parts of society. This crisis appears so grave that one might suggest that these cleavages cannot be represented agonistically, and instead are divisive and represent particular interests. However, historical evidence suggests that parties can deal with change and will eventually do so in an agonistic way. This is true even if there is the temporary appearance of a crisis. This is most visible in Germany, where there has been a long history of decrying the party system as being in a state of crisis, whether this is due to convergence, cartelisation, fragmentation or rising extremism. Nevertheless, postwar German history has shown that the system is responsive. Whether it be new parties, like the Greens, emerging to represent new interests, or older parties like the CDU adapting to a less salient religious cleavage, the German party system has been able to respond to changes in cleavages (Poguntke 2001; Scarrow 2002). Moreover, on this line of reasoning, it is reasonable to suggest that the rise of the AfD, and the shifts other parties have made in response, indicate that the party system is already adapting and working as expected. Evidence of crisis in the AfD stems from their more antagonistic approach to politics. History reflects how this need not be a problem. Anti-system parties like the Greens have successfully transitioned to a party of the system, in that they have become more willing to compromise on policies. This has allowed them to join 3 different coalitions after the 1998, 2002 and 2021 elections. In order to have real power, parties realise they need to be in government and to be in government, they need to moderate their message, broaden their support and legitimate the system (Scarrow 2002). However, this is not necessarily the case: parties may remain extreme, but there are strong incentives in party democracies to adapt because that is the only way to gain power. Such a process has already been ongoing in France, where the National Rally, under Marine Le Pen, has pushed a process of 'undemonisation' to broaden the party's support (Surel 2019). Therefore, the apparent crisis of party democracy is less of a crisis than it might initially seem.

Regarding the matter of making politics practice, there is also some debate as to how effective contemporary parties are. There is good reason to believe that parties, such as those in Germany, are effective in the practical aspects of governing. This has been visible in the way they have been able to navigate the difficulties of the federal system to still drive change and manage the economy (Scarrow 2002). However, the way in which parties use identity to drive participation in politics has become weaker. As outlined earlier, parties have been struggling to adapt to the rapid pace of social change recently, leading to a general perception that parties are unrepresentative. Combined with an individualistic notion of independent voters, which means that voters vote freely based on their personal opinions and thereby self-identify as 'Independent' voters, this has consequently resulted in a decline in party identity (Rosenblum 2010). Predictably, this has been associated with declining voter turnout in democracies like Germany (Liddiard 2019). However, as parties adjust to their new environment, they ought to be able to redevelop party identity among their voters. They should then seek to resuscitate turnout as the German parties did when they re-established themselves in the post-war era (Poguntke 2002). This would be beneficial, not least because parties are strongly incentivised to encourage their supporters to vote, as this increases their own support levels. Consequently, it is unconvincing to argue that parties are in a state of continuous decline. Instead, this article

argues that parties not only remain effective for governance but also that parties will be able to create strong party identities again.

CONCLUSION

This article has argued that parties cannot and should not be replaced as the organising institution of modern democracy. Historically, there have been critiques of parties as divisive and representing particular interests. Today, these critiques are especially applied to anti-system parties. Parties have also been criticised as inadequately representative, which has led to increasing support and use of alternative democratic methods.

However, this article has argued that parties have shown themselves to be the most effective means of ensuring that conflict is both represented and managed. Thus, they produce a safe political climate that facilitates agonism rather than antagonism and ensures its own continuity. Furthermore, I have argued that the rise of anti-system parties, in Germany and Israel especially, which is currently considered divisive, is actually a sign of the party system functioning. These anti-system parties are a form of self-correction within the party system, which are making party politics more representative. The nature of party politics means that these parties are likely to become increasingly mainstream over time, as the French National Front has done with its process of 'undemonisation'.

In addition, this article has shown that party democracy is the only practical system for both campaigning and governing, thus rendering it necessary within any other system. Therefore, it would not be possible to replace parties entirely. Both referenda and deliberative assemblies would be lacking in both of these functions and would therefore not constitute viable replacements. Consequently, this article has argued that parties are both normatively and practically irreplaceable.

This article should give readers hope for the long-term viability of party democracies. While I have focused on Israel and Germany, I hope that this argument will be equally applicable to many other advanced democracies. We should take comfort in the adaptability and resilience of our party systems.

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‘How much can she (and the rest of us) take?’: A Critical Analysis of the Role of the Print Media in Narrative Creation during the Truss Premiership

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This article critically analyses the role of print media in the narrative surrounding the premiership of Liz Truss, focusing primarily on *The Daily Mail*. This article argues that newspapers were essential forces in the establishment of the general narrative of incompetence, instability, and failure surrounding Truss' premiership. Ultimately, this would lead to her growing unpopularity and, eventually, her resignation. The article also furthers that tabloid and broadsheet corpora contributed to a general narrative of female politicians as unable to work effectively in leadership roles. Firstly, this article charts the narrative of Truss' leadership through the newspaper's headlines and cover stories. It argues that this demonstrates the media's power to influence the trajectory of political events and the attitude of its readers. Further, it explains how tabloid newspapers utilise right-wing ideology and language techniques to construct a narrative with gravitas and broad appeal to the public. Finally, this article examines how the gendered language in and coverage by *The Mail* and other newspapers emphasised Truss' incompetence and thereby contributed to negative perceptions of female politicians in leadership positions in politics. Utilising techniques of critical discourse analysis, as well as examining pre-existing empirical studies on gendered media coverage, this article concludes that the print media played a significant role in establishing a negative narrative of Truss' premiership. Overall, this article hopes to contribute to the growing body of work relating to the perceptions of female politicians in the media. It will also demonstrate the continuing role played by the media in the political sphere despite decreasing newspaper circulation in the United Kingdom.

INTRODUCTION

On the 20th October 2022, Liz Truss resigned as Prime Minister, making her the shortest serving Prime Minister in British History after only 45 days in office (Nevvet and Whannel 2022).

