United States Foreign Policy and National Identity in the Twenty-First Century

Edited by
Kenneth Christie

UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The question of US national identity and its relationship to foreign policy has become ever more important following the end of the Cold War. Americans appear reluctant to think of themselves as belonging to an imperial power and yet at the same time their State acts as the global hegemon, using pre-emptive measures to secure national interests in neo-realist terms.

Featuring contributions from a wide range of distinguished and upcoming scholars, this edited volume sheds significant new light on the continuities and discontinuities in the relationship of US identity to foreign policy as it has changed from the post-Cold War period through the defining moment of 9/11 and into the twenty-first century. Starting with a discussion of notions of American identity in a historical sense, the contributors go on to examine the most central issues in US foreign policy and their impact on national identity including the end of the Cold War, the rise of neo-conservatism, ideas of US Empire and the influence of the 'War on Terror'. They question the nature of the ideology behind US foreign policy, trying to assess historical influences in the first place, motivations and causes, the nature of the ideology and some of the consequences. What is the role of the United States in the modern world and what does this mean for its changing identity are key questions the text seeks to answer.

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO MY BROTHERS,
COLIN AND DAVID

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FOREWORD

Anatol Lieven

The essays in this volume seek to interpret a fateful riddle of our time: the powerful, complex and often contradictory currents which combine to form US foreign and security policy. Understanding these is of immense importance to the world in general, and also to Americans. For American nationalism, due to its highly ideological character, is, if anything, even more myth haunted than most nationalisms.

As in most nationalisms, to Americans themselves these national myths are apt to appear as self-evident, unquestionable truths, while to much of the rest of the world, they may appear very questionable indeed. Above all, the alternation between realist and idealist impulses may appear to non-Americans (and of course, some Americans) as mere hypocrisy, while the influence of religious fundamentalism, especially on policy towards Israel, tends to attract a mixture of blank incomprehension and deep hostility.

During the first years of the Bush administration, one particular aspect of US nationalist mythology gained particular prominence, namely, the belief that the United States has a national mission – in the view of many, a divinely sanctioned mission – to lead the world towards freedom, democracy, progress and peace. This belief makes it very hard for Americans to rise to the challenge of Jonathan M. Hansen's chapter to show reciprocity to other nations – for largely unconscious but very powerful forces impel Americans to a belief that most other nations cannot be regarded as America's equals and so do not deserve reciprocity. To show such reciprocity to 'dictatorships' would indeed be a betrayal of America's identity and mission.

This faith in America's global leadership is an integral part of what has been called 'the American Creed', instilled in American children almost from the first day they join school, and often by their families and churches as well. The 'American Creed' in turn is the essential underpinning of American civic nationalism, which is shared in one form or another by the great majority of the population (or at least the white middle-class population) and also plays a key role in integrating new immigrants into the US polity.

The roots of this Creed are extremely old. Elements of them predate not only the founding of the United States but also the arrival of the first White settlers in

North America; for the New England Puritan concept of the new colonies as 'A City on a Hill' stems from the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English and Scottish Protestant conceptions of those countries as 'God's New Israel', setting a new standard not just of holiness but also of good, just and righteous government for mankind in general.

Missionary zeal and embattlement by surrounding Catholic states meant that this conception always had a warlike dimension. The Old Testament was liberally plundered for references and parallels whereby the enemies of Protestantism appeared in the guise of Amelekites and Philistines. In particular, the savage wars of the English and Scottish Protestants against the Catholic Irish prefigured the conquest, dispossession and partial extermination of the North American Indians.

Today, a mixture of religious fervour and racial affinity continues to play a significant part in US foreign policy, especially when it comes to support from US Protestant fundamentalists for Israel. Much more important, however, is the belief in America's democratic mission to the world, which is shared in principle by the great majority of the bipartisan – though they may differ greatly on how, and how far, to put it into effect.

The Bush administration in the years immediately following 9/11 was unusual in the degree to which leading elements of it thought that they could spread democracy by force of arms. Belief in America's role as the dominant force for human progress was however equally shared by the previous Clinton administration.

In this book, Roger Johnson examines how belief in US victory in the Cold War became a US national myth. This was then backed up by America's role in bringing the former Communist nations of Eastern Europe to free market democracy – a role in which, in the general US discourse, the European Union had no significant part. The East European combination of successful democratic transformation, successful free market economic reform and strongly pro-American foreign policies became a paradigm – with strong mythical underpinnings – that for several years the US establishment believed could simply be extended across much of the world. The rhetoric of the Bush administration concerning democracy and the Muslim world, and the publications of Democratic institutions like the Progressive Policy Institute, have both been based on this paradigm; one which unfortunately, as Francis Fukuyama and others have pointed out, is not necessarily of any relevance outside the specific circumstances of post-Communist Eastern Europe.

The US ideological commitment to spreading democracy as a short-term project is one of the things which distinguishes the American empire today from previous western empires like the British and French. These had a formal belief in the gradual spread of Western institutions, but in practice deferred these almost indefinitely in conquered territories while consolidating their own imperial power. In the United States today, the population needs to be assured that the goal is democracy if it is to support many overseas operations.

In practice, of course, US actions in this regard have always been far more flexible than US public rhetoric would suggest. Both in the Cold War and the War

on Terror (and indeed for many years before that in Central America and the Caribbean) US administrations have been willing to support extremely savage dictatorships if these have served US geopolitical interests or access to fossil fuels. Where the United States has intervened directly and met strong opposition or recalcitrant conditions on the ground – as in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan – it has been willing to settle for something very different from democracy. This has been true over the years of both Republican and Democratic administrations. It was after all President Franklin D. Roosevelt who coined the immortal phrase, 'He may be a sonofabitch but he's our sonofabitch' to justify US support for the tyrannical rule of Somoza in Nicaragua.

The democratic missionary impulse in the United States has also long co-existed with other impulses, usually grouped somewhat unfairly under the pejorative name of 'isolationism'. In large sections of the US population, especially in the South and the so-called Heartland, while there is strong commitment to the values of the American Creed, there is also deep scepticism as to whether many non-Americans are actually capable of following them and establishing true, American-style democracy. There is also fear that close involvement in the affairs of these inferior peoples may lead America itself to be corrupted.

In the past, these attitudes were directed above all at 'decadent' and 'autocratic' Europe. Today, they focus on the question of whether the United States should pull out of Iraq and other places and leave the natives to kill each other if they wish to. For obvious reasons, such views are generally extremely unpopular in the US policy elites and media, and are only politically represented in their full form by relatively marginal politicians like Pat Buchanan. However, they have considerable resonance in popular culture, as expressed by figures like country singer Merle Haggard in his 2006 song 'America First'.

This attitude is closely linked to the belief that America represents not values which can be adopted by the whole of mankind, but a specific civilization of its own. In the past, such beliefs had strong racist connotations. Today, these are veiled, but in a milder form the tradition continues in the famous view of Samuel Huntington that the world is divided into different and mutually exclusive civilizations, and in the growing hostility of many Americans to mass immigration, especially from Latin America – an issue analysed by Carl Pedersen in his chapter. Such attitudes are strongly linked to scepticism concerning America's ability to spread democracy to other cultures – something that now distinguishes Huntington clearly from his erstwhile neo-conservative allies.

It should be noted, however, that even most conservative White Americans are no longer racially exclusionary in the old sense of emphasizing colour of skin as an absolute social and sexual dividing line and obstacle to political power. The past 50 years have seen great progress in that respect, with the US armed forces – an institution with immense prestige among conservative White Americans – taking the lead. More recently, certain of the conservative evangelical churches have also begun publicly to repent of their past racism and commit themselves to racial equality and even intermarriage.

As witnessed by the careers of Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice, being Black is certainly no longer a bar to reaching very high office. If Barack Obama is rejected by middle America in his bid for the presidency in 2008, it will be because of doubts as to his culture and patriotism stemming from his background and youthful behaviour and attitudes, not because of his race as such.

This is a critically important distinction. Over the past half century, America has gone from being a herrenvolk (master race) democracy, in which all power and rights were reserved for Whites, to what might be called a civilizational empire, in the footsteps of China, Rome and (in its own estimation at least) the Soviet Union. That is to say, people of any race and ethnicity can join the imperial nation and enter the imperial elites – but only as long as they accept unconditionally the imperial culture and official religion.

In the United States, the culture to which aspiring immigrants are expected to assimilate themselves is that of the middle classes. These are still chiefly, though not exclusively White, and strongly marked by their long Protestant tradition. Just as they eventually accepted Catholics and Jews, so today there is acceptance of Hindus and Buddhists – though for obvious reasons, distrust of Muslims. However, there is still an expectation that people will be God fearing in some broader sense, hard working, law abiding, patriotic and above all perhaps English speaking. Across much of the country, it is also a great help if you like country music, or can pretend to do so. Recent Latino immigrants are seen to fail on a number of counts. Above all, their sheer numbers seem to present a threat to the continued dominance of the English language, middle-class values and even the American Creed.

In other words, greater racial tolerance does not necessarily indicate greater cultural tolerance. Indeed, there may even be an inverse relationship. More than 50 years ago, the great social and cultural analyst Max Lerner remarked that as Americans became more willing to accept that people of other racial and cultural origins *could* become Americans, so they became more uncomprehending and angry when they refused to do so, or failed to do so. In a crude form, such attitudes are expressed in phrases like 'the ragheads don't deserve our boys dying for their freedom' and 'let's just nuke 'em and go home'.

Caught between these conflicting pressures, it sometimes appears surprising that the United States has a foreign policy at all. This is all the more so because of the power of the US Congress, and especially the Senate, to influence US actions through the imposition of sanctions, the veto of diplomatic links, the mandating of spending programmes and the acceptance or rejection of treaties. This power is without parallel among the developed democracies, both because of the constitutional rights of Congress and the ability of individual senators to defy their own president's and party's wishes. These senators and congressmen in turn are influenced by myriad local, regional and national lobbies and interest groups, some of which – like most notoriously the Israel lobby – may have aims which run flatly counter not only to US national interests but to the official policy of successive administrations.

Eppur se muove: yet it does move. Or at least it has done so up to now. The immense power of the United States gives it a great capacity to recover even from such disasters as Vietnam and Iraq, or at least to deter enemies from exploiting US defeats. Moreover, the influence of the US capitalist classes on US politics and government, though negative in many ways, does often help to maintain a degree of pragmatism and restraint towards those countries in which US capital has a major stake. This can be seen most notably in the cautious policies of successive US administrations towards China, and the contrast between US–China policy and those formulated towards Russia, where US capital has far smaller interests.

The influence of the American Creed, though it cannot save the United States from many crimes and blunders, does create certain constraints on the grossest forms of aggression and oppression, by the United States itself if not by US allies. Abu Ghraib occurred, but like My Lai it was also eventually exposed and investigated – even if none of the senior officers or officials responsible paid any kind of price for it.

Finally, and most strikingly in terms of previous historical patterns, the US uniformed military and intelligence communities themselves have emerged as a critically important force for moderation and avoidance of war. It was notoriously civilian political officials who had evaded military service, like Dick Cheney and Paul Wolfowitz, and not the US military, which pushed for the invasion of Iraq, and a former general, Colin Powell, who was the strongest administration voice for caution.

The US high command requires a certain degree of international tension to justify the size of military spending, but it is not pushing for major war. Apart from anything else, Iraq and Vietnam has brought an acute realization that many such operations are simply unsustainable with a volunteer army, since recruitment will dry up – and if there is one idea that the military joins the politicians and society in detesting, it is the thought of a return to conscription and an army stuffed with demoralized, disaffected draftees. In other words, despite strong militarist influences in American culture, the United States today is not Germany or France in 1914, with masses of ordinary people willing actually to fight.

At least, this will be true unless, God forbid, the United States suffers another really devastating terrorist attack. Should this occur, then all bets will be off. Nonetheless, just as after 9/11, the US response will be determined not just by the scale and nature of the attack itself, nor by the character of the administration in power, but also by deep and ancient patterns in US political culture and national identity. It is to the elucidation of these that this book is dedicated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Kenneth Christie

It is a difficult task to write an introduction for such a fine group of papers as are gathered in this collection, particularly following the foreword by the distinguished scholar Anatol Lieven. In this instance, however, some background is worth mentioning because it in turn led to the volume and provided the intellectual context from which it emerged.

Between November 9th and 11th, 2006, the Rothermere American Institute (RAI), based in Oxford University, hosted its annual conference. The theme for that year's conference was 'US national identity in the twenty-first century'. This meeting was the latest in what has become an annual pilgrimage for scholars interested in the workings of the United States. I have now attended three of these and there is a sharp and well-defined interest in the topics from all sorts of disciplines represented.

A proliferation of sub-themes were discussed under the general rubric of identity including the construction of identity, globalization, race, foreign policy, immigration and the War on Terror among many others. It was fascinating to see a diverse group of historians, political scientists, sociologists and literary academics present their work drawing on different perspectives. This in essence is what makes the RAI conference work; a sense of interdisciplinarity. The papers tend to paint across broad canvas while paying individual attention to detail.

Why it's important?

The question of US national identity and its relationship to foreign policy has become ever more important following the end of the Cold War. Americans appear reluctant to think of themselves as belonging to an imperial power and yet at the same time their state acts as the global hegemony, using pre-emptive measures to secure national interests. Such reluctance (on the public's part) is particularly so when the connotations of empire and imperialism are generally construed as negative influences with a history of misdeeds and atrocities. Americans have long seen themselves as unwilling to become involved even though the record of their government's actions differs with this assessment. It is clear today that the United States has used instruments of foreign policy as a tool

to secure national interests in realist terms while defining such interests as ideal-ist in nature (the spread of freedom and democracy, for instance).

The promulgation of democracy and freedom (or even wars on specific threats) is not a new theme in American foreign policy, or as part and parcel of US iden-tity. Woodrow Wilson, the US president, first put them into a practical bent after the First World War, but there is a fairly long continuity made explicit from the Presidency of Jimmy Carter in the 1970s through the Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush Presidencies continuing through that of President Clinton to George W. Bush. To some extent, the United States has seen itself as an 'exceptional' nation not bound by the rules of normal nation-states, and this has provided a cer-tain justification for its actions. What is new, in its latest incarnation, is the extent of the missionary zeal in promoting it, coupled with the visceral military power to enforce it. The United States has been viewed as a hegemonic power which has resorted to imperial strategy to achieve its ends, and that is the view of support-ers as well as critics. As Hans Kohn pointed out in the 1950s, 'American national identity has been based in the belief that the nations binding principles are rooted in qualities and capacities shared by all people everywhere'.[1] Several neo-conservatives reinforced this missionary framework in the late 1990s arguing that 'the US must discourage advanced industrial nations from challenging our leader-ship or even aspiring to a larger regional or global role'.[2] However, the United States does not like to think of itself as 'imperialist', a negative, pejorative term in a world where self-determination is an accepted international norm. It holds this role in a state of ambiguity and confusion.[3] In part, the text will look at the ideol-ogy and rationale for this and the problem of being a 'reluctant' imperial power.

As such this text is aiming to analyse the dilemmas, ambiguities and identity crises that the United States faces in the post-Cold War period and, in particular, how this identity relates to the nature of foreign policy. It questions the nature of the ideology behind US foreign policy, trying to assess historical influences in the first place, motivations and causes, the nature of the ideology and some of the consequences. And for this purpose we divide the text into three sections: a sec-tion on history and identity, a section on motivations and ideology and lastly a section on consequences.

These debates and themes naturally lend themselves to controversy but the overall themes will reflect the connections between policy and identity and the conflicts which have developed out of these relationships. Identity is in a sense a changing and dynamic concept as we move into an increasingly globalized world.

In the first chapter, Roger Johnson discusses the impact of the Cold War in terms of identity and foreign policy drawing on the importance of victory. Victories hold a unique position in national myth and memory as symbols of great achievement by which to measure the present and set goals for the future. Narratives of victory can be employed through rhetoric, representation or com-memoration as reassurance of future triumphs, or as an appeal to identity – to the virtues and values that triumphed in the past. Johnson considers the Cold War victory in these terms, how it has followed this general pattern of influence

on policy and identity and the relationship between them, and how it has been an exception, unique amongst American victories, in the reactions it has garnered. Such distinctions have their root in the unprecedented nature of the conflict: during it, the notion of victory was inseparable for many from nuclear war, while its actual lack of military resolution perhaps contributed to uneasiness amongst the responses to its final outcome. Such uneasiness may be seen in the debates of the time over America's future role in the world, its current state and, indeed, over its past. Such debates, as well as the indirect and uncertain cultural responses to the victory, can be interpreted in terms of American identity in flux.

Carl Pedersen on the other hand draws upon current demographic trends to illustrate how the United States will approach the status of becoming a majority–minority nation by the middle of the twenty-first century and the effect on its identity. This is a trend that has prompted fears of a Latinization of the United States. The chapter examines the debate over US identity in the twenty-first century drawing on the nativist and cosmopolitan discourses of the twentieth century. Finally, it assesses which of these discourses will emerge as the dominant stream for the construction of an American identity in a majority–minority nation.

In section 2 we concentrate on the motivations and ideological factors behind the identity. Inderjeet Parmar, for instance, focuses on the claims that the US Foreign Policy Establishment has come under the influence of radical neo-conservatives, particularly since 9/11, which accounts for the unilateralist, aggressive and militarist character of US policies since then. This is far from the case as Parmar argues. He first argues that a detailed study of two major think-tanks and policy-related organizations – the AEI and the PNAC – in conjunction with a detailed survey of the polity-centred US foreign policy elite, shows that the closer an organization is to the upper tier of foreign policy-making, the more like the old-line traditional WASP-dominated Establishment its leadership and membership look and second, that the much more significant development lies in the fact of the ascendancy of an influential new broad *Conservative* Establishment that has displaced the Liberal Establishment and, indeed, ratcheted to the Right the leadership of the Democratic Party.

Within the two points made above, this chapter shows that there have been important shifts in identity, membership and leadership in the US foreign policy Establishment, that is, there are many more non-WASP elements with religious affiliations, educational backgrounds and region of birth differences from the traditional Establishment. The shifts, though significant, are not revolutionary, and hardly at all felt at the very top of the Establishment, that is, in the White House and Congressional leadership. It is argued that the neo-cons were seen to have 'hijacked' the Bush administration – particularly through the influence of the PNAC – for four reasons: first, their media presence drew attention to them out of all proportion to their policy influence; second, their bellicose message was attractive to the media in the wake of 9/11; third, they served a purpose for the

Bush administration at a specific time and could be jettisoned if things went wrong (plausible deniability); finally, neo-cons represent a kind of pornography of the liberals, a lightning rod for criticism and rejection of the broader conservative movement of which neo-cons are the most vocal representatives. The conclusion is that because of significant changes in the social composition, identity and attitudes of the US foreign policy Establishment, and their impacts on the political opposition, any new administration's room for manoeuvre is severely limited; the direction of US foreign policy is now set for several years to come.

Following this Caitlin Stewart makes the effort to show the linkages between religious lobbies in the United States, a topic which has increasingly had important implications for identity. The chapter explores the relationship between US evangelical Protestantism and foreign policy in its form and identity. Reticent through much of American history to actively participate in politics, by the late 1970s evangelical fundamentalist Protestants command one of the most influential political blocs in the Republican Party. Their growing numbers and influence have challenged, and defeated, the hegemony of liberal mainstream Protestantism in American society. While foreign policy issues are not the only concern this group has, the way the modern nation of Israel fits into their religious eschatology, or a belief in the end of days, has become an issue of paramount importance. Powerful political lobbying efforts, the enormous sums of money donated to Israel, and the hard-right political stance these Americans take regarding the Middle East have significantly changed the relationship between religion and foreign policy in the United States. In so doing, evangelicals have redefined the meaning of patriotism itself. Israel often equals America as the destinies of the two nations are explicitly linked together.

In a final chapter in this section, Ed Lock focuses on the relationship between US identity and security policy and argues that the tension between universalism and nationalism within US identity encourages the adoption of security policies that are characterized by the tension between multilateralism and unilateralism.

Lock discusses the themes of universalism and nationalism within conceptions of US identity, focusing on representations regarding the unique origin and character of the United States and those which emphasize the universalism of the values that underpin US identity. He then shows how these understandings of US identity inform two quite different visions of the nature of the international security environment, one in which international society and order are both possible and desirable and one in which anarchy and insecurity prevail. Finally, he illustrates how these understandings of the international security environment are consistent, respectively, with multilateralist and unilateralist security policies.

In the final section which deals with some of the consequences, we examine the notions of empire and the US role in the world. To begin with, Jason G. Ralph's chapter assesses US policy on two issues of international law in the context of Paul Kahn's statement 2005 that the United States is the quintessential

modern state in an increasingly post-modern world. It first looked at US opposition to the International Criminal Court and found that the Bush administration's insistence that accountability for universal crimes be implemented at the level of the state, rather than supranational court, matched Kahn's statement. It also examined the debate on the Alien Tort Claims Act which allows US courts to apply customary international human rights law. Opposition to this Act is strong, although the Supreme Court's recent decision in *Sosa* v. *Alvarez-Machain* demonstrates that if the United States is a modern state that resists post-modern experiments in global governance (such as the International Criminal Court), it maintains a universal outlook and a willingness to apply universal law.

Second, Binoy Kampmark examines the concept of the United States as an empire. The word is out: the United States is an empire, he declares. Numerous publications from across the political spectrum label it as such, disagreeing merely on its effects, and the moral or political nature of it. The influence of the British Empire has been pertinent in this regard. How the British Empire is viewed in US intellectual and policy debate is an important aspect of American imperial policy in this century. But the external dimension is also important to this process. Crucial here is how the Anglophones – intellectuals from outside America but with a deep interest in it – have guided this process. 'These Americans,' noted Harold McMillan as Minister at Allied Headquarters in North Africa, 'represent the new Roman Empire and we Britons, like the Greeks of old, must teach them how to make it go'. The chapter deals with the Niall Ferguson thesis (discussed in *Empire* and *Colossus*) as its main theme: how American empire is good for the world, but how Empire is flawed, and how it has been received in US cultural and political circles.

And last, Jonathan Hansen takes up a question posed by historian William Appleman Williams some 25 years ago in his book *Empire as a Way of Life* (Oxford, 1980): 'Is the idea and reality of America possible without empire?' On the face of it, this may appear to be an odd question. Surely, it is possible to make the case for the *idea* of a non-imperial United States if not for the real thing. Contemporary criticisms of US imperialism take for granted the idea: a non-imperial United States would consume only its share of global resources, would respect the sovereignty and popular will of other nations, and would pursue multilateral solutions to international problems. If US imperialism is inherent in the logic of liberal political economy, as Williams argues, then solutions to imperialism will have to confront the logic head on, either by renouncing liberalism, as Williams himself did, or by identifying resources dormant in liberalism capable of overcoming its harmful effects.

Jonathan Hansen suggests that a solution to US imperialism lies not in retreat from liberalism but in the liberal principle of reciprocity. By reciprocity, I mean a moral stance whereby individuals and groups regard Others not as means to their own ends but as ends in themselves, whereby social and political differences are valued for the self-reflection they inspire rather than arrayed hierarchically and

whereby political, economic and cultural exchange are genuinely two-directional. In this chapter, he briefly sketches Williams' critique of US imperialism which in effect charges US policy-makers with a failure of reciprocity.

The debate between and within academic circles over the shape of US foreign policy and its relationship to identity looks set to continue in the twenty-first century as Americans go to the polls to elect a new President in 2008. It is hoped that these essays will interest and inform people who study and want to understand the relationship between identity and foreign policy in this nation-state.

Section 1

HISTORY AND IDENTITY IN US FOREIGN POLICY

1

VICTORY AND IDENTITY

The end of the Cold War in American imagination

Roger Johnson

Introduction

Where the end of the Cold War has been described and understood as an American victory, it is often tied to concepts of American identity. The idea of victory as a national achievement or goal can inform ideas of national purpose and character and can be expressed to reinforce or define a national identity. The notion of a Cold War victory, even with its peculiar circumstances and contexts, is no exception. The end of the Cold War, its roots, and its consequences have received much scholarly attention since its occurrence. The effect of the extended global confrontation on American identity culture and discourse during its time has also been the subject of historical interest. The significance of its end in these terms, however, and its incorporation into meaningful American narratives or myths has yet to be fully examined. This chapter will explore how perceptions of a Cold War victory have related to the construction and expression of American identity. While such perceptions clearly belong to the last years of the twentieth century, and these first years of the twenty-first, it will also be necessary to look at how victory was understood in advance of its occurrence. First, however, some discussion is needed of what we mean by American victory and how it can relate to national identity.

Victory and identity

As an event of foreign policy, martial victory has repeatedly and definitively affected the shape and capacity of the American nation. As a concept and symbol, victory has also played a role in the construction and expression of American national identity, where identity is understood to be shaped by a collective purpose, defined by shared historic ideals and examples, and in response to the outside world. A conceptual or symbolic victory refers not to the invented or imagined triumph, but to the response in national culture to the pursuit or achievement of a successful military foreign policy. In the culture of the United States, the idea of victory has contributed significantly to national definition. This

is not to say the idea of American victory is exceptional, merely that within American national identity in relation to foreign policy, victory holds an important symbolic role. Broadly speaking, this role is enacted in three sequential stages: in victory's anticipation, in the immediate response to its achievement, and in its mythic recollections. During wartime, when national unity is most forcefully demanded and keenly felt, victory is presented by national leaders as a vital common purpose and a measure of identity. When declaring war on Japan, Franklin Roosevelt's assurance that the "American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory" was more than a statement of policy.[1] It was an expression of the virtue of American identity and the consequent inevitability of triumph. If the pursuit of victory is symbolically tied to the attributes of national identity, then the achievement of victory is the ultimate affirmation of that identity. However, while such an affirmation may be cause for celebration, the realization of victory also heralds change, not only in the transition from war to peace but also in the introduction of new challenges, responsibilities, and opportunities. The national debates that so frequently follow successful American wars are in response to new realities but are often framed in terms of a consistent and instructive identity. Victory can thus represent a catalyst for the redefinition of national purpose and the identity which guides it.

Finally, and most enduringly, victory informs American identity through its recollection in the broad, amorphous habits of national memory. "Remembering the past," as David Lowenthal contends, "is crucial for our sense of identity: to know what we were confirms that we are."[2] This is as applicable to the collective memory as it is to the personal, as far as collective "remembering" is understood as only an analogy to the physical and psychological process. It is comparable in that its "creative construction" is in response to or "conversation" with the present,[3] that it is formed through meaningful narrative sequences[4] and, indeed, that its activity provides a basis for self-perception. Collective memory, in this case American national memory, is constructed from mythic narratives and symbols of the past, enacted through rhetoric, cultural representation and ritual, and primarily concerned with understanding the present and anticipating the future through a shared identity. It is subject to contest and change. Victories of the past are easily incorporated into such myths, whether demonstrating in hindsight the exceptional, even destined nature of American progress or providing example for current and future challenges.

The notion of victory has a potentially multivalent relationship to the construction of national identity. Through its dramatic and affirmative aspect, it can be used to bind and reinforce a shared identity, while its transitory conclusiveness may also disrupt and challenge ideas of shared purpose. Without making too great assumptions about how consistently other American victories have been pursued, received, and remembered, the idea of victory in the Cold War has been distinct in its manifestation in each of its three stages and significantly problematic, especially considering the continued argument over whether there was a victory that America could claim or even that there was a war. To the broad extent

that the Cold War is understood in America as a single, consistent, militarized confrontation between enemies, the defeat of one side construes a victory for the other. For the sake of clarity, if not simplicity, I will refer to the years 1989–91, during which the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union collapsed, as the period of Cold War victory. In advance of these events, victory was largely unanticipated and talk of it was controversial. On its occurrence, it was received uncertainly and as an historic event it has yet to acquire an unambiguous and resolute position in American memory. This is not to say that the idea of a Cold War victory holds no significance in the construction of American identities, current and past, rather that attempts to use it to bind such constructions have been problematic and are revealing of the contestations and variations of American national identity.

Anticipating victory

Tom Englehardt has described the long established "victory culture" of American discourse, a persistent collection of narratives which inform Americans of their aptitude for and familiarity with triumph. As he sees it, this culture, "hundreds of years in the making," is centered on "the American war story," an archetypal narrative which justifies American war as necessary and reactive, while distancing its audience from the violence through the assurance of victory.[5] His argument is that, while this story was adapted most successfully to describe US involvement in World War II, it was fundamentally altered, even ended, by the atomic victory over Japan and the ensuing decades of Cold War with the Soviet Union. Englehardt's declining victory culture is traced primarily in forms of entertainment – films, television, comic books, and even the games and toys of children – but the morphing, newly contested understanding of martial triumph is also apparent in the rhetoric and language of national leadership during the Cold War, where it is explicitly tied to ideas of national purpose and identity.

The Cold War saw a dramatic new meaning to the concept of victory. The possession of nuclear weapons by the United States and the Soviet Union as well as the global reach of their conventional power determined a complex web of indirect and hypothetical battles which made the prospect of victory at best cloudy and at worst terrifying. Traditional martial concepts and language were revised as the Department of War became the Department of Defense, security became the primary goal over triumph, and containment over conquest. The rhetoric of victory, such a common feature of previous times of war, took on new aspects and generated new responses. Rather than just a call for a common cause, it was taken up as a means of challenging and defying the orthodox policy consensus of containment and deterrence and provoked mistrust and fear as much as it inspired perseverance. This contestation was defined along political lines as the conservative right employed the rhetoric of victory to attack policies of restraint, arms control, negotiation, and détente. Notable attacks on the Truman Administration came from Douglas MacArthur, removed from Korea, who asserted to his supporters in Congress that "in war, there is no substitute for victory,"[6] and from Senator Joseph

McCarthy, whose 1951 polemic on the policies of Dean Acheson and George Marshall was entitled *America's Retreat From Victory*. His pursuit of the "conspiracy … to diminish the United States in world affairs, to weaken us militarily, to confuse our spirit with talk of surrender in the Far East and to impair our will to resist evil," eventually led to his disgrace in national politics, at least outside of the camps of the right wing, and distinctly nationalist, anticommunism.[7]

The following decade saw the conservative Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater present his vision for America in similar challenging terms, titling his manifesto, *Why Not Victory?* Goldwater did not go so far as McCarthy's implication that his opponents' lack of commitment to victory was an indication of treason, of anti-Americanism, but there was a suggestion in his argument that the policies and strategies of the liberals in government were essentially un-American. McCarthy's target was George Marshall. In the eponymously titled chapter of his book, Goldwater focused on Senator William Fulbright. Fulbright had rejected the idea of victory in the Cold War, believing that such a course would cause a "savage dichotomy between the Communist and Western world" and had "led to MacArthur's revolt and to McCarthyism" at home.[8] Goldwater had demanded an official declaration of a policy of victory in the "Communist War," which Fulbright dismissed as "a stirring term with a romantic ring." Goldwater found such a response "astounding":

> I doubt if any United States Senator or government official – ever before in the history of our Republic – has ever been called upon to make a *case for victory* in a conflict where everything that the United States stands for today – or ever stood for in the past – is at stake.[9]

The would-be president was clear that his insistence on victory was in line with American history and in defense of the American cause. Fulbright, whom he characterized as a dreamy, utopian internationalist, was at odds with American identity.

However, while Goldwater's challenge certainly resonated significantly with some Americans, his campaign for victory and his claim on American identity failed to win him the presidency. Despite his insistence that his strategy was designed to prevent a nuclear war, the concept of pushing for victory was too closely (and too easily) associated with military triumph. Goldwater was perceived and portrayed by his opponents as a dangerous extremist who would commit the world to nuclear destruction. More than that, his politics were explicitly linked by some, including Martin Luther King and Pat Brown, to those of Nazi Germany, undermining his credentials as a voice of true Americanism.[10] Planning his 1980 presidential bid, Ronald Reagan echoed his forerunner in his straightforward vision of Cold War strategy: "we win and they lose."[11] This again caused concern and recrimination from those who feared nuclear triumphalism despite Reagan's repeated assurance that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought"[12] and unallayed in the early years of his administration by the colossal weapons build-up and the appearance that

America was now making plans to fight and win a nuclear war. Consternation over such plans found no ease in a Defense spokesman's reassurance that "if there are enough shovels to go around, everybody's going to make it."[13]

By the time of Reagan's administration the idea of American victory had developed a new urgency following the military defeat in Vietnam. Previous incidents of defeat in American history had become incorporated into larger narratives as "mobilizing preludes to victory,"[14] such as the Alamo or Pearl Harbor, or in the case of the former Confederacy, as the basis for a separate regional identity. The withdrawal from and loss of the long, divisive and destructive war in Vietnam, however, had challenged American identity through its upheaval of traditional assumptions about American victory – its inevitability and its deservedness. In Hollywood cinema, where westerns and war movies had been perhaps the primary articulations of traditional victory narratives in America, the experience of the war dramatically altered such popular mythic expressions. John Wayne's *The Green Berets* (1968) proved the only exception to the genre of Vietnam films in which victory was not the experience, or even in many cases the purpose, of the soldiers they depicted – a blunt contrast to the war movies that had filled American cinema screens during and after World War II. As the principal military experience of the Cold War, Vietnam provided no assurance of traditional victory to assuage the bleak uncertainty of mutually assured destruction. This had a profound and well-explored effect on American identity, whether expressed in the controversially untriumphal Vietnam Veterans' Memorial or in the Reagan Administration's self-conscious use of military force – restrained and cautious, as in Lebanon, or targeted and celebratory, as in Grenada.