The speed of her downfall, as well as the almost universal portrayal of her premiership as a failure, are now defining features of her premiership (Kutllovci 2022). Although it is acknowledged that Truss' resignation resulted from poor economic decision-making (BBC News 2022), British newspapers, in particular *The Daily Mail* (*The Mail*) and other tabloid corpora, were vital actors in establishing the negative narrative surrounding Truss, which consisted of incompetence, failure and disastrous leadership. After contextualising the Truss premiership by outlining the varying headlines and front pages of tabloid and broadsheet corpora from her election as Conservative Party leader to her resignation, this article will seek to illustrate how the print media were able to establish such a narrative. Using techniques of critical discourse analysis, in particular, the use of tabloid newspaper ideology and language techniques including 'seductive persuasion' (Kitis and Milapedes 1997), a highly negative narrative of Truss and her leadership was brought to the political fore. By examining the presence of gendered techniques in these headlines, this article will also further that the print media established a gendered narrative surrounding Truss during her premiership, advancing a pre-existing narrative of women as 'non-leaders' (Mavin et al 2010). This article will highlight that through a multiplicity of language techniques, pre-existing audience-newspaper

relationships and the ‘tabloidization’ (Conboy 2010, 130) of the ‘political reality’ (Shenhav 2006, 246-247), a highly negative narrative of Truss was embedded in public opinion. As a result, this acted as a factor in Truss’ decision to resign. Thus, this article will argue that the media’s role in the narrative surrounding the Truss premiership was significant. Narrative, in this article, will be defined as the general perceptions which are attributed to the ‘political reality’ (Shenhav 2006, 246-247).

This article constitutes an original contribution to the field of Political Media Discourse Analysis. The print media’s role in establishing the narrative surrounding Truss, particularly the role of tabloid corpora, has not been researched in the United Kingdom before. However, the brevity of Truss’ tenure as Prime Minister and the rapidity of her decline in public opinion raise important questions about the factors that contributed to her negative public perception (Kuttlovki 2023; Raven 2022). The power of the media in shaping opinion around the ‘political reality’ (Shenhav 2006, 246-247), also known as its ‘agenda-setting’ capability (McCombs and Shaw 1972, 176) is widely documented. This can also be described as a so-called ‘soft-power’ of the media (Wright et al 2020), in which the media acts as a government ‘lapdog’ or ‘watchdog’ (Whitten-Woodring 2009). This entails a publication either supporting the government agenda with minimal criticism, (government ‘lapdog’) or acting as a source of criticism for the government agenda (government ‘watchdog’) (Whitten-Woodring 2009).

The use of Critical Discourse Analysis methodologies and literature review of language concepts in this essay, have been chosen to critically analyse how the media had the power to foster such negative perceptions of Truss. This analysis is warranted as Critical Discourse Analysis’ central thesis posits that ‘language and representation are bound up with power’ (Higgins and McKay 2016, 285). In order to examine the power that the print media had in shaping the negative public opinion and thus contributing to the downfall of Truss, it is essential to examine print media’s use of language. More specifically, it must be considered how the media chooses to represent itself through ideological means and how language distorts the ‘political reality’ (Shenhav 2006, 246-247) from its source (Hall 1973, 2-3).

AN OUTLINE OF THE PRINT MEDIA’S NARRATIVE OF TRUSS’ PREMIERSHIP

The overall narrative of the Truss premiership provides an important picture of the distinctions between the tabloid and broadsheet press. Particularly at the beginning of the Truss premiership, two different narratives or perceptions of the ‘political reality’ could be observed (Shenhav 2006, 246-247); one positive and sensationalised, and another that was less positive and more tentative regarding Truss’ prospects of political success. Towards the end of her premiership, positive news coverage from all print corpora had faded. Tabloid newspapers, who were once supportive, began to contradict their earlier coverage as it became increasingly clear that Truss’ position was untenable. It is crucial to examine the contradictions projected and the extent of the negative coverage to understand the influence of the media narrative on the electorate.

The tabloid newspaper *The Mail* began its coverage of Truss’ premiership in a positive light. After Truss won the Conservative Party’s leadership contest on the 6th September 2022, *The Mail* printed ‘Cometh the hour, cometh the woman’ as its main headline (Groves 2022b). This tone was replicated almost exclusively by newspapers which are largely perceived to have a right-wing ideology (Smith 2017), including the tabloids *The Daily Express*, with the headline ‘Put faith in Truss to deliver for Britain’ (Lister 2022b), and *The Sun*, which read ‘Liz puts her foot on the gas’ (Cole 2022). The following day, *The Mail*’s splash read ‘Together we can ride out the storm’ in reference to Truss’ speech before she entered Downing Street to begin her premiership. The headline also describes how ‘the skies cleared’ before Truss started speaking in ‘a moment loaded with cheering symbolism’ (Moir 2022). These headlines contrasted other newspaper’s front pages acknowledging the issues facing Truss’ initial weeks as Prime Minister. This included *The I*, whose standfirst read ‘Economists warn that taxpayers or consumers will need to pay for bailout’ (The I 2022d) referring to Truss’ proposed energy bill cap, and the *Financial Times*’ headline, ‘Truss assumes office with vow to steer Britain out of energy storm’ (Financial Times 2022), which addressed the political issues facing Truss

during her first days in office.

From this array of headlines, an initial positive leaning in the tone of the tabloid print media can be observed, especially in comparison to 'broad sheet' media. *The Mail*, *The Daily Express* and *The Sun* are all considered to possess a majority 'right-wing' stance by the public (Smith 2017), and all portray the entrance of Truss into Downing Street as a positive event. Therefore, ideology arguably determines the tone of newspapers' coverage of Truss and will be significant in shaping the opinions of a right-wing readership.

On the 23rd September 2022, Kwasi Kwarteng, Truss' Chancellor of the Exchequer, delivered her government's 'mini-budget' containing '£45 billion of unfunded tax cuts' (BBC News 2022). *The Mail* celebrated the 'mini-budget' on the 24th September with the headline 'At Last! A True Tory Budget' (Groves 2022a). However, other newspapers focused on the falling value of the pound. This included the tabloid *The I* with the headline 'Pound plunges after Kwarteng bets UK economy on tax cuts' (The I 2022c), and the broadsheet newspaper *The Telegraph*'s headline 'Kwarteng gambles on biggest tax cuts in half a century' (Chan et al 2022).