Responding to victory

The general lack of belief in victory during the Cold War, where identity was framed not around a unified purpose of triumph but around an acceptance of the Cold War's, or at least the Soviet Union's perpetuity, led to surprise and uncertainty upon the realization of victory. Few Americans, not least amongst the leadership, had expected an end so peaceful and so total until it was upon them. Not only did victory force a re-evaluation of national purpose but it also provoked a reassessment of assumptions about the conflict as a whole and how it had defined America. The period of victory, from the end of Reagan's presidency to the collapse of the Soviet Union in late 1991, echoed with these questions as the leaders, experts, and commentators of the nation tried to answer them. A product of these debates, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's glossy report of 1992, *Changing Our Ways*, reflected on the peculiarities of the Cold War's end, which "not one member" had foreseen:

> And yet ours is a paradoxical victory. There has been no Victory-over-Communism day, no confetti, no strangers kissing in the street. Indeed, it has been a long time since America has been so uneasy about itself

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and so uncertain of where to go next. As Americans look abroad, our euphoria over the crumbling Berlin wall has given way to the realization of how complex the challenges ahead will be.[15]

The conflict ended with a series of strange, sporadic occurrences in which US military had no involvement, defeating no armies and liberating no cities. There was no negotiation of surrender, nor any demobilization to prompt victory parades for returning troops. Americans had no means of participating in the victory and could only observe its events through their televisions and the print media. The rapid and successive revolutions of Eastern Europe provided a series of images, most notably of the Berlin Wall overwhelmed and redundant in November 1989, through which Americans could vicariously celebrate a euphoric victory which had as yet brought no change to their situation. Though such results could be interpreted as American achievements, they could only be experienced as foreign events and, however joyous their reception, they would not provide a framework for a celebration or resolution of American identity. In early 1990, the historian Daniel Boorstin suggested a historical model for American reactions to revolutions abroad that describes a process of euphoria morphing into revulsion. His message was one of caution against over-optimism, criticizing "our naïve faith that people everywhere will behave like Americans" and stressing the foreign un-American nature of the ongoing events.[16]

The streets of Eastern Europe were not the only stage on which Americans could view the unfolding victory. The world stage also drew attention, as the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union traveled and met around the globe, advancing a thaw in hostilities, both symbolic and real. Gorbachev's visit to Washington, DC, in 1987 and Reagan's to Moscow in 1988 were profound signifiers of the changing relations between the two leaders' nations, and the product of the Moscow Summit, the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty, was evidence of that change. While in Moscow, Reagan had the opportunity to speak to the students of Moscow State University and used it to evangelize on the tenets of the American nation and its character. He emphasized the vibrancy and success of the United States and that the roots of this lay in the commitment to freedom that Americans maintained, guided by their history and by their religion. Reagan promoted American identity to the young Soviets and offered it to them, even merging it with a Soviet identity by stressing the familial links of Slavic-Americans, describing America's technological advances in terms of universal revolution and citing *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* in the same breath as Dostoyevsky, Pasternak, and Russian folk songs. Reagan avowed a nontriumphal, reconciliatory America: "Americans seek always to make friends of old antagonists."[17]

Similarly, at the Malta Summit the following year, George H. W. Bush used language of reconciliation, again expressed in terms of the American experience. Bush defined the US–Soviet conflict in terms of the American Civil War, consistently evoking the words of Lincoln and implying a brotherhood between the previously implacable foes as they sat at the peace table. This emphasized the

idea of a war ending with reunion and a common future; however, it also hinted at an American victory over an outdated, immoral, and incompatible system. Moreover, Bush's rhetoric projected "a belief that international peace and stability required the spread of American values and continued American strength and that American experience could explain change elsewhere in the world and offer a model for its future stabilization."[18] With the end in sight, American leaders avoided overt claims of victory, but by framing talk of peace and reconciliation in terms of American values and American myths, they implied a triumph of American identity.

Even while presidential rhetoric heralded peace, however, the Cold War still bound perceptions and prevented any immediate certainty of a conclusive victory. Summits such as those at Malta or Moscow were traditional parts of the Cold War framework, and Bush was not the first president to speak of peace and coexistence. Even as Soviet satellites broke away and the Red Army withdrew from Afghanistan, some within the Bush administration maintained a suspicion of Gorbachev and his reforms, either that they were insincere or that they would fail and that normal conditions would return. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney berated the optimists in Congress who would "give away their overcoats on the first sunny day in January,"[19] while his department in the first months of the administration drew up a long-term strategy review which projected over the next 8 years the need to counter an aggressive and expansive Soviet Union. This document prompted the criticism that the Pentagon was "rudderless" and suffering "an identity crisis."[20] Earlier, conservative groups and commentators had given dramatically skeptical responses to events which in retrospect would be seen as presaging victory. Accusations of appeasement were leveled at Reagan following his acceptance of Oscar Arias' peace plan for Nicaragua ("the Brezhnev Doctrine wins," editorialized by the *Wall Street Journal*) and after his signing of the INF treaty, where the president was characterized as Chamberlain to Gorbachev's Hitler and labeled "a useful idiot for Soviet propaganda" by Richard Viguerie.[21] The question of whether America had won a victory was a point of division at the 1990 Conservative Political Action Conference, where Howard Phillips warned that "our leaders are intoxicated with premature self-congratulation which has clouded their judgment and blinded their eyes to ominous reality ."[22]

This skepticism, testament to the perseverance of the idea of the Soviet Union as an awesome, malevolent, and permanent threat, was superseded by the voices that recognized or predicted the end of the Cold War and eventually lost any hold. Amongst these other voices, however, there was a striking lack of consensus – not only relating to the meaning of these external events but also to what could subsequentially be understood about America's Cold War experience and, vitally, to the question of where America should now go. Often the reaction to victory from this broad range of academics, politicians, policy experts, and journalists was expressed in the terms of American identity. It was understood that the moment was significant, a turning point which allowed or even necessitated the reassessment of national identity as defined by national achievement and

purpose, or in a more abstract sense, national history and destiny. The most celebrated, derided, and cited of this discourse was Francis Fukuyama's article "The End of History," published in the *National Interest* in 1989. An argument certain of the unfolding "triumph of the West, of the Western *idea*," which placed it firmly at the crowning point of a historical narrative of progress, at the pinnacle of "mankind's ideological evolution," and the entry point into a new phase of "post-historical consciousness," Fukuyama's thesis resonated amongst Americans eager to interpret events as a demonstration of America's exceptional role in the world and in history.[23]

Other historical theories took hold which ordained America's decline rather than its progress or triumph. The pull of this idea was demonstrated by the surprising success of Paul Kennedy's tome, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, which charted the inevitable decline of empires, America's included, through overexpansion. The collapse of the United States' nemesis acted here as a prefiguration of Americas' own future. Whether determinist or speculative, and whether triumphal or wary, the recognition of the urgent historical significance of the moment prompted observers to seek to redefine America's future around concepts of the nation's traditional role and purpose. It was on the right where arguments were most commonly framed in terms of a guiding national purpose and a distinct, traditional national identity and the debates within the 1990 issues of *The National Interest* reflected this focus. Arguing for a "new nationalism" that "puts America first" and "second and third as well," Pat Buchanan saw that it was in America's best interest and best tradition to disentangle itself from the world, maintaining its own hemisphere through a strong navy while withdrawing all its troops from their far-flung outposts and breaking its ties to collective security. Buchanan emphasized that his isolationist proposals were consistent with both the historical ideals of America, citing the cautions of Adams and Washington, and with the heart of the nation, demanding that the United States have no purpose for which Americans would not fight and die.[24]

Buchanan was in explicit opposition to more interventionist, internationalist, "democratist" conservatives, whose ideas were also claimed to be in harmony with American identity. Robert Bartley rejected neoisolationism, claiming it to be "out of step with history" and that it would make a casualty of the American spirit. Instead, the United States should "be true to its historic principles" of free and open markets and world leadership.[25] Ben Wattenberg used distinctly exceptionalist language in his advocacy of cultural imperialism and democracy promotion which he clumsily, if aptly, titled "neo-manifest destinarianism." Here, Wattenberg called upon the American "sense of mission" and "revolutionary spirit" to actively and shamelessly promote national values and systems around the world.[26] Charles Krauthammer was more realist about the challenges that America faced and more nuanced in his understanding of American ideological traditions but still saw value in visionary goals, suggesting to his nation "that we go all the way and stop at nothing short of universal dominion."[27] In proposing new foreign policy directions for the United States, these experts drew on

American identity as found in history, taking satisfaction and lessons from the newly apparent success of American conduct of the Cold War and searching beyond that for a broader consistency of purpose.

It is often said that identity is constructed around the reflection of some defining other, in terms of nations, an enemy who determines amongst a people a united purpose and common reference point for self-perception. The abandoned hostility and then collapse of the Soviet Union, "the perfect ideological enemy for Americans," represent in this way a loss of an essential contributing factor to American national identity. "We are doing something really terrible to you – we are depriving you of an enemy," warned Georgiy Arbatov in 1987, perhaps overlooking the parallel danger, ultimately fatal, to his own Soviet identity.[28] The consequences of this loss can be seen not only in the foreign policy debates of the time, as the quest for a purpose conflated with the identification of possible threats, finding solutions in such figures as Saddam Hussein, but also in the more inward focus on the fractured domestic politics of the time. There was little reconciliation between left and right as the dividing yardstick of the Cold War receded. Rather, gloating over the other's new redundancy went in hand with the commitment to continued opposition over internal issues. Writing in the *National Review* in 1990, Tom Bethell conflated American liberalism with defunct Soviet ideology and declared the new conservative agenda: "With socialism on the ropes abroad, it is now time to focus on socialism at home."[29] Meanwhile, in the epilogue to his polemical critique of anticommunism which described it as racist and imperialist and the Cold War as a "fraudulent deception," Joel Kovel warned that even after its end "celebration would be premature" due to the continuing "messianic jingoism" of "post-communist anti-communism."[30] "Balkanization" into "single-issue republics" was apparent at each end of the political spectrum.[31] Broad coalitions once defined around the Cold War factionalized and issues which centered on the moral character of America emerged in the foreground. The environment, sexuality, abortion, and religion inspired ever more divisive arguments understood under the militarized umbrella title of the "culture wars." Flag desecration and the teaching of history in schools also reemerged as issues to be debated in Congress and the media as Buchanan's "new nationalism" sought to firmly establish the symbols and myths of America against internal threats. Few of these arguments were new to Americans, but the vigor behind them and the speed with which they occupied the national discourse in the years of the Cold War victory suggest that the "culture wars" operated as a replacement of the Cold War as a defining crucible of American identity.

Externally, while Japan and its ascendant economy enjoyed a brief period as the principle threat in American imagination,[32] Saddam Hussein's Iraq became the focus of the United States' martial enmity on the invasion of Kuwait in 1990. As a tangible military achievement, the Gulf War could also symbolize the Cold War victory and define an American role. In the *National Review* in 1991, William Bennett enthused over the implications of a success in the ongoing war, heralding it as a "Rebirth of a Nation." Observing the upsurge of patriotism and the new respect that Americans seemed to have for their soldiers, he claimed that

"the military is teaching us a civics lesson" about "the importance of things like duty, honor, virtue and the hitching up of one's purpose to a larger purpose beyond the self." For Bennett, a victory in the gulf would also finally put an end to the doubts and defeatism of the Cold War and would "replace Vietnam in the national psyche." "Historians," he predicts "will have to write about American success rather than a failure" causing "people to ask about how such a nation came to be, to ask about the philosophy behind our success." The moral and technological success of the war would generate patriotism in popular culture and the sciences and inspire a generation as a lasting historical example. Bennett was convinced that victory could have a profound, positive, and practical effect on American self-image, but his focus is almost entirely on its military aspect. The martial imagery and heroic actions of soldiers could give a focus to national pride in a way that joyous Berliners or historic summits of reconciliation could not.[33]

However, while the Gulf War did prompt the widespread expression of popular patriotism, its victory failed to act as the renewal Bennett predicted. Writing of a "post-victory malaise" in 1992, Strobe Talbott observed that by the time of President Bush's reelection campaign,

> the victory in the gulf no longer seemed total; nor was it clear exactly what guiding principles for future American policy the event had defined. It was even being said that far from serving as a precedent … [the Gulf War] marked the end – not the beginning of an era.[34]

Bennett's prediction that the victory would prompt celebratory Hollywood titles – "*The Day of the Patriot*? *Combat Ready: The Story of Colin Powell*? and perhaps even *The Bridge over the River Tigris*?"[35] – also proved wide of the mark. The most successful films to represent the war – *Three Kings* (1999) and *Jarhead* (2005) – appeared considerably later and were notable for their subversions of the traditional war film's conventions rather than any emphasis on the character of American victory. However, the 1990s did see Hollywood, and indeed wider American culture, develop an increased fascination with other American wars and victories in America's past. The American Civil War and World War II, each used by the Bush administration to rhetorically frame the end of the Cold War and the Gulf War, respectively, can to some extent be understood to have acted as surrogate victories through which Americans could experience a renewed victory culture and reimagine the incoherency and uncertainty of the Cold War victory and its consequences.

In 1990, Ken Burns' PBS documentary series *The Civil War* was resoundingly well received by some 40 million viewers.[36] High interest in the conflict was also reflected by the success of books such as James McPherson's *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* and the meticulous reenactment and noble ideals of the Hollywood productions *Gettysburg* (1993) and *Glory* (1989). To an even greater extent, World War II captured the imagination of America through its 50-year anniversary in the early nineties and beyond. Again, popular history in literature and

on television was a catalyst for interest and celebration, notably represented by Tom Brokaw's NBC series *The Greatest Generation*, and Stephen Ambrose's accounts of the European campaigns, such as *Citizen Soldiers*. Stephen Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) and his later collaboration with Ambrose, the 2001 HBO series *Band of Brothers*, can be seen as a response to the massive interest generated earlier in the decade and the fictional replication of the ideas Brokaw and Ambrose sought to promote in their histories – the centrality of the individual soldier's experience and the rightness of the war. Spielberg, "the American Kipling" and one of "the chief cinematic purveyors of exceptionalism and triumphalism,"[37] tapped into the commemorative popular mood with his offering of a straightforward victory narrative that contrasted with the previous decade's defeat narratives represented by Vietnam movies and the paranoia and self-victimization of Cold War films such as *Rambo II* (1985) and *Red Dawn* (1984). These efforts, according to Gary Gerstle, had a common motive: "to place great wars at the center of American history; to find in those wars the leadership, character, and values that made America great; and to use the recovery of these wars' histories to bolster a [liberal] nationalism."[38]

The celebratory retrospective of World War II was given governmental blessing in 1993 when Congress authorized the construction of a commemorative monument on the Mall in Washington, DC. Dedicated in 2004, the memorial is imposing and triumphant – its star inscribed "Freedom Wall" offering a marked contrast to the sunken tomb of the nearby Vietnam memorial. Though the location and design were controversial, some critics likening the style to that of Albert Speer,[39] the World War II memorial represents a determination to remember history in terms of victory. Emily Rosenberg explains this "memory boom," which manifested not only in terms of official commemoration or cultural representation but also in increased memory-based activity and consumption amongst the general population, in terms of identity. The anxiety and "identity dilemma" is activated by a globalized and consumerist culture, with "the past offering one more consumerist arena" in which one can find "the elusive promise of self-realized identity." This is particularly relevant when one considers the "boom" to have been the province of post-war generations, searching for personal meaning in the experiences of their parents and grandparents.[40] In terms of national identity, the reemergence of these wars can be understood in similar terms. The Cold War victory both removed fundamental defining factors through which the American nation knew itself, its place, and its purpose, while also providing in itself as a new means of determining identity. That American thought then turned to historical victories suggests that Americans were using established, recognizable mythic frameworks through which to re-imagine the otherwise uncertain, ungraspable Cold War victory and a consequent American identity.

Remembering victory

As the Cold War passed into history itself, however, narratives emerged to explain the full course of the war and the roots of its victory. Though largely part of the domain of historical scholarship on the Cold War, the way in which

certain of these narratives gained broad acceptance and are used to indicate and appeal to national identity, puts them at mythic level. A plotted and coherent story of the conflict provides an explanation of how America came to be as it is, and importantly, a guide as to what the United States should now be. Some revisionist explanations emphasize either with nuance or polemic the ambiguities of America's conduct and its relative nature with Soviet Union's, essentially denying both the accepted constructs that define the Cold War and the idea of an American victory. This was an idea expressed early by Christopher Hitchens, lambasting Fukuyama: "any fool can declare an end to a conflict the scope of which he vastly exaggerated in the first place."[41] Noam Chomsky stated that "the apparent termination" of the Cold War was "an ideological construction more than historical fact," reading the conflict to be about the advancement of US hegemony rather than the confrontation between two powers and that the demise of the Soviet Union would have little bearing on US conduct.[42] Such readings do have implications for some constructions of American identity – those which define an imperialist United States, for example – but cannot be said to be part of the contestations of national identity in mainstream political and cultural arenas. Broadly speaking, there are two narratives that have emerged which accept the reality of the war and a conclusive victory and which make claims about American identity and purpose. Each of these is not only what Allen Hunter describes as "vindicationist" interpretations which "claim more than mere triumph" for America but also a proof of the strength and rightness of American ideologies and institutions, a justification of American actions, and also something of a mythic, retrospective narrative which suggests an inevitability of outcome.[43] Hunter coins the term as a critique of orthodoxy in Cold War history as represented by, among others, John Lewis Gaddis and Arthur Schlesinger Jr. Their approach, or Hunter's criticism, will not be discussed here, but the notion of "vindicationism" is useful in understanding the role of Cold War narratives in the political discourse of the past 20 years.

The first narrative describes a war whose victory was written in its opening stages. The policies of containment and deterrence laid out in the late forties were part of a deliberate long-term plan which saw resolution in 1989–91. Though there were perhaps some deviations from the course, the Cold War represented a generally consistent and US-led strategy to defeat the Soviet Union. Two post-Cold War Presidents, George Bush Sr and Bill Clinton, evoked this narrative in the early nineties. The rhetoric of the Bush administration before the Gulf War focused on the early years of the Cold War and the policy of containment, recalling the achievements of Truman and Acheson, Marshall, Kennan, and Eisenhower. Avoiding mention of the failure of Vietnam, or aberrations such as Nixon's détente, Carter's human rights agenda, or Reagan's rollback, the effect was to give an impression of a planned course safely played out. An emphasis on containment, writes Siobhán McEvoy-Levy, "was a reminder that the Cold War had been about American resolve and the execution of 'Grand Strategy' … that it had been managed, made safe, contained by United States leadership." The

effect was "to make the future seem manageable."[44] In the first year of his presidency, Clinton plotted a similar account, claiming that "thanks to [the leadership] of every American president since World War II from Harry Truman to George Bush, the Cold War is over."[45] Soon after, he reasserted the idea of a long-term strategy pursued with consistent resolve: "We were in it for the long run, not to win every day, not to know what every development in every country would be. We had clear principles, clear values, clear strategy."[46] While warning of post-Cold War disorder at home and abroad Clinton offered a reassuring view of the Cold War which, though dark and dangerous, had been seen through with a consistency of principle and leadership. Referring also to Gaddis' "long peace," the President presented it as a model of behavior and success, a guiding historical example of American character, ability, and leadership.

The second narrative is also a vindication, though it is not about inclusively affirming a broad and continuous American strategy or a constant, unified American identity and purpose. Instead, it vindicates a conservative insurgency and their rejection of orthodox policy. It credits conservative anticommunism as the true instigator of American victory and emphasizes the role of one figure in particular: Ronald Reagan, the right's "easy (and plausible) two-word explanation for how victory was snatched from the jaws of defeat."[47] In a laudatory account of his presidency, Dinesh D'Souza asserted that Reagan "was the true victor in the Cold War: … he foresaw it … he planned it … he brought it about."[48] This was not an historical innovation but a restatement of a well-established narrative which credited the Cold War triumph to the principled actions of a conservative president. Rather than vindicating a consistency of Cold War American leadership and policy, this view condemns it as a failure and justifies instead the stance of Barry Goldwater, whose vision of victory was unheeded until 1980 and redeemed through Reagan's leadership. The year 1980 becomes a turning point, a watershed moment in American history where the demoralizing influences of presidential weakness, liberalism, and the anti-war movement are rejected and Communist advances are for the first time confronted. Peter Schweizer's polemical biography, *Reagan's War*, sees Reagan fighting Communism almost independently for the previous thirty years, before defeating the Soviet Union at the end of his presidency. This victory is achieved through military confrontation, both in the abstract sense of rearmament and in the reality of Third World battlefields, through the moral denunciation of communist ideology, and, significantly, through the renewal of American patriotism. Again, the accuracy of this generalized account is not in question here, rather its implications for the construction of national identity in the decades following his presidency.

Reagan made the promotion of an enthusiastic, celebratory patriotism a central focus of his presidency, combining a reinvigoration of national symbols, tradition, and ritual with the consistently mythic rhetoric of an exceptional America. Entering office, Reagan declared his wish to "go down in history as the president who made Americans believe in themselves again"[49] and left it expressing that his proudest achievement was "the resurgence of national pride that I call the new patriotism."[50] He went on to call for an "informed patriotism" based on the

promotion in education and culture of an American history that confirmed and demonstrated an exceptional American identity. Suitably, perhaps, Reagan has become part of such a history. Even while alive, though confined to private life by Alzheimer's disease, Reagan was the focus of several commemorative projects seeking to enshrine him as a national symbol. Proposals were debated in Congress concerning the inclusion of his profile on Mount Rushmore and on a range of different currency denominations, as well as the construction of a Reagan memorial on the Mall. Though as yet to no avail, such efforts increased in determination following Reagan's death and the considerable national reaction it generated. The overwhelming popular response to Reagan's death and funeral suggests a broad acceptance of the former president as a symbol of national identity and one inextricably linked with triumph. However, this symbol is one that is subject to distinct ideological contestation and is used to make specific partisan claims on American identity. Reagan, "living proof of the American Dream,"[51] is also proof of the success of conservatism, leading to a conflation of conservative with American identity. Ann Coulter, a popular voice of conservative nationalism whose jeremiad, *Treason*, laid out a narrative of the Cold War which gave sole credit to Reagan for victory, most overtly expressed this conflation on Reagan's death declaring that "only authentic Americans loved Reagan" and implying the next logical step that only those who love Reagan are authentic Americans.[52] Reagan's was a double victory: one that reaffirmed American power in the world and asserted at home the necessarily conservative nature of American identity.

The narrative of Reagan's victory has been recalled in another way, above the quarrels of commemorative projects and modern day pamphleteering, though with a similarly partisan agenda – in Reagan's own medium of mythic presidential rhetoric. George W. Bush has imbued his presidency with echoes of Reagan in terms of policy, style, and image. Tax cuts and missile defense, delegated management, moral clarity, and a frontiersman guise are amongst the corresponding features of the two presidents, parallels upon which Bush has been willing to play. Victory is also a vital theme for Bush, a war president in the way that Reagan never was, with both the hot, daily conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan and the more intangible, near perpetual nature of the War on Terror. Bush uses the example of Reagan's victory, and his own ideological and symbolic connection to Reagan, to present those wars to the American people.

In October, 2006, President Bush spoke at a Republican Senatorial Committee reception with the specific purpose of generating support for the Republican Party in the mid-term elections, where he made specific links between victory in Iraq and the War on Terror, victory as represented by Ronald Reagan, and the choice that voters would be making the following month. Bush expressed his admiration for Presidents Truman and Kennedy but went on to outline "a shift in philosophy in the Democrat party" starting with the nomination of George McGovern for President in 1972. This was a shift to a philosophy of doubt and defeatism, most clearly marked by Democrat opposition to the policies of Reagan, who in Bush's words, "history will remember … as the man who brought down the Soviet Union and won

the Cold War." The Democrats, meanwhile, "did not share his optimism or his strategy for victory …. They'd gotten to the point where they didn't think we could win."[53] On the fifth anniversary of 9/11, the President insisted that America faced "more than a military conflict," but the "decisive ideological struggle of the twenty-first century and the calling of our generation." "Our nation," he claimed "is being tested in a way that we have not been since the start of the Cold War."[54] Earlier in the year, the President had made a more explicit comparison:

> While there are important distinctions, today's war on terror is like the Cold War. It is an ideological struggle with an enemy that despises freedom and pursues totalitarian aims …. Like the Cold War, America is once again answering history's call with confidence – and like the Cold War, freedom will prevail.[55]

Bush presents the Cold War as an historical model through which America can understand its contemporary challenges. The Cold War victory becomes myth, rooted in the traditional exceptionalist idea that the United States will answer "history's call" and applied to guide current choices and provide reassurance of a certain future. In the partisan rhetoric of an election year, victory is aligned specifically with Reagan, the Republican Party, and with conservatism. Bush's narrative of the Cold War presents it as much as a battle between the victory-based ideas of the right and the defeatism of the left as between the Soviet Union and America. However, in a wider sense, the use of the Cold War as myth to define the War on Terror serves both to assure the inevitability of American victory and to depict the indeterminate and intangible War on Terror as a familiar and natural American undertaking.

A distinguishing feature of these narratives is the emphasis that they place on the role of America's political leaders in winning the Cold War and their equation of national identity with support for that leadership. However, the motives behind recent efforts to commemorate the Cold War and its victory have a notably different angle that possibly reflects John Bodnar's distinction between "official" and "vernacular" forms of collective memory, the former being the domain of "cultural leaders" and the latter of "ordinary people." The two arenas are not fully disparate, however, but mediated by "the symbolic language of patriotism" and national identity.[56] The Cold War Veteran's Association (CWVA) was established in Kansas in late 2001 and has since grown with the creation of chapters all around the country. Among the stated goals of the organization are the establishment of a federally recognized Cold War Victory Day and the creation of an official Cold War Medal to be awarded to all who served honorably between 1945 and 1991. The organization also supports the independent movement for a national Cold War memorial, a project led for 9 years by Francis Gary Powers Jr. Each has met with only gradual success. Powers has been granted a location for his museum and memorial near Arlington Cemetery but has yet to raise the necessary funds. The CWVA, meanwhile, have seen their mission gain some ground in state governments and in Washington. In 2003, CWVA member

Congressman Dennis Moore (Democrat: Kansas) made a speech to the House asking that the National Government and State Governors proclaim 1 May to be "Cold War Victory Day." The 1st of May marked not only the day Francis Gary Powers Sr was shot down over the Soviet Union in 1960 but also "the traditional day of celebration for Communists worldwide, and displays of military might."[57] Since then, Cold War Victory Day has been proclaimed and celebrated in an increasing number of states each year, though it has yet to be declared nationally.

The Cold War Medal, meanwhile, failed to gain passage as part of the 2007 Defense Authorization Bill, but the Association assured its members that it would lobby for new sponsors to get it through in 2008. The movement is nonpartisan and has gained support from both republicans and democrats, most notably, perhaps, Hillary Clinton who announced in 2005 that "our victory in the Cold War was made possible by the willingness of millions of Americans in uniform to stand prepared against the threat behind the Iron Curtain from Berlin to the DMZ."[58] This very much recalls the language of the CWVA, whose attribution of the Cold War victory goes straight to the enlisted men and women, to the ordinary Americans who ensured success at least as much as any president. Their focus is on the recognition of the soldiers who ensured a victory, and this is combined with an attitude that is noticeably antigovernment (though most specifically anti-Pentagon). Frank Tims, a spokesman for the group, condemned the "Cold War denial so prevalent in our nation's capital."[59] This only hints at the suspicions expressed on the CWVA message boards that their demands are disregarded in Washington due to an ignorance of the contribution of their service, a misinterpretation of the Cold War as a primarily ideological conflict (rather than one defined by actual service in foreign arenas) or the political correctness of international diplomacy. Powers' Cold War Museum project is much less confrontational, though equally focused on the needs of ordinary Americans. "Where do Cold War families go to honor their dead? What graves can they decorate with flags and flowers? What memorial do these unsung heroes have?" asked Powers in rhetorical support of his work.[60] Rather than focus on the legions of living, but unrecognized, victors of the Cold War, Powers and his supporters wish to commemorate the few hundred who, like his father, were killed on active duty outside of the better remembered hot conflicts of the long struggle with Communism, such as Korea or Vietnam.

This indicates the contested and still-developing nature of the Cold War's place in American memory. While for more than 40 years the Cold War as a state of existence was essential in defining American identity and shaping American culture, as an historical event it lacks distinct definition in American imagination. Moreover, while it has by and large been understood as a victory, it has not generated the coherent response in terms of the expression of national identity that might be expected for such a positive conclusion. While it can be viewed as an outstanding affirmation of the superiority of American ideology and political systems – perhaps the lynchpins of American identity – the victory is neither easily represented in American symbols nor easily remembered as a shared experience. Victory is best associated symbolically with national leadership and with the military; however, in each of these areas, the Cold War victory is problematic.

The leader most associated with the victory is Ronald Reagan, yet while he was a president extraordinarily successful at signifying his nation, prompting Gary Wills to name him "the great American synecdoche," he also remains an active symbol of American conservatism and partisan division.[61] The efforts of the CWVA focus on the contribution of the military to the war, offering the traditionally iconic image of the ordinary American soldier as a symbol through which to represent the victory. However, this approach lacks credibility. The length of the conflict, the breadth of its theater, and, overall, its lack of military solution, or even engagement with the Soviet Union, do not allow it to be represented in the same way as other American wars, nor its victory – such as it is – as other American victories.

Conclusion

Victory is an evocative word and a mobilizing concept. An appeal to victory frames national purpose, its achievement demands a reflection upon a nation's future, and its echo resounds in national memory, punctuating and vindicating a mythic national narrative. This indicates that both the idea and event of victory, the conclusive triumph over external threats, play flexible and effective roles in the construction and expression of national identity. Generally speaking, this can be demonstrated in American history, from the Revolution to World War II, with the victories and the memories of them informing a sense of unified national identity. As we have seen, the same process can be observed in the case of the Cold War, where victory is anticipated, received, and remembered in terms of American identity. However, it also presents itself as an exception. Due to the long-term apprehension about what a Cold War victory might entail and to the strange intangibility of its eventual conclusion, the very evocation of a victory has an added layer of significance. Barry Goldwater's call for victory was a distinct challenge and an attempt to redefine American purpose and recapture a specific American identity. Those that called a victory while the Cold War wound up, such as Pat Buchanan or Francis Fukuyama, did so with the purpose of framing America's role and its future, using the idea of victory as evidence of a determining identity. The narratives that emerged seeking to explain the victory and place it in an historical, or mythic, context also defined specific national identities, whether coming from Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, or the CWVA. Such use of a victory and contestation of its meaning may be expected, but when, as in this case, the idea of victory is elusive and disputed, claims of identity made around it are more tentative and more open to contestation. The end of the Cold War has been interpreted in terms of identity, has generated assertions of American identity, but has yet to be fully embraced as a solid grounding for American identity in the twenty-first century.

2

COSMOPOLITANISM OR NATIVISM?

US national identity and foreign policy in the twenty-first century

Carl Pedersen

Who are we?

In 2006, the maverick politician, sometime Presidential candidate, and TV commentator Patrick Buchanan appeared as a guest on the Fox network talk program Hannity & Colmes. He was there to plug his new book, *State of Emergency: The Third World Invasion, the Conquest of America*. Sean Hannity, one of the hosts, pointed out that the book was currently number one on Amazon.com and asked Buchanan why he thought the issue of immigration had captured the minds of so many Americans.

Buchanan replied by boasting of his prescience in addressing the issue in 1992 when he was running against President George H. W. Bush in the Republican primaries. Buchanan lost the Republican nomination to the sitting president but was granted a central role at the Republican National Convention in Houston, Texas, later that year. Buchanan used the pulpit to full advantage. Savoring his moment in the national spotlight, Buchanan put forward the argument that the election was more than a discussion of economics.

> It is about who we are. It is about what we believe. It is about what we stand for as Americans. There is a religious war going on in our country for the soul of America. It is a cultural war, as critical to the kind of nation we will one day be as was the Cold War itself.[1]

In Buchanan's view, the conflict between Communist totalitarianism and American freedom may have ended with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, but the war over American national identity had not yet been resolved. Other conservatives echoed Buchanan's sentiments. Irving Kristol, often regarded as a scion of neoconservatism, pointed out that the end of the Cold War with the Soviet Union should result not in complacency but rather heightened vigilance because, as he put it, "Now that the other 'Cold War' is over, the real

cold war has begun. We are far less prepared for this cold war, far more vulnerable to our enemy, than was the case against a global Communist threat."[2]

In this new war, the most important position for the national security of the United States was not, as one might expect, that of Dick Cheney, the Secretary of Defense, but rather of his wife Lynne, who at the time was Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Conservatives took to calling her the Secretary of Homeland Defense and lauded her attacks on History professors who would, in her view, sully the past record of the United States with their overzealous focus on slavery and the oppression of women, the working class, and ethnic minorities.[3]

In Buchanan's and Kristol's world, the insidious forces of liberalism were poisoning American society from within and weakening its defenses against fragmentation. For Buchanan, one of the most important aspects of this impending threat was the liberal attitude toward immigration. In *State of Emergency*, he recalls an ideal past in which Americans were bound together by a shared history and common ancestry and talks with trepidation of a future of warring ethnic groups that will eventually rend the fabric of the American nation. Moreover, the fate of the nation is bound up with the fate of the Republican party. Immigration threatens to diminish the Republican base. In Buchanan's view, the Immigration Act of 1965 that abolished quotas set in 1924 and has resulted in a surge of immigration from Latin America in particular will convert the Republican majority touted by Kevin Phillips in 1968 into "the Lost Colony of the twenty-first century."[4]

Buchanan is not alone in his fears of the dissolution of the American nation. From the halls of academia to the arid plains of the borderlands, neonativists are engaged in defending American national identity. The classicist and political commentator Victor Davis Hanson has raised the alarming specter of the most populous state in the United States being transformed, if current immigration trends continue, from California to Mexifornia.[5] The British immigrant Peter Brimelow rails against the economic, social, and cultural consequences of what he calls the "immigration disaster."[6] Tom Tancredo, a Republican Congressman from Colorado, has made the issue of immigration a cornerstone of his political campaigns. In 2006, he published the anti-immigration diatribe *In Mortal Danger: The Battle for America's Border and Security*. Dissatisfied with the stance of President George W. Bush on immigration, he announced in April 2007 that he was running for the Republican presidential nomination. The influential newscaster Lou Dobbs has a nightly segment called "Broken Borders" that warns viewers against the dangers of immigration. The Minuteman Project mans the front lines of the war against immigration, "doing the work Congress refuses to do" as its internet site would have it, patroling the borderlands and protecting the homeland from the third world invasion that Buchanan warns against.[7]

In 2004, Samuel Huntington, best known for his 1993 essay (and then book), *The Clash of Civilizations*, published a volume that brought his concerns of a global cultural clash home. Buchanan's 1992 question became Huntington's title: *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity.* Huntington was in no doubt as to what constituted American national identity. Like Buchanan, he

recalled a past with a core identity based on an Anglo-Protestant heritage. That heritage was being challenged by a host of recent developments.