The economic consequences of the 'mini budget' were significant. On the 26th September, the value of the pound 'fell to record lows against the dollar' (BBC News 2022). The economic impact was so significant that the Bank of England intervened by buying £65 billion in government bonds to prevent a collapse of the pension system (Partington 2022). Moreover, the International Monetary Fund criticised the budget as "likely to increase inequality" (Taaffe-Maguire 2022). *The Mail* continued its support of the financial plan by seeking to blame 'speculators profiting from the plunging pound' in its lead on the 27th September; this was accompanied by the headline 'Fury at elite city slickers betting against UK PLC' (Ford, Rojas and Witherow 2022), directing discontent towards them rather than Truss or Kwarteng who had enacted the budget. In stark contrast to this, other major tabloid newspapers were deeply critical of the economic strategy. For example, *Metro*'s headline read 'The pound Kwartanks' (Binns 2022). *The Daily Star*'s headline quipped 'Honey, I shrunk the quids' (Stone 2022a), referring to the falling value of the pound.

A clear disparity in coverage of the 'mini-budget' and its consequences can be observed between *The Mail* and other corpora. Additionally, *The Mail* is also wilfully ignorant of the budget's real-world political consequences.

After the severe economic consequences of the 'mini budget', the news coverage of Truss became universally negative. On the 18th October, *The Mail* published the headline 'In office, but not in power' (Groves 2022c). When Suella Braverman resigned as Home Secretary on the 19th October, she referred to 'concerns about the direction of this government' in her resignation letter (Braverman 2022). In its standfirst, *The Daily Express* remarked 'Truss premiership in meltdown after "disgraceful" Commons scenes' (Lister 2022a). Five newspapers referred to Truss' government and leadership as 'chaos', this included the tabloids *The Daily Mirror* (Stevens 2022) and *The I* (The I 2022a), the online newspaper *The Independent* (Woodcock 2022), and notable broadsheets including *The Daily Telegraph* (Riley-Smith 2022a) and the *Financial Times* (Parker et al 2022a).

On the 20th October, Liz Truss resigned as Prime Minister. *The Mail* presented a teaser of an article on its front-page reading 'Truss was a disastrous dalliance who served only to remind us what a real leader looks like' (Vine 2022). *Metro*'s headline read 'The worst PM we've ever had' (Yeatman 2022). In a final negative attack on Truss, newspapers presented the Truss premiership as an overall failure.

The Mail had adopted a contrasting narrative to their coverage only three weeks earlier; changing their stance from support of Truss and her economic policy to disapproval of her premiership. This was also adopted by *The Daily Express*. This narrative turnaround was therefore particularly significant as both tabloids are perceived as two of Britain's most right-wing newspapers (Smith 2017), largely aligning themselves with the conservative ideology.

It may be argued that Truss' downfall could be attributed more to the consequences of the economic downturn than the narrative constructed by newspapers. For example, an empirical study by Sanders et al (1993) found that during the period 1979 to 1987, newspaper

coverage of the economy had a negligible impact on the public's support for the government (1993, 176). However, the media was significant in setting the agenda for Truss' leadership. The 'agenda-setting' power of the media refers to its ability to determine the 'important issues' within politics and shape the 'political reality' (McCombs and Shaw 1972, 176). The impact of the 'agenda-setting' can be evidenced by opinion polls. At the beginning of Truss' premiership, the slightly optimistic tone adopted by the press was reflected in a 9% approval rating increase from Truss' predecessor, Boris Johnson, to herself (Raven 2022). However, by the end of her premiership, with broadly negative newspaper coverage, Truss' net favourability was -70% (Raven 2022). This demonstrates the significance of the newspapers in creating the general narrative around Truss' leadership, as the net favourability of Truss largely reflected the narrative projected by newspapers.

The impact of this narrative on the national perception of Truss' leadership can also be critically analysed with reference to the ideology of the tabloids, in particular *The Mail*, and the use of tabloid language techniques. This includes 'tabloidization' (Conboy, 2010, 130) and the use of 'seductive persuasion' (Kitis and Milapedes 1997, 560-561). These techniques enabled the media to significantly shape the narrative around Truss' leadership as a failure by making it more widely accepted by both audiences that support the Conservative party and readers who are apathetic to political news.

THE INFLUENCE OF NEWSPAPER IDEOLOGY

Ideology, 'the structuring of beliefs from a particular perspective' (Conboy 2010, 105), was influential in establishing the positive narrative around Truss' entry into Downing Street. Conboy (2010) outlines how the media must present a consistent set of values and interpretations to maintain its audience, creating a 'pact of solidarity' (2010, 108), which is a reinforcement of 'the sense of shared values between the reader and news medium' (2007, 108). The media projects the news through an ideological lens to 'invite solidarity' or to 'reflect shifts within dominant ways of thinking' (2007, 108). *The Mail* is perceived as Britain's most right-wing newspaper (Smith 2017) and is seen by 31% of people as being 'generally much more favourable' to the Conservative party or right-wing (YouGov 2023).

The depiction of Truss by the right-wing tabloids was highly positive initially. *The Mail* portrayed Truss using sensationalised language. In its depiction of 'the sky clearing' over Truss, *The Mail* expands the truth to make it 'seem more exciting or dramatic' (Frye 2005, 2) in order to engage its audience. This stands in contrast to the general background of economic instability and hardship in the UK that Truss had inherited (Dunleavy 2022) as well as the challenges to her tenure, which were acknowledged in other newspapers. The positive aspects of Truss' leadership, and the sensationalism of her entry into Downing Street, were deliberately selected to establish the narrative of her leadership in a way that evoked positivity and optimism towards the Conservative party. The positive perception of Truss' beginnings as Prime Minister, that were adopted collectively by right-wing corpora, assisted in 'inviting solidarity' among a conservative readership. Thus, the ideology of the print media significantly influenced the creation of an initial, positive narrative around Truss despite the reality of the hardships she faced (Dunleavy 2022).

The shift in net favourability among Conservative voters coincided with *The Mail's* initial highly positive, sensationalised headline and its marked alteration in its opinion of Truss afterwards. In a poll conducted by Redfield and Wilton Strategies (2022) on the 7th September 2022, 13% of 2019 Conservative voters 'Strongly Approve[d]' of Truss' overall job performance, and 33% of Conservative voters 'Approve[d]'. In comparison, national opinion was significantly lower, with only 21% of overall poll participants who 'Approved'.

This provides a marked contrast to the net favourability of Truss after her resignation, in which 62% of 2019 Conservative voters now 'Strongly Disapprove[d]' of Truss' overall job performance. Conservative voters' opinion now coincided with the overall national opinion, in which 66% of participants 'Strongly Disapprove[d]' (Redfield and Wilton Strategies 2023). This negative downturn in Truss' net approval was accompanied by *The Mail's* tease on the 20th October describing Truss as a 'Disastrous Dalliance' (Vine 2022), as well as previous coverage

describing Truss' powerlessness; 'In office but not in power' (Groves 2022c). A correlation can be identified between the timings of the negative coverage by *The Mail* and a sharp downturn in the net favourability of Truss. Although *The Mail* was not the only tabloid nor print media to adopt a negative stance towards Truss during her last weeks in Downing Street, the high proportion of Conservative voters amongst *The Mail's* readership (Curtis 2017) signifies that *The Mail's* ideological position may have had some impact on its readership.

Such low favourability as Prime Minister in opinion polls would not normally be a decisive factor in the decision for a Prime Minister to resign, as evidenced by Truss' predecessor Boris Johnson. According to a poll by YouGov (2021), 73% said that Boris Johnson was doing 'badly' as Prime Minister on the 17th January 2022. However, Johnson did not resign until 7th July 2022 when the significant number of resignations of cabinet ministers and junior ministers in his government, making his viability in government untenable (Coffee House 2022). It is important to note that Truss' election as Prime Minister was determined by a vote among the Conservative party membership between the final two candidates for party leader, rather than at a general election (Durrant and Barr 2022; Johnston 2022). Much like the accession of Theresa May after the resignation of David Cameron, Truss' appointment came during a period of 'heightened instability' following Johnson's resignation (Williams 2021, 400). Truss had not necessarily 'proved herself' as, in comparison, Margaret Thatcher did in 1979, when she secured her premiership in a general election after leading the Conservatives in opposition (Williams 2021, 400). Truss may thus have been more reliant or, at least, more sensitive to public favourability, particularly that of the Conservative 'base' or 'backbone membership' (Tryl 2022).

The position taken by *The Mail* after the consequences of the 'mini-budget' was, therefore, an extremely significant force in shifting the narrative regarding Truss due to *The Mail's* ideology. *The Mail's* initial support for Truss continued from its favourable coverage during the leadership contest, with 88% of articles written about Truss during the leadership contest period described as positive (Tobitt 2022). However, *The Mail* then transformed from being one of Truss' biggest supporters during the Conservative leadership contest (Waterson 2022). They quickly grew from being described as one of the 'doomed mini-budget's biggest cheerleaders' (Hall 2022) to a voice in the myriad of criticism facing Truss' final week as Prime Minister. As a result of its marked shift in its stance on the 'mini-budget', *The Mail* switched from being a government 'lapdog' to a government 'watchdog' regarding Truss and her government's agenda (Whitten-Woodring 2009). As a right-wing, Conservative-supporting tabloid (Smith 2017; YouGov 2023), this transformation contributed significantly to the perception of Truss' failure to govern, as the main source of her support had turned against her.

Truss not only risked general dislike by this continuing decline in net favourability among Conservative voters, but also a significant challenge to her legitimacy as Conservative party leader. This was the section of the electorate that underpinned her legitimacy to accede to Downing Street and thus, had the ability to not only cause legitimacy questions amongst Conservative MPs, of which a majority of 137 backed her rival at the time, Rishi Sunak, in comparison to her 114 votes in the fifth ballot (Morris and Scott 2022), but also to hold her to account regarding her chances of success in the next general election (Murr and Fisher 2022).

It is difficult to identify the print media as the sole determiner of the downturn in Truss' favourability among Conservative voters. However, it is important to consider that 'political homophily', the concept that individuals form their habits based upon their ideological similarity to others or, in this instance, newspaper titles (Huber and Malhotra 2017), has been evidenced previously. According to a poll by YouGov of over 50,000 British Voters, 74% of voters who read *The Mail* as their most regular newspaper in the 2017 election voted for the Conservative party (Curtis 2017). With the assumption that *The Mail* readership is thus predominantly Conservative-leaning (Curtis 2017), it is likely that *The Mail's* marked change in stance was influential on the Conservative voter base.

Thus, it is argued that the ideology of newspapers was impactful on the growing dissatisfaction with Truss' leadership amongst Conservative voters. This, ultimately, contributed to a more prolific downturn in her popularity with the public at large, as well as with Conservative

voters. With this significant loss of approval among the Conservative voter base (Redfield and Wilson Strategies 2022), this was presumably a decisive factor in Truss' decision to resign. Therefore, the print media had a significant impact on the narrative created around Truss.

THE INFLUENCE OF LANGUAGE IN TABLOID CORPORA

In furthering an ideological agenda or appealing to a certain audience based on ideology, language acts as an important textual mechanism through which newspapers can maintain their readership and impart their views. With the rise of tabloid and 'popular' newspapers, language became an essential mechanism for newspapers to expand beyond a homogeneous, middle-class audience to become appealing to 'proletarian Britain' (Conboy 2010, 3). When analysing the language newspapers utilised during Truss' tenure as Prime Minister, it becomes evident that the use of language was an essential component in the crafting of her negative image. Through the techniques of 'seductive persuasion' (Kitis and Milapides 1997) and 'tabloidization' (Conboy 2010), newspapers were able to circumvent reporting of complex politic.