Huntington's and Buchanan's books complement each other. In a review of Huntington, Alan Wolfe could not resist characterizing the book as "Buchanan with footnotes."[8] Buchanan is the more shrill of the two, but despite the difference in tenor, both operate within a classic nativist paradigm, defined as "intense opposition to an internal minority on the ground of its foreign (i.e. 'un-American') connections."[9]

Discussion of Huntington's book focused for the most part on chapter nine, in which he argued that the increase in Latino immigration to the United States will in time divide the country and lead to the dissolution of the core American identity. However, for our purposes, it is more appropriate to look at the way in which Huntington lays out the ebb and flow of American national identity since the colonial era. According to Huntington, "the salience of national identity" has experienced preeminence and decline at various points in American history. From the latter half of the eighteenth century to the end of the War of 1812, a common identity was forged in the face of threats from the British and French empires. As these threats subsided, national identity suffered. The Civil War "solidified" the United States, and "American nationalism became preeminent as the United States emerged on the world scene and in the following century fought two wars and a cold war."[10] As in so many conservative narratives, all was well until the 1960s. The change in immigration laws during the 1960s gave rise to a massive influx of foreigners, primarily from Latin America. In the wake of the Civil Rights Movement, the insidious ideologies of multiculturalism and diversity chipped away at the solid edifice of the American core culture. The solidity of national identity was further endangered by the babel of non-English languages. The final blow came with the dissolution of the Soviet Union that eliminated the major threat to American security but also diminished "the salience of national identity compared to subnational, transnational, binational, and other-national identities."[11]

As horrific as they were, the terrorist attacks of 9/11, seen in this light, produced a positive development in the form of renewed patriotic sentiment. Former Reagan Education Secretary William Bennett captured the moment in *Why We Fight: Moral Clarity and the War on Terrorism*: "Suddenly flags were flying everywhere, and everywhere we were singing the national anthem and 'America the Beautiful.'"[12] Huntington, while recognizing that 9/11 did indeed intensify the salience of national identity, was nevertheless wary of its depth and long-term prospects.

Buchanan and Huntington belong to a strain in American thought that harkens back to another era replete with outside threats to American national identity – the first decades of the twentieth century. Buchanan's culture war was being fought between cosmopolitans, who took an expansive view of the cultural mix produced by immigrants, and nativists, who regarded the massive waves of immigrants coming to the shores of the United States as a threat not only to national identity but also to the American nation itself.

Cosmopolitanism and national identity

The cosmopolitans of the turn of the last century, whose ranks included the likes of Jane Addams, William James, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Randolph Bourne, were, according to Jonathan Hansen, attempting to get Americans "to embrace a social-democratic ethic that reflected the interconnected and mutually dependent nature of life in the modern world" by challenging "Anglo-American cultural assumptions about the meaning of American identity" and renouncing "diplomacy that advanced Western interests at the expense of other nations."[13]

Such sentiments, of course, ran against the grain of what proved to be the dominant discourse of the period – the nativism that posited a core culture emanating from the Northeast, that regarded the predominantly Southern and Eastern immigrants in the United States with apprehension if not outright fear, and that saw in what Lothrop Stoddard called "the rising tide of color," the beginning of the end of Western civilization.[14]

The culture war against cosmopolitanism was greatly aided by the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1917 that seemed to exacerbate the threat to Western Civilization even as World War I came to an end. The strength of nativism was reflected in the Immigration Act of 1924 that imposed strict national quotas, which severely limited immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe. It is no coincidence that a leading declinist and nativist, Madison Grant, had a hand in the formulation of the bill.[15] John Higham has characterized the passing of the bill as nothing less than a Nordic victory.[16]

Draconian immigrant legislation, coupled with the disruptions of the Great Depression and World War II, slowed immigration to a trickle. Isolationist sentiment in the interwar years mitigated against notions of cosmopolitanism that were predicated on an opening toward the world. Midwestern Republicans constructed an American national identity of the heartland, populated by small businessmen and farmers of Northern European extraction. This was the true America, uncontaminated by the massive influx of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe that filled the cities of the Eastern seaboard.[17]

The marked lapse in cosmopolitanism after the Nordic victory did not mean complete eradication, however. Cosmopolitanism took on a variety of forms in the 40-year period between the passage of the restrictive Immigration Act of 1924 and the more lenient Immigration Act of 1965. In his presidential address to the American Historical Association in 1932, Herbert Eugene Bolton called for "a broader treatment of American history, to supplement the purely nationalistic presentation to which we are accustomed." Bolton constructed an argument for "the essential unity of the Western Hemisphere," a history of the Americas that included colonization, expansion, and imperial rivalry from the northernmost regions of Canada to Tierra del Fuego on the southern tip of Chile.[18] Bolton sought to emphasize the connections and interrelationships in the Americas in opposition to the narrow nativist view of American national identity.

US involvement in World War II was crucial in keeping the cosmopolitan flame alive. The struggle against not only the Fascist dictatorships in Germany and Italy but also the Nazi racial ideology discredited notions of racial and ethnic inequality in the United States. The nativist vision rested on the dominance of an Anglo-Protestant core culture. Although in no way comparable to the genocidal fanaticism of Nazi racial ideology, the idea that a single culture should be preeminent went against the grain of an Americanism that was increasingly being defined in terms of diversity and equal status for all ethnic groups and races. In his book *A Nation of Nations*, written toward the end of World War II, Louis Adamic gave succinct expression to the differences between a nativist and cosmopolitan sentiment, even though he did not use those terms.

> There are two ways of looking at our history.
>
> One is this: that the United States is an Anglo-Saxon country with a white Protestant Anglo-Saxon civilization struggling to preserve itself against infiltration and adulteration by other civilizations brought here by Negroes and hordes of "foreigners."
>
> The second is this: that the pattern of the United States is not essentially Anglo-Saxon though her language is English….The pattern of America is all of a piece; it is a blend of cultures from many lands, woven of threads from many corners of the world. Diversity itself is the pattern, is the stuff and color of the fabric.[19]

President Franklin D. Roosevelt had recognized this cultural diversity in a speech in 1936 praising the contributions of new immigrants and acknowledging that many retained the languages and traditions of their countries of origin.[20] In his last inaugural address, Roosevelt warned against the United States retreating into the isolationism of the interwar years and insisted that the lesson of World War II had taught Americans "to be citizens of the world," the very definition of cosmopolitanism.[21]

The Civil Rights Movement, the Immigration Act of 1965, and new social movements like the Latino movement were instrumental in transforming American national identity away from a narrow nativist viewpoint into a broader and more inclusive cosmopolitan conception that acknowledged the contributions made by a variety of groups to the formation of the American nation. For cosmopolitans, the opening of borders was the fulfillment of a long-standing American ideal; for nativists, it was the beginning of the end of a coherent national identity.

Cosmopolitanism in the twenty-first century

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, these cosmopolitan trends, I would contend, despite Buchanan's and Huntington's protestations to the contrary, are

irreversible. The US Census Bureau has predicted that by the middle of this century, the non-Hispanic white population will drop to about half of the US population.[22] As of 2005, four states – Hawaii, New Mexico, California, and Texas – have majority–minority populations, with Maryland, Mississippi, Georgia, New York, and Arizona soon to follow.[23] The trend toward cosmopolitanism is not purely a case of numbers, however. A number of factors have promoted a more fluid sense of American national identity in the twenty-first century. The United States and many Latin American and Caribbean nations permit dual citizenship. Many immigrants live lives in two countries, their frequent travel facilitated by inexpensive plane fares and Spanish-language bureaus that cater to their needs. In other words, transnationalism has become the norm for many of the new immigrants.

The year 2007 marks the first year when more than half the global population will be urban. Megacities – metropolitan areas with over 10 million people – are proliferating around the globe. The United States has two in the top ten: New York City and Los Angeles. These globalized cities constitute, in the view of sociologist Saskia Sassen, denationalized spaces that promote a reinvention of the notion of citizenship. She predicts that dual and multiple nationalities will become the norm, not the exception.[24] Of the 20 cities in the world that have over 1 million foreign-born residents, the United States has by far the most: eight.[25] These eight cities are located on both coasts, on the Texas borderlands, and in the Upper Midwest. It is no accident that major American cities were the scene of mass pro-immigration demonstrations in the Spring of 2006. However, the marked growth in immigrant populations has not just affected metropolitan areas. Internal migration is encroaching on what Anatol Lieven has called the Embittered Heartland.[26] As a Pew Hispanic Center survey pointed out in 2005,

> The Hispanic population is growing faster in much of the South than anywhere else in the United States. Across a broad swath of the region stretching westward from North Carolina on the Atlantic seaboard to Arkansas across the Mississippi River and south to Alabama on the Gulf of Mexico, sizeable Hispanic populations have emerged suddenly in communities where Latinos were a sparse presence just a decade or two ago.[27]

The border between the United States and Mexico has become increasingly blurred. Bolton's idea of a Greater America seems closer to realization than when he spoke in 1932. Since 1968, it has become customary to speak of the Southernization of American politics. As the Pew report shows, however, what we are seeing at the beginning of the twenty-first century is a Latinization of the American South. New Latino immigrants maintain close ties with communities in their countries of origin. This is the cosmopolitanism of the twenty-first century: social networks being sustained through modern modes of communication and travel. There is evidence that, despite nativist invective, many Americans persist in seeing this new immigration as part of "who we are." Sociologist Alan

Wolfe has noted that "It is not an exaggeration to say that open borders, rather than having the effect of diluting what it means to be an American, define, for a sizable portion of the American middle class, what America is all about."[28]

Two immigrants to the United States have provided the philosophical under-pinnings for a new cosmopolitanism for the twenty-first century. Amartya Sen was born in India, educated in Great Britain, and is currently a Professor at Harvard. In his most recent book, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*, he takes issue with the idea of a clash of civilizations that his colleague at Harvard, Samuel Huntington, has made popular. Sen believes that Huntington's views are reduc-tionist and lead to what he calls "civilizational incarceration." He views the kind of thinking that Huntington adheres to not so much as a reflection of reality, but as the root cause of conflict. The argument that people claim their full identity in religion or culture elides the multifaceted identities that make up each individual. As Sen observes, "The world is frequently taken to be a collection of religions (or or civilizations or cultures), ignoring other identities that people have and value, involving class, gender, profession, language, science, morals, and politics."[29]

Sen forcefully registers his objection to what he calls the "miniaturization" of people in rigid categories and recognizes a more open form of identity that per-mits social interaction on a whole range of levels. He dismisses fears that multi-culturalism has gone too far, as Huntington and other cultural conservatives would have it. The issue is rather whether cultural practices are imposed or "freely chosen by persons with an adequate opportunity to learn and reason about alternatives."[30] In other words, multiculturalism is not a sign of the dissolution of identity, but its fulfillment. Huntington's notion of identity sees individuals as bound and gagged in civilizational confinement, while Sen advocates an open and multifarious identity. Sen does not mention cosmopolitanism by name, but his conception of identity clearly promotes a cosmopolitan sensibility.

Kwame Anthony Appiah, on the other hand, devotes an entire book to the sub-ject. Like Sen, Appiah's life is an example of the cosmopolitanism he champions. Born in Ghana and educated in Great Britain, Appiah is a Professor of Philosophy at Princeton. In *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*, Appiah attempts to chart a middle ground between a nationalist sensibility intent on keep-ing foreigners out and an impartial cosmopolitanism that expresses no form of solidarity between citizens. He advocates a partial cosmopolitanism that can be defined as universality plus difference. Being a citizen of the world does not pre-clude having local allegiances.

Appiah regards the very notion of cultural purity as an oxymoron and cele-brates what he calls cultural contamination. He quotes approvingly Salman Rushdie's characterization of his novel *The Satanic Verses* that incurred the fatwa against him. Rushdie writes that his novel

> celebrates hybridity, impurity, intermingling, the transformation that
> comes of new and unexpected combinations of human beings, cultures,
> ideas, politics, movies, songs. It rejoices in mongrelization and fears the

absolutism of the pure. Mélange, hotchpotch, a bit of this and a bit of that is how newness enters the world. It is the great possibility that mass migration gives the world, and I have tried to embrace it.[31]

Rushdie's celebration is Huntington's nightmare. The question is whether there will be cause to celebrate a cosmopolitan victory in the twenty-first century that will once and for all overturn the Nordic victory of 1924. Current patterns of immigration and provisions of immigration law would seem to indicate that American national identity is undergoing a profound transformation that promotes cosmopolitanism. Neonativist policies of control and containment, coupled with an ideology of one-way assimilation into an Anglo-Protestant core culture, are out of step with an increasingly globalized community that encourages mass migration.

The implications for American national identity are clear. Dual citizenship, the communications revolution, and relatively inexpensive air travel have changed the ways that recent immigrants construct their identity. The antiquated notion that coming to the United States entails a gradual shedding of past identities is no longer viable. Instead, the cosmopolitan notion that belonging to a particular society does not necessarily mean a rejection of past identities is gaining strength among new immigrant communities.

Cosmopolitanism and US foreign policy

In contrast to the neonativists, who see the reinvigorated patriotism of the post-9/11 era as a bulwark against the insidious forces of cosmopolitanism that threaten to fragment the national will and leave the United States vulnerable and weak, I would argue that the turn toward a cosmopolitan national identity in the twenty-first century can influence US foreign policy in a positive direction.

The impact on US foreign policy of trends toward cosmopolitanism in American national identity has arguably been assisted by the abject failure of the unilateralist policies of the Bush administration that reflect the very neonativist restitution that Huntington sees in the post-9/11 era. These policies are predicated on notions of American exceptionalism that obviate any attempt to understand the root causes of Islamic fundamentalism, disagreements within the Islamic community, conflicts between Saddam Hussein's Baathist regime and the Islamic Republic of Iran, and so on. Instead, Bush administration rhetoric has been suffused with simplistic nostrums such as the universal desire for democracy and false analogies comparing the war in Iraq with the allied liberation of France in 1944. To put a fine point on it, the Bush administration has pursued policies that proceed from the idea of the United States as a city on a hill projecting a beacon of democracy that needs to be enforced by the use of military force, a curious combination of what John Judis has aptly characterized as using (Theodore) Rooseveltian means to achieve Wilsonian ends.[32]

If, as I have argued, a cosmopolitan national identity is on the ascendant in the twenty-first century, the implications for US foreign policy could be profound.

Traditionally, US foreign policy has rested on a paradox. The nation of immigrants has proven to be singularly myopic in its view of the world. This myopia can be explained by two factors: the desire on the part of immigrants to leave their European past behind and the frontier ideology (or myth, if you will) of the American character in the formative years of the American nation. George Washington's 1796 admonition to avoid "entangling alliances" with Europe can be seen as not only a policy recommendation, but also as the realization that many immigrants wanted a clean break with their past in order to embrace an American future.

The prospect of a new life on the frontier put further physical distance between the immigrant and Europe. Frederick Jackson Turner put it succinctly in his famous address on American national identity in 1893:

> The frontier is the line of most rapid and effective Americanization. The wilderness masters the colonist. It finds him a European in dress, industries, tools, modes of travel, and thought. It takes him from the railroad car and puts him in the birch canoe. It strips off the garments of civilization and arrays him in the hunting shirt and the moccasin. Thus the advance of the frontier has meant a steady movement away from the influence of Europe, a steady growth of independence on American lines.[33]

The European settler is stripped of former identity and becomes a true American through contact with the American landscape. In other words, Europe is a burdensome past to be cast off, and the United States is the future to be embraced wholeheartedly. Furthermore, Turner argues that the frontier experience is instrumental in creating individualism and that individualism in turn promotes democracy not only in the United States but also in Europe. Turner's address was prompted by the findings of the US Census Bureau that all land in the continental United States had been settled. If the frontier experience defined American national identity, what would be its fate in the new century when the pattern of shedding a European past in favor of an American frontier future was no longer an option? The answer came a mere five years later, when the McKinley administration launched the Spanish–American War. The ideology of continental expansionism that had forged Americans out of European immigrants would now be extended to the Caribbean and the Pacific. The American mission would have global reach. The stage was set for an activist foreign policy predicated on forgetting the immigrant past and spreading American democracy across the globe. The notion that immigrants to the United States might provide the foreign policy establishment with insights into the histories, cultures, and societies of nations that were affected by US expansionism, either through direct intervention or trade, was not part of the equation. This myopia has been emblematic for US foreign policy in the twentieth century and has persisted into the twenty-first not least because of the turn to unilateralism after 9/11, a policy that is the very epitome of Sen's civilizational incarceration.

One could argue that if anything embodies Huntington's vision of an Anglo-Protestant core culture, it is the US foreign policy establishment. As Godfrey Hodgson has pointed out, US foreign policy for most of the twentieth century has been the purview of a small coterie of Anglo-Protestants, a surprising number of whom "were not just undergraduates at Yale but members of a single secret senior society there, Skull and Bones."[34]

Robert DeNiro's second film as director, *The Good Shepherd* (2006), tells the story of the birth of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). DeNiro has a small role as Bill Sullivan, a thinly disguised William J. "Wild Bill" Donovan, who first proposed the establishment of a US intelligence service toward the end of World War II.

The central figure in the film, however, is Edward Wilson, played by Matt Damon. His character is loosely based on the infamous CIA operative James Jesus Angleton. Like Angleton, Wilson attends Yale and has a love of poetry. At Yale, Wilson is encouraged to join the Skull and Bones and ends up marrying the daughter of an influential Senator, thus completing his initiation into the world of the American foreign policy elite.

At one point in the film, Wilson visits the Italian–American gangster Joseph Palmi to discuss his impending deportation. Palmi, who has lived in the United States most of his life and therefore considers himself an American, muses about immigrant identities: "We [Italians] have our families, our church …. The Irish, they have their homeland …. The Jews, they got traditions …. Even the niggers have music …. Tell me something … what do you people have …?" Wilson's deadpan answer speaks volumes about the attitudes of not only the CIA, but arguably the entire US foreign policy elite: "The United States of America … the rest of you are just visiting."[35]

A case could be made that it is precisely that mindset that has produced the myriad failures of the CIA, amply documented in Tim Weiner's magisterial history of the agency, *Legacy of Ashes*. In an interview with Charlie Rose to promote the book, Weiner has offered a blunt assessment of why the CIA has so consistently fallen short: "We're Americans …. And secrecy and deception … don't come easily to us. Neither do foreign languages, neither do foreign cultures, neither does foreign history."[36] Weiner argues that the failures of the CIA are rooted in cultural myopia – a lack of deep knowledge of other societies. He uses as an example the inability of the agency to "send an Asian-American into North Korea without him being identified as some kid who just walked out of Kansas."[37] The war on terror requires the kind of intelligence based on deep knowledge that the CIA has not been able to provide.

There is little indication that the Bush administration has learned from these past failures. It persists in trading in false analogies and misreadings of history to promote its global war on terrorism.

President George W. Bush is not known as a voracious reader. And yet, in August 2007, almost four and a half years after he launched the invasion of Iraq, Bush used a British novel written more than half a century ago to make a point

about the future of US engagement in Iraq. Bush administration rhetoric usually drew analogies between the global war on terror and World War II – a struggle between the forces of democracy and totalitarian ideologies. In his speech before the Veterans of Foreign Wars, however, Bush made the bold rhetorical move – which some commentators felt was more an act of desperation than incisive analysis – of comparing a premature withdrawal from Iraq with the humiliating US exit from Vietnam in 1975. He took a long view of this process by going back to the 1950s, just before the United States entered Vietnam in an effort to shore up the French campaign against the Viet Minh. Bush's aim was to excoriate those who believed that the US presence in the region was counterproductive. That is where the British novel came in. As Bush put it,

> The argument that America's presence in Indochina was dangerous had a long pedigree. In 1955, long before the United States had entered the war, Graham Greene wrote a novel called, "The Quiet American." It was set in Saigon, and the main character was a young government agent named Alden Pyle. He was a symbol of American purpose and patriotism – and dangerous naivete. Another character describes Alden this way: "I never knew a man who had better motives for all the trouble he caused."[38]

Bush, of course, did not accept the notion that the American presence in Indochina was in any way counterproductive. He held to the conservative Republican view that it was the reluctance of Congress to provide the finances needed to continue the war that proved fatal to the US mission to prevent the Communists from taking over South Vietnam. Graham Greene's novel has been regarded as an anti-American tract. The character of Alden Pyle embodied the hubris of the American mission in Indochina, not least because Pyle had little understanding of the society that he was attempting to save. The narrator, the world-weary British journalist Thomas Fowler – that Bush mentioned as "another character" – portrayed Pyle as not only willfully naïve but also possessed of a missionary spirit that assumed that Vietnam desired to be like the United States. In his words, Pyle "was determined … to do good, not to any individual person but to a country, a continent, a world."[39] Pyle's mission of spreading American-style democracy in Indochina in the 1950s is of course eerily reminiscent of Bush's own twenty-first century global war on terrorism. Ironically, in characterizing the mission of Alden Pyle in Indochina, Bush could just as well have been describing his own mission in Iraq. The failed American mission in Vietnam, in part brought about by the willful ignorance of policymakers, was being repeated in Iraq, but with a twist. The thinking behind the US involvement in Vietnam was that, if the South were to fall to the Communists, the whole of Southeast Asia was in danger of being overrun – the so-called Domino theory, first touted by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Bush's vision of the Middle East could be called the Domino theory in reverse – a free, democratic Iraq would be

a beacon in the oppressed Middle East and, one by one, authoritarian regimes in the region would be toppled (it was unclear how this would be achieved) and would join Iraq in creating a free Middle East, closely allied with the United States. That this vision has little prospect of being fulfilled is in part due to the failure of the United States to comprehend the history and culture of the Middle East, precisely what Graham Greene over 50 years ago was citing as the reason why the American mission in Indochina would ultimately fail.

Interestingly enough, the potential for failure was recognized at the time in another novel, which was a runaway bestseller in 1958 and went on to sell over four million copies. In *The Ugly American*, authors William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick offered a stinging characterization of US diplomats and operatives stationed in Southeast Asia. Most live lives of comfort in enclaves cordoned off from the local populace. As one diplomat puts it, "You can buy the same food in Asia that you can in Peoria. Even, say, in Saigon they stock American ice cream, bread, cake, and well, anything you want. We look out for our people. When you live overseas it's still on the high American standard."[40] This state of affairs still exists. The journalist Naomi Klein was struck by the difference between the Green and Red Zones in Iraq. While ordinary Iraqis suffered from the lack of a functioning infrastructure, Americans in the Green Zone enjoyed electricity, state-of-the-art communication systems, and entertainment. As she put it, "It felt, oddly, like a giant fortified Carnival Cruise ship parked in the middle of a sea of violence and despair, the boiling Red Zone that is Iraq."[41] As for the intelligence community, most did not even leave the United States. As Tim Weiner has pointed out in his history of the CIA, as of 2001 the overwhelming majority of its 17,000 employees lived in the Washington suburbs and "were unused to drinking dirty water and sleeping on mud floors."[42]

However, there were a small number of Americans who stood out from the rest. One was Colonel Edwin Hillandale, a character loosely based on the legendary CIA agent Edward G. Lansdale.[43] Hillandale is based in the Philippines. He speaks Tagalog and is willing to endure deprivations and physical hardships in the rural areas of the country. He establishes a rapport with local leaders and assists them in defeating a communist rebellion. US policy goals are achieved through deep knowledge and cooperation, not hubris and military power.

The difference between an Edwin Hillandale and an Alden Pyle is, I would contend, the difference between a cosmopolitan and a nativist view of national identity and by extension of the United States and the world. There are indications that the US foreign policy and military establishments have learned from past mistakes and are recognizing the need for a deeper understanding of the trouble spots in the world. Since cosmopolitanism is, according to Sen and Appiah, based on multiple identities and cultural contamination, new immigrants that maintain social networks with their countries of origin could prove invaluable in formulating policy, gathering intelligence, and fighting the war on terrorism. The convergence of the failure of unilateralism, based in part on a nativist worldview, and factors promoting cosmopolitanism can lead to new ways of thinking about US foreign policy.

Francis Fukuyama, author of the triumphalist tract *The End of History* (1989) that exhibited all the hallmarks of a myopic neonativist sensibility in its argument that liberal democracy had reached a zenith with the demise of the Soviet Union, had, five years after 9/11, become disillusioned with the neoconservative project that he so warmly endorsed. In *America at the Crossroads* (2006), he looked back longingly to the period immediately after World War II, when the United States, the most powerful nation on earth, forged entangling alliances with European nations and was instrumental in creating a host of multilateral institutions. Fukuyama renounced Bush's unilateralism in favor of what he called a multi-multilateral foreign policy composed of overlapping international institutions.[44] Fukuyama's vision for a new US foreign policy for the twenty-first century bears some resemblance to the kind of liberal internationalism proposed by Roosevelt and Winston Churchill in the Atlantic Charter in 1941 and consolidated at the end of the war with the Bretton Woods agreement, the establishment of the United Nations, and the Nuremberg trials. What Elizabeth Borgwardt calls the Zeitgeist of 1945, which she defines as a "new spirit" that "produced a brief vogue for all things multilateral and cosmopolitan" may well animate US foreign policy in the twenty-first century.[45] The spirit of multilateralism that prevailed in the immediate postwar period was, according to the journalist E. B. White, directly linked to "the successful model of America's polyglot, overpopulated cities."[46]

Moreover, there are clear indications that the US military and intelligence establishments are revisiting counterinsurgency strategies based on deep cultural knowledge that were unjustly discredited during the Vietnam War.

Another cosmopolitan figure, David Kilcullen, an Australian lieutenant colonel and anthropologist currently working for the US government, has been instrumental in formulating how these strategies can be used in the twenty-first century. He is careful to take into account the globalization effects that have transformed the nature of insurgency since the war in Vietnam. The new insurgency is transnational.[47] At the request of then Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, Kilcullen contributed the section on irregular warfare in the Pentagon's most recent Quadrennial Defense Review. He characterized the current conflict as a "long war" and proposed that US forces attain "greater language skills and cultural awareness."[48] A caption on a photograph in the report showing US soldiers at a police recruiting station in Iraq reads "The U.S. Army is harnessing the diversity of American society by recruiting heritage speakers of priority languages to serve as translators and interpreters."[49]

The *Counterinsurgency Field Manual* (2007) reflects Kilcullen's views. In the section on intelligence in counterinsurgency, the *Manual* proposes that intelligence gathering take into account the social structure, culture, and languages of host societies.[50] These efforts are a clear attempt by the US military and intelligence establishments to counter the cultural myopia and excessive reliance on military solutions to political problems that have plagued US foreign policy in the past.

Conclusion

On the cusp of the mass pro-immigration demonstrations in the Spring of 2006, a Spanish-language version of the American national anthem, the Star-Spangled Banner, was released. "Nuestro Himno," as the Spanish version was called, provoked outrage in nativist quarters. However, instead of regarding it as an affront to genuine patriotic fervor, it could be argued that singing the national anthem in a foreign language can be an expression of cosmopolitan patriotism – an allegiance to the United States not predicated on rejecting past identities. Banners at some of the pro-immigration demonstrations in the Spring of 2006 read "Somos Americanos" – We are Americans. For cosmopolitans, such a sentiment is not contradictory. For neonativists, such a reply to the question that Buchanan and Huntington have posed is tantamount to heresy, a dangerous step on the road to national disunity. However, the neonativists are fighting a losing battle.

To say that nativism was in its last throes would be somewhat of an exaggeration. Nevertheless, as I have attempted to show, there are social, political, and demographic tendencies that point in the direction of a new cosmopolitan national identity in the twenty-first century. As Tamar Jacoby has observed, there need be no contradiction between integration and identity.[51]

A cosmopolitan American national identity will inevitably also have an impact on notions of American exceptionalism that elide national differences in favor of an us-versus-them worldview. As Thomas Bender has argued, presenting "a cosmopolitan appreciation of American participation in a history larger than itself" encourages humility and affirms subnational affiliations and transnational social solidarities.[52]

Furthermore, cosmopolitanism can function as a bulwark against the cultural myopia that has plagued American foreign policy since 1898 by nurturing deep knowledge of other societies. The paradox of an immigrant nation turning away from the world in imperial isolationism could be resolved. Instead of seeing cosmopolitanism as a threat of disunion, Americans could regard it as an opportunity to become citizens of the world even as they maintain their allegiance to the United States.

Section 2

MOTIVATIONS, IDENTITY AND IDEOLOGY IN US FOREIGN POLICY

A NEO-CONSERVATIVE-DOMINATED US FOREIGN POLICY ESTABLISHMENT?

Inderjeet Parmar

Introduction

It is claimed by some, to one extent or another (Tony Smith[1]; John C. Hulsman;[2] Michael Lind[3]; John Higley[4]; Laurence A. Toenjes[5]; Mickelthwait and Wooldridge[6]; Farmer[7]), that the US Foreign Policy Establishment has so radically changed in social, ethnic and religious composition and political subculture from its traditional WASP base that it has come under the increased influence of (mostly Jewish) radical neo-conservatives, particularly after 9/11, which accounts for the unilateralist, aggressive and militarist character of US policies since then.[8] Conversely, others argue that there has been little or no change in the Establishment's composition or worldview.[9] This chapter contends that there *have* been significant shifts in Establishment membership (especially at its lower echelons) but that, despite these developments and the proximity of several leading neo-conservatives to the levers of power in the Bush administration, those factors cannot account for the foreign policy of the administration. It is argued here that the truly significant political–historical development lies in the recent ascendancy of an influential new broad conservative Establishment that has, at least partially, displaced the liberal Establishment and, indeed, ratcheted to the Right the leadership of the Democratic Party. The development of a conservative Establishment's power clearly occurred alongside and dovetailed with changes in the foreign policy approaches of American liberals, intellectual transformations among whom, over the past two decades, are now providing considerable intellectual and ideological support to the democracy-promotion agenda driving (rhetorically, at least) powerful elements of the conservative Establishment.[10] *Any radical changes in foreign policy, therefore, may be related to a general rightward ideological shift in the Establishment in conjunction with catalyzing events that galvanized pre-existing tendencies in a more permissive political environment conducive to change.*

The conservative social and ideological shifts that *are* evident are rooted not in any neo-con 'hijacking' of the Bush administration but in a number of historical developments that culminated in an *apparent* neo-con 'revolution' after 9/11. First, the 1970s and the Reagan era witnessed the increase in size, influence and visibility of right-wing social forces, ideologues, and think-tanks such as the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), taking advantage of the collapse of the New Deal order. Second, the collapse of the Soviet bloc – the main barrier to US global predominance – lifted the lid on America's global ambitions, opening the way for 'new thinking' about, and constructing a benign international environment for, American power. Third, from the end of the Cold War, there developed a self-conscious desire among leading conservatives to build a 'conservative Establishment' to rival and displace the 'liberal Establishment', forces especially galvanized by Bill Clinton's election victory in 1992. Finally, the election of George W. Bush and especially the terrorist attacks on 9/11, which catapulted those strategically positioned and well-prepared right-wing forces into the political front row, provided an ideal opportunity to press demands that had previously been viewed with some scepticism.[11] Such is the power of this shift in thinking that it is fast becoming the new consensus in US foreign policy; it is likely to incorporate the leading elements in the US Congress and the Democratic Party and strategic elements of public opinion (as well as leaving large sections of public opinion divided and confused).[12]

Structure of chapter

The chapter first advances a definition of the US foreign policy Establishment that shows its traditional social, political and other characteristics in order to examine the extent of change within it and to compare and contrast it with the elements surrounding and associated with the Bush administration. Second, the chapter shows the rise of the conservative Establishment from the early 1990s to the beginnings of the second Bush administration (2005–8). Third, the chapter introduces new research – on the American Enterprise Institute and Project for the New American Century – which shows important indicators in the social composition of the (lower echelons of the) Establishment as well as its limitations in the context of rising conservative power in general. Fourth, those changes are considered in the context of radical evolutions in the thinking of liberal-internationalists, which constitutes the basis of a new bipartisan foreign policy, an additional factor ratcheting to the right the leadership of the Democratic Party. Overall, what appears to have occurred is a radical shift in Establishment thinking (elements of which coincided with neo-conservatives' attitudes), which created the conditions for greater neo-con and Establishment cooperation in pursuing shared objectives. The seemingly all-pervasive media presence of the neo-cons, however, temporarily masked the degree to which post-9/11 foreign policy is still driven largely by the traditional Establishment.

Defining establishment

According to one of its most acute observers, Godfrey Hodgson, the American foreign policy Establishment is composed of groups of men who know one another; 'who share assumptions so deep that they do not need to be articulated; and who contrive to wield power outside the constitutional or political forms: the power to put a stop to things they disapprove of, to promote the men they regard as reliable, and to block the unreliable ….' Hodgson further notes that 'The true establishment man prided himself on his bipartisanship, his ability to get on with and work with right-minded fellows of either party'.[13] Nelson Polsby supports elements of that definition by arguing that the Establishment tends to be centrist, pragmatic, executive-branch focused, as well as being educated in the east coast Ivy League schools.[14] Though recruiting principally from Ivy League universities and elite private schools, the traditional Establishment was also open to talented people 'with the wrong family pedigree', part of the 'genius of the American Establishment', according to Max Holland.[15]

Hodgson argues that the post-Pearl Harbor foreign policy Establishment was defined by a *history*, a *policy*, an *aspiration*, an *instinct*, and a *technique*. It was forged historically in organizations like the Office of Strategic Services during the Second World War and the Cold War, in the building of the Marshall Plan, United Nations, IMF, World Bank and NATO; its *policy* was broadly anti-isolationist and liberal internationalist and was to advocate restraint but to admire the use of hi-tech military force; its *aspiration* was to the moral and political leadership of the world: heading 'a single Western coalition holding the world in balance against the infidel is fundamental to this establishment'. The Establishment's *instinct* was for the 'non-ideological', pragmatic centre ground; its *technique* was to work through the executive branch – the National Security Council, Central Intelligence Agency, White House rather than the Congress, electoral politics or public opinion. To sum up, the post-1941 Establishment was characterized by its pragmatism, centrism, elitism, multilateralism and exclusive focus on the executive branch.

Conversely, the Bush administration and its supporters are often characterized as very different: ideological not pragmatic, right wing not centrist, unilateral not multilateral, for preventive and pre-emptive wars not restraint, and populist not elitist.[16]

This chapter argues that there is a new conservative foreign policy Establishment, or at least an influential conservative wing of the Establishment, in the United States; that it was consciously planned and constructed; that it now consists of a series of overlapping and interlocking elites connecting the Bush administration, the federal bureaucracy, right-wing think-tanks and conservative media, as well as Congress. Such is the influence of this new Establishment that its thinking has now more or less subsumed the leadership groups of the Democratic Party, suggesting that the new Establishment and consensus will shape the contours of US foreign and national security policy well beyond the end of the Bush administration.

On the other hand, other recent research suggests that there has been no change in the character and outlook of the very top tier of the US foreign policy Establishment over the past 60 years. The highest echelons of the Establishment remain socially rooted in the east coast and the Ivy League and retain its internationalist orientation. An interesting study, the findings of Busby and Monten, are almost entirely compatible with the claims of this chapter that there has been development and change in the composition of the Establishment but at the lower echelons rather than at the very top and therefore that such change is important but not necessarily sufficient fundamentally to alter foreign policy. Even so, the conservative shift within the Establishment has had significant impacts on US foreign policy.

The main flaws of the study of Busby and Monten are methodological: first, they collected data only on higher public officials and congressional leaders, betraying a state-centric definition of the Establishment, while the one favoured in the present study emphasizes also their non-state, private characteristics and *overlaps* between state and society;[17] second, Busby and Monten did not collect data in regard with religious affiliation – a major omission given claims of the increased importance of Jewish neo-cons in the Establishment; third, as evidence of worldview, they analysed only party platforms and state-of-the-union addresses, rather than a far broader range of works and writings. Again, this points to a rather state-centric understanding of the Establishment, as opposed to Hodgson's wider one.

Planning and building a conservative establishment

In 1991, Edward J. Feulner Jr, president of the Heritage Foundation, declared that in ten years there would be a new conservative Establishment in the United States. Fully institutionalized, the conservative Establishment would exist not just in think-tanks but also in the White House, Congress, media and the universities, leading ad hoc coalitions on special issues. Even by 1991, Feulner noted that Heritage and other conservative think-tanks had 'made conservative ideas not only respectable, but in some cases even mainstream'.[18] Additionally, Heritage had become part of the 'permanent … Washington policy-making apparatus'. In terms of America's global position, Feulner recognized the need for the United States to use its lone 'military, economic, and cultural superpower' status to 'expand freedom' around the world.[19]

The ambitious aim was not merely to join the existing Establishment but to 'supplant' it: 'the old order is crumbling', Feulner argued, 'and something new and different is going to come in and take its place'.[20] Conservatives were increasingly dominant as newspaper op-Ed columnists and on radio and TV talk shows. Yet, they lacked a major presence in the universities, although the Hoover Institution and the American Enterprise Institute were seen as major scholarly institutions.[21]

The new Establishment that Feulner envisioned was to be inclusive, a 'big tent' that housed 'mainstream' conservatives, Buchananites and neo-conservatives. He refused to marginalize the neo-cons: indeed, he welcomed them as they brought 'new intellectual vigor to conservative debate … [and were] an appealing intellectual force

manning the ramparts in liberals' greatest bastion – New York City'. He further argued that neo-cons' ideas would 'still be valuable as we move toward a [post-Cold War] new international order'. Feulner indicated the degree of unity within American conservatism – mainstream and neo-con.[22] His foreign policy views, as expressed ahead of 9/11, further suggest how widespread conservative discontent with US foreign policy was in the 1990s.

In a speech in 1995, Feulner outlined a US foreign policy that would place American vital interests at the very core of a 'God-inspired battle for human freedom'. Since the Cold War ended, Feulner claimed, 'America's purpose has drifted … I don't believe that the United States can truly advance political and economic freedom around the world until it regains a sense of its own vital interests'. Both right-wing isolationists and left-wing interventionists were wrong, respectively, to withdraw from a robust American foreign policy that trusts American power and to cling to 'a pessimistic attitude that America cannot hold its own in the world'. American foreign policy, Feulner argued, needed to confront North Korea and Iran, secure oil supplies, and lead the world through increasingly unilateral means: 'I believe multilateralism is the abandonment of America's leadership role in the world.'[23] Hence, the mainstream conservative Heritage Foundation's leader voiced views the elements of which are frequently (mistakenly) attributed exclusively to neo-cons.

The conservative Jeffrey Gedmin furnishes further evidence of foreign policy ideas shared by conservatives and neo-cons. Straight after 9/11, Gedmin argued that the United States could not tolerate 'unreasonable constraints imposed by international coalitions' in its fight against terrorism and its bid 'to reestablish the credibility of a united West under American leadership'. Europe, China and Russia were motivated by a desire to 'constrain American power and predominance', as was the Arab world. Echoing the neo-cons, Gedmin argued that Arab opposition to the United States turned on nothing less than 'the wholesale failure of the Arab states to modernize and democratize' which, in turn, explained 'why radical Islam has been permitted to grow and spread so extensively ….'[24] Gedmin urged the case for 'removing Saddam [Hussein] from power' to fight terror and 'boost America's standing in the Arab world'. More presciently, he argued that that would mean American long-term military occupation of Iraq for building a secure 'democratic Iraq' as a catalyst for peace in the Middle East.[25]

Finally, it is clear that while conservative criticism of the neo-cons is acceptable to the Heritage Foundation, criticizing the Bush administration's foreign policy is beyond the pale. While Heritage's John Hulsman was free to write critically about the neo-cons – in the pages of *Open Democracy*, for example – he was dismissed from Heritage once he began attacking the Bush administration's Iraq policies[26] indicating, ironically, how close to the neo-cons the broader conservative movement has become. Hulsman's *Eisenhower conservatism* was intolerable: too moderate for Heritage.

The institutional and revenue growth of Heritage was also impressive during the 1990s. Its marketing efforts linked it to the corporate, political and academic

worlds, and its activist functions linked it with other 'policy analysts, Republican party officials, conservative scholars and grassroots constituencies'.[27] In the 1990s, Heritage organized a bimonthly working group of conservative organizations. Heritage has become the central organization of conservatism in the United States. By 2002, Heritage spent 40 per cent of its budget on research, in contrast with just 15 per cent in 1989, further evidence of its weight in the Congress, the White House, and the conservative movement (Abelson 2006: 11).

In 2006, political scientist John Higley argued that there is, in effect, a conservative Establishment in the United States. It is centred, he argues, upon 'the Bush elite [which] is a study in network density and integration – of circles within circles and hubs within hubs': 'exceptionally integrated and uniform in belief ….' To Higley, the new elite is made up of several intersecting circles, including the Vulcans – conservative veterans of the Reagan, Ford, Nixon, and Bush I years such as Richard Cheney, Lewis Libby, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Condoleeza Rice, and Stephen Hadley. Higley includes within these circles public officials like Colin Powell and Richard Armitage. Despite their tactical squabbles, Higley suggests, 'the Vulcans are as one in believing that US military power … is the central means for unseating dictatorial regimes and promoting democracy and freedom worldwide.'[28]

Broadening out from the White House, the Vulcans' networks of associates predominated within cabinet departments and intelligence agencies and included people such as Richard Perle, Douglas Feith, Stephen Cambone, John Bolton, and David Wurmser. Even further, Higley traces the links of the Bush elite to the Project for the New American Century's policy document, *Rebuilding America's Defenses* (September 2000**)**, the writing of which was chaired by leading neocons, William Kristol and Robert Kagan, with authors including Cambone, Dov Zakheim (Pentagon), Bolton, Elliott Cohen and Devon Cross (Defense Policy Board [DPB]) and Libby. Fox News, radio talk shows and think-tank representation at Congressional hearings disseminate even more widely the Vulcans' views on the war on terrorism.[29] Higley's conclusion is that a new conservative Establishment has actually emerged.

The Heritage Foundation, as shown above, has remained close to the Bush administration, especially since 9/11. Edward Feulner stated that Heritage had focused on threats to security for over a decade before 9/11: it was because of its established track record that commentators note that 'From the cold war to the war on international terrorism, when the Heritage Foundation speaks, conservative policy-makers listen.'[30] Not for nothing is it charged by critics that Heritage has gone '"establishment"'.[31]

While Higley's argument is well known, though anecdotal, Toenjes – a sociologist – has conducted a systematic study of the role of elements of the conservative Establishment in advocating the war on Iraq. He analysed 14 conservative organizations including Heritage, AEI, Project for the New American Century (PNAC), Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA), Hudson Institute, and so on, finding 223 interlocks between their 650 individual

members/leaders; just nine leaders accounted for 121 of the interlocks, including Richard Perle, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, James Woolsey and John Bolton.

Of the 14 organizations, five were at the core of the drive to war with Iraq: PNAC, Committee for the Liberation of Iraq (CLI), Center for Security Policy (CSP), DPB Advisory Committee and JINSA. The five organizations played specialized roles:

- PNAC: planning strategic roles
- CLI: mobilizing United States and international organizations for war
- CSP: shaping the 'mass mind' of the Congress, administration and public
- DPB Advisory Committee: deepening connections to government, especially Pentagon
- JINSA: cementing US–Israeli ties

It is clear from Toenjes's analysis that there is a densely interconnected set of influential and active think-tanks and advocacy organizations on the conservative right with close links with the Bush administration. Interestingly, the five core organizations and committees are not only very close to the Bush administration but also *they were often formed at the behest of that administration to promote its policies.* For example, the CLI was formed in 2002 'with the administration's blessing … to press the case [for war on Iraq] in the United States and Europe …. Members include former secretary of state George P. Shultz, Sen John McCain (R-Ariz.) and former senator Bob Kerrey (D-Neb.)'. The CLI, according to its officers, worked 'closely with the administration … [and had] met with [Stephen] Hadley and Bush political adviser Karl Rove'. Condoleezza Rice and Richard Cheney met the group shortly afterwards.[32] The CLI was chaired by Bruce P. Jackson, a leading Republican hawk and former head of the US Committee on NATO.

In addition, JINSA, CSP and PNAC (for the latter, see the more detailed analysis below) are also heavily connected with the Bush administration, including Richard Cheney, John Bolton and Douglas Feith.[33] The DPB is even more clearly part of the administration's policy-making processes.

Given the evidence above, it appears clear that there is indeed a strongly entrenched conservative wing of the foreign policy Establishment with connections with the very centres of power as well as with the Washington, DC, policy communities, the mass media, the Congress, the universities, the Republican Party as well as important elements of the Democratic Party. *It is also interesting to note that the relationship between the conservative think-tanks and the administration is not necessarily one that is characterized by neo-conservative predominance over the administration. The above relationships suggest that there is/was an agenda that was shared by conservative administration leaders, including President Bush, and non-administration conservatives, neo-conservatives and liberal hawks.*

The next section of this chapter aims to present new research further to examine the idea that there is a new neo-conservative dominated foreign policy Establishment.

The American Enterprise Institute and the Project for the New American Century

I now examine data for a more detailed sociological analysis of two major conservative think-tanks: AEI and PNAC, both strongly associated by critics with neo-cons and the Bush administration.[34] I conducted a detailed analysis of 51 AEI leaders and associated scholars and of 33 PNAC leaders and signatories of its *Statement of Principles*.[35]

The objective of researching the AEI and PNAC is to establish the social and educational characteristics of their leaders (in comparison to the conventional characteristics of Establishment members) as a step towards better locating them in relation to the US power structure, that is, to determine the extent of their 'outsider' and 'insider' characteristics. The argument is that the closer/further an organization is to the levers of foreign policy and power – as measured by connections to such policy-related agencies and institutions, for instance – the more its members and leaders should resemble/differ from the traditional Establishment. An outsider organization should, therefore, exhibit strong non-traditional Establishment social and educational backgrounds, while an insider organization would display many more traditional Establishment background indicators.

Research was conducted, therefore, on the sources of education, region of birth and religious affiliation data available in Web-based and other sources. Consideration was also given to the degree of linkage of each of the AEI and PNAC to mainstream conservative think-tanks, the US state and congress, and linkages with elements of the historically liberal internationalist think-tanks. Data on these matters should tell us a great deal about the organizations' outsider/insider characteristics. I also compare my findings with those of Busby and Monten to show how the AEI and PNAC leaders compare with their study of the Establishment's composition. I conclude that the PNAC, the organization closest of the two to the core Establishment – that is, top echelons of the state and policy-making – looks more like the old Establishment (i.e., east coast born, Ivy league educated and Protestant) than the AEI. The PNAC is more mainstream conservative-linked *and* also shares much in common with liberal internationalist hawks, suggesting that the neo-con group's influence needs to be understood in the context of shared foreign policy objectives rather than as neo-cons' hijacking of the Bush administration.

Research findings with regard to the AEI

Education: The 51 leaders of the AEI had 79 university affiliations as students, 27 (34 per cent) with Ivy League institutions and 52 (66 per cent) with non-Ivy League universities and colleges: they were twice as likely to be educated at non-Ivy League than at Ivy League institutions. On the other hand, the findings of Busby and Monten for the post-Cold War period showed that 57 per cent of Establishment members were Ivy League educated and 43 per cent at other

institutions. This suggests that the AEI leaders' educational profile is elitist but still significantly different from the traditional Establishment. Yet, the degree of linkage of the AEI with the Bush administration suggests that the recruitment base of the Establishment has broadened.

Region of birth: Data were available on only 22 of the 51 leaders of the AEI: two were born overseas. Of the remaining 20 leaders, 55 per cent (11) were east coast born and 45 per cent (10) were born in the south or west. An almost even split, therefore, while the results of Busby and Monten for Establishment members were 65 per cent born on the east coast and 30 per cent in the rest of the United States. This tends further to reinforce the distance from the Establishment of the AEI leaders as well as the idea of a broadening out of the US foreign policy elite to the 'periphery'.

Religion: Data were available on 21 of the 51 AEI leaders: of those, there were 19 Jews. Thirty-seven per cent of the leaders of the AEI were therefore of Jewish origin, further reinforcing the broadening-out thesis, this time from traditional overwhelming prevalence of Anglo-Saxons. Even so, 63 per cent of the AEI leaders were probably non-Jewish. The AEI, then, appears as an organization that has significant outsider characteristics but remains dominated by Christians, mainly Protestants. The data in this section of the study, however, require further research as information on religious affiliation is sketchy. Nevertheless, it does look as if there is significant outsider participation in the AEI's affairs, a channel for influence with policy-makers.

State links: Fifty-one AEI leaders had 54 links with the state, including the White House, CIA, State Department, Defense Department, National Security Council, and Congress. The number of links is somewhat lower than expected, especially for an organization that is commonly known to be close to the Bush administration. The data suggest, however, a well-integrated organization with important connections with the centres of political and foreign policy power.

Other conservative and liberal think-tank links: AEI had just 37 links with other think-tanks, nine of them with mainstream conservative groups such as Heritage, Hoover, Cato, Hudson and Manhattan Institute and just three with the Council on Foreign Relations, the traditional core of the liberal internationalist Establishment. This suggests that AEI was close to mainstream conservative organizations but much less so with the liberal-internationalist Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). Alongside links with the state, the data above suggest AEI is reasonably well-integrated into the Washington policy and ideological communities. Yet, it retains a certain distance as well. This suggests some degree of ideological and political competition within the conservative camp.[36]

Research findings on PNAC leadership

Education: Thirty-three leaders had 28 Ivy League links but 40 non-Ivy League connections as students: again, this suggests greater social breadth of recruitment, though this time in a ratio of 58 per cent: 42 per cent in favour of non-Ivy League

institutions, near-complete reversal of the findings of Busby and Monten. However, PNAC leaders were more likely to have been to Ivy League universities than their AEI counterparts (42 per cent as opposed to 34 per cent). There is some distance therefore between the PNAC leaders and the traditional Establishment, though the PNAC is closer to the latter than is the AEI.

Region of birth: Of the 16 PNAC leaders upon whom such data were available, ten were east coast born and six were born in the south and west, that is, 63 per cent east coast and 37 per cent other. Approximately 50 per cent of AEI and 65 per cent of the sample of Busby and Monten were east coast born, on the other hand. The PNAC leaders, therefore, occupy a place closer to the sample of Busby and Monten than the AEI leaders.

Religion: Information was available on only 15 leaders: of those, ten were Jewish, two were Protestant, two were Catholic and one was Muslim (Zalmay Khalilzad). That is, 29 per cent of the PNAC's total number of leaders were Jewish as compared with 37 per cent of the AEI's. This further suggests decline of outsider characteristics at this level of the Establishment and the prevalence of insider characteristics. Once again, however, religious affiliation information is difficult to retrieve, and further research is required.

State links: The PNAC's 33 leaders were highly connected with the American state – displaying 115 such connections: 27 with the Department of Defense, 13 with State, 12 with the White House, 10 with the National Security Council, and 23 with the Congress. PNAC, therefore, was far more state connected than AEI (which had just 54 links for its 51 leaders). The PNAC may be considered strongly integrated into the political and administrative machinery of US power; certainly, it is not an outsider institution in this regard.

Other think-tanks: PNAC's 33 leaders had 88 links with other think-tanks, the largest non-state sector of linkages of the organization (AEI's 51 leaders had just 37 such links, emphasizing its *relative* isolation). Of those 88 links, 16 were with mainstream conservative think-tanks (as opposed to the AEI's nine). On the other hand, PNAC had almost as many (12) links with the Council on Foreign Relations, a much more surprising and interesting finding. This suggests even more the mainstream conservative and institutionalized character of PNAC and not its neo-con character as is often claimed (especially by Michael Lind, but also others). The AEI had only three links with the CFR, showing its outsider character more clearly.

It is clear that the educational, regional and religious sources of the (lower elements of the) US foreign policy Establishment have broadened out from the Ivy League to other universities such as Stanford, Georgetown and Johns Hopkins – all elite universities, of course, so hardly a revolution; a shift, nevertheless, has occurred. Regionally, there is a shift away from the east coast to the rest of the United States.[37] In terms of ethno-religious affiliations, the traditionally Anglo-Saxon Establishment has become more inclusive, especially of Jewish conservatives.

The connections of both AEI and PNAC to mainstream think-tanks of conservative and liberal persuasion suggest that they are more mainstream than previously

Table 3.1 Comparative university, region of birth and religious affiliation data (in per cent)

	Ivy League	Non-Ivy League	East coast	Non-east coast	Jewish	Non-Jewish
AEI	34	66	55	45	37	63
PNAC	42	58	63	37	29	71
B & Mª	57	43	65	35	NA	NA

a B & M refers to the data of Busby and Monten; NA = not applicable.

Table 3.2 AEI and PNAC comparative linkages with the state and think-tanks

	State links (n)	Conservative think-tanks (n)	Liberal think-tanks (n)	Total think-tanks (n)
AEI (51)	54	9	3	37
PNAC (34)	115	16	12	88

thought. This more mainstream character is further emphasized by the multiple links of both organizations with the US state and politics, especially notable in the case of PNAC. This all suggests that more and more outsiders are getting into positions of influence. However, the data of Busby and Monten and data from the research above show that outsiders are getting into the lesser roles and offices in the lower echelons of the state, or the lesser positions in the highest offices, making their positions somewhat precarious should crises emerge. Equally important, their lesser positions would suggest less centrality to the foreign policy-making process and a greater likelihood of being recipients for broader dissemination of decisions taken higher up the administration.

My research complements that of Busby and Monten, therefore: at the very top of the Establishment, they show that there has been little change. However, the closer an organization is to the state, the more it resembles the 'old line' Establishment in terms of educational background, region of birth and religious affiliation, as well as connections with mainstream organizations. This holds for the AEI, which is less close to the centres of power than the PNAC. The PNAC, frequently cited as the nerve centre of neo-conservatism, then, looks more mainstream than we would have expected. Its closer connections with the state and with mainstream conservative and liberal organizations suggests that it is an organization that was drawn closer to the Establishment because its ideas and objectives were already shared by policy-makers.

This finding – of the PNAC's more mainstream conservative/liberal character as indicative of its proximity to the Establishment – is reinforced when research is conducted on the 24 Bush appointees who have been identified as neo-cons or as very close to the neo-cons by various observers. Such figures include Elliott Abrams, Richard Cheney, Zalmay Khalilzad, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz,

Condoleezza Rice, and so on.[38] Together, those 24 Bush appointees boasted 66 connections with a variety of think-tanks: conservative (27), neo-conservative (20) and liberal (19).

Interestingly, with 11 connections, the single group with which the 24 Bush appointees were most closely linked was the Council on Foreign Relations, ever the liberal consensus-building institution at the very heart of the US foreign policy Establishment.[39]

Liberal shift

The last piece of evidence takes us nicely into a neglected aspect of intellectual and ideological shifts in foreign policy thinking over the past nearly two decades: the development of liberal interventionism or liberal hawkishness favouring democracy promotion and humanitarian intervention as the way to US and global security. *Ultimately, it is this development that evidences the growth of conservative power and enhances the power of the conservative foreign policy agenda of the Bush administration*, making it all the more likely that the post-Bush era will similarly be characterized by continued 'democracy-building' programmes in, and military occupation of, Iraq and the use of democracy-promotion policies, with and without force, with regard to the Middle East and other parts of the Third World.

Tony Smith argues that intellectual developments – such as democratic peace theory – internal to the concerns of liberal internationalists coinciding with the end of the Cold War and superpower military competition created the conditions for the emergence of a globally assertive American internationalism that wanted to put some military muscle behind the push for democracy and human rights. Committed to multilateralism and international law, the liberals therefore had to redefine the principle of state sovereignty – 'conditional sovereignty' Ivo Daalder and James Steinberg called it, in 2005 – in order to permit the international community – or 'Community of Democracies' as President Clinton and his secretary of state Madeleine Albright termed it – militarily to intervene to prevent humanitarian disasters, ethnic cleansing and genocide and to promote democracy. In effect, Smith argues, liberals' 'muscular multilateralism' for global human rights, democracy promotion, and peace, dovetailed with the conservatives' and neocons' unilateralism and focus on American preponderance to produce, after 9/11, a bipartisan consensus around the principles enunciated in the Bush doctrine.[40] Such dovetailing also led many liberals and Democratic Party leaders to support the American war on Iraq to defeat an undemocratic, brutal dictatorship, albeit one that had been contained for over a decade.

The Democratic Party's Progressive Policy Institute (PPI) – often known as Clinton's think-tank due to its close links with the Democratic Leadership Council – is a good example of the political impacts of intellectual shifts among liberal internationalists, according to Smith. The PPI counts among its supporters and statement signatories liberal hawks such as Robert Kerrey, Larry Diamond,

Kenneth Pollack and James Rubin and Democratic representatives and senators such as Stephen Solarz, Joseph Biden, Hillary Clinton, John Kerry and Joseph Lieberman.[41] PPI backed the Iraq War from the very beginning as part of a new decades-long war, like the Cold War, that demanded that America 'rally the forces of freedom and democracy around the world to defeat this new menace and build a better world'. According to Smith, the PPI's public statements on Iraq and the Middle East were even more militaristic than those of the PNAC. In 2005, the PPI declared that 'Today's Islamist terrorists could prove more dangerous than our Cold War adversaries .… [Therefore], Jihadist extremism will be the Democratic Party's first priority this year and every year until the danger recedes'. In short, the only point of difference between the PPI and allied liberal internationalists and the Bush administration was the robustness, determination and timeliness of the latter's policies, not the policies themselves. This 'terror war liberal interventionism' is, in effect, a twenty-first century variant of 'Cold War liberalism', along the lines of Arthur Schlesinger's *The Vital Center*.[42]

Conclusion

It is often argued that the neo-cons hijacked the Bush administration – particularly through the influence of the PNAC. I argue that this is for four reasons: first, their media presence drew attention to them out of all proportion to their policy influence; second, their bellicose message was attractive to the media in the wake of 9/11; third, they served a purpose for the Bush administration at a specific time and could be jettisoned if things went wrong (plausible deniability); finally, neo-cons represent a kind of pornography of the liberals, a lightning rod for criticism and rejection of the broader conservative movement of which neo-cons are the most vocal representatives.

It is clear, however, that there was no hijacking by neo-cons of the Bush administration. As the evidence above shows, and as Mickelthwait and Wooldridge argue in *The Right Nation*, what the neo-cons were saying for so long struck a chord with conservative America only after 9/11; the neo-cons' outlook captured and articulated the conservatives' mood – within the Bush administration and the country – and made it appear that the neo-cons were in control, that there was a 'neo-conservative moment'. In practice, it may well have been that the neo-cons were more servants than masters of the Bush administration. The American state – the conservative Establishment as represented by the Bush administration – may have used them much more than it was used by them.

My conclusion is that because of significant changes in the social composition, identity and attitudes of the US foreign policy Establishment, especially the rise of its conservative wing, and allied coincidental changes in liberal-intellectual foreign policy thinking – in the context of 9/11 – and the impacts of all these factors on the Democratic 'opposition' – any new administration's room for manoeuvre is severely limited; the direction of US foreign policy is now set for several years to come: its name is imperial expansion.

4

PATRIOTISM, NATIONAL IDENTITY, AND FOREIGN POLICY

The US–Israeli alliance in the twenty-first century

Caitlin Stewart

Introduction

Shifts in the religious landscape of the United States in the latter half of the twentieth century have produced a change in American self-identity and the meaning of patriotism for a growing number of evangelical Protestants. This chapter explores the support of a particular group of US Protestants – evangelical fundamentalists – for the State of Israel and how this support has altered its understanding of patriotism. Ardent evangelical fundamentalist support for Israel began in the 1970s and has since intensified. Their motives are biblical, separating them from the mainstream who tend to be pro-Israel because they pragmatically view Israel as a democratic ally in an unstable region of the world. Powerful political lobbying efforts, enormous sums of money donated to Israel, and the absolutist stance these Protestants take regarding Middle East foreign policy have significantly changed the relationship between religion and foreign policy in the United States. The development of an intimate relationship between evangelical leaders in the United States and hard-right Israeli politics has altered not only the US–Israeli alliance but also the relationship of the United States with the rest of the Middle East. In this way, evangelicals have redefined the meaning of patriotism itself. Israel often equals the United States as the destinies of the two nations are explicitly linked together. To be pro-America is to be pro-Israel.

Dispensational premillennialism and American religious identity

It is an intense religiosity that makes the United States unique among the industrialized nations of the West. While active church participation has declined in Western Europe, since the end of World War II, church attendance has increased in

the United States, driven, in part, by fear of atheistic communism. Paradoxically, the strict separation between church and state has only resulted in a dynamic relationship between Americans and their religion. Without state sponsorship, churches have grown adept in recruiting and sustaining membership.[1,2] Religious variety, therefore, flourishes in the United States. The nature of Protestantism itself, through its emphasis on self-interpretation of Scripture, further encourages denominational multiplicity – with each denomination or nondenominational organization competing for members. Dispensational premillennialism – a particular strain of evangelical Protestantism cultivated in this religious hothouse – combined fundamentalist and evangelical tendencies with a particular interest in prophecy to create a powerful movement in American Protestantism.

Originally imported to the United States from England by former Anglican priest John Nelson Darby in the late nineteenth century, dispensationalism added a prophetic element to fundamentalist Protestant theology.[3] Dispensational theologians teach that all of history is divided into seven distinct eras, or dispensations, each of which reflects a method by which God deals with humanity and is marked "by special characteristics which reveal God's plan of salvation." Dispensationalists believe that through the literal interpretation of scripture these seven dispensations can be identified, including the current one, "the Great Parenthesis," inaugurated with the Jews' rejection of Jesus as Messiah and the birth of Christianity.[4] Millenarian impulses in fundamentalist dispensationalism added greater theological complexity to this particular tendency in American Protestantism. At its most basic level, Christian premillennialism – "an internally varied and complex theological persuasion" – holds that Jesus Christ will, at some unknowable time, return to earth to defeat Satan and establish his kingdom of peace and justice for a thousand years.[5] Before the establishment of the millennial kingdom, however, a seven-year period of great suffering (the tribulation) will commence with the reign of the Anti-Christ on earth. *Pre*millennial dispensationalists, therefore, believe that Christians living on earth at the time of the Anti-Christ will be carried to heaven in a secret rapture *before* the Great Tribulation begins that will precede Christ's establishment of the millennial kingdom.

Israel and the Jews play a significant role in this end of days eschatology. The reestablishment of the nation of Israel in the land of Palestine marks one of the most significant precursors for the return of Christ to earth. Dispensational premillennialists teach that the Anti-Christ will miraculously establish peace in the Middle East, and thereby garner international support. He will then, however, turn his wrath upon the Jewish people who will refuse to consider him the Messiah. They will be the target of intense persecution before the final battle of Armageddon, which will take place in modern-day Israel. According to dispensational premillennialism, biblical prophecies apply most directly to the Jewish people, making fundamentalist American Protestants particularly interested in Israel and the Jewish people and the role both play in the end times.[6] Initially, dispensationalists exhibited an ambiguous attitude toward the Jews. According to historian Joel Carpenter, "as eager interpreters of the 'signs of the time,' they

were among the first Americans to see – and denounce – the Nazis' persecution of the Jews."[7] In a theme that would be echoed later in American Protestant–Israeli history, these fundamentalists charged that nations and individuals who plotted against the Jews were always destroyed by God. At the same time, however, early dispensationalism's focus on the hereafter created a passive attitude toward active involvement in current events, making them, as Carpenter asserts, "susceptible to some of the most vicious conspiracy theories" of the 1930s.[8] As a result, "many found themselves embracing aspects of Zionism and anti-Semitism at the same time." By the 1950s, however, the anti-Nazi propaganda of World War II, the knowledge of the Holocaust in the war's wake, and the anticommunist rhetoric of the Cold War led to the development of a Judeo-Christian culture that de-emphasized religious differences between Christians and Jews.[9]

Despite the intense interest in current events and world affairs, premillennial dispensationalists initially eschewed involvement in politics and foreign policy. Their focus was otherworldly and the emphasis lay in converting as many souls as possible before time ran out. A particular boon to their recruitment occurred after the national realignment of the world map following World War I appeared to vindicate their prophetic predictions, particularly the establishment of the British Mandate in Palestine and the Balfour Declaration. Moreover, using biblical prophecy to explain tumultuous, and sometimes frightening, world events appealed to many American Protestants and made dispensational premillennial fundamentalism "the most influential evangelical movement in the United States during the second quarter of the twentieth-century."[10]

The embarrassment of the Scopes Monkey Trial in 1925 stung the fundamentalists in their attempts to shape domestic policies.[11] Reticent after the 1920s to actively participate in politics, the post-World War II period ignited a new conviction among theologians and scholars that to reclaim American culture necessitated participation in domestic and international affairs. Fundamentalism, "more than any other Protestant movement or tradition" propelled the new Religious Right into the political arena.[12]

Driven by their disgust of the increasingly liberal society around them and emboldened by the teachings of theologian Francis Schaeffer (1912–84), American fundamentalists set about engaging American society and working to change it. Schaeffer, an American expatriate living in Switzerland, argued that Christians should "concentrate on rescuing their world from moral decay rather than on dwelling on apocalyptic fantasies about its end."[13] He insisted that Americans' self-satisfied moral complacency posed a dangerous threat. He wrote, "we must not forget that the world is on fire. We are not only losing the church, but our entire culture as well. We live in the post-Christian world which is under the judgment of God. Some people think that just because the United States of America is the United States of America, because Britain is Britain, they will not come under the judgment of God. This is not so."[14]

Fundamentalists' motivation stemmed not only from moral conviction but also from a sense of patriotism. According to Walter Capps, a synthesis of "selected

Christian theological judgments" with "specific conceptions of how a democracy ought to function" created a dynamic belief among the Religious Right that "[American fundamentalism] carries the authority of both the Bible and the guiding philosophical principles of the nation's Founding Fathers."[15] Capps argues that "The leadership of the movement will always be dedicated toward achieving an effective working relationship between national piety and national patriotism so that the two might function as harmonizing collaborative teammates in the pursuit of the common good."[16] The emphasis on prophecy among dispensational premillennialists provided a specific plan of action for national and international affairs – a stance that "was able to position itself much closer to the center of national public life."[17] This combination of piety and patriotism would eventually produce a new version of American self-identity, however: one that equated Christian patriotism with pro-hard-right Israeli foreign policy.