'SEDUCTIVE PERSUASION'

Kitis and Milapides (1997, 560-561) identify two ways in which a newspaper or news reports can persuade their readership. Firstly, news reports can seek to convince their readership by presenting 'a series of argumentative steps' (Kitis and Milapides 1997, 560-561) and relying on the reader to accept those steps. Alternatively, they can use 'seductive persuasion', meaning that they attempt to 'seduce' their readership. This can be achieved by pre-empting the ideological leaning of the reader, establishing the newspaper's truthfulness in the 'trustworthiness' of its writers and its reputation as a newspaper instead of seeking to present a logical argument (Kitis and Milapides 1997, 560-561). To summarise, employing this concept seeks to engage the 'emotional rather than the cognitive involvement' (Kitis and Milapides, 1997, 561) of the readership by reaffirming the readers' views, or by implicitly forcing them to change or modify their thoughts entirely. This is particularly evident in the writing of *The Mail*, where their ideological leanings play a key role in drawing in their readership. In the context of Truss, 'seductive persuasion' was particularly successful in reaffirming positive narratives to a Conservative audience at the beginning of her premiership, and in later adding significant weight to negative perceptions of her leadership due to *The Mail's* right-wing reputation (YouGov 2017).

The Mail's employment of 'seductive persuasion' (Kitis and Milapides 1997) was a clear feature of its creation of the narrative around Truss. This was displayed in the emotive and 'sensationalist' language of Truss' entry into Downing Street, with the headline describing 'The skies clearing' above Truss (Moir 2022). *The Mail* portrays Truss' presence as powerful enough to control the weather, portraying her as a saviour-like figure to the readership. This triggers the emotions of the reader and reaffirms *The Mail's* ideal audience's Conservative views by portraying her extremely positively and as an almost 'omnipotent presence' (Dunleavy 2022). This is contrary to accounts in other corpora including *The Financial Times*, which highlighted her political challenges, including inflation and energy prices (Financial Times, 2022). This emotive language is employed again when *The Mail's* perspective had changed, with the use of the rhetorical question 'How much can she, and the rest of us, take?' (Groves et al 2022b). The use of the pronoun 'us' reaffirms an ideological 'pact of solidarity' (Conbo 2010, 108) between the paper and its Conservative readership by referring to them as a collective. This directs an adversarial tone towards Truss herself rather than her government in its entirety; an anti-establishment, populist perspective of 'us' versus 'her'. This also implicitly encourages its readers to change their views along with the newspaper by reinforcing the sense of an ideological community and by presenting negative views that appear 'attitudinally-congruent' with the rest of the population (Hameleers, Bos and de Vrees 2017).

As a result of 'seductive persuasion' (Kitis and Milapides 1997), *The Mail's* use of language intersects with its ideological stance by encouraging its predominantly Conservative readership (Curtis 2017) to change their opinions of Truss' competency as Prime Minister. By

doing so, *The Mail* actively contributes to the delegitimisation of Truss' premiership as the tabloid explicitly encourages her primary voter base, who once supported her and who also read *The Mail*, to turn against her. It can therefore be argued that *The Mail*'s use of 'seductive persuasion' (Kitis and Milapides 1997) was significant in the pervading negative narrative surrounding Truss.

'TABLOIDIZATION'

According to Conboy (2010, 130), 'tabloidization' is a convergence of elements of entertainment and popular culture with news and politics. The tabloid newspaper creates a 'textual bridge' of readers' own experiences of their culture with their beliefs by using language that resembles what the reader would use to discuss their own views in a conversation (Conboy 2010). This concept is referred to by Fairclough (1994) as 'conversationalization'. The 'tabloidization' of the Truss premiership was particularly noteworthy due to its extent and, also, due to its popularity. The tabloid newspapers were successful in simplifying the Truss premiership and its shortcomings into easily digestible material. The extent of this is visible in its potential to become an online meme (Alvelos 2022). Overall, the techniques of 'tabloidization' were highly successful in projecting a publicly accepted narrative of Truss' as politically incompetent.

A prominent example of the 'tabloidization' (Conboy 2010, 130) of the narrative around Truss was *The Daily Star*'s recurring comparison of Truss to a lettuce in a competition to see if the lettuce would expire before the end of Truss' premiership (Stone 2022b). The comparison of Truss to the colloquialism 'wet lettuce' (Stone 2022b) made a significant contribution to the narrative concerning Truss' incompetence and weakness as a leader; it had the ability to transcend 'its tabloid-sponsored milieu...becoming the source of innumerable memes, jokes, puns, and mutations' (Alvelos 2022). The comparison spilled over from print media into other forms of widely read and interacted with social media channels, including a livestream on YouTube, which was watched by nearly 20,000 people (Victor 2022).

The comparison between Truss and the lettuce, which was originally featured in the magazine *The Economist*, outlined how the ten days Truss had had as Prime Minister before the 'mini-budget' compared roughly to 'the shelf-life of a lettuce' (Alvelos 2022; *The Economist* 2022). The transfer of this comparison from a more 'elite' publication (Demata and Conscenti 2020, 55), with a closed audience limited to those interested in politics, to a metaphor used in a 'popular' tabloid (Demata and Conscenti 2020, 55) 'conversationalized' (Fairclough 1994) the derision of Truss. It thus appealed to a broader audience due to its popularity and transposition to an online meme.

A neologism, which is 'a recently created (or coined) word, or an existing word or phrase that has been assigned a new meaning' (Richardson 2007), is often utilised in tabloid milieu and is a feature of the 'tabloidization' of press coverage. Aiming to relate politics to popular culture references and providing a 'textual bridge' (Conboy 2010) of understanding for their readership, neologisms were used to make criticism of Truss' premiership the subject of satirised ridicule understandable to a wider readership.

Both tabloid publications *The Metro* and *Daily Star* utilise a neologism in their reporting of the crash of the pound. *The Metro*'s headline 'The pound Kwartanks' (Binns 2022) satirises the surname of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Kwasi Kwarteng. By turning the bleak economic picture into a comedic, satirical headline, *The Metro* dilutes the serious economic nature of the crash of the pound. This makes the news more comprehensible for its everyday readership and also draws greater attention to the economic incident. Its humorous, 'eye-catching headline' makes it more accessible and appealing to readers (Schaffer 1995, 28). Similarly, *The Daily Star*'s headline 'Honey, I Shrunk the Quids' (Stone 2022a) refers to the film 'Honey, I Shrunk the Kids'. References to popular culture by these newspapers signify a 'tabloidization' (Conboy 2010, 130) of the 'mini-budget' and general reporting on the economy.