The rise of the moral majority and the eclipse of liberal Protestantism

Since the 1960s, the decline of congregations and influence of mainline Protestantism in the United States – which has traditionally advocated a more even-handed approach to Middle East affairs – have been matched by the rise of dispensational fundamentalism. Since the 1970s, a flurry of books, such as Hal Lindsay's best-selling, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, Tim LaHaye's *Left Behind* series, movies, and seminars have popularized the dispensational movement in American Protestantism. Now, as one political lobbyist in DC argues, "such theology represents the dominant strain of Christian thinking in America."[18] As the movement's numbers continued to rise, it grew increasingly politically savvy, marking a distinct turn from a previous eschewing of interference in worldly affairs. Timothy Weber, in *On the Road to Armageddon*, notes that prior to the mid-1960s, most fundamentalist evangelicals were "content to watch the game from the sidelines" rather than try to effect change themselves.[19] They believed God's purposes would be fulfilled regardless of human action. The birth of Israel in 1948 and the capture and unification of Jerusalem following the 1967 Six-Day War changed that and propelled them off the sidelines and into the game.

This political shift coincided with a cultural shift of views toward Israel. According to historian Michelle Mart, the Judeo-Christian culture of post-war America "Christianized" not only the Jews, but the Israelis as well, making them appear less foreign to US Protestants and led to a less-threatening view of Israeli culture. American culture glamorized Israelis – tough warriors and people of the Bible – at the expense of their "other" Arab neighbors.[20] This cultural transformation accelerated the political mobilization of evangelical Protestants who were quick to combine cultural and religious interest with political activism on Israel's behalf.

By the late 1970s, evangelical fundamentalist Protestants' growing numbers and influence challenged and eventually defeated the hegemony of liberal mainstream Protestantism in US politics. Many scholars attribute the rise of evangelical Protestant

political activism to the establishment of the Moral Majority in 1979 by the evangelist Jerry Falwell. One of the largest conservative lobby groups in the United States, the Moral Majority represented a concerted effort by evangelical Christians to enact domestic and foreign policies on behalf of the values of conservative Protestants. Its membership roster numbered in the millions and reflected a veritable who's who of significant American evangelicals including Pat Robertson, Tim and Beverly LaHaye, Jim and Tammy Baker, and well-known Atlanta minister, Charles Stanley, among others. Echoing Nixon's call to the "Silent Majority" during the 1960s, the Moral Majority claimed that its platform reflected the concerns of the majority of Americans. Its four founding principles included opposition to abortion, the upholding of traditional marriage, strong US defense, and support for Israel.

Clearly Israel is not the only factor influencing increasing evangelical Protestantism's political activism. Certainly other issues, like abortion, prayer in school, the teaching of evolution, gay rights, and other topics created platforms to rally around for these Protestants. While issues of foreign policy are not the only concern this group had, the way the modern nation of Israel became engrained into their religious eschatology became an issue of paramount importance. In addressing its support for Israel and a strong national defense, the Moral Majority focused its attention on foreign policy issues and stringently lobbied the Congress and the president to enact policies favorable to Israel's security. Israel and its role in the fulfillment of biblical prophecy factored heavily into the Moral Majority's theological interests, making it sympathetic to Israeli claims to the Holy Land.

Many scholars including Donald Wagner (1998), Gersham Gorenberg (2000), and Timothy Weber (2004) have addressed the biblical interest American evangelicals express toward Israel.[21] They have charged that the dispensationalist premillennialist tendency of evangelicals consistently resisted efforts to secure peace in the Middle East. These Protestants denied recognition of Palestinian rights and claims to statehood because they felt that such concessions betrayed Israel's biblical mandate to possess all of the Holy Land. Peace will only come when the Messiah returns at the end of days to establish his kingdom on earth, after the apocalyptic battle of Armageddon. They believed, therefore, that human efforts to affect peace were counter to God's purposes.

The platform of no land for peace has been a consistent one for evangelical Protestants in the United States. Nowhere was this more apparent than during Jimmy Carter's presidency. Coinciding with the evangelical Baptist's election, *Time* Magazine declared 1976 the "Year of the Evangelical." Carter's support of Israel stemmed as much from his evangelical upbringing as his geopolitical pragmatism. As one historian noted, "as a child he had studied maps of the Holy Land and identified the sites of Bible stories. By the time he was three years old, he had a greater knowledge about Palestine than he did about the rest of America." In his autobiography, Carter stated that he "considered this homeland for the Jews to be compatible with the teachings of the Bible, hence ordained by God."[22] Yet Carter worked to broker the Camp David Accords in 1979 and was willing to sell arms to Israel's professed enemies. These actions garnered him intense criticism from both Jews and evangelical Protestants, particularly Jerry Falwell.

Political mobilization on behalf of Israel began with a rejection of Carter's recognition of Palestinian right to statehood and the exchange of land for peace. American evangelicals declared that such a position directly contradicted the biblical mandate for Israeli claims to all of the Holy Land. While other factors played a role in Reagan's defeat of Carter, exit polls revealed that he lost both the Jewish and the evangelical vote – a significant part of his previous base. Willing to ignore Carter's outspoken faith in favor of hard-right Israeli interests, Falwell urged his followers to support Ronald Reagan's campaign. Presidents since Carter increasingly have had to consider the powerful voting bloc evangelicals now wield.

Under Reagan, who identified with the Christian Zionist movement and saw Israel as a valuable ally in the Cold War, Israel received three billion dollars annually in the form of grants as well as Reagan's vocal support in the United Nations.[23] After coming under increasing fire in the United Nations for its activities in Lebanon, Israel found a strong ally in Reagan. On December 4, 1983, Reagan declared, "if Israel is ever forced to leave the U.N., the United States and Israel will leave together."[24]

While Jerry Falwell enjoyed friendly relations with Reagan during his presidency, Falwell's connection to significant figures in the Israeli hard-right Likud government created what one scholar termed, a "theopolitical alliance."[25] After meeting Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin during Falwell's first trip to Israel, Falwell and several other prominent ministers wrote a letter to the Israeli Prime Minister that pledged their unwavering support for Israel and emphasized America's common interests with its Middle East ally:

> As Americans who are dedicated to the cause of freedom, we share love of liberty, commitment to democratic institutions, and respect for the dignity of the individual fashioned in the image of God with the people of Israel. We also know that the State of Israel plays a crucial and strategic role in protecting the security of our own country and of all freedom-loving peoples. Israel stands as a bulwark of strength and determination against those, who by terror and blackmail, threaten our democratic way of life. At a time when the reliability of America's traditional allies is increasingly called into question, we salute the State of Israel for your steadfast friendship and for your loyalty and devotion to the ties which bind our nations together. Israel has always upheld America, and as Christian leaders, we pledge to uphold Israel.[26]

The statement went further than simply an expression of pragmatic support for a democratic ally in the Middle East, however. Reiterating their objection to land-for-peace negotiations, the statement continued: "On theological, as well as historical grounds, we proclaim that the Land, Israel, encompasses Judea and Samaria, as integral parts of the Jewish patrimony, with Jerusalem as its indivisible capital." Furthermore, they noted, "we acknowledge the rights of Jewish settlements in these areas."[27] Evangelical fundamentalists' opposition to land negotiations had broad implications for US policy in the Middle East. Palestinian

claims to statehood constituted a "grave threat" to Israeli security, and pressure by the United Nations and Europeans to force Israel to return to its 1967 borders should be resisted at all costs, according to these Protestants. Such concessions not only jeopardized Israeli rights to a biblical mandate to possess all of the Holy Land, but also "the strategic interests of the United States and the Western world."[28] Land negotiations with Palestinians, Jordanians, Syrians, and Lebanese endangered Israeli and American security.

When Begin bombed the Iraqi nuclear reactor a year later, his first call to the United States was not to President Reagan but to Falwell, asking him to explain Israel's rationale in the preemptive strike to evangelicals in the United States. Falwell responded: "Mr. Prime Minister, I want to congratulate you for a mission that made us very proud that we manufacture those F-16s. In my opinion," he added, "you must've put it right down the smokestack."[29] Falwell, like Begin, believed that Israel and the United States had common enemies. In this respect, theirs was "a common stand" against common enemies – which tied America's fate unambiguously to Israel's. Falwell argued that biblical mandate necessitated American support of Israel and condemned the National Council of Churches for its public criticism of Israel's action in Iraq. "These ecclesiastical leaders do not speak for a majority of Christians in America," Falwell told reporters.[30] Falwell insisted that "God promises to bless those who blessed the children of Abraham and curse those who cursed Israel. I think history supports the fact that he has been true to his word. When you go back to the pharaohs, the Caesars, Adolf Hitler and the Soviet Union, all those who dared to touch the apple of God's eye – Israel – have been punished by God. America has been blessed because she has blessed Israel."[31] Walter Capps argues that "In Falwell's mind, the United States has an obligation to support and encourage Israel, that is, if the United States is to remain strong and vital."[32] Evangelicals across the United States echoed Falwell's conviction of the necessity of support for Israel in order for America to prosper. Missionary and Bible Light International founder Elmer Josephson highlighted the promise of Genesis 12:3 – "I will bless them that bless thee" – when considering the attitude Christians should take toward Jews in the United States and Israelis.[33] Fundamentalist theologians such as Gleason L. Archer of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School warned that "we see his hand of judgment upon all of those nations and empires who have treated His people with unkindness." In an article entitled "Eight Reasons Why Evangelicals Care about the Land of Israel," Archer noted one particular reason for Israeli support that pro-Israel evangelicals would use as a mission statement in the decades to come. "The highway of human history is littered with the bones of those who have unjustly oppressed and slaughtered the nations of the Jews," he wrote. "We are taught that the future belongs to them as the leader and upholder of the new kingdom which Christ will establish in the land of Israel after his triumph over all the forces of the ungodly at the Battle of Armageddon."[34]

Such evangelical insistence that American support for Israel was vital to American prosperity resonated with Pastor John Hagee, of the nondenominational

Cornerstone megachurch in San Antonio, Texas. Shocked by the United States' public condemnation of the Osirak bombing, on September 10, 1981, Hagee orchestrated a "Night to Honor Israel" in which his church raised ten thousand dollars for a local chapter of Hadassah. Hagee would continue to hold more "Nights to Honor Israel" in his own church and in churches across the nation, raising millions of dollars over the following decades.

Evangelicals gain political strength

Since the founding of the Moral Majority in 1979, the political power of fundamentalists has only strengthened, and along with it, their support of Israel. Part of the new Religious Right's growing influence can be traced to the establishment of the Christian Coalition by Pat Robertson following his unsuccessful bid for the Presidency in 1988. The Christian Coalition, following on the heels of the Moral Majority, created a highly influential political advocacy group and voter mobilization program that galvanized evangelicals to continue political agitation. With membership reaching well over the one million mark, its contribution to political activism for the Christian right in the past few decades has been significant. According to a recent report by *The Christian Century*, mainline Protestantism's most influential journal, by 2000, evangelical fundamentalists represented over a third of the membership of the Republican Party and exercised significant influence in the Republican Party in approximately 30 states.[35] David Brog, who worked for Arlen Specter as his chief of staff and is now the head lobbyist in DC. for Christian Zionism, asserts that "when Republicans hold the balance of power in Washington, evangelical Christians become *the most* powerful pro-Israel force in America" and constitute "the largest single voting block within the Republican Party."[36] They raise "millions of dollars every year" for Israel, and their numbers often eclipse those of Jewish tourists in Israel.

Recently, in an effort to unite disparate Christian support of Israel, Pastor John Hagee founded Christians United For Israel.[37] Its purpose lay in providing a coherent, powerful, and politically influential lobby representing a wide swath of Protestantism to work to influence US foreign policy. Christians United for Israel (CUFI) exists, as they proclaim on their Web site, "to provide a national association through which the Israel church, Para-church organization, ministry or individual in America can speak and act with one voice in support of Israel in matters related to Biblical issues."[38] In order to mobilize members, CUFI offers frequent "Middle East Intelligence Briefings" to its members that include notable guest speakers such as Jim Woolsey, former Central Intelligence Agency director, and Lt Gen. Moshe Yaalon, the former Chief of the General Staff for the Israeli Defense Forces. Members can sign up for a "Rapid Response Membership" that includes weekly e-mail updates about current issues affecting Israel. Quoting Isaiah 62: 6–7 ("I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; They shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the Lord, do not keep silent, and give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem

a praise in the earth"), members are encouraged to "send letters, faxes or emails to their elected officials when issues critical to Israel's security come before Congress."[39]

Members of CUFI believe that Israel has a biblical mandate to all of the Holy Land, including parts of Jordan, Lebanon, and Egypt. To consider statehood for Palestinians or to relinquish any land at all is in direct contradiction to scriptural teachings and their theopolitical worldview. Their interpretation of the Bible explicitly negates any land-for-peace deals, including the now defunct "Roadmap to Peace." Hagee declared recently that, "Diplomacy would only make God angry."[40] Hagee and those sympathetic to CUFI's aims argue that only uncritical and adamant support for Israeli security and claims to land will allow the United States *itself* to be blessed and prosper. Their support of hard-lined Israeli policies is not only given in anticipation of the end times and fulfillment of biblical prophesies but also as a way to provide security for the United States in the war against terror.

Political alliances

Not all agree, however, that patriotism and piety are so closely intertwined. Criticism from Abraham Foxman of the Anti-Defamation League highlights the uneasy alliance many American Jews feel toward pro-Israel American evangelicals. Foxman has long been critical of the close alliance between American fundamentalists and the Israeli hard-right and was particularly critical of former Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's meeting with Jerry Falwell in 1998, accusing him of "crude and insensitive behavior."[41] Robert Zimmerman, president of the American Jewish Congress, points to the conflict of interest between the Religious Right and liberal Jews in American politics. Jews, who traditionally support issues anathema to the Religious Right, including abortion, separation of church and state, and the opposition of prayer in public schools, are allying themselves with a political agenda that "threatens the freedoms that make Jews safe in America."[42] Others within the American Jewish community are less concerned. "Praise God and pass the ammunition," responded Nathan Perlmutter, Director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, to Jewish concerns about fundamentalist agendas. Lenny Ben David, formerly associated with The American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and the Israel Embassy in DC, stated that "until I see Jesus coming over the hill, I am in favor of all the friends Israel can get."[43] Attitudes within Israel echo David's pragmatism. The Israelis who discount fundamentalist theology are nonetheless happy to take evangelical tourist dollars, benefit from political lobbying efforts of Christian Zionists, and nurture close relationships with important fundamentalist figures in America. In the 1980s, while courting Falwell's support, former Prime Minister Begin stated, "I tell you, if the Christian fundamentalists support us in Congress today, I will support them when the Messiah comes tomorrow."[44]

For Brog, the head lobbyist for CUFI and a Jew, evangelical support for Israel is not based on the *prophecies* of the Book of Revelations but rather on the

promises of the Book of Genesis – namely those that assure blessings will come to those who support Israel – a shift of theological emphasis that mollifies some Jews concerned about fundamentalist support for Israel. According to Brog "there was a revolution in Christian theology toward the Jews in America, but no one noticed."[45] Far from a "Faustian bargain," evangelical support for Israel should be embraced by American Jews and Israelis as these evangelicals "are nothing less than the theological heirs of the righteous Gentiles who sought to save Jews from the Holocaust."[46] Noting recent concerns expressed by Foxman that "evangelical Christians are the greatest domestic threat to the Jews," Brog fused patriotism and Christian Zionism together in his answer. He retorted, "I wish we lived in a world where law-abiding, patriotic, and philo-Semitic Christians were our biggest worry." When asked about his defense of Pat Robertson, Brog combined patriotism and pro-Israeli policies in his reply. Calling him "a good man," Brog pointed out that Robertson "has served America and Israel admirably over a long career."[47]

Brog also claims that since 9/11 "evangelicals recognized along with many other Americans that radical Islam was the greatest threat facing our country and we were in a war with its proponents." In this context, Brog argues, "Israel is seen as an ally … the first line of defense of Judeo-Christian civilization." Despite theological differences between himself and the lobby he represents, Brog claims that his decision to work for Hagee and CUFI stemmed from a belief that "it was the most important thing I could do, not only for Israel but for America."[48] He stated, "What matters more and what is of a much deeper significance [than theological differences], is everything that we share. We share a love for Israel and love for America. And we share an understanding of the war on radical Islamic terror, and that makes us brothers."[49]

The recent controversy over the "The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy" paper published in the March 23, 2006 issue of the *London Review of Books* highlights yet another angle of the US Evangelical–Israeli alliance. While authors John T. Mearsheimer of the University of Chicago and Stephen M. Walt of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government focus their criticisms of the undue influence of the Israel lobby on American foreign and domestic policies on AIPAC, they include Christian Zionists in the broader group of pro-Israel political lobbies operating in Washington.

Members of the "realist" school of foreign policy, Mearsheimer and Walt argued that the close US–Israel alliance served a valuable purpose during the Cold War by countering Soviet influence in the Middle East. With the end of the Cold War, however, Mearsheimer and Walt insist that strategic interests in the area no longer privilege the close US–Israel connection. Moreover, they claim, US support for hard-lined Israeli policies impedes progress in the Middle East by alienating Arab nations, derailing peace efforts, and fostering anti-American terrorism.

Ultimately, they argue, the pro-Israel lobby works as an impediment to patriotism by putting the interests of another country before that of the United States. According to the authors, the pro-Israel lobby "has convinced Americans that US

and Israeli interests are essentially identical."[50] Response to the paper varied widely. In Israel, the daily left-leaning *Haaretz* declared it would be "irresponsible to ignore its serious and disturbing message," while the right-wing *The Jerusalem Post* denounced it.[51] Clearly, however, the conflicting views of patriotism expressed by both critics of the pro-Israel lobby and its supporters, particularly fundamentalist evangelicals, remain a significant issue.

Far from serving as the liberal's benign bogeyman, evangelical Protestantism's political influence is very real. Michelle Goldberg, author of *Kingdom Coming: The Rise of Christian Nationalism* noted in an interview with the BBC that "evangelical Christians have substantial influence on US Middle East policy – more so than some better known names such as AIPAC."[52] Over 50 percent of Americans claim to be Protestants, and evangelical Christians comprise a substantial number of that group. An ABC News/Belief Net Poll conducted in 2001 revealed that 38 percent of Americans define themselves as "born-again" evangelical Christians.[53] Moreover, a 2006 survey conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life revealed that "there are far more evangelicals in America than Jews" comprising "about a quarter of the US population (Jews make up about two percent)." The survey also revealed that "two in three evangelicals believe that the establishment of the state of Israel fulfills Biblical prophecy." Aware of the potential political power evangelicals possess in the United States, Hagee remarked, "When a congressman sees someone from AIPAC coming through the door, he knows he represents six million people. We represent forty million people."[54] David Klinghoffer of *The Jerusalem Post* acknowledged the political prowess of evangelical American support for Israel: "The U.S. is Israel's best friend largely because the American Christian community wills it to be so."[55]

Emboldened by the promise of God's blessings for the United States if it supports Israel, Hagee has become a savvy political mobilizer. Max Blumenthal insists that despite the fact that Hagee has less name recognition than Pat Robertson or Jerry Falwell, he is among the ten most influential political leaders in the United States – due primarily to the size of his congregation and his influence in the Republican Party.[56] On July 18 and 19, 2006, CUFI held its first national summit entitled "A Night to Support Israel" drawing a crowd of 3000 evangelicals from all fifty states who claimed 280 scheduled meetings with representatives on Capital Hill in order to proclaim their support for "Israel's right to the land by Biblical Mandate."[57] At the evening banquet on the last night, supporters were turned away at the door for lack of seating. Attendants included Israeli Ambassador Daniel Ayalon, Republican Senators Rick Santorum and Sam Brownback, and Republican National Committee chairman Ken Mehlman. Following the summit, on July 27, 2006, four members of Congress and Democrats Eliot Engel of New York and Gene Green of Texas joined with Republicans Dave Weldon of Florida and Trent Franks of Arizona to create the Israel Allies Caucus.

The Israel Allies Caucus serves as the American counterpart to the Christian Allies Caucus in the Israeli Knesset. Founded on January 5, 2004, the Christian Allies Caucus unites disparate Christian groups under the Christian Zionist

umbrella to advocate their political agenda within the Knesset. Josh Reinstein, director of the Caucus, points to its birth to prove that "the line between the political and the biblical is disappearing."[58] In the United States, the bipartisan Israel Allies Caucus serves the same purpose. Last July, claiming over 25 congressional members, the Israel Allies Caucus advocated for additional time for the Israeli military to accomplish its goals in Lebanon before the implementation of a US-backed ceasefire. In fact, as journalist Max Blumenthal recently asserted in an interview with National Public Radio, the Israel Allies Caucus and CUFI – who had earlier helped to torpedo Bush's "Roadmap to Peace – claimed sole responsibility for convincing the State Department to hold off for a month on the demands for a cease-fire in Lebanon to allow the Israelis military carte blanch."[59] Evangelicals who attended the annual summit in DC pressured their representatives to "not restrain Israel in any way in the pursuit of Hamas and Hezbollah."[60]

CUFI's effective lobbying efforts impressed AIPAC. Recognizing Hagee as one of the most politically powerful pro-Israel Protestants in the United States, AIPAC invited him to speak at the AIPAC Policy Conference on March 11, 2007. Hagee began his remarks by cementing the relationship between evangelicals and AIPAC. He suggested that they "look to America's mainline churches and their initiatives to divest from Israel. You go to the bookstore and see slanderous titles by the former President of the United States and you feel very much alone." But, he continued, to great applause: "I came here tonight to deliver a message to you from those millions of evangelicals in America and I want to say this as clearly and plainly as I can possibly say it – Israel you are not alone." The effort to "parcel out parts of Israel in a futile effort to appease Israel's enemies" would be met with fierce resistance by evangelical Americans, Hagee promised. Evangelicals would lobby for Israel to influence the State Department and the "political brothel that is now the United Nations."[61] Hagee explained their support stemmed from the promises of Genesis 12 and 13 in the Torah and added, "we believe those blessings are very real and those judgments are very real." Hagee concluded his remarks with a vision sure to terrify the critics of AIPAC and the "Israel Lobby": "think of our potential future together: fifty million evangelicals joining in common cause with five million Jewish people in America on behalf of Israel is a match made in heaven."[62]

The CUFI and AIPAC lobbies have encountered a president amenable to their agenda in many ways. "It seems like presidents like Reagan and Bush who have a foundation in the Bible have a better understanding of what Israel's role is in the world," said Helen Freedman, executive director of Americans for a Safe Israel, a pro-Israeli lobby group in New York City. "Reagan shared a spiritual bond with Israel that has been compared with President Bush's understanding of the strategic, historic, and biblical role of Israel."[63] David Brog agrees that "there is a definite reason to believe that Bush's faith does affect his administrative policy, both foreign and domestic." Pointing to the differences in former president Bush's policies toward Israel, Brog asked, "Have geopolitics really changed so much since Bush 41 left the White House? No. Has the religious orientation of the president changed? You bet."[64]

President George W. Bush, elected with the help of pro-Israel evangelical Christians, has also expressed the desire to passionately defend Israel. As a recent *New York Times* article revealed, in Bush's first meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, an observer remarked that Bush immediately declared that "'I'll use force to protect Israel,' which was kind of a shock to everybody. It was like, 'Whoa, where did that come from?'"[65] According to the author of the article, Sheryl Gay Stolberg, this intense support of Israel stems from two things. First, Bush sees Israel as a stalwart ally in the war on terror. "It is [9/11] that caused the President to really associate himself with Israel, with this notion that for the first time, Americans can feel on their skin what Israelis have been feeling all along," as one scholar at Brandeis University insists. Second, Bush is motivated by the concerns of his "staunchly pro-Israeli" evangelical Republican base. But perhaps most tellingly, Martin S. Indyk, President Clinton's former ambassador to Israel, insists that for Bush "there is a religiously inspired connection to Israel in which he feels, as President, a responsibility for Israel's survival."[66]

A new American patriotism

Since World War II, "Israel has received more direct aid from the U.S. than any other country," notes Mitchell Bard, a member of the American–Israeli Cooperative Enterprise.[67] While in 1998 under President Bill Clinton, the Israelis voluntarily agreed to phase out US assistance over a ten-year plan, the acknowledgment of phased-out US financial support of Israel has encouraged evangelicals to mobilize to raise money for a wide variety of Israeli causes. Financial assistance to Israel from John Hagee has grown dramatically since he held his first "Night to Honor Israel." By 2004, Hagee's nationwide "Night to Honor Israel" events resulted in checks for over 2.25 million dollars to Jewish organizations that support Israel – one of the largest non-Jewish fund-raisers in the United States. Hagee has repeatedly insisted that the best way to insure America's future is to deepen the US–Israeli alliance. Claiming that the scriptural promises that "he who blesses Israel, I will bless" is "God's foreign policy," members of CUFI work hard to ensure the House and Senate reflect their concerns. While many political commentators have noted his powerful political lobbying efforts in DC and his influence in the Republican Party, this power comes from grassroots evangelical supporters across the United States who, at Hagee's request, write to their senators, travel at their own expense to meet with Congressional representatives in DC, donate money to Israel, watch his telecasts on the Trinity Broadcast Network, and buy his books by the millions.

In Hagee's best-selling books, he argues that an attack on Israel is an attack on the United States itself. Nowhere is this argument more clearly stated than in John Hagee's book, *Attack on America: New York, Jerusalem, and the Role of Terrorism in the Last Days* (2001). Tellingly, only one quarter of the book addresses the United States directly. The remaining three-quarters – despite the book's title – are concerned with Israel in general and Jerusalem in particular. Hagee's folksy tone

in *Attack on America* does little to mitigate the chilling warning he offers his readers. Support of Israeli claims to the Holy Land marks an essential test of the righteous Gentile nations. Hagee defines the biblical mandate in broad terms:

> Israel rightfully owns all of the land God gave to Abraham by blood covenant, "from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates," and "from the wilderness and Lebanon … even to the Western Sea" (Gen. 15:18; Deut. 11:24). Ezekiel 48:1 establishes the northern boundary of Israel as the city of Hamath; the southern boundary is established in Ezekiel 48: 28 as the city of Kadesh. In modern terms, Israel rightfully owns all of present day Israel, all of Lebanon, half of Syria, two-thirds of Jordan, all of Iraq, and the northern portion of Saudi Arabia.[68]

Jerusalem cannot be divided, and Palestinians are not to be negotiated with. "Believe it my friend," he warns, "as long as humans are negotiating for the peace of Jerusalem, real peace will not come. The Temple Mount stands in the way. The 'converted or be destroyed' creed of Islam will not allow it."[69] Hagee exhorted his readers to "let our resolve be felt in the halls of Congress, through the corridors of the United Nations, and to every enemy of Israel. Never again will Jerusalem be divided!"[70] Human efforts at peace in the Middle East are both contrary to God's will and pointless. "Let me assure you," Hagee concluded, "peace will never come to Israel nor to the world until the world has a conference with the Prince of Peace."[71] Repeatedly throughout *Attack on America*, Hagee reminded his readers that unless the United States stood with Israel in its claims to land, the United States would collapse and come under the judgment of God. The blessings God promised those who blessed Israel remained in effect, from the Old Testament to the present. At the end of days, Hagee warned, Christ will "judge the gentile nations of earth for the manner in which they treated the Jewish people and Israel." The Roman Catholic Church and the British Empire would not escape judgment, the former for its historic anti-Semitism and the later for "its White Paper policies during World War II and before."[72]

Moving beyond the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, Hagee engaged the conflict with Iran in his latest book, *Jerusalem Countdown: A Warning to the World* (2006). In it, he argues that Israel and the United States must move preemptively against Iran's nuclear capabilities. To do otherwise, he argues, would be to commit national suicide. It is unclear, perhaps purposefully, whose national suicide Hagee is referring to – the United States' or Israel's. Once again he warns his readers, "Those nations who align with God's purposes will receive his blessing. Those who follow a policy of opposition to God's purposes will receive the swift and severe judgment of God without limitation."[73]

The dual themes of blessings and judgment are constantly reiterated in Hagee's lucrative public appeals, as well. On May 22, 2007, on a Trinity Broadcast Network telecast, Hagee reminded his viewers of God's promise that "if you, as an American Christian, if you do not stand up and speak up, I will raise another

supporter for Israel, but you will not be saved."[74] Advertising the upcoming CUFI National Summit to be held in July of 2007, Hagee warned that if Americans did not do all they could to support Israel, "God will allow judgment to come to America in spades."[75] In order to be counted as the righteous among the Gentile nations, true patriotism calls for conjoining the fates of the United States and Israel. As is obvious from Hagee's book title, *Attack on America*, the United States is under attack whenever and wherever Israel is under attack.

Conclusion

During the Cold War, anticommunism defined patriotism for American Protestants. Now, however, patriotism equals pro-hard-right Israeli policies for evangelicals. Never before in US history has US foreign policy been so closely tied with that of another nation's. Radical Islamic terrorism has replaced Soviet communism as the common enemy of the United States and Israel. But evangelicals have gone beyond the advantages of strategic antiterrorism alliances in the support of Israel. The political power and fund-raising skills of evangelical fundamentalists pose a daunting threat to politicians and government officials working to improve US respectability and authority in the region – a necessary precursor for change.

Their intimate alliance with hard-right Israeli politicians has implications beyond the question of US–Israel alliance. Their staunch opposition to land-for-peace deals and their unwillingness to negotiate with Israel's neighbors poses a challenge for Congress, the President, and the State Department in brokering Middle East peace. The rhetoric used by Hagee and others to describe Muslims, and Arabs in general, hardly fosters an atmosphere of mutual trust necessary to work with countries in the region, especially when one considers their claim that Israel's biblical mandate to the land encompasses most of Israel's neighbors. Former President Jimmy Carter serves as a warning to other Presidents. Carter brokered one of the most important peace negotiations in the modern history of the Middle East and lost the evangelical vote because of his willingness to sell arms to Israel's neighbors and offer land for peace.

US support for Israel is important to Christian Zionists not only for the immediate future but also for the time when all the nations of the world will be called to account for their treatment of the Jews and Israel. They want very much for the United States to be counted among the "righteous Gentile nations." Evangelical leaders point to two scripture verses to support this claim: Genesis 12:3 – "I will bless them that bless thee" – and Psalm 122:6 – "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee."[76] As one evangelical leader noted as early as the 1950s, "We see His hand of judgment upon all of those nations and empires who have treated His people with unkindness."[77] Patriotism must be synonymous with pro-hard-right Israeli policies, lest the United States be judged as unrighteous. The fates of the two nations are inextricably linked.

Evangelical fundamentalist theological convictions represent a new religio-patriotism that is reshaping national identity in the twenty-first century.

Robertson's, Hagee's, and Falwell's pro-Israeli stance does not substantially deviate from a long tradition of evangelical and fundamentalist support for Israel based on biblical promises of prosperity and blessings. What has changed is the degree to which evangelicals have shaped current policies through their new-found political power and have altered US national identity as a result.

Economic and diplomatic self-interest can *only* be considered in view of their consequences for Israeli security and expansion. According to such thinking, these two interests are never contradictory. They believe that the patriotic solution is to defer to Israeli interests to ensure God's blessing on the United States and mobilize politically to achieve that goal. To identify one's self as an American is to identify with Israel and to align oneself with Israel against all other nations, particularly Arab, who would threaten harm. Since 9/11, US concerns over terrorism have added a stronger element of identification with Israel and have aided Christian Zionists in their attempts to link US national identity to their pro-Israel agenda. To these Protestants, support for Israel is not simply a question of strategic alliance in the war on terror but one that promises to ensure the continuing prosperity of the nation and to garner the blessings of God as a "righteous Gentile nation." For pro-Israel Protestants, to support Israel *is* to support America.

THE COMPLEX FATE OF BEING AMERICA

The constitution of identity and the politics of security[1]

Ed Lock

Introduction

Despite fierce scholarly debate regarding the validity of doing so, it remains an almost ubiquitous practice to refer to states as being analogous to individual human beings.[2] Underpinning such a practice are the assumptions that such entities exist and, more pressingly, that they possess identities that are at least somewhat settled,[3] for it is the presumed existence of identity that makes such statements both possible and logical.[4] If identity has long been of implicit importance within the discourse of international politics, it has more recently become of explicit interest to scholars of the foreign and security policies of states because, it has been argued, the identity of a state will influence how it behaves within the international system.[5]

It is in this context that much has been written regarding the identity of the United States. On the one hand, this interest in American identity represents a logical product of the fact that understanding the foreign and security policy of the United States is of particular importance due to that country's unrivalled power within the contemporary international system.[6] On the other hand, it is worth noting that the identity of the United States has long been a subject of interest for scholars and observers because of the presumed uniqueness of the subject.[7] There is something intangible and yet intriguing about the identity of America. Perhaps this is because, as David Campbell has argued, 'if all states are "imagined communities" … then America is the imagined community par excellence. For there has never been a country called "America," nor a people known as "Americans" from whom a national identity is drawn'.[8] Whatever the reason, questions regarding the identity of the United States and how it might influence US security policy are of great contemporary importance.

To say that the desire to understand the identity of the United States may be great is not to suggest that gaining such understanding shall be easy. After all,

identities are likely to be multiple and contested rather than single and settled.[9] Furthermore, identities must continuously be reproduced through political practices.[10] This latter point only increases the importance of examining the relationship between security policy and identity, for if the identity of a state such as the United States is produced, it is security policy practices that are one of the key sites at which such production takes place.[11]

It is the relationship between US identity and US security policy that this chapter seeks to examine. More precisely, this chapter constructs an account of this relationship that highlights the importance of two features of US identity and the implications that these hold with regard to security policy. On the one hand, it traces connections between representations of the United States as an exceptional sovereign state and security policies directed at the maintenance of US political autonomy, the promotion of US military supremacy and the defeat of existential threats to America's territory and population. On the other hand, this chapter traces connections between representations of the United States as a member of a community of states bound together by common values concerning freedom and democracy and a security policy directed towards the constructive integration of an international society shaped by the values of the American Creed. Importantly, neither of these representations of US identity – and therefore neither of these security policies – is understood to be independent of the other. Instead, it is because of the interrelated nature of these representations within the discourse of US security policy-makers that US security policy, and thus the fate of America itself, are so complex.

This chapter proceeds in four sections. First, this chapter elucidates the conceptual relationship between identity and security policy. Key to this section is the argument that not only are the concepts of 'identity' and 'security' each constructed and contested but also that the two are interrelated. Second, two representations of US identity that are evident within the discourse of security policy are identified and examined. The first of these emphasizes the significance of the sovereign status of the US, while the second emphasizes the importance of the universal character of the values of the American Creed. Third, this chapter articulates the manner in which these elements of US identity shape particular understandings of the nature of the global security environment. The final section of this chapter demonstrates how these divergent representations of identity and security have led to the emergence of two trends in US security policy; one which emphasizes the importance of US military dominance and one which emphasizes the importance of the institutionalization of international society. Throughout this chapter, examples are drawn from the rhetoric and practices of the Clinton and Bush administrations in order to highlight particular aspects of the argument.

Identity and Security

During the past quarter century, relatively settled understandings of the concepts of security and identity have become increasingly challenged. The field of Security Studies has witnessed a great deal of debate regarding the question of what the term

security means. As a result of such debate, there has been a general shift within the field away from an understanding of security as referring to the protection of the state through the exercise of military force and towards the realization that security is, in the much quoted words of W. B. Gallie, an essentially contested concept.[12] During this period, the broader field of international relations (IR) has witnessed a similar problematization of the concept of identity.[13] The reasons behind this 'turn' towards the analysis of identity are many, relating to both the perceived importance of identity in the post-Cold War era[14] and the seeming absence within traditional IR theories of serious attempts to theorize identity.[15] Whatever the reasons behind the debate, the result has been an acceptance that the meaning of identity is not given, but constituted and, importantly, contested.[16]

However, while settled understandings of these concepts have been challenged, a growing awareness of the relationships between identity and security has also emerged. On the one hand, the concept of identity makes the notion of security possible and shapes how 'security' is understood.[17] Within the field of security studies, this issue is addressed in terms of the need to define the referent object of the discipline before definitions of the central concept of security can be developed.[18] The importance of this point is evident in terms of the broadening of the field of security studies beyond its traditional focus on the state. In this context it has been recognized that the identity or nature of what it is that is being secured will have a significant impact on how it is going to be secured.[19] On the other hand, it has been argued that understandings of security and security-related practices are central to the production of identity. Thus, security policy has been understood by some as a set of processes that serve to constitute and secure the identity of particular actors.[20] Security policy may be particularly important in this regard due to the inherent relationship between identity and difference and to the frequency with which articulations of identity/difference tend to be situated within discourses of danger and insecurity.[21] Within such discourses, a foreign and dangerous 'other' is held to threaten the security and identity of the 'self'.[22] Though there is plenty of room for debate as to whether this understanding of identity – as requiring insecurity – is exhaustive,[23] it is clear that security policy represents a key site at which the constitution of identity takes place. Again, therefore, identity and security are intimately connected.

This understanding of the contested and interrelated nature of the concepts of security and identity presents us with (at least) two challenges. First, the assumption that security and identity are essentially contestable concepts raises questions regarding our capacity to develop final and fixed definitions of either term. Second, the assumption that identity can shape understandings of security and that security practices can shape understandings of identity implies that neither of these concepts can be understood as existing prior to the other. This challenges traditional notions of causality. Importantly, both of these challenges directly limit our capacity to deploy traditional (positivist) methods of analysis regarding the relationship between identity and security. Fixed definitions form a central feature of such a methodology because the precise definition of variables must precede analysis of

the relationships between them.[24] In addition, the notion of causality is a central feature of a traditional scientific method that aims to explain how social reality operates.[25] Acknowledging that identity and security are discursively constructed (and therefore contestable) concepts and that the meanings of these concepts are often interrelated precludes the possibility of applying such methods of analysis.

While these two challenges are worthy of note, neither should be conceived as being fatal to the analysis of the relationship between identity and security policy. As has been noted above, the recognition that certain concepts, including those of identity and security, are essentially contestable ought to discourage us from seeking prior definitions that can subsequently be applied to an analysis of US policy. However, to acknowledge that final and fixed meanings are impossible to arrive at is not to suggest that we are left merely with the possibility of deconstructing particular understandings of such terms so as to demonstrate the fundamentally contingent nature of all such definitions. Efforts to fix the meaning of terms, including 'identity' and 'security', are as much a feature of politics as is the inherently contestable nature of all concepts.[26] Furthermore, some efforts at the securing of meaning are more powerful than others, resulting in the emergence of dominant understandings of such concepts in a given context.[27] As a result, analyses of the meaning of such concepts must focus on examining the political processes through which certain meanings of these concepts are continuously (re)produced within a particular political context. These meanings are neither natural nor inevitable, but they are likely to be prominent features of the political terrain in which policy-makers must operate. One of the functions of analysis should therefore be to 'look and see' how such concepts are represented within the context of US security policy discourse.[28]

A similar analytic position must be adopted with regard to the relationships between such concepts. Rather than labelling one concept as 'cause' and the other as 'effect', we would do well to consider them as two (among many) nodes within a discursive field. Again, this relationship exists because the concept of security requires an identity that is to be secured and because representations of security serve to reconstitute particular identities.[29] This understanding of the relationship between identity and security has implications with regard to the political practices of security policy-makers. If particular understandings of the identity of a state are prominent features within the political discourse of that state and if to deploy a particular understanding of security is, implicitly, to deploy a particular understanding of identity, then policy-makers face constraints in terms of the types of security policy that they can articulate.[30] Thus, as well as examining how the concepts of identity and security are represented within US security policy discourse, we should also examine how these representations implicitly and explicitly relate to one another.

The identity of the United States

Analyses of US identity as it relates to foreign and security policy are numerous and diverse. From George F. Kennan's (1984) concerns regarding American

'legalism' and 'moralism'[31] to William Appleman Williams' (1972) condemnation of American imperialism[32] and from Arthur Schlesinger's (1986) emphasis on the notions of experiment and destiny in US foreign relations[33] to Walter Russell Mead's (2002) identification of four schools of thought regarding US foreign policy[34], scholars have repeatedly sought to link trends in US foreign and security policy to particular understandings of America's identity. Even a brief study of this literature demonstrates that attempting to analyse the nature of the identity of the United States represents a mammoth task. As in the case of the mammoth, however, two points stand out; two representations of US identity are particularly prominent within the literature regarding US identity and security policy and within the discourse of security policy-makers themselves. On the one hand, considerable emphasis is placed on the principles of the American Creed as a set of values that define what it means to be American. On the other hand, representations of US identity also place what is often implicit emphasis upon the United States' status as a sovereign, territorially bounded nation-state. Each of these representations of US identity has important implications regarding understandings of security and, therefore, regarding the articulation and application of US security policy.

Perhaps the most prominent aspect of US identity is related to the political principles upon which America was founded. As described by William Tyler Page, this American Creed includes such principles as freedom, equality, justice and humanity. Within the United States, these principles were articulated within such documents as the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and institutionalized through the mechanisms of democratic liberalism, republicanism and the rule of law. The suggestion has been frequently made that, to a significant extent, it is these principles and institutions that define what 'America' is.[35] Thus, for example, if we examine the National Security Strategies produced by both Democrat and Republican administrations in recent decades, we see references to such principles as being foundational to the identity of the United States.[36] State of the Union speeches are also littered with references to the values of America, as are other more mundane statements made by Presidents, security policy-makers and members of Congress. Similarly, a brief survey of literature that addresses the general topic of US security policy reveals the frequency with which such principles are referred to as the bedrocks of US identity, thus demonstrating the taken-for-granted status of these fundamental principles.[37]

What is most important about such representations of US identity is not merely their prevalence but also their character, the key point here being that the principles of the American Creed are routinely described in *universal* rather than national terms.[38] This universalism is particularly evident within the language employed within the Declaration of Independence: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness'. Furthermore, within the rhetoric of policy-makers, the values that are said to underpin America are not only described as being essential to the

promotion of the well-being of American citizens, but as being necessary to the well-being of all people. Thus, the Clinton administration suggested that the 'universal values of democracy, human rights and respect for the rule of law' were central to the United States and to all peoples.[39] President Bush recently echoed this point stating that 'freedom is timeless. It does not belong to one government or one generation. Freedom is the dream and the right of every person, in every nation, in every age'.[40] Again, the key point here is that the identity of the United States is represented as being defined by values that are universal in character.

Representations of US identity are characterized by a second prominent feature, however, that evokes America's status as a territorially bounded nation-state. The implications of this feature of representations of US identity are often referred to, though rarely considered in great detail. Scholars ranging from Hans Morgenthau[41] to Joseph Nye[42] have asserted that the United States ought to adopt a security policy grounded in its interests as a normal nation-state, yet such scholars have rarely engaged the questions of what a 'normal' nation-state is and how it may come to have existed. That this aspect of US identity is rarely considered both results from and gives some indication of the taken-for-granted status of sovereignty within IR literature.[43] The multitude of practices that constitute the United States as a territorially bounded nation-state, while often assumed to be a natural part of the modern political environment, are central features of the discourse of US security policy. Proclamations regarding US independence as well as early efforts at expanding, mapping and securing the borders of the United States were all shaped by European traditions and understandings of the nature of political community.[44] The result has been a strong sense of American nationalism, which despite its difference to the ethnic nationalism of some early European states, remains rooted in the notion that people live in distinct communities that are politically and geographically distinct.[45] Today, American administrations routinely invoke nationalist representations of US identity by proclaiming that the protection of American territory and the American population remains the primary responsibility of the government in Washington.[46]

The central feature of this understanding of political community in general and US identity, in particular, is the concept of sovereignty. Importantly, as Stephen Krasner has noted, this concept is complex and can incorporate multiple elements.[47] The element of sovereignty that is of greatest importance in this context is that which Krasner defines as 'Westphalian sovereignty'. The Westphalian conception of sovereignty is centred on the geographic limits of political authority and responsibility. This conception of sovereignty inscribes limits not only with regard to the authority and responsibility of the US government, however. According to Krasner, Westphalian sovereignty also requires 'the absence of authoritative external influences' within the territorial borders of a state.[48] Representations of the United States as a sovereign state therefore evoke a strict distinction between the United States and the world beyond it. The identity of the United States is characterized in terms of a territory and a population, both of which are particular rather than universal.

Thus, two quite different representations of US identity – one which is characterized by universalism and one which is characterized by particularism – are evident within the discourse of US security policy. Importantly, however, these representations are rarely deployed independently of one another. Indeed, one of the defining features of US security policy discourse is the manner in which various policy-makers have sought to integrate these distinctive understandings of US identity within their rhetorical practices. For example, the Clinton administration's frequent reference to the United States as the 'indispensable nation' implies that the United States represents both a distinct nation-state and an (indispensable) element of something much larger, a political community of universal extent.[49] The Bush administration too has deployed understandings of US identity that draw upon each of the representations discussed above. Thus, after characterizing freedom as the birthright of every person in every civilization, the Bush administration identified the United States as the leader of the 'great mission' to conquer freedom's adversaries.[50] On the one hand, such representations distinguish the United States from other states by granting it a leadership role. As such, there is a strong sense of exceptionalism in such representations of US identity.[51] On the other hand, the deployment of such rhetoric also serves to situate the United States within a broader community of peoples who are bound together by their shared desire for freedom. This latter representation lies at odds with the idea of American exceptionalism as it constitutes the United States as part of a community and, at least implicitly therefore, as being bound by the norms and rules of that community. Therefore, the presence within US security policy discourse of representations regarding the universality of American values and the particularism of US sovereignty result in the emergence of complex and potentially contradictory understandings of the identity of the United States. Indeed, it is the tension between these distinctive understandings of US identity that represents one of the defining features of this discourse.

The United States and the international security environment

Understandings of the identity of that which is to be secured have important implications regarding how security can itself be understood.[52] Within the context of US security policy representations regarding the identity of the United States are important not only because they constitute that which is to be secured but also because they constitute the very environment within which the United States is situated.[53] Furthermore, as we shall see, the different representations of US identity discussed above are consistent with quite different understandings of the security environment within which the United States must operate. As has been noted, however, US identity is characterized by a tension *between* universalism and particularism. Perhaps unsurprisingly, therefore, representations regarding the security of the United States also tend to be characterized by the tension that results from the prominence of these two different understandings of US identity within the discourse of US security policy. However, before

examining this tension in greater detail, it is worth beginning with a brief discussion of the implications that each of the alternative representations of US identity have regarding the conceptualization of security.

At the centre of this issue are questions regarding the boundaries that demarcate the United States from the environment in which it is situated. When considering this point, it is perhaps easier to start with the understanding of US identity as being defined primarily in terms of sovereignty. Such representations of political identity constitute the United States as a political entity defined by territorial borders, but they also implicitly constitute the global political system in a particular manner. As has been argued by scholars such as Richard Ashley, when understood in this way, the principle of sovereignty generates an understanding of the political realm that exists between states as being qualitatively different from that which exists within states.[54] More precisely, this vision of political community is intimately connected to understandings of the international system as being anarchical in character, a position that has been advocated most strongly by Realist and Neorealist scholars.[55] As Buzan *et al.* (1993) suggest, 'anarchy and autonomy are opposite sides of the same coin'.[56] In this sense, the existence of sovereignty – and the rational ordering of domestic politics that it makes possible – is linked directly to the existence of international anarchy, which is presumed to preclude the possibility of either an overarching international authority or the rational ordering of international politics. Thus, representations of the United States as a sovereign political entity implicitly constitute the global security environment as a realm of insecurity and anarchy. As scholars such as Mearsheimer have argued, an insecure and anarchic system is likely to encourage states to seek survival through the maximization of military power.[57]

Alternatively, if we take the first vision of US identity – the idea that certain American values (freedom, democracy, equality) are inherently universal – we are left with a quite different understanding of the nature of the boundaries of the United States and of the nature of the security environment in which the United States operates. The representation of the United States as the embodiment of a set of universal principles challenges the notion that there is a qualitative difference between the political space inside the territorial borders of the United States and that which exists outside those borders. In order to appreciate the significance of this point, it is worth re-examining the premises upon which the Realist distinction between the domestic and the international are based. This distinction is advanced by Realist scholars on the grounds that there are no universally valid norms or values.[58] Sovereignty is therefore understood as legitimizing the existence of separate and autonomous communities of people, each of which may be based upon a different value system. As a result, the international system is seen as anarchic due partly to the principle of sovereignty and partly to the varied and incompatible political and social values of the nation-states that sovereignty serves to constitute. To suggest that all people share certain values is to challenge both the relevance of territorial borders and the representation of international politics as taking place within an anarchic realm. On the one hand, territorial

borders must be seen as somewhat arbitrary once the notion that people on either side of them are fundamentally alike in their love of liberty.[59] On the other hand, the existence of universal values provides a vital foundation upon which the peaceful and rational ordering of international politics might be built.[60] Thus, representations of US identity that emphasize the importance of universal values serve to constitute the international system as a realm that, rather than being characterized by anarchy and violence, is instead qualitatively similar to the domestic political realm.

It is clear, therefore, that the two representations of US identity discussed above are consistent with quite distinctive understandings of the international security environment. The representation of the United States as a sovereign state is consistent with what we might term a Realist conception of the nature of the international security environment. Alternatively, the representation of the United States in terms of universal values of freedom, democracy and the rule of law is consistent with a vision of an international security environment which is far more amenable to the rational ordering of politics, perhaps even in a manner which is analogous to the domestic sphere of the United States itself. However, the discourse of US security policy is characterized not merely by the existence of these two representations of US identity, but, more precisely, by a tension between them. US presidents rarely represent the United States in terms of either sovereignty or universal values; instead, they often seek to integrate these two understandings of identity. Such practices not only add to the complexity of discourse regarding US identity – consider, for example, the ambiguity of concepts such as the 'indispensable nation' – but they also lead to greater complexity in terms of the representation of the security environment in which the United States exists. Within the discourse of US security policy, two articulations of the identity of the United States and the security environment in which it exists are particularly prominent. Each of these integrates elements of the sovereign and universal representations of US identity and elements of the more abstract conceptions of the international security environment discussed above.

On the one hand, there are representations of the United States as a sovereign state made exceptional by its embodiment of universal values.[61] Such representations place some emphasis on the sovereign boundaries of the United States and thus serve to reconstitute the qualitative distinction between the domestic and international political realms. This representation of the United States is consistent, therefore, with an understanding of the international security environment as being anarchic and dangerous. However, the representation of the United States as the champion of values that are held to be of universal significance serves to exacerbate the distinction between the United States and that which lies beyond it. Given the need to represent identity in relation to difference, such representations of American exceptionalism tend to be linked to the identification of existential sources of danger that exist in the anarchic international realm. Thus, as Campbell argues, there is a certain similarity to the manner in which past and present administrations have represented the sources of danger to the United States.[62]

Representations regarding the existential threat posed by Communism provide a particularly pertinent example of the character of this discourse. Communism and the Soviet Union were represented as being fundamentally and inherently opposed to the very values of the United States and, therefore, committed to the destruction of America itself and the American way of life.[63] More recently, the Bush administration has adopted a similar formula with regard to the representation of the threat posed by terrorism and 'rogue' states. Thus, the terrorists who attacked the United States on 9/11 were labelled as 'evil-doers' who could not 'stand freedom' and who hated 'what America stands for'.[64] Later, this category of actors who opposed the United States was expanded to incorporate all those who directly or indirectly supported terrorists, including most prominently Iraq, Iran and North Korea, the members of the 'axis of evil'.[65] Indeed, Bush even went so far as to explicitly liken the threat faced by America in the twenty-first century to that it had faced throughout much of the twentieth: 'Our struggle is similar to the Cold War. Now, as then, our enemies are totalitarians, holding a creed of power with no place for human dignity. Now, as then, they seek to impose a joyless conformity, to control every life and all of life'.[66] Bush continued with this theme in his most recent State of the Union address, where he stated that the war on Terror constituted 'a decisive ideological struggle' in which 'the security of our nation is in the balance'.[67] Importantly, this tendency to represent threats to the United States in such terms is not merely a characteristic of the Bush administration; President Clinton deployed a similar style of rhetoric regarding the dangers faced by the United States. In 1998, for example, he argued that America 'must combat an unholy axis of new threats from terrorists, international criminals and drug traffickers'.[68] What is common to all of these representations is that they are characterized in existential terms; the United States is threatened by entities that are inherently opposed to the United States and its values. Such representations therefore serve to constitute America as an exceptional nation, the security of which is of paramount importance not only to the people of the United States but also to all those in the world who (inherently) value freedom.

On the other hand, representations of US identity that emphasize the universal validity of American values tend to situate the sovereignty of the United States within the context of an international system which is amenable to the ordering of politics through the application of the rule of law. In other words, such representations imply that common values associated with liberty and the rule of law provide a foundation upon which international politics could be ordered through the construction of common rules and the institutions needed to apply and adjudicate them.[69] In this context, the sovereignty of the United States is represented as an instance of the application of a legal principle that is universally applicable but which by no means repudiates the possibility that other universal rules and norms could be constructed. Such representations of US identity are consistent with quite a different understanding of the international security environment than that discussed above. In this context, insecurity does not result from the existence of existential threats that are fundamentally opposed to the existence of the

United States; instead, it results from the absence of the rules and institutions needed to manage international politics in a peaceful and ordered manner.[70]

Classic examples of this element of US security discourse include President Woodrow Wilson's 'Peace without Victory' address to the Senate in 1917 and the rhetoric deployed by Presidents Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman in support of the emergent United Nations.[71] In each of these cases, insecurity was cast in terms of the absence of the mechanisms needed to order international politics in a rational and peaceful way. Such characterizations of the nature of the international security environment continue to be deployed by policy-makers in more recent times. This very vision was explicitly articulated by the Clinton administration in its 1997 National Security Strategy Report (NSSR), which suggested that

> [America's] responsibility is to build the world of tomorrow by embarking on a period of construction – one based not only on current realities but also upon enduring American values and interests – of international frameworks, institutions and understandings to guide America and the world far into the next century.[72]

Speaking at the University of South Carolina, Madeleine Albright acknowledged this point, saying that 'the United States can never turn its back on the international system or the rules; because without us, they don't exist, and with us, we are the organising principle. If we stick by the rules and carry out the rules, the others can see that that is the way to go'.[73] Though it is perhaps less known for deploying such rhetoric, the Bush administration has articulated similar understandings of the nature of the security environment. Thus, for example, the 2002 NSSR stated that

> Today, the international community has the best chance since the rise of the nation-state in the seventeenth century to build a world where the great powers compete in peace instead of continually preparing for war.[74]

The most recent NSSR expands upon this point by contending that the security of the United States 'rests on strong alliances, friendships, and international institutions, which enable us to promote freedom, prosperity, and peace in common purpose with others'.[75] These statements implicitly acknowledge that the absence of a strong international community and the values, rules and institutions that underpin it represent a key source of insecurity for the United States.

Although the understandings of the global security environment discussed above do not represent the only such representations evident within the discourse of US security policy,[76] they are certainly prominent features within this discourse. Importantly, these understandings of the security environment are consistent with the two distinctive representations of the identity of the United States discussed in the previous section. To represent the United States as an exceptional nation-state is to constitute the global security environment as an anarchic

realm. Furthermore, such articulations of US identity are particularly likely to be associated with the identification of existential threats to the existence of the United States and its ideals. Alternatively, to represent the United States as an element of a potentially universal community of peoples grounded in the universal values of the American Creed is to constitute the global security environment as a political realm capable of being ordered in a manner analogous to the domestic realm of the United States itself.[77] Within such an environment, insecurity emerges as a result of the failure to achieve this political ordering rather than from some fundamental source of evil. Importantly, like the relationship between the conceptions of US identity discussed above, the relationship between these representations of the security environment is one of tension rather than mere distinction. The rhetoric of policy-makers often seems to incorporate elements of each of these understandings of the security environment. As the final section seeks to demonstrate, the resulting complexity holds significant implications with regard to the articulation of US security policy.

The complexity of US security policy

American security policy is often characterized by, at the very least, complexity and, at times, incoherence.[78] Importantly, and as this chapter argues, this complexity is not merely the result of the sheer scope of US security policy and the number and diversity of the actors involved in its construction. Complexity also arises due to the existence of divergent representations of both US identity and the global security environment that are prominent features of the discourse of US security policy. These representations may be divergent, yet each remains powerful. In particular, understandings of the identity of the United States serve important functions within American politics and, as Michael Hunt has argued, cannot be ignored by policy-makers.[79] Understandings of identity are necessary (even if implicit) prerequisites of any security policy and different understandings of identity result in different understandings of how security might best be achieved. The result of the divergent articulations of US identity and security discussed above has been the emergence of two distinctive themes within US security policy, each of which is highlighted below.

The first such theme in US security policy is linked to the representation of America as an exceptional nation-state and of the international security environment as an anarchic and dangerous realm within which the United States faces existential threats to its existence. The form of security policy that is logically consistent with this understanding of the international security environment is in many ways similar to that advocated by Realist scholars. In an anarchic realm, there is no overarching authority that can enforce international laws and norms (and no possibility that such an institution could emerge).[80] As a result, sovereign states have no recourse other than to protect themselves.[81] Furthermore, a state's capacity to protect itself must ultimately be dependent upon its power relative to other actors in the international system.[82] While multiple sources of power may exist,

the primary instrument of security policy must always remain military force.[83] As such, Realists advocate the dispassionate maximization of power, and military power in particular.[84] However, while these Realist principles may be somewhat consistent with US security policy, they are not entirely so.[85] Realist theory is built upon a Westphalian conception of sovereignty, but representations of US identity link the Westphalian notion of sovereignty with a sense of exceptionalism grounded in the universal significance of the principles of the American Creed. This exceptionalism holds two implications regarding security policy.

On the one hand, the representation of American exceptionalism is often strongly connected to the representation of the United States as facing an existential threat. Thus, for example, President Bush has described America's enemies as being 'gripped by an implacable hatred of the United States of America. They hate our friends, they hate our values, they hate democracy and freedom and individual liberty'.[86] Similarly, the Clinton administration referred to the existence of a 'struggle between two broad visions of the future', one which supported the 'move toward economic openness [and] political pluralism' and 'a competing vision … of continued self-isolation and violent opposition to liberalising forces'.[87] Such rhetoric, especially when linked to the administration's suggestion that people and states were either with America or against it, served to divide the world into those who love freedom and those who are inherently and fanatically opposed to it. One of the consequences of representing US security in this way is to grant absolute importance to the maintenance of US military primacy and to the use of military force. When faced with such existential threats, non-military tools of security policy such as diplomacy and the implementation of international law are clearly going to be ineffective. The Clinton administration adopted such a position in its dealings with Iraq in 1998, where the suggestion was repeatedly made that force was the only thing that the tyrannical regime of Saddam Hussein could understand.[88] More recently, the Bush administration has made this understanding of the role of military force central to US security policy through calling repeatedly for the development and maintenance of a 'military without peer'.[89] Indeed, this understanding of the absolute importance of military force has been extended through the Bush administration's explicit articulation of a policy of pre-emption.[90] That this understanding of the relevance and function of military force is inconsistent with Realist theory is evidenced in part by the fact that the practices of the Bush administration, particularly its actions with regard to Iraq, have drawn criticism from Realist scholars.[91]

On the other hand, the implications of American exceptionalism with regard to US security policy also differ from Realist expectations in terms of the emphasis placed on the universal validity of the principles of the American Creed. One of the features of US security policy has been the assumption that these principles are of absolute relevance within the domestic political systems of all states (Bennett 2000).[92] The project of exporting these principles – and especially the institutions of democracy and free-market capitalism that support them – has been intimately linked to the promotion of global peace and American security

(see, e.g. Fukuyama 1992).[93] In recent times, this has been evident in the Clinton administration's adoption of a grand strategy of 'democratic enlargement'[94] (Ruggie 1996: 2), and, perhaps more controversially, in the Bush administration's advocacy of regime change in Afghanistan and now Iraq (see Kaplan and Kristol 2003; Williams 2005).[95] This element of US security policy is grounded in the assumption that the domestic political system of a state is important in determining its foreign policy, a point that is fundamentally inconsistent with Realist theory. Taken together, therefore, representations of American exceptionalism are consistent with the pursuit of a security policy that is characterized by three features: a general disdain for international institutions and laws, the pursuit of absolute military preponderance and the active exportation of American principles and, most notably, democracy.

A second and quite different theme is also evident in US security policy, however. This theme corresponds to the representation of US identity in terms of the location of the United States within a community of peoples bound by American values. As has been noted above, this understanding of US identity serves to constitute the international security environment as being amenable to the peaceful ordering of politics in a manner that is analogous to the domestic political system of the United States itself. In this sense, insecurity represents a product of the absence of effective rules and institutions that might otherwise provide a foundation for international security as well as for the security of the United States itself.[96] Consequently, the pursuit of security necessitates the active construction of such rules and institutions along lines that are consistent with the values and principles of the American Creed. Before considering the efforts of US security policy-makers to construct such an international order, it is worth clarifying the quite different understanding of the nature of the international political realm that underpins these efforts.

Whereas the representation of the United States as an exceptional nation-state implicitly constitutes the international security environment in terms that are somewhat consistent with Realist scholarship, this alternative understanding of the international realm is more consistent with that articulated by scholars of the so-called 'English School'.[97] Thus, while references to American exceptionalism are consistent with the concept of an anarchic international *system*, the representation of the United States as an element of a broader community of peoples and states is consistent with the notion of an international *society*. An international society differs from an international system in minor, though important, ways. An international system emerges when two or more states have enough impact on one another so as to cause them to behave, at least in some sense, as parts of a whole, whereas an international society exists when two or more states, recognizing certain common values, conceive of themselves as forming part of a society to the extent that they recognize themselves as being bound by certain rules.[98] A key point here is that, while the anarchic nature of the international system is taken by Realists to be a timeless feature of international politics, English School theorists have acknowledged the potential for change, which can involve the emergence, strengthening and decline of particular international societies.[99] What

is important here is not merely whether policy-makers acknowledge the existence of an international society bound by effective rules and institutions but whether policy-makers acknowledge the possibility that such a society might exist.[100] Within the context of the discourse of US security policy, we can identify clear evidence of the acceptance of this potential. This position was strongly and repeatedly advanced by members of the Clinton administration, who referred to the existence of a 'community of democratic nations' and the importance of furthering the 'constructive integration' of that community.[101] Similarly, the Bush administration's suggestion that 'the international community has the best chance since the rise of the nation-state in the seventeenth century to build a world where the great powers compete in peace'[102] and its repeated references to an international community of civilized states imply at least the potential, if not necessarily the existence of an international society.

Not only is the recognition of the possibility of constructing an international society a persistent feature of US security policy discourse, so too is the articulation by policy-makers of the type of international society that is sought, namely, one based upon the principles of the American Creed. The historical persistence of this approach to security policy within the United States has been noted by many scholars.[103] Ikenberry, in particular, has referred to this project as an effort to construct a liberal world order 'built around multilateralism, alliance partnership, strategic restraint, and institutional and rule-based relationships'.[104] Members of the Clinton administration explicitly supported such a vision of security by stating that 'if Americans are to be secure in such a world, we must seize the opportunity that history has presented to bring nations closer together around basic principles of democracy, free markets, respect for law and a commitment to peace'.[105] While references to the desirability of promoting strong international institutions and rules have been less frequently deployed by the Bush administration, there is some evidence within the rhetoric of its members of the continued relevance of this element of US security discourse. For example, Bush stated in 2002 that the members of the international community, and especially the United States, had 'dedicated [themselves] to standards of human dignity shared by all, and to a system of security defended by all'.[106] More recently, Bush has explicitly stated that the aim of the United States 'is to build and preserve a community of free and independent nations'.[107] As such, the Bush administration's rhetoric has served to reconstitute understandings of the United States as existing within a community of peoples bound by shared values. For both administrations, therefore, security policy was directed to the constructive integration of an international society of states grounded in the values of the American Creed.

Conclusion

Clearly, these two themes in the discourse of US security policy are inconsistent with one another. Furthermore, the complexity of US security policy mirrors this inconsistency. The institutionalization of international society that is consonant

with one conception of US identity clashes with the disregard for such international institutions and laws that is consistent with the other. The pursuit of military pre-eminence and the unconstrained use of force against existential threats is inconsistent with the construction of international rules and norms that might regulate international society and therefore require restraint on the part of the members of that society. Yet despite the inconsistency between these different elements of the discourse of US security policy, they remain grounded in representations of US identity that have been persistently deployed by US policy-makers, including the representatives of administrations as different as those of Presidents Clinton and Bush.

These representations of US identity are neither 'true' nor inevitable, but they are powerful and, as has been demonstrated, they hold important implications for US security policy. The institutionalization of international society will not inevitably prove to be a feature of US security policy, but it is a goal that remains consistent with an understanding of US identity that has continued to be advanced by policy-makers, even those associated with the Bush administration. Each time the United States is referred to as existing within a society of states that is bound together by the common values of freedom, democracy and the rule of law, space is opened for the advancement of policies that promote the institutionalization and strengthening of that international society. Alternatively, it is not inevitable that American policy-makers will seek to promote the unconstrained military supremacy of the United States, but each time the United States is represented as a unique state characterized by its possession of universally relevant values, the logic underpinning such policies will be strengthened.

To argue that either these representations of identity or these elements of US security policy discourse will necessarily shape the practices of policy-makers in the future would be to ignore the constructed and, therefore, contestable nature of all conceptions of identity and security. The political practices of policy-makers, and of a myriad of other actors both inside and outside the United States, will determine how the identity of the United States is understood in the future. In saying this, however, it is important to recognize two things. First, the representation of identity – be it explicit or implicit – is a necessary prerequisite of any conceptualization or articulation of either the concept of security or of security policy itself. Second, future political actors will have to, at the very least, engage with the understandings of US identity and security policy that are prominent today. Whether they can effectively challenge and even replace these understandings remains an empirical question, and not one that can be answered here.[108] What is interesting to note, however, is that despite the controversy surrounding the practices of the Bush administration, neither the presidency of George W. Bush nor the momentous events that have occurred during his time in office have radically altered the manner in which the identity of the United States is represented.

Section 3

THE CONSEQUENCES: THE RELUCTANT EMPIRE?

6

REPUBLIC, EMPIRE OR GOOD INTERNATIONAL CITIZEN?

International law and American identity[1]

Jason G. Ralph

Introduction

Because it has traditionally codified the independence of distinct legal and political communities, international law has played a central role in the social processes that construct statehood. In fact, the early American Republic embraced what was then referred to as the law of nations as a means of consolidating the sovereignty of its people and securing its place among an international society of sovereign states.[2] However, as international society has evolved to include all human beings as rights-bearing citizens and as it considers delegating judicial authority to supranational courts in order to protect those rights, the match between republican and internationalist principles has come under threat. Indeed, the argument that the United States must oppose recent developments in international law in order to protect its founding principles is now heard with increasing frequency. This chapter explores this tension and what it means for American identity by mapping the debate on the application of international human rights and humanitarian law in American and international courts. It does this with specific reference to the debates on the Alien Tort Statute (ATS), the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the War on Terror. Its central argument is that those who oppose the direct application of international human rights and humanitarian law in American courts are obviously motivated by a need to defend the Republic against unaccountable judges applying a law that has not gained the consent of the American people. Likewise, those who oppose the ICC are motivated by a concern that the Court's independent prosecutor is unaccountable and therefore a threat to the values that underpin the American Republic. The chapter concludes, however, by arguing that as long as this discourse allows the US government to use its power overseas without check, balance or redress, that discourse risks becoming part of a process that helps to defend Empire rather than one that helps to advance Liberty.