Because tabloid newspapers are focused primarily on issues of gossip, celebrity, and sex (Schaffer 1995, 29; Williams 2009, 201), their content does not typically emphasise the reporting of 'hard news', such as politics, compared to their broadsheet counterparts (Schaffer 1995, 28). Thus, to gain the attention of their regular readership and to further reach new audiences,

political issues are contextualised by tabloids through ‘conversationalization’ (Fairclough, 1994), the use of colloquial phrases and references to popular culture in order to appeal to the mass-market (Williams 2009, 200). By making Truss’ political failures increasingly digestible for a mass-market audience, these were no longer confined to the politically active readership, but were now widely known among members of the public.

In this instance, the utilisation of neologisms and ‘tabloidization’ (Conboy 2010, 130) was essential in making the negative narrative of Truss accessible and easily understandable to a wider audience. In other words, Truss’ failings fell victim to ‘democratisation’ by the tabloid press, in which they were no longer solely subject to scrutiny by the politically involved, but also to that of the public at large. As a result, the negative narrative surrounding Truss was widely received and interpreted through the negative tabloid coverage. Therefore, this had an impact on her approval ratings among the general public, and not solely those within the confines of her own party or voter base.

The popularity of the Truss and lettuce comparison, as well as the negative coverage by other tabloid corpora, was crucial in projecting the perception of Truss’ incompetence to a larger, less politically active audience. It also extended the projection beyond the confines of the print media to social media, which 87% of people aged 16 to 24 now use as their primary source for news consumption (Ofcom 2022, 3). This ultimately contributed to a ‘swift erosion of public opinion’ (Avelos 2022) by furthering a negative narrative of Truss through multiple media channels. At the beginning of her premiership, this also reaffirmed and sensationalised the political views of the Conservative readership. By implicitly encouraging the Conservative readership to change their views, it aided Truss’ delegitimisation within her own political party. Whilst it was her policy, not her own image, that was responsible for her downfall in the ‘political reality’ (Shenhav 2006, 246-247), the print media was essential in popularising and reaffirming the narrative around Truss’ leadership as one of failure and humiliation.

THE TABLOID NEWSPAPER AND ‘GENDERED MEDIATION’

“Gendered mediation” (Gidengil and Everitt 2003, 210) refers to news coverage that treats the masculine as the norm. As a result, when women find themselves stepping into the political sphere, they are subject to increased scrutiny because their behaviour and presence is viewed as a deviation from the norm, or as an anomaly. This coverage by the media is not only more extensive and has greater emphasis on the female or feminine but is deliberately gendered due to the desire to present women as a ‘novelty’ in the masculine order (Gidengil and Everitt 2003, 210). In politics, this is not a concept confined to the coverage of Truss alone, instead it is a wider historical trend. It also clearly extended to Truss’ predecessors Theresa May and Margaret Thatcher (Williams 2021). However, it is also true that, due to the consequences of ‘tabloidization’ and tabloid focus on audience enhancement and ‘personalisation’ (Langer 2007), Truss was subjected to “gendered mediation” by the emphasis on her personally as the focus of negative political coverage. This contributed to subtly pervading narratives around female politicians as ‘outsiders’ and ‘non-leaders’ (Mavin et al 2010, 560).

Furthering this, newspapers also established a highly gendered narrative around Truss’ leadership competency. Newspaper headlines sought to portray Truss’ ‘humiliation’ by emphasising the control held by the new Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, over the economy and even the leadership of the Conservative party itself when reversing the measures established in the ‘mini-budget’. In contrast, Truss herself was portrayed as powerless. A headline from *The Mail* that stated Truss was ‘In office, but not in power’ (Groves 2022c) on the 18th of October 2022, along with *The I’s* headline that read ‘Hunt takes charge as PM fears the exit’ (The I 2022b). *The Financial Times* also wrote in their subheading that ‘investors’ were now ‘reassured’ by Hunt (Parker et al 2022b). These headlines play into a gendered mortification of Truss’ leadership, implying that she requires ‘the back-up of a man to give her message credibility’ (Mavin et al 2010, 651). This posits that male leadership and political domination are required to stabilise the failures of a female leader. This overall message represents female politicians as ‘non-leaders’ (Mavin et al 2010, 560) by contrasting Truss’ lack of power, as suggested by *The Mail*, with Hunt’s ability to ‘reassure’ investors and to ‘take control’.

This example corroborates an empirical study by Aaldering and Van der Paas (2018). When analysing media coverage, they found evidence of 'gender-differentiated coverage' between male and female political leaders. Male leaders received greater coverage based on leadership traits of 'political craftsmanship' (2018, 926), which involves their knowledge of issues, general political competence and 'vigorousness' (2018, 926), describing their 'strength' in the political arena, decisiveness and ability to dominate. The roles in the above example can be attributed to Hunt; he is praised for his 'political craftsmanship' (Aaldering and Van de Pas, 2018, p. 926) in 'reassuring' the markets by *The Financial Times* and for his 'vigorousness' (Aaldering and Van de Pas 2018, 926) by 'taking charge' as outlined by *The I* (The I 2022b). In comparison, Truss is described as powerless by *The Mail*. Such a stark supposed contrast in leadership ability implicitly encourages the readership to view Hunt as more 'competent' and better suited to leadership than Truss. As a result, subtly pervading narratives surrounding women in political leadership are reinforced as the male politician is presented as more proficient in politics.

Corroborating this, the 'personalisation' (Langer 2007) of the narrative surrounding Liz Truss was also central to the gendered portrayal of her incompetence. 'Personalisation' is the increasing 'focus on leaders and their personalities' rather than concentrating on 'abstract institutions or policies' as a means of delivering political news (Langer 2007, 372). Truss was at the forefront of criticism for the failures of her government. For example, on the 18th October 2022, the front page of *The Mail* featured a picture of Truss leaving Parliament with the caption 'Haunted PM leaves Westminster last night' (Groves et al 2022b). The lettuce comparison used by *The Daily Star* placed Truss' 'iconicity as a core source of her derision' (Alvelos 2022). Finally, Truss was also referred to by the personal pronoun 'She' in *The Mail*'s headline 'How much can she, and the rest of us, take?' (Groves et al 2022b); in this context, the pronoun 'she' ensures that her gender becomes the 'primary descriptor'. This can also be considered a 'demoting' description as the individual being discussed 'has to be inferred' and the person is given subtly 'a more background role' (Langer 2007, 374). Additionally, *The Mail* begins their lead with 'Her first 38 days in office.' The pronoun of 'her' used immediately after the headline is particularly poignant as Truss is not mentioned once by name in the headline, nor lead; as two of the most eye-catching pieces of the newspaper's front cover, this omission is significant. Truss is, again, 'demoted' (Langer 2007, 374) as an anomalous female figure, a figure unworthy of mention by name.

With this presentation of Truss' female leadership by the print media, as well as the personal focus on Truss for her Chancellor's mistakes, Truss is presented to the newspaper readership as an object of ridicule. As a female leader, she is shown to the readers with large images of herself as the focus of the negative coverage, despite Kwarteng also being to blame for the economic policy. She is subjected to a greater 'mediation' that is deliberately gendered as it highlights her as the source of the political problem. She is 'the novelty' (Gidengil and Everitt 2003, 210) in the political process and is offered up to their readership as the source of the blame, particularly by *The Mail*.

Gendered coverage was continued throughout the reporting of the 'mini-budget' and its economic consequences. After the dismissal of Kwarteng, no major broadsheet or tabloid placed a picture of Kwarteng on its front page. Despite this, all had images of Truss. Although some headlines did focus on Kwarteng's dismissal, such as the headline in the broadsheet newspaper *The Daily Telegraph* 'Truss clings to power after axing Kwarteng' (Riley-Smith 2022b), all of the major tabloids present Truss as the lead of the story. *The Sun*, albeit not as a headline, utilised a spoiler reading 'Lame duck Liz on the brink' (Atherley 2022). Meanwhile, *The Daily Star* continued their lettuce neologism with the headline 'How long can wet lettuce Liz Romaine?' (Stone 2022c). With these headlines, the competency of Kwarteng as Chancellor of the Exchequer is not scrutinised, despite him serving as one of the so-called 'Great Offices of State' In this instance, Truss is bearing an increased load for the actions of Kwarteng. This is not to suggest that Truss was not equally responsible for her governments 'mini-budget' policy, but rather that she is the victim of increased media scrutiny and derision that did not equally focus on the failures of Kwarteng. She is the subject of 'gendered mediation'

(Gidengil and Everitt 2003, 210) and increased scrutiny because of her position as a woman in a leadership role.

This is not unique to Truss: Williams identified that increased coverage generally centres on 'gender, femininity [or] appearance' by 'conservative media' compared to 'progressive' corpora (2021, 407). To illustrate this point, compared to one-third of articles in more left-leaning corpora, all more right-wing newspapers relied on emphasis of Theresa May's femininity in 'more than half' of all articles (2021, 408). Additionally, since Thatcher, a change in 'journalist norms and standards' has occurred, which has 'sensationalised' and 'personalised' the politician (2021, 415). This has had an impact on gendered coverage as greater inspection is given to their private lives and as 'subversive gender choices' are brought to the fore (Williams 2021, 415). This begins to explain why gendered coverage is particularly prominent in the tabloid press and why, despite Truss' tenure as Prime Minister being so short, she was subject to gender-differentiated coverage.

Indeed, tabloids often act to 'exploit the climate of permissiveness' by combining politics with celebrity gossip (Buckledee 2020, 12). *The Mail* changed its format in the 1970's and 1980's to the tabloid format in order to appeal to a new audience and to increase circulation, replicating the success of its competitor, *The Sun* (Buckledee 2020, 14). With tabloid media, 'hard news' such as politics is adapted to evoke a 'sensationalised' tone (Williams 2021, 415) as a means of appealing to the readership. However, the desire of the tabloid to 'celebritise' (Williams 2021, 411) a political actor to appeal to a broader audience results in the political actors themselves being presented by the tabloid as a 'nexus point' via which political issues can be discussed (Weidhase, 2021). This can also be described as 'Infotainment', a term used to describe the combination of information and entertainment in tabloid newspapers and, often, the inability to tell the difference between the two. This leads to increased focus on the political actor generally as the centre of coverage. However, female politicians suffer negative consequences disproportionately from this coverage (Gidengil and Everitt 2003). By serving as a forum of discussion for political issues, the coverage they receive emphasises their presence as a deviation from the norm of the male-dominated political arena, subtly reinforcing the perspective that 'women do not really belong in politics' (Gidengil and Everitt 2003, 210).

Women are often regarded as the 'inherently different, deviant presence' in society, whereas the male presence is perceived as the 'genderless norm' opposing women as the 'gendered other' (Williams 2021, 406-407). Consequently, a woman's position, particularly within the traditionally male-dominated political sphere, is seen as a deviation from the norm. Thus, their gender is used as a 'primary descriptor' (Williams 2021, 407) which differentiates them from men. This 'gendered othering' (Southern and Harmer 2021), in which a woman's place in the political order is presented as anomalous by the media, is not exclusive to Truss. Both Margaret Thatcher and Theresa May were found to have been impacted by increased media 'personalisation' (Langer 2007; Williams 2021).