The Alien Tort Statute and American identity

In April 1979, Norberto Peña-Irala, the former Inspector General of Police in Asuncion, was arrested in the United States for being an illegal alien. On hearing of the arrest and impending deportation, Dolly Filártiga immediately sued Peña-Irala for the torture and murder of her brother, Joelito Filártiga. Both the plaintiff and the accused were citizens of Paraguay and the alleged offence took place on the territory of that state in 1976. Dolly, however, had applied for permanent political asylum while visiting the United States in 1978. The court for the Eastern District of New York, where the suit was originally filed, dismissed the case against Peña-Irala. However, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals over-turned that decision. Citing the §1350 of the 1789 Judiciary Act – otherwise known as the Alien Tort Statute (ATS) – it noted that the first US Congress had established district court jurisdiction over 'all causes where an alien sues for a tort only (committed) in violation of the law of nations'. The Court of Appeals con-tinued as follows:

> Construing this rarely-invoked provision, we hold that deliberate torture perpetrated under color of official authority violates *universally accepted norms of the international law of human rights*, regardless of the nationality of the parties. Thus, whenever an alleged torturer is found and served with process by an alien within our borders §1350 provides federal jurisdiction.[3]

This decision was consistent with the expert testimony by a number of distin-guished international legal scholars (Richard Falk, Thomas Franck, Richard Lillich and Myres MacDougal) who stated unanimously that the law of nations prohibits absolutely the use of torture. The Department of State, under the polit-ical direction of the Carter administration, also submitted a statement arguing that 'international law now embraces the obligation of a state to respect the funda-mental human rights of its citizens'.[4] The Filártigas were ultimately awarded $10 million. Unfortunately for the Filártigas, they were never able to collect damages and US immigration officials deported the Paraguayan officer.[5]

The *Filártiga* decision has been described as the *Brown* v. *Board of Education* of the transnational public law litigation.[6] Indeed, ATS litigation is now said to be entering its third phase of lawsuits, with multinational companies bearing the brunt of such action.[7] While damages are rarely collected by the victims, human rights groups and liberal scholars argue that the publicity created by ATS litigation is itself a form of accountability.[8] In this respect, one might argue that the US judi-ciary is helping to raise awareness of human rights abuses and in so doing it is contributing to those social processes that help construct the kind of global con-sciousness that promotes a more inclusive conception of international society. It is, one might further suggest, engaging in the kind of practices expected of a 'good international citizen'. This concept, which has been developed by normative

International Relations theorists like Linklater, Dunne and Wheeler, sees states as members of an international society that demands the fulfilment of responsibilities which are usually, although by no means exclusively, defined by international law.[9] Although a state's independence and vital national security interests are non-negotiable, good international citizens are expected to forsake particular interests when they clash with the international common good. Clearly a judicial intervention (whether criminal or civil) in the internal affairs of another state has the potential to be costly in terms of international political and commercial relations, but where international law has articulated a right and a duty to intervene in order to protect universal values, good international citizens are expected to accept these costs for the sake of enforcing the law.

The issues exposed by the ATS, however, are not merely ones of American *interests*. Opponents of ATS litigation complain that it complicates investment decisions and that it impedes the fight against terrorism,[10] but these arguments seem marginal compared with those that oppose ATS litigation on the grounds of American *identity*. The question posed by ATS litigation in effect is this: who decides what laws can be applied in US courts? The *Filártiga* judgement was controversial because the Second Circuit applied an interpretation of customary international law on torture that had not, at that time, been approved by Congress in the form of a statute or a treaty. Customary international law differs from treaty law in that it is said to exist in state practice rather than in an agreed-upon text. This inevitably increases the interpretative burden on the jurist who often, as in the *Filártiga* case, calls upon the academic community to help clarify what the law of nations actually is. Recourse to academic opinion, however, does nothing to dampen the controversy. In fact, it only exacerbates that controversy because many within that same academic community see this process as empowering a transnational class of international jurists who cannot be held accountable and are therefore free to impose their own subjective opinions of what the law should be. Finally, even if opponents of the *Filártiga* decision can accept an enhanced role for the jurist, it is almost impossible for them to accept the fact that it is the practices of other states that might influence the American jurist's decision.

Curtis Bradley's attack on ATS litigation nicely summarizes these concerns. He notes how customary international law 'does not involve any agreed-upon text voted upon by US representatives'. Moreover,

> The most populist branch of government, the Congress, has at best a very indirect role in the formation of customary international law. Rather, US involvement in customary international law formation comes primarily from the Executive Branch. Nor, even with that involvement, is there any guarantee that the US position will prevail or that customary international law will reflect US legal traditions and culture. The United States simply has one important voice in a community of over 190 diverse states.[11]

From this perspective, customary international human rights law may be one way of defining the values that are held in common across international society but concerns about the processes that create that law also mean that it is questionable whether good international citizens are really serving liberty when they apply it in national courts. The application of customary international human rights law, its critics would argue, cannot possibly be consistent with a notion of good international citizenship because it ultimately undermines the independence of peoples who have proclaimed the right to be self-governing, and although critics like Bradley do not use this kind of language, they clearly oppose *Filártiga* because in their eyes it cannot be squared with the idea of United States as a self-governing Republic. From this perspective, *Filártiga* was the application of a law that existed in the normative imagination of legal scholars and had not received the consent of the American people or even the consideration of their representatives. The implication is that for these critics, good international citizenship involves only the kinds of practices that help to defend the self-governing nature of independent states and the principle that laws derive their legitimacy from the consent of the governed. Because the ATS threatens to undermine this principle, it has to be opposed.

At this point in the analysis it is worth pausing to ask what the first Congress actually intended when it passed the ATS in 1789. This too has been a matter of debate. For opponents of the *Filártiga* precedent, the primary aim of the first Congress was to consolidate the young Republic's independence by demonstrating that the US judiciary would be able to enforce the law of nations at every level. Following the so-called Marbois incident of 1784, the Continental Congress feared being seen by the great powers as failed state. That is, they feared being seen as a state that was unable to meet the minimum requirements of international society. Marbois was a French Ambassador who having been assaulted by a disgruntled French citizen in Philadelphia found it difficult to find redress.[12] Given that the rights of Ambassadors were central to the smooth functioning of international society, it was thought that the new Republic risked war if it could not guarantee those rights. Indeed, Vattel's *Law of Nations*, which had a profound influence on many of the founding fathers, warned that any 'assault against a foreign ambassador impinged upon the sovereignty of the foreign nation and if not adequately redressed could rise to an issue of war'.[13] In order to meet its responsibilities towards an international society that would help guarantee the independence and sovereignty of the American people therefore, the 1787 US Constitution guaranteed that 'all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public ministers and Consuls' would be heard by the US Supreme Court. The first Congress, it is believed, merely added an additional layer of certainty by passing the ATS, which as we know allowed foreign nationals the right to sue their assailants in district courts.[14]

For opponents of the *Filártiga* judgement, the point to this history is twofold. First, it demonstrates that values of international society were very different in 1789 when Congress accepted the role of a good international citizen by passing

the ATS to make sure the law of nations would be enforced across the United States. The rights that the United States sought to guarantee then were the rights of Ambassadors as representatives of states and not the rights of all aliens as representatives of humanity. Moreover, the rights of Ambassadors were significant not because they were privileged individuals but because as the representatives of states their safety was central to achieving the ultimate aim of international society, which was the orderly conduct of relations between independent sovereign states. The rights of other men may have been articulated in national constitutions and the expectation may have been for independent republics to guarantee those rights. Yet, when states failed to meet those expectations, the rights of man could not be guaranteed by an international society because that society was also to be characterized by the desire of man to live in independent and self-governing national communities.

This communitarian understanding of accountability and this pluralist conception of international society underpinned what is perhaps the most well-known statement against the *Filártiga* judgement, Judge Bork's opinion in the *Tel-Oren* case. This case involved an ATS lawsuit filed by the victims of a 1978 terrorist attack on an Israeli civilian bus. The case was dismissed by the Court because all three judges agreed that 'terrorism' had not been defined as an offence against the law of nations. Bork, however, used his opinion to launch a stinging rebuke of the *Filártiga* decision. For Bork, international human rights litigation represented a threat to international comity and was therefore inconsistent with the original intention of Congress. The 'primary purpose of the adoption of the law of nations by federal law', Bork insisted, was 'to promote America's peaceful relations with other nations .… It will not do', he continued,

> simply to assert that the statutory phrase the 'law of nations', whatever it may have meant in 1789, must be read today as incorporating all the modern rules of international law and giving aliens private causes of action for violations of those rules. It will not do because the result is contrary not only to what we know of the framers' general purposes in this area but contrary as well to the appropriate, indeed the constitutional, role of courts with respect to foreign affairs. What little relevant historical background is now available to us indicates that those who drafted the Constitution and the Judiciary Act of 1789 wanted to open federal courts to aliens for the purpose of avoiding, not provoking, conflicts with other nations.[15]

The second point implied by the above historical account of the ATS is that the decision to enforce the law of nations was ultimately a political decision that was driven by the power realities of the day. The additional implication, which was in fact stated explicitly in a different context by Robert Kagan, was that, because the United States was no longer threatened by more powerful states, it did not have to be so concerned about enforcing the law of nations.[16] The point being made by

Bork, Bradley and other critics of *Filártiga*, however, was not so much that the United States should reject more contemporary expressions of the law of nations; rather their point was that the decision on when and what aspects of international law should be applied is ultimately a *political* decision. This is necessary not only because the sovereignty of the American people is expressed through their political representatives but also because the Constitution has clearly invested the power to conduct foreign relations in the political branches of government. From this perspective then, the direct application of customary international law as envisaged by supporters of *Filártiga* is hardly the conduct becoming of a good international citizen. Rather, it undermines the principles of republicanism and is thus a threat to the vision of an international society based on orderly relations between self-governing republics.

This understanding of America's place in international society, and the historical interpretation of the ATS that supports it, is disputed by liberal scholars who seek to defend the *Filártiga* precedent. For instance, Anne-Marie Burley has argued that the historical narrative cited above gives far too much significance to the security concerns of the new Republic and it denies much of the ideological promise contained in America's revolution.[17] While Burley agrees that the threat of war against those nations of aggrieved alien traders and alien diplomats concentrated the minds of those in the first Congress, she argues that the ATS was passed for reasons other than these prudential concerns. The ATS, she writes,

> was a straightforward response to what the Framers understood to be their duty under the law of nations …. Their motives derived not only from a negative calculation of the immediate national security consequences if they did not comply, but also from a positive conception of conduct befitting a civilized nation. As a general principle, 'duty' embodied the constraints imposed by concepts of national honor and virtue. The Framers understood duty and national self-interest to be conceptually distinct – at least in the short term. Both were equally legitimate and important factors in shaping foreign and, indeed, domestic policy.[18]

This kind of thinking, Burley claims, was particularly strong among Jeffersonian republicans who sought to break down the moral barriers created by old-style international relations. Thus, for Jefferson, the moral duties incumbent on individuals in a state of nature

> accompany them into a state of society and the aggregate of the duties of all the individuals composing the society constitutes the duties of that society towards any other; so that between society and society the same moral duties exist as did between the individuals composing them while in an unassociated state, their maker not having released them from those duties on their forming themselves into a nation.[19]

Burley acknowledges that this view was by no means universal among the founding fathers. The opposing view, of course, was made strongly by Alexander Hamilton writing as *Pacificus*, something that now allows us to perhaps describe opponents of contemporary human rights litigation as Hamiltonian realists. Burley's general point, however, is that Jefferson held a conception of national duty that was founded on an understanding that the American Republic was very much part of and therefore had obligations toward an international society. Jeffersonian republicans would not, as Adams later put it, go 'in search of monsters to destroy', but they would nonetheless use means that were less costly to the national interest to publicize and punish the actions of those who violated the law of nations. It was in this intellectual context, according to Burley, that the founding generation passed the ATS. The first Congress, she concludes held a conception of community that transcended the nation and which obliged Americans to

> help redress certain violations of international law as such, regardless of where they may have occurred or the identity of the victim. This obligation flowed not to other states individually, but to the *community* of civilized nations as a collective and mutually beneficial entity.[20]

In this respect, the *Filártiga* decision was consistent with the image of America as a particular community with obligations to a broader conception of international society whose values were articulated by customary international law which could be applied in national courts even without the direct authorization of that nation's political authorities. Indeed, the *Filártiga* decision, Burley concludes,

> vindicate[d] a vision of the United States at the forefront of efforts to strengthen the rule of law in international as well as domestic affairs. This posture remains a matter of national honor, a source of justifiable pride. It also accords with a broader conception of accountability to the international community as an obligation to a functioning society constituted under a common legal system, rather than as one owed simply to its individual member states.[21]

As a postscript to this debate, it is worth noting the US Supreme Court's recent decision in *Sosa* v. *Alvarez-Machain.* This case involved an appeal against a $25,000 fine that had been awarded under the ATS. These damages had been awarded by a Californian court after a Mexican national Alvarez-Machain (who had earlier been cleared of the torture and murder of a US official) sued another Mexican national Sosa for unlawful arrest. While the Supreme Court reversed the Californian court decision on the grounds that unlawful arrest was not a violation of the law of nations, it also dismissed the argument that under no circumstances could this law be automatically applied by US courts. The anti-*Filártiga*

arguments of commentators like Bradley did appear in the dissenting opinion of Justice Scalia, but the majority of the Court found that there were in fact 'limited enclaves in which federal courts may derive some substantive law in a common law way'.[22] Thus, 'the door to further independent judicial recognition of actionable international norms' was left 'ajar subject to vigilant doorkeeping, and open to a narrow class of international norms today'.[23] Yet as the call for vigilance implies, the Court also offered a warning against judicial activism in the name of 'international society'. In fact, it stated explicitly that there were good reasons for 'a restrained conception of the discretion a federal court should exercise in considering a new cause of action of this kind'. For instance, it warned of the 'collateral consequences' that private action could have on the nation's foreign policy and urged judges not to seek out and define new and debatable violations of the law of nations. Moreover, by referring to the 1991 Torture Victim Protection Act (TVPA), which '"establish[es] an unambiguous and modern basis for" federal claims of torture and extrajudicial killing,' the Supreme Court in effect stated that it would prefer US courts only to act where there was clear political authority. Yet, it also noted that the TVPA clearly stated that the ATS should 'remain intact to permit suits based on other norms that already exist or may ripen in the future in to rules of customary international law'.[24] The Supreme Court, in other words, had clearly listened to concerns about the application of customary international law without the explicit consent of Congress. But, in accepting such law as American law, it was stating three things: that international law is more than just what the political branches of states will consent to, that these laws are found in customary international practices that help articulate an international common interest, and finally that the United States can contribute to processes that prudently secure those interests by allowing US district courts to apply customary international law as in the *Filártiga* case.

The story of the ATS is in many ways a story about how Americans see themselves in relation to the values of international society. It is a complex story, but in many ways these complexities can be understood if one considers that the United States is founded on the universalist principles of natural law while simultaneously claiming to be a self-governing Republic with no international obligations other than those the representatives of the American people accept on their behalf. The issue being debated in the US courts and academic journals no longer centres on the legitimacy of natural law, but opponents of *Filártiga*-type decisions are very much concerned that the direct application of customary international law suffers from the same democratic shortcomings. That is, they are concerned that customary international law is giving an elite of progressive international lawyers the opportunity to impose their subjective views of what international law should be. On the other hand, those that support *Filártiga*-type decisions see customary international law as the product of a process that is not undemocratic simply because it applies to peoples who have not consented to it. As Beth Stephens notes, it does not necessarily follow that customary international law is undemocratic simply because the United States is unable to determine what that law is.[25] Part of

the democratic ethos, she argues, is a willingness to accept the results of delibera-
tion even if they do not suit one's particular interests. To do that, however, one has
to accept that the American community is part of, and not distinct from, an inter-
national society that rests on foundations other than state consent.

The International Criminal Court and American identity

Similar issues are raised by the creation of the world's first permanent ICC. The
ICC was created by the Rome Treaty, which was adopted for ratification in 1998
and came into effect in 2002 following the ratification by the sixtieth state in
April of that year. It assumed jurisdiction over crimes against humanity, war
crimes and genocide in July of 2002 and has since then been investigating cases
in Sudan, the DRC and Uganda. As one of his last acts in office, President
Clinton signed the Rome Treaty. He did, however, note that the treaty contained
'significant flaws', which would have to be addressed before he would be will-
ing to recommend sending the Treaty to the Senate for ratification. This unusual
step was driven in part by the Rome Statute, which required states to at least sign
the Treaty by December 31, 2000 in order for them to attend the meetings of
Preparatory Commission.[26] This had been set up to deal with the practicalities of
setting up a new court but it was hoped by outgoing Clinton officials, most
notably David Scheffer who had led the US delegation at Rome, that the United
States would be able to address its concerns in this forum. Much to Scheffer's
regret, the incoming Bush administration did not take up the opportunity to fur-
ther engage the PrepComm.[27] Instead, the Bush administration signalled its out-
right opposition to the Court by 'unsigning' the Rome Treaty. This too was an
unusual move, but it can be understood in terms of the new administration's
belief – propagated most forcefully by Undersecretary of State John Bolton –
that President Clinton's signature of the Rome Treaty was designed to block
President Bush's signature of anti-ICC legislation in Congress.[28] Whether this
was the case depends on a complex reading of the Vienna Convention on the
Law of Treaties but that is largely irrelevant here. What is relevant is that the
act of 'unsigning' the Rome Treaty was followed by a concerted campaign to
protect US citizens from the jurisdiction of the Court. The determination to
achieve this goal was such that the Bush administration was willing to cut mili-
tary aid to some of its most geostrategically important allies in the War on Terror
(e.g. Jordan) and the war on drugs (e.g. Colombia) when they refused to extend
the appropriate guarantees.[29]

As institutions based on the principle of accountability for the abuse of those
rights deemed to be universal and therefore inalienable, one would expect to see a
complementary relationship emerge between the United States and the ICC. Yet,
US opposition to the ICC reminds us that the American Revolution was as much
about asserting the independence of a particular community as it was about that
community being governed by the rule of universal laws. The United States shares
the Court's aims of bringing justice to those who have perpetrated universal crimes.

Yet, it also complains that the manner in which the ICC pursues justice is a threat to the values of the American Republic. More specifically, opponents of the ICC are concerned because the Court, and especially the Office of the Independent Prosecutor, is not accountable to democratically elected politicians and they therefore suspect that it will be open to abuse. This was made clear by Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Marc Grossman when he explained the Bush administration's reasons for unsigning the Rome Treaty. Grossman appealed to the founder's wisdom to justify the decision. The Statute, he argued, created a prosecutorial system that is an unchecked power and he warned, recalling the words of the founding father John Adams, that 'power must never be trusted without check'.[30] Of course, supporters of the ICC point out that the Prosecutor can be checked by a panel of pretrial judges and that all Court officials are ultimately accountable to the Assembly of State Parties. This is no consolation for American opponents of the Court whose main concern is not checks and balances per se, but those specific checks and balances that hold prosecutors to account before *the American people*. In this respect, the issue of American opposition to the ICC is not a different conception of accountability but a different conception of the community that politicians, prosecutors and judges are accountable to.

Another reason why the Bush administration opposes the Court is that it exercises jurisdiction over citizens of states who have withheld their consent from the Rome Treaty. The jurisdictional regime of the ICC and how it was created is another complex story, but it is worth summarizing because a parallel can be made to the debate on customary international law cited above.[31] The issue faced by the delegates at Rome was firstly how a case might be referred to the Court. It was considered a success for the human rights lobby when the Conference agreed that the Court's prosecutor need not wait for a state or the UN Security Council to refer a case. The Prosecutor, in other words, was empowered to follow the evidence and, if need be, indict an individual without the prior authorization of states or a group of states. Fearful that the Prosecutor would use these powers to pursue an anti-American agenda, the United States proposed that the Prosecutor's jurisdiction be limited to include only the citizens of states that had signed the Rome Treaty. This proposal, however, was rejected in favour of what became Article 12 of the Rome Statute. This allows the Prosecutor to proceed independently if the situation he wishes to investigate includes an accused who is the citizen of a state party or (and this is the controversial aspect) if the alleged crime took place on the territory of a state party. Thus, American personnel serving in, for example, Bosnia could find themselves being investigated by the ICC despite the fact that the American people had withheld their consent from the Rome Treaty. For the Bush administration, the possibility of prosecutions on this basis not only threatened international peace and security (because it deterred nations from contributing to peace-keeping missions like the one in Bosnia) but more fundamentally it was a threat to US sovereignty and thus a threat to its constitutional democracy.

The issue of 'sovereign consent' cannot by itself explain why the United States opposes the Court. Presumably, if the United States had been satisfied that the

Court did not threaten US interests or undermine international peace and security, it could have ratified the Rome Treaty. This was not the case, of course, and the United States withheld its consent for these reasons which are decisive. However, the fact that the Bush administration then attacked the Court for exercising jurisdiction over citizens of governments that had not ratified the Treaty again resonates with some of the themes discussed in the previous section. For instance, supporters of the Court argue that its jurisdiction rests firmly on the principle of territorial jurisdiction, which is, they further argue, universally recognized as customary international law. They argue that international society does not allow the United States to object to a state applying its laws in its territory and it therefore does not provide the United States the right to object to that state delegating jurisdiction to an international court.[32] Opponents of the Court, however, reject this argument not on the grounds that states do not have the right to enforce their laws in their own territory. That of course would undermine the idea of an international society based on self-governing Republics. Rather they argue that delegating jurisdiction to an international court is a new practice that cannot yet be accepted as customary international law, and besides, if the United States objects to the new practice, then its citizens should not be subject to it as a matter of custom.[33] Indeed the idea that states have the right to exempt themselves and presumably their citizens from new forms of custom is central to maintaining the principle of sovereign consent. It was after all Vattel who, driven by a concern for the principle of consent, demanded that states are only 'bound to observe it [custom] … so long as they have not expressly declared their unwillingness to follow it any longer'.[34]

Thus, the issue of consent might not be *the* reason for US opposition to the ICC, but the fact that it plays a major role in US efforts to delegitimize the Court does tell us something about the way in which a substantial part of the American political elite wishes to relate to international society. Like those opponents of the *Filártiga* judgement, opponents of the ICC use the issue to present an image of the United States as a self-governing Republic that is subject only to those laws that the American people have consented to through the actions of their political representatives. One only needs to observe the manner in which Bush administration appointees celebrate their opposition to the Court to realize that it is part of a social process designed to reconstruct the image of America as an exceptional nation based on republican principles. Following a vote at the UN Security Council which exempted US peace-keepers from the Court's jurisdiction, for instance, Ambassador John Negroponte declared that

> [o]ur Declaration of Independence states that … 'governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from … the consent of the governed' … We have built up in our two centuries of constitutional history a dense web of restraints on government, and of guarantees and protections for our citizens .… The history of American law is very largely the history of that balance between the power of the government and the rights of the people. We will not permit that balance to be overturned by

the imposition on our citizens of a novel legal system they have never accepted or approved, and which their government has explicitly rejected.[35]

The problem for those interested in sustaining this idea of the United States as an independent Republic that need not accept the will of the international community is the one cited earlier. The discourse of American exceptionalism rests as much on the idea that its founding principles are universal as it does on the United States being a particular expression of a state dedicated to those principles. In other words, the United States cannot condemn the ICC and its attempt to deliver accountability to those who violate rights, without offering an alternative; the problem here is that when a particular nation offers an alternative that delivers universal goals, it is inevitably tainted by the charge of imperialism, particularly if that alternative exempts that nation's citizens from the processes of accountability it seeks to apply to the rest of the world.

An example of this is the US insistence that the decision on when and where to start international criminal processes should be left to the UN Security Council. Both the Clinton and the Bush administrations supported the so-called *ad hoc* tribunals in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda and it might be suggested that they could have fully supported the ICC if the only means of referring a case to the Court was through the UN Security Council. Indeed the Bush administration's decision to abstain from the Security Council's decision to refer the situation in Darfur, despite the fact that Sudan is not party to the Rome Treaty, suggests as much. Although some argued that this was a major concession on the part of the Bush administration, it was in fact consistent with its policy that the Security Council should decide when a situation is referred to the Court.[36] The administration argued, of course, that they were thinking of the international common good when seeking to maintain the Security Council's privileged position. The UN was, they pointed out, charged with maintaining international peace and security; and states put that at risk by giving key decisions to a Prosecutor who could operate independently of the Security Council. Yet supporters of the Court point to the fact that the Security Council can play a role in deferring those prosecutions that pose risk to international peace and security. Article 16 of the Statute allows it to postpone a prosecution if nine of its members pass a resolution identifying such a threat. They further argue that the US position was motivated less by a concern for the principles of order and justice and more about maintaining great power control over the whole process.[37] Had the United States got its way, of course, its single vote at the Security Council would have been able to veto any referral that was in conflict with American interest. As it stands, the independent Prosecutor can under the criteria set out in Article 12 investigate this kind of situation even without Security Council authorization.

At the time of writing, 139 states had signed the Rome Treaty and of those 105 had ratified it. Whether this is sufficient to represent the will of the international community is debatable. On the one hand, the level of support has exceeded

expectation, but on the other hand, significant states such as Russia, the People's Republic of China and India have all stood alongside the United States to express their opposition to the Court. What is clear is that by reforming the process by which decisions on international criminal justice are made, the ICC has in effect democratized international society. By offering a Prosecutor who can operate independently of the UN Security Council, the ICC has in effect given a voice to those victims of human rights abuse who would otherwise have been voiceless because their status as victims was inconvenient to the great powers. For this reason, it can be argued that support for the Court is a new responsibility that good international citizens should do their best to meet. Yet, while supporters of the Court see its creation as a democratic development, opponents of the Court cling to the idea that international society should only be concerned with maintaining order between independent, self-governing Republics; and because this is central to the image of the United States that American nationalists are eager to portray, they waste little opportunity to attack the ICC as undemocratic and therefore un-American. From this perspective, good international citizenship involves opposing the ICC and defending republican principles such as the right of peoples to consent to the law and to the officials that govern them.

As noted above, the United States cannot comfortably live in an international society of truly *sovereign* states because it cannot stand by and let human rights abuses go unpunished without undermining its self-image as a standard bearer for values that are universal. This leads it to pursue policies that might not at first sight appear to be imperial but can nevertheless be described in such terms because ultimately these policies seek to exempt US citizens from legal processes that they readily apply to the citizens of other states. This is evident in the support it extends to processes of international criminal justice that are controlled by the UN Security Council where the United States can more or less determine the decision. It is also evident in its willingness to unilaterally violate the sovereignty of other states for the purpose of bringing to justice those regimes that have not been ruled according to universal principles. The most obvious example of this is the Iraqi Special Tribunal, which was set up to prosecute Saddam Hussein and others following the American-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. Although this was technically a national court, the United States did not object to the Tribunal using a definition of crimes against humanity that was lifted straight from the Rome Statute.[38] This underlines the fact that America's problem with international criminal law is not to do with the values it seeks to promote; rather America's problem is with the manner in which international society has decided to prosecute that law. It also highlights the problem the United States has in resisting the ICC because it violates national sovereignty while continuing to seek universal justice for crimes against humanity. American politicians may genuinely believe they are serving the common good when they bring human rights abusers to justice and indeed no one should weep for Saddam Hussein even if they may regret the manner in which he met his fate. Those same American politicians, however, cannot be genuinely surprised when critics who see the universal being

implemented by the particular call that policy imperialist. This is especially the case now that there is an alternative (the ICC) that can avoid the charge of selective justice, a charge that does so much to undermine US claims to be a good international citizen.

Conclusion

The Bush administration's opposition to the ICC is matched by its opposition to the ATS. In contrast to the Carter and Clinton administration's support for human rights litigation, the Department of Justice under the Bush administration filed amicus briefs that make arguments similar to those of Bork and Bradley cited above. For instance, the Department of Justice argued in the *Doe* v. *Unocal* case that the ATS did not create a cause of action and that Congress alone had the power to 'enact specific and carefully crafted rules'.[39] It further argued that the ATS necessarily called upon the courts to

> render judgments over matters that implicate our Nation's foreign affairs. In the view of the United States, the assumption of this role by the courts under the [ATS] not only has no historical basis, but, more important, raises significant potential for serious interference with the important foreign policy interests of the United States, and is contrary to our constitutional framework and democratic principles.[40]

The Department of Justice was particularly concerned that 'such claims can easily be asserted against this Nation's friends, including our allies in the fight against terrorism'.[41] One can also find this argument being made by the Departments of Justice and State in the *Sosa* and *Exxonmobil* cases.[42] For critics of the Bush administration, however, these normative concerns were being used instrumentally to disguise a policy that was guided by the interests of big business.[43] For instance, Beth Stephens wrote that although 'couched in terms of separation of powers, the [Bush] campaign [against ATS] seeks to protect allies from accountability for egregiously wrongful behaviour'. While Stephens accepts the need for 'respectful deference' of the Executive's role in foreign affairs, she concludes that '[u]ncritical acceptance of these politically charged interventions would undermine the constitutional balance of power'.[44] Indeed, the appellants' response to the US amicus brief in *Unocal* argued that the *Filártiga* precedent would actually help America's prosecution of the war on terrorism. In that war, they argued, 'the United States is justifiably asking other countries not to serve as a haven for egregious international law violators. If we expect others to comply, the United States cannot do otherwise within its own borders'.[45]

In one respect, the US debate over the ATS and the ICC is about what Burley refers to as 'ceilings'.[46] That is, it is about the higher expectations of the US government and its capacity to apply and enforce rather than simply respect international human rights law. Yet, as Stephens notes above, the 'uncritical acceptance'

of the arguments used by the Bush administration to oppose the ATS hold their own dangers. Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that such arguments have been used to undermine the 'foundations' on which prior expectations of US human rights policy are based. In other words, the arguments of those who previously sought only to deny access to United States and international courts by limiting the application of international human rights law are now being used to exempt US officials from legal accountability as they wage the war on terrorism. Understanding this alerts us to the fact that while the legal realist's concern about the legislative role played by judges may be important in preserving democratic accountability, that concern also provides a platform for the political realist who prioritizes their conception of the national interest ahead of the responsibilities demanded by international or global civil society.

This point can be illustrated by explaining the context of the following passage:

> [A]llowing customary international law to rise to the level of federal law would create severe distortions in the structure of the Constitution: Incorporation of customary international law directly into federal law would bypass the delicate procedures established by the Constitution for amending the Constitution or for enacting legislation. Customary international law is not approved by two-thirds of Congress and by three-quarters of the State legislatures, it has not been passed by both houses of Congress and signed by the President, nor is it made by the President with the advice and consent of two-thirds of the Senate. In other words, customary international law has not undergone the difficult hurdles that stand before enactment of constitutional amendments, statutes, or treaties. As such, it can have no legal effect on the government or on American citizens because it is not law. Even the inclusion of treaties in the Supremacy Clause does not render treaties automatically self-executing in federal court, not to mention self-executing against the executive branch. If even treaties that have undergone presidential signature and senatorial advice and consent can have no binding legal effect in the United States, then it certainly must be the case that a source of rules that never undergoes any process established by our Constitution cannot be law.[47]

As a summary of the normative position expressed by Bork, Bradley and others who oppose the ATS because it potentially undermines the principles on which the American Republic was founded, this statement is as good as any. Yet, this was not *the purpose* of the above statement. Bybee's recourse to those arguments that attack the constitutional and democratic legitimacy of customary international law was for the purpose of constructing a legal space where the President could fight terrorism without domestic or international check. Of course, those who attack *Filártiga* and the ICC because they threaten the Republic do not necessarily have to agree with the President's conduct of the war on terrorism. Many

political factors impinge on that assessment. Yet, clearly there is a link between those who see the United States as a self-governing Republic and therefore not bound by customary international law and those who seek to concentrate power in the hands of the president for the purpose of fighting terrorism. Bybee's arguments on customary international law echo those made by Bradley and they were no doubt motivated by a genuine concern for the idea that the American people should be self-governing. But when those arguments appear in a volume called *The Torture Papers*, it reminds us of two things. First, that the Founders were right when they warned against the tyranny of democracy and second, that the neo-Kantian warning – that is, that republics founded on universal principles do not always respect those principles in their foreign policy – is also right.[48] By abusing the space created by lawyers seeking to defend democracy based on the nation-state, the US government has in fact created further interest in cosmopolitan conceptions of accountability. It has, in other words, tended to undermine its own arguments on the ATS and the ICC and encouraged cosmopolitan projects that look for alternative forms of accountability beyond the nation-state.

THE GREEKS OF OLD

Modelling the British Empire for a
twenty-first century America

Binoy Kampmark[1]

> In the Ancient world, order meant empire. Those within the empire
> had order, culture and civilisation. Outside it lay barbarians, chaos
> and disorder.
>
> <div align="right">(Robert Cooper, *Observer*, April 7, 2002)</div>

> I surrender! Empire it is. Someone get me my pith helmet. On to
> Omdurman! Or is it Fallujah?
>
> <div align="right">(Robert Kagan, letter to Niall Ferguson, posted
> May 4, 2004, on *Slate*)</div>

The word is out: the United States is an empire. As a label, it has, according to
Joseph Nye, Dean of the Kennedy School of Government, 'come out of the
closet'.[2] Numerous publications from across the political spectrum label it as
such, disagreeing merely on the issue of its effects.[3] But the key influences, the
political tropes that govern the nature of what American empire is, and notably
what models it can draw on, require examination. The influence of the British
Empire has been pertinent in this regard. How the British Empire is viewed in US
intellectual and policy debate is an important aspect of American imperial policy
in this century. But the external dimension is also important to this process.
Crucial here is how the Anglophones – intellectuals from outside America but
with a deep interest in it – have guided this process. An individual crucial to such
a study is Niall Ferguson, performing a role that Harold McMillan, as Minister at
Allied Headquarters in North Africa, foresaw in 1944: 'These Americans repre-
sent the new Roman Empire and we Britons, like the Greeks of old, must teach
them how to make it go.'