Furthermore, in William's study analysing articles from the first three weeks of Thatcher's and May's premierships and using critical discourse analysis, it was found that in 45.7% of May's articles, her gender was mentioned. This compared to 40.8% for Thatcher (2021, 407). There was also disparity between the two female leaders regarding mentions of their femininity and appearance. Thatcher's femininity was highlighted in 53.4% of articles, while May's was emphasised in 66.1% (2021, 408.) With regards to appearance, May's appearance was subjected to coverage 'almost twice as often' as Thatcher (2021, 411). Although gendered commentary adopted a 'neutral or even positive tone' (2021, 410), the commentary on May had a particularly negative impact because of the emphasis it placed on 'her sex over her professional role', which, in turn, places her position as a 'serious political actor' into question (2021, 410). This study draws parallels to the coverage of Truss. Her gender was also placed 'over her professional role' (Williams 2021, 410), for example by *The Mail's* use of the pronouns 'she' and 'her' before mentioning her by name (Groves et al 2022b). This contributes further to the question of her credibility as a politician, as her female characteristics are emphasised as atypical in the male dominated political sphere (Williams 2021, 401).

By participating in 'gendered mediation' (Gidengil and Everitt 2003, 210), print media

thus portrayed Truss as the 'outlier' in the political system. Her competency as a leader was compared to that of her male counterpart Jeremy Hunt, who was portrayed as more capable by 'taking charge' (The I 2022b), while she was also placed as the 'source of derision' (Alvelos 2022) for her government's failures. Simultaneously, her male chancellor, Kwasi Kwarteng, was subjected to less coverage for his own 'mini-budget' failure. This gendered portrayal of Truss contributed to the narrative of incapability and incompetency that pervaded coverage of Truss in the print media, leading to the extremely low net-approval she received among her supporter base and the public (Redfield and Wilton Strategies 2022b).

Placing Truss at the forefront of political derision contributed to a narrative of women as 'non-leaders' (Mavin et al 2010, 560), as Truss herself, rather than her decisions, are placed at the forefront of the narrative of failure and ridicule. Truss is 'not necessarily depicted as unsuitable for leadership; rather, she is constructed as a monstrous version of what a leader is expected to be' (Baxter 2018, 48) through a continual emphasis on her as a leader as the principal factor in her downfall. This is visible in the reference to her by *The Mail's* article by Vine (2022) as a 'disastrous dalliance'. Thus, the media was significant in its contribution to a gendered narrative around Truss' leadership and its failure.

Combining imagery and language techniques with 'gendered mediation', tabloid corpora are able to reinforce gendered stereotypes of female politicians as 'non-leaders' (Mavin et al 2010, 60) as a subtly pervading, 'normalised' perspective. The 'tabloidization' of major political issues, most prominently demonstrated by the 'Lettuce' campaign run by the *Daily Star* and its subsequent popularity introduced the comparison of Truss to a lettuce into the lexicon of vocabulary used daily to portray Truss' political failures. What is noteworthy is the ease with which this comparison gained traction on social media (Alvelos 2022) and this was transposed from the covers of the *Daily Star* tabloid, a unique demonstration of the British 'tabloid culture' that fails to be replicated elsewhere (Buckledee 2020, 1-19). However, most importantly, it serves as a demonstration of how easily a female political leader can become the source of popular derision whilst her fellow male political actors and collaborators escape this gendered criticism. This was also visible with Theresa May, whose nickname of 'Maybot' by *The Guardian's* John Crace (2016) was widely adopted and was 'the year in a word' in 2017 according to *The Financial Times* (Mance 2017). 'Maybot' was adopted to ridicule May's monotonous answers to questions, such as her campaign slogan 'Strong and Stable'. However, it quickly became a descriptor for every political 'faux-pas' that she committed, including her dancing and a coughing fit she had during a speech at the Conservative party conference in 2017 (Mance 2017). Derision was no longer consigned to her political actions; it now applied to everything she did, from her speech to her human bodily functions. What was once a technique reserved for the tabloid press, *The Guardian*, considered a 'quality paper' with a 'neutral language' focus (Demata and Conoscenti 2020, 14) adopted a narrative marred by features of 'tabloidization' (Conboy 2010, 130).

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the chronology of the narrative constructed of Truss' leadership by newspapers was initially one of optimism, low taxes, and assistance with the rising cost of energy bills. This then descended rapidly, into one of humiliation, powerlessness, and failure. Assisted by ideological influence, the 'tabloidization' of her leadership, the 'conversationalist' register adopted and the use of 'seductive persuasion', newspapers were significantly influential in 'agenda-setting' around Truss' leadership. This combination was responsible for establishing it as a failure. Additionally, the print media was able to contribute to the continued depiction of women as 'non-leaders' inter alia through its portrayal of Jeremy Hunt as a more competent alternative and its 'personalisation' of Truss as the cause of her downfall (Langer 2007). The use of these techniques to create a highly negative narrative, in combination with extremely low public opinion, significantly challenged and undermined Truss' credibility as Prime Minister. This article, therefore, concludes that the role of newspapers was significant in establishing the narrative surrounding Truss and her premiership and hence may well have been a factor in her decision to resign.

This article hopes to further contribute to the understanding of the impact that the print media has on political agenda-setting. Although it is increasingly challenging to determine the impact of the media in its entirety on voter behaviour due to its increased 'fragmentation' into different forms, such as social media, online transpositions of the traditional newspapers and broadcast media (Wring and Ward 2020, 283), print media still has influence and is still emulated by radio and television (Wring and Ward 2020, 283). This article hopes to demonstrate further how the print media's 'soft-power' of narrative creation, particularly that of the tabloid press, is still prevalent in influencing the behaviour of the electorate. It therefore could also impact the behaviour of the political actors that are answerable to, and are legitimised by the electorate themselves (Gidengil and Everitt 2003).

Notably, this article does not present original statistical evidence. However, it establishes the basis and prominent themes that can be utilised to further investigate the frequency of gendered or sensationalised terms in the coverage of Truss' premiership. It is hoped that such an analysis will support the conclusions of this article.

This article also hopes to contribute to a greater understanding of how gender differentiated coverage or 'gendered mediation' can impact the narrative portrayed of female political actors, largely to their disadvantage. It is hoped that the evidence outlined results in heightened awareness of the negative impact of gendered coverage. This has the potential to encourage increased critical introspection by all media outlets into the impact of their coverage and the impact of increased gendered 'personalisation' (Langer 2007, 372) of female politicians, as well as increased critical awareness of the readership. With this, further progress will be made towards the goal of 'normalising' (Williams 2021, 399) the female politician as a permanent, valuable feature of the political order.

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