An entire coterie of Anglophone thinkers, some who hail from Britain (Niall
Ferguson, Christopher Hitchens, Paul Johnson) and others from former 'dominions' –
Canada (Michael Ignatieff) being an example – have fashioned reputations within
the United States on particularly positive views of American power. They choose
to identify it by various appellations: primacy, hegemony or imperialism 'lite'.

Their observations at times are strikingly akin to advice, the counsel of Macmillan's Greeks to America's Roman imperium. They brandish an intellectual weaponry that insists on empire as a valuable precedent in guiding American foreign policy after September 2001. Their behaviour raises some crucial questions. What is it about empire, notably the British Empire, that attracts these pundits in their counsel to US policy-makers?[4] What place does the British Empire hold as a symbolic lodestone in assisting Americans identify their global role as imperial? How effective have their calls been in cultural and policy-making circles within the United States?

Anglo-empires: continuities and discontinuities

Winston Churchill, on more than one occasion, recalled a comment he attributed to Otto von Bismarck: that the motor of modern history lay in, '[t]he fact that the North Americans speak English'.[5] The view presupposes common elements: shared identities, ideologies and values, the material of a 'special relationship'.[6] Given this state of affairs, the current advisory role British pundits of culture and politics assume towards their transatlantic cousins is perhaps unsurprising.[7]

The client must nonetheless be receptive to the advice proffered. The specific trajectories of American history, which have reflected periods of discomfort with the idea of empire as a system of world order, would tend to militate against a brief for an American empire in British guise. Strong resistance from the anti-imperialist lobby of American politics and culture, seeing empire as antithetical to American identity has made periodic appearances.[8] Such views inevitably conflicted with the pro-imperial strand in American history, a strand underlined with clarity in the works of such scholars as R. W. van Alstyne and William A. Williams. Alstyne made it a dominant theme in his research, naming one of his works after an observation George Washington made in March 1783.[9] The Wisconsin school of revisionism, spearheaded by Williams, added fuel to the fires of an imperial discourse otherwise submerged in the conflicts of the twentieth century.[10]

The anti-imperial trajectory in American history has proven hard to disrupt, and till 2001, proved ascendant. Whatever language may have come to pass till then – the terms 'hegemony' or 'geopolitics' coined by realists – empire remained in the closet, a term gathering dust. America did not conquer; it only liberated. America did not annex; it merely absorbed territory through popular consent. American forces strike against terror; they never inflict it. Historian Ernest May characterizes this motif of what has been described as the 'myth of the reluctant superpower': 'Some nations achieve greatness. The United States had greatness thrust upon it.'[11] These perceptions have not been discouraged – the literature on America's use of force in conflict is replete with examples on the heavy burden thrust upon the United States in assuming its international obligations, its reluctance in using force (albeit one it does with good measure).[12]

In two world wars, America would intervene, but never, so the rhetoric goes, as a fellow imperial traveller. It would come as a rescuer, but one ambivalent and in some cases outwardly hostile to the anti-imperialist credentials of its main ally. America refused to relate to Britain the master colonialist, but the Britain of Westminster democracy, law and global markets. The group of senators who opposed President Wilson's calls to ratify the League Covenant and join the League of Nations drew on a strong anti-imperialist undercurrent.[13] In joining the League and ratifying the Covenant, the United States, so went the argument, would supposedly conscript America to protect the possessions of imperial powers. Britain, with its imperium, was naturally singled out. 'The allied and associated powers were left masters of the world, dictators of the world's policies,' explained Senator William E. Borah of Idaho to his fellow senators in February 1921, 'They were the autocrats of statecraft'.[14] In September, Borah would claim that the Versailles Treaty was the product of 'the old imperialistic policies which have brought the world into sad ruin'. He sided with the German version of this punitive peace: it was a *Diktat* – 'a dictated treaty, dictated by those who felt the agony of conflict and whose fearful hours of sacrifice now changed to hours of victory, thought only in terms of punishment'.[15]

The criticism proved particularly acute amongst opponents of intervention in the Second World War. The America First Committee, publications such as *Uncensored*, and other core groups of dissent focused on the evils of intervention – and British empire.[16] The debate on assisting (or not assisting) Britain, notably from the isolationists, launched an unrelenting assault on empire, often clouding the ideological differences with the aggrandizing aims of the Third Reich.[17]

A favourite target of these groups was the newspaper editor and chairman of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, William Allen White. Volleys were often fired at White's attempt to involve the United States in aiding Britain. Imperial hypocrisies and the darker side of empire were stressed. In the *Uncensored* files in the New York Public Library is a publication of an extract of W. A. White's comment from March 20, 1899, in his paper the Emporia *Daily Gazette*, with the advertized heading at the top 'This is not Hitler speaking. It is William (Not Wilhelm) Allen White'. White wrote of the 'Anglo-Saxon's manifest destiny to go forth in the world as a world conqueror' and 'take possession of all the islands of the sea'. 'Are Mr. White's Fellow Committee Members aware of this side of his nature? Were 1899 and 1917 also in Defense of America or where they adventures in *Emporia* imperialism?'[18]

How then, does the modern British Empire fit into the landscape of American political and intellectual discourses? The public relations men who have sought to sell British Empire have a new task in the twenty-first century, a task that presented itself in slightly different forms in 1914 and 1939. But, this is where the selling becomes interesting: they are not merely interested in selling empire, but a specific brand of empire that Americans must adopt if they are to succeed. In short, pro-American British figures have their own ideas on how the American empire can function, and where the United States has gone wrong in implementing it.

Some – here public figures, government officials, members of the intelligentsia – in Britain praise the American empire (they argue it exists, that it has to exist, that Americans must awake from dormant ignorance to their role as imperial constable). But their praise is muted by a sagacious reproach: they question like learned counsel. They refer to the experience of the British in order to provide advice, tendering wise words to smooth the rocky path of the new imperialists. We see this in lesser known form in the Henry Jackson Society, established by enthusiasts of the view that American power buffered by British cooperation can ride the storm of current global instability and disseminate democracy through the channels of the 'Anglosphere'.

The Henry Jackson Society, whose arteries run through Peterhouse College, Cambridge, have embraced a hybridized Anglo-American identity as a vehicle for the global dissemination of 'freedom'. Theirs is a 'project for democratic geopolitics'.[19] It is the classic wording of liberal empire: a foreign policy based on the 'rule of law, liberal democracy, civil rights, environmental responsibility and the market economy'. It advocates the adoption of a 'forward strategy': global democratization, forced if need be. The British are to hold the reins of a stubborn Europe ('the necessary furtherance of European military modernisation and integration under British leadership, preferably within NATO'), while the United States should be allowed to go about its business of facilitating global empire.[20]

This organization is by no means the only one. There are also writers who volunteer their views about the current global order with America as its stabilizing force, leading the West in a global push for modernization. Robert Cooper, Tony Blair's foreign policy adviser, wrote in 2002 that Western countries would have to 'deal with "old-fashioned states" outside the postmodern continent of Europe with the rougher methods of an earlier era – force, pre-emptive attack, deception, whatever is necessary to deal with those who still live in the nineteenth century'.[21] We think of novelist V. S. Naipaul, who told his audience in New York soon after the attacks in September 2001 that Americans 'were facing "a war declared on you by people who passionately want one thing: a green card"'.[22] To the same choir came Salman Rushdie and Martin Amis.[23]

Left leaning members of the British intelligentsia, who had offered various critiques of American power in the past, urged a wounded United States to undertake a massive retaliatory force in light of the terrorist attacks. British expatriate Christopher Hitchens, in encouraging the Bush administration to guard 'against rationalisation', urged the invasion of Iraq, the overthrow of despotic regimes, the liberation of the Middle East.[24] Americans were to become unilateral, moral policemen. His inspiration had Anglo-imperial roots. Hitchens confessed to being a navy brat; he loved C. S. Forester's *Hornblower*; he read Patrick O'Brian's 20-volume masterpiece 'as if it had been so many tots of Jamaica grog'.[25] For Hitchens, America was, as a political concept, 'a great idea'. Of the great revolutions and their legacies, the only true remnant of the progressive legacy was the 'American Revolution'. 'It still has a dynamic. It is the only one capable of universal application.' Hitchens' curious melding of old and new, imperial formulae

for the twenty-first century, presents a peculiar case, and, in many ways, one typical of an Anglophone caught in the identities of new world values and old world imperialism. This was symptomatic of a breakdown in the left consensus on the evils of empire. Quarrels within the left, and indeed, the disintegration of the entire liberal critique of the United States, hegemony and empire, have occurred with some consequence.[26]

We see this in most spectacular fashion in the conservative historian Niall Ferguson, a modern version of the ideologue historian. He is a senior fellow of the Hoover Institution at Stanford, a centre of respectable conservative opinion. He has been associated with neo-conservative thinkers who have dominated the democratizing thrust of US foreign policy under the Bush administration. He scolds, lectures, and furnishes fine-tune Oxbridge rhetoric to present the counterfactual, the idea of what could be or have been done better. He was, as the *Observer* noted in a column, 'trapped inside a body of a man born in the 1960s'. The scenario was bleak for offspring born in that decade: 'You become a Thatcherite – aggressive on the battlefield and the economy. You write "why oh why" polemics for the *Daily Mail*. You eventually quit the insular mother country for the new empire across the pond.'[27] He churns out work with a self-confessed Weberian protestant ethic, perplexed at historians who require decades to churn out monographs; he writes to his Calvinist roots and his second city of empire, Glasgow. His métier is economic history. In a sense, his intellectual progress betrays a distinct pedigree, Oxbridge having been the engine room of British empire. Their historians have a record of producing glowing narratives of empire: J. R. Seeley's *Expansion of England* (1883) remains a work to be read. Beit Professor of History of the British Empire Reginald Coupland provided Oxford's end of the imperial drive, and sought to publicize what he perceived to be a gap in the understanding of British colonies.[28]

He has admitted that, in presenting papers to various institutes, think-tanks, and government organizations in the United States, he is seeking to contrast the experiences of the British and American empires.[29] He even went so far as to tell an audience at Harvard University's oration of the Two Hundred Twenty-Third Phi Beta Kappa Literary Exercises in June 2004 that the Americans of today are the British of yesterday. 'The Americans are the British and the British have become Europeans.'[30] In a slightly different sense, Ferguson reminds us of the academic project of a 'British Commonwealth of Nations' pioneered by British historians with eyes firmly set on the common identity shared by all nations of Anglophones. One such figure was Sir Lionel Curtis, founder of the imperial lobby group, the Round Table, and Beit Lecturer of Colonial History at Oxford, who envisaged a globally fused commonwealth of Britain, its dominions and the United States, a super commonwealth that would tie all in an Anglophonic world order.[31]

To regard Ferguson as an imperialist, a neo-conservative, is only instructive in a limited sense. 'Ferguson,' put the naval historian Paul Kennedy, 'is no more a Wolfowitzian advocate of American empire than Ariel was a benign guide to the drunken sailors Trinculo and Stephano when he led them into the thorns and

marshes'.[32] He is, in many ways, a romantic. His brief career in student politics was sabotaged by his ardent opposition to the Oxford Union motion: 'This House Regrets Colonization'.[33] His childhood was filled with imperial motifs: novels of H. Rider Haggard and John Buchan, 'imperial' jousts on the sporting battlefields between mother country and colonial offspring (Australia, New Zealand), a diet of 'Empire' biscuits.[34] He recalls his family life, ancestors who lived empire, breathed empire. They settled on the Canadian prairies at Saskatchewan; they braved freezing cold. Ferguson's interpretation of empire and his insistence on its realization as a crucial part of American identity provide a means of assessing the modern appeal for empire. Importantly, the reception of such ideas in an American audience provides some standard on how the United States will shape its imperial identity in the coming years.

The case for empire

'The best case for empire is always the case for order', writes Ferguson in his brief for American empire in *Colossus*.[35] But the argument for empire as a viable political ordering, indeed, a tangible creature of modern politics, is made in *Empire*, a praise of British Empire, with its Joseph Chamberlains, its Cecil Rhodes, its colourful builders. The anti-imperial world order, presaged by J. A. Hobson's *Imperialism: An Essay*, followed by Bolshevik critiques (Lenin's *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*), is directly challenged. British Empire, for instance, put money into colonies, rather than keeping it in the developed world.[36] In the current, anti-imperial world order (Ferguson takes 1996), only 28 per cent of foreign direct investment goes to developing countries; in 1913, the proportion was 63 per cent. Such investments would also be more secure – there were institutions protecting them. British economic stability was especially sound where societies were dramatically undeveloped. Naturally, French civil law was a less viable export than British common law, offering less security for investments.[37]

The Ferguson oeuvre is a celebration. It is Whig history. 'Without the spread of British rule around the world, it is hard to believe that the structures of liberal capitalism would have been so successfully established in so many different economies around the world.'[38] The British provided 'law and administration'; it was 'cheap and efficient': it was 'non-venal'.[39] It ensured the free passage of goods across the globe; it also encouraged a highly mobile labour market.[40] The British, Ferguson argues, rightly postponed the transfer of democracy to countries not ready for it.

Ferguson seems to be doing what Coupland tried doing at Oxford with two differences: first, that he is lecturing, not the British, but the Americans and second, that he seeks to use empire as a template that will continue to operate in the future more effectively. He is, in effect, shuffling the pieces of furniture of American identity, placing the notion of empire amongst it, arguing for its iconic status. He summarizes the opponents of empire simply: they were either those who emphasized

the plight of the colonized or those who stressed 'the negative consequences for the colonizers'.[41] But his empire is colourful. It spread the rule of law along with mismatched battles between colonizers and colonized; it was the seat of the modern global economy.

In *Daedalus*, he argues that we must realize the ubiquitous nature of the imperial legacy. We are all products of it, the offspring of expansionist powers. Ferguson argues that they, not humans, were the principal actors of history. He sketches an imperial typology, classifying empires as tyrannical, aristocratic, oligarchic and democratic. Their means of rule, the 'public goods' they administer, economics and 'social character' vary.[42]

Lip service to the less savoury aspects of empire is paid. 'It should never be forgotten,' he writes, referring to the brigandage of Welshman Henry Morgan's assault in December 1663 on Gran Grenada, a Spanish outpost north of Lago de Nicaragua, 'that this was how the British Empire began: in a maelstrom of seaborne violence and theft'.[43] But when it comes down to it, the colonial administration's deft mixture was near perfect. We are left marvelling at a historically cunning confluence of factors: British expertise in its finances, trade with its colonies (India) and figures such as Henry Morgan.

This sits uncomfortably with the sanguinary scenes described in Mike Davis' *Victorian Holocausts*.[44] The famine wrought in India remains the horror story of the period, and Cambridge academic Priyamvada Gopal, in a formidable riposte to Ferguson, has made various assertions that are hard to dispel. We can hardly blame the British for drought, but there was something to be said against the obstructionist policies endorsed by the British to prevent the alleviation of famine. There, famine took the lives of almost 30 million Indians. Ferguson does not take well to the charges that the British Empire could have resembled the terror machines of Stalin and Mao, or that its costs were as cataclysmic to those wrought by the work of totalitarian dictatorships. When a journalist from the *Independent*, Johann Hari, launched a salvo stating such a case, the rebuke was stinging. Ferguson mocked the journalist as 'Horrible Hari'.[45]

Ferguson does have a somewhat equivocal value, if nothing else: he acknowledges that America is an empire. It has various elements that demonstrate its similarities with other hegemonic powers. He charts its history, at times haphazardly, but not necessarily ineffectively in the first part of *Colossus*. First a continental empire, it then became a hemispheric one, moving into the Caribbean, Central America, and the Pacific. Purchase, annexation (Texas in 1845; California in 1848; Alaska 1867; and followed by the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Hawaii and Guam in 1898). Then, it moved from 'continental to hemispherical imperialism'.[46] Then came the Cold War, with the security of Europe mattering most, and then the shift to the Middle East – oil, terrorism.[47] But these idiosyncratic imperialists in denial chose to practice the 'imperialism of anti-imperialism'. They would simply call their geopolitical activities by another name, but with telling consequences: they would not preventively attack China with nuclear weapons during the Korean War (Ferguson regards this as a possible mistake); they would

do as Pyle in Graham Greene's *Quiet American*, deny empire while practising imperial politics and thus lose in Vietnam.[48]

Then, it shares similarities with its British counterpart. America is a logical Anglophone successor. It has done more than Britain in influencing the economics of the globe (tariff reductions through the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs and the World Trade Organization). Britain was, likewise, the engine room for globalization in the nineteenth century. The United States used the dollar's role as a key currency pre- and post-breakup of Bretton Woods.[49] 'Twentieth-century history handed the United States a privileged position in the world economy; its currency became and has remained the world's favourite.' Once the dollar was unleashed from its pegged status against gold, becoming a 'fiat currency' that was convertible irrespective of the value of gold, it became even more attractive.[50] The United States has managed its external liabilities through prudent devaluation. Let us then dispense with 'hegemony': America, he suggests is an empire, having preferred informal (through NGOs, corporations) to direct rule (which does use military force), a creature of informal empire.[51] It is a liberal democracy with a market economy, though he notes some 'illiberal characteristics'; it is concerned with its own security; maintaining international communications; access to raw materials; providing limited goods; peace (intervening occasionally) against regimes; freedom of seas and skies for trade and Americanization (conversion).[52]

Having decided that America is an empire, he then proceeds to look at the feasibility of its application to the international system. Policy effectively masquerades as history. Ferguson asks, is the model of 'national independence' a 'universally viable model'?[53] He asks this in light of the occupation of Iraq and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. He treats sovereignty as an inherently and justly mutable idea, where 'political dependence' for periods of time might be a 'good idea'.[54] Decolonization, Ferguson attempts to argue, was not such a good idea. Woodrow Wilson's urgings to self-determination as a rule should never have been articulated. Prosperity came to a few nations; others became conflict-ridden states, with Africa putting pay to the idea that carte blanche independence might be a good idea.[55] He does in *Colossus* what he did in *Empire*: Former colonies have fared badly, with Singapore being a spectacular exception. Those colonies when dependencies of empire did rather better as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (Ferguson pits them against US GDP) than current levels. Capital, instead of spreading wealth to developing nations, has remained trapped in developed countries, where the labour market is restricted. Empire, with its paternal benefits (rule of law, stable institutions), seems attractive. Nor is empire that expensive when you get the maths right – the mistake is telling the citizens of empire that it will cost nothing at all.[56]

Ferguson's point is simple: the world needs empire, and America can accomplish it, though imperfectly. American power is needed, the 'only effective solution to such challenges such as Bosnia, Kosovo' but it is also done in a cooperative sense.[57] Imperialism has been waged in the name of 'internationalism'.[58] The

Europeans are not quite up to the task. They are not as industrious, their labour market is inflexible and they have less promise. 'Unlike most European critics of the United States, then, I believe the world needs an effective liberal empire and that the United States is the best candidate for the job.'[59] The contours of this empire that Ferguson refers to have shed the skin of conventional empire-speak. He does not agree with the 'neo-imperialist' talk borrowed from a cupboard of 'bygone' Kiplinesque mentalities. There is no need to declare the American empire 'from the rooftop of the Capitol'.[60] But he urges intervention, the use of brute force at times to quell 'bellicose' regimes. He thus stakes the claim, and some of these were expressed in *Cash Nexus*, that democratizing rogue states would not be that costly (he argues that it would not push the US defence budget above 5 per cent GDP) and introducing the rule of law provides long-run dividends (market democracy).[61] In short, the United States should do what was done to Germany and Japan, an imperial project of state building. But Ferguson then seems to do a turn-around, having argued that the United States is the 'best candidate' to then argue that its 'liberal empire' is ineffective, given the nature of its economic system, social make-up and political culture.

The nub of the issue in so far as American empire goes is that its undertaking may be doomed. This is where the models of British and American empire are pitted against each other, with the latter coming out considerably worse. In contrast to its British counterpart, America suffers from three key deficits that may well render its imperial project unworkable: an economic deficit, a manpower deficit and an attention-deficit disorder.[62]

First, the economics. Since 1985, Ferguson notes that the United States has gone from a global net creditor to being the world's biggest debtor. Net international liabilities, he claims, are now 'equivalent to around a quarter of its gross domestic product'.[63] But 'fiscal overstretch' – a concept associated with the decline of empires, is something more serious on the home front. He warns the American empire builders that their creation is one of consumption, rather than thrifty accumulation. It will fall in time if it does not correct its current accounts and sort out its domestic spending regime. He advises that the welfare state be cut back: Americans, he scolds, think more of social security than national security. Seventy-seven million baby boomers will be collecting Social Security benefits; by 2030, America's elderly would have doubled; but there will be an 18 per cent increase in the number of workers footing that bill.[64] These observations tend to show that the fall of America's 'undeclared empire may be due not to terrorists at the gates or to rogue regimes that sponsor them, but to a fiscal crisis of the welfare state at home'.[65]

The deficit in manpower is problematic. Britain needed its imperial auxiliaries (Indian recruits). The American prison population exceeds 2 million, and Ferguson lets us know that this number is 14 times the number of American troops in Iraq. This is the equivalent, in turn, to the number of troops Britain stationed in Iraq in 1920. Naturally, the British, Ferguson implies, were more effective, though he concedes that their ride was a smoother one, unruffled by the

current number of Iraqis. Ferguson finds enough material for American recruits to police the globe, suggesting the drafting of the jobless, illegals and convicts.[66] The 'liberal' empire that Ferguson advocates is not unilateralist because it can never afford to be. On the contrary, he sees 'a solo strategy' as barren, offering 'little prospect of victory' against such challenges as terrorism, nuclear proliferation and organized crime.[67] The United States will need other powers on board to shoulder the burden of peace-keeping. American soldiers make bad police, poor members of local constabulary forces they have little 'appetite' for.[68] If they do not acknowledge these drawbacks, they will need their Kant-reading Venusians (to use Robert Kagan's terminology) from Europe to assist them as Hobbes-Clauswitz reading Martians.[69]

In the case of its cognitive handicap, the gravest of all, the United States has a chronic 'impatience with foreign entanglements' producing 'premature withdrawal' (Iraq, Afghanistan, Haiti, Somalia), a problem associated with not having the 'staying power' that would otherwise come in recognizing imperial credentials.[70]

> It's an empire that is remarkably adept at spreading its culture globally. In that sense, it's an empire with almost unrivalled military and cultural power. But when it comes to what might be called imperial governance, it is an empire which, precisely because it doesn't recognize its own existence, consistently underperforms.[71]

American interventions have operatic resonances: 'Like the fickle Lieutenant Pinkerton in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, American overseas interventions went through three phases: ardent in Act I, absent in Act II, anguished in Act III.'[72]

In practical terms, he advises that a Marshall Aid model be used in Iraq: do not reconstruct it 'on the cheap'; offer a more sizeable official 'occupation'.[73] He notes that the State Department had a plan for Iraqi reconstruction that was scrapped by the overeager Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld. He claims that stabilizing Iraq will yield benefits: American exports will grow along with the Iraqi economy just as the economies of Germany and Japan did. Reconstruction can also lead, he argues, to American jobs, rather than a diminution in the American way of living.[74] The costs to American empire then do not lie in Iraq proper. If American empire has the will-power to stay, the costs are outweighed by the benefits in the long-run.

Reactions and effects

American reactions to suggestions that the United States embrace an imperial identity can be usefully gauged by examining the reactions to Ferguson's thesis. The assumption that we might have comfortably made prior to 2001, that an imperial programme for a supposedly anti-imperial power prima facie would not work, no longer holds. Given the 'neo-Jacobin approach to international affairs'

adopted by Washington in recent years, with its 'monopolistic' and 'universalist' tendencies, Ferguson's thesis would surely have been feted.[75] Take, for instance, the astonishing array of builders for the American imperial project. In brute form, we have Michael Ledeen, the holder of the curiously named 'Freedom Chair' at the American Enterprise Institute. 'Every 10 years or so, the U.S. needs to pick up some crappy little country and throw it against the wall just to show the world we mean business.'[76] Max Boot of the Council on Foreign Relations seeks an incarnation of British imperial policy, wanting the equivalent of the Colonial Office. Naturally, Ferguson's blunt appraisal is of use here. He cuts the ground away from hypocritical suggestions that American power is untainted by signs of an imperial tag. His work has made American historians, public-policy pundits and officials confront the nature of imperial power.

Certainly, a popular reaction to Ferguson can be discerned. Mainstream publications extol his influence. *Time* found Ferguson's thesis provocative enough to land him a position in their hall of 100 most influential scientists and thinkers for 2004.[77] *Publisher's Weekly* ran a review claiming Ferguson's work as 'erudite and statistical' leading to a possible rethinking of the way liberals view intervention 'even as it castigates conservatives for their lacklustre commitment to nation building'.[78]

The liberal *Nation* would publish a review by Ronald Steel agreeing firstly, that the premise of an existing empire was correct. 'Of course the United States is an empire, and in most respects the most powerful the world has ever seen.'[79] America would set the 'agenda even by its absence'. For Steel, 'The empire is what it is, and the power realities will not be greatly different even if the name is euphemsized and the personalities who direct it are changed.' Self-awakening to the imperial identity is only occurring gradually. But the historical roots of this had to be recognized: had not Henry Luce of *Time* and *Life* magazines called the time after 1945 that of the 'American Century' which brought with it the need to 'accept wholeheartedly our duty and our opportunity as the most powerful and vital nation in the world, and in consequence exert upon the world the full impact of our influence, for such purposes we see fit and by such means as we see fit'.[80] In the final analysis, Ferguson was at least refreshing in fastening attention to empire as identity.

But following Britain, in effect, the Roman adhering to the standards of Greek wisdom, is not for all. David Ignatius, novelist and correspondent for the *Washington Post* residing in Paris, found it highly problematic, if not unpalatable, to taper a British design over American hegemony. 'We Americans actually spend too much time already wishing we were Britain. The CIA wonders why it can't spy like MI6; every president fixes on the resolute Winston Churchill as a secret role model. In crisis, we hear the voice of Margaret Thatcher whispering, "Don't go wobbly."' If an empire is to be capably formulated, it would have to take into account 'real strengths and limitation of our culture and political experience'. Ignatius is thus optimistic: Ferguson is wrong to assume that the appropriate tradition to ape is British – America will 'fail' as a prosthesis of Gladstone's Britain, but 'we may yet succeed as America'.[81]

Television, a medium well harnessed by Ferguson, has also produced its fair share of admirers of his idea of liberal empire. The Larry Kudlow and Jim Cramer current affairs programme on CNBC only had praise. 'And Niall,' said Larry Kudlow affably, 'could you just briefly define what you mean by liberal empire? Because I think I'm wholeheartedly for it.' He was also for the economic reforms to correct local fiscal imbalances. His slippery arithmetic led Ferguson's thesis to look more promising: a 45 trillion dollar future liability was nothing when one looked at 700 trillion dollar value of GDP in year 2075 'so its really only 6 percent and then we can reform Social Security and Medicare and fix this issue without too much difficulty'. Kudlow wished Ferguson 'go in and pay President Bush a call, bolster him up just a little bit'.[82]

The reaction from scholars has been more ambivalent, and a resort to semantic gymnastics apparent. The historian John Lewis Gaddis, who made his mark with a post-revisionist study seeking to augment the New Left and realists in their interpretations on the origins of the Cold War, takes issue with the trimmings of empire and Ferguson's assessment of the US record after the Second World War. Gaddis typically sidesteps the consequences of hegemony, allergic as he is to the suggestions that America is an empire. One can still be a successful hegemon without exerting formal control. As he claimed in his review of Ferguson's *Colossus* in the *New York Times*, the United States, far from proving inept in containing the Soviet Union, proved enormously successful. 'It designed an international order in which American influence spread, as Ferguson himself notes, more by invitation than by imposition.' At the end of the Cold War, America conspicuously lacked any 'credible great power rivals in sight, a condition that persists over a decade later'. Gaddis whimsically observes: 'A fondness for consumption and shopping malls? Perhaps, but compared with whom? The Europeans? The Japanese? The Chinese?'[83]

Walter Russell Mead, Henry Kissinger Fellow of the Council of Foreign Relations, certainly nods respectfully in Ferguson's direction but is similarly deft at sidestepping the issue. Empire is instead the 'American project', articulating the key points or liberal order, wealth and stability.[84] Ironically, some neo-conservatives continue to insist that the characterization is inappropriate, given the element of 'justice' in the promotion of American values. Americans insist on fighting terrorism for the common good, dictatorships for the betterment of humanity.[85]

Robert Kagan of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace remains perhaps the most alarmed of all the reviewers, baffled by Ferguson's insistence that empire moulds America's visions and aspirations. In a sparring debate with Ferguson at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, DC, Kagan considered that declaring the United States to be an empire 'would not only be factually wrong but strategically catastrophic'. In contrast to 'the exploitative purposes of the British', the American programme of spreading rights and democracy was fundamentally at odds with imperialism. America 'enriches' its partners economically; it did not 'turn them into deserts'. It did not deal in the business of occupations; there would be no imperial conquest.[86]

A skirt through the reactions to Ferguson's thesis from think-tanks would in theory be instructive, given their crucial role in formulating policy in American politics in recent years.[87] Space only allows one example to be profitably explored. The Cato Institute, a conservative libertarian think-tank of thirty years standing, has demonstrated some interest in the Ferguson thesis on American empire. Its reaction is interesting for accepting parts of the thesis while discarding others. It regularly warns with the temper of Austrian jurist Friedrich A. Hayek about the evils of a social net, a welfare state. Titles such as 'More Welfare, More Poverty' feature in its publications list. Its director of health and welfare studies, Michael D. Tanner, argued that, 'News that the poverty rate remained at 12.6 percent last year, statistically unchanged from the year before, has set off a predictable round of calls for increased government spending on social welfare programs.'[88]

Christopher A. Preble, Director of Foreign Policy Studies at the Cato Institute, struggles with the idea that the American state will don the suite of imperial officials and police an imperium. In a direct response to the challenges suggested in Ferguson's *Colossus*, Preble argues that 'America has risked the lives of millions in her history – but generally in the defense of perceived national interests.' Rather conventionally, Preble advances the case that America had been born of a rather different political source: anti-imperialism. It was 'hard to imagine Americans giddily donning jodphurs and pith helmets and to instantiate the theories of a zealous Scottish academic'. But Preble is concerned with the nature of who decides which countries are to fall under the rubric of a governing power. Who is to decide? 'Ferguson? "Enlightened" Westerners? Those with the most guns? If decolonization has been so negative, why aren't many in those countries "begging" to rejoin empire?'[89] Whatever the merits of American policy, shouldering imperial responsibilities would be unrealistic.[90]

Ferguson, according to Preble, also overplays the merits of the Egyptian model as a classic exponent of liberal empire. Through deception, through empty promises of leaving but not doing so (Ferguson counts 66 promises by the British, measured against a staying time of 72 years), the United States might well adopt this same approach in Iraq. Surely the model cannot be used now in Iraq? Americans, for one, would not stomach it.[91] Preble is one of them. In sentiments reminiscent of that anti-imperial critique of British empire, Preble takes Ferguson to task for ignoring the features of enslavement 'unspeakable brutality [wrought] on its subjects, leaving countless dead natives in its wake. If Ferguson believes that such slaughter is justified, he should present an argument'.[92] There is too much Kipling, and no Orwell, conspicuously absent in the bibliography.

Predictably, a member of the fiscally conservative Cato Institute would find agreement with Ferguson's argument that the costs of empire could spiral. But those costs would be incurred within the imperium: the reliance, for instance, on 'wasteful entitlements'. Preble reminds the readers of the work of the senior economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, Jagadeesh Gokhale. Readers, argues Preble, should be less concerned about American rejection of the bugle call to empire than the lack of will to correct fiscal imbalances.[93]

The advice of British pundits to their American counterparts has taken a bit of a beating in recent times. The limits of imperialism are currently being exposed in the engagements of the Middle East. Afghanistan is proving formidable, as it did for the British in the nineteenth century. Iraq is proving intractable. The fact that Americans may not like empire may not be such a bad idea. Self-correcting limits inherent in a democratic process may have its virtues. Ferguson, it seems, is expecting too much. But his arguments on empire as a crucial aspect of American identity are bound to linger.

EMPIRE AS A WAY OF LIFE?

A search for historical alternatives

Jonathan M. Hansen

Is the idea and reality of America possible without empire?
(William Appleman Williams, *Empire as
a Way of Life*, 1980[1])

Is America possible without empire? On the face of it, this may appear to be a strange question. Surely it is possible to make the case for the *idea* of a nonimperial United States if not for the real thing. Most contemporary criticisms of US imperialism take the possibility for granted. A nonimperial United States would consume only its share of global resources, would respect the sovereignty and popular will of other nations, and would pursue multilateral solutions to international conflicts.[2]

Were he alive today, William Appleman Williams could certainly endorse such a vision. But he would be skeptical that it was possible for the United States, at least so long as it remained in the grip of a liberal political economy. In *Empire as a Way of Life*, Williams presents a litany of incidents in which the logic of a liberal political economy drove the United States to adopt policies inimical to the liberty and well-being of foreigners and US citizens alike. The solution to US imperialism, Williams suggests, is for the nation to renounce its liberal philosophy and market economy and to cultivate its own garden,[3] which is really no solution at all. Whatever one's perspective on liberalism, we can all agree that the United States is not about to abandon its liberal institutions, nor is it likely to retreat from the global arena no matter how inimical the current climate. What, then, should we make of William's book?

Williams goads us into examining our assumption that the way to curb US imperialism is simply to call it to a halt. If US imperialism is inherent in the logic of liberal political economy, as he argues, then solutions to imperialism will have to confront the logic head on, either by renouncing liberalism, as he himself did, or by identifying resources dormant in liberalism capable of overcoming its harmful effects.

It is this latter challenge that I take up in this essay. I will suggest that a solution to US imperialism lies not in retreat from liberalism but in the underappreciated

liberal principle of reciprocity. By reciprocity, I mean a moral stance whereby individuals and groups regard "others" not as means to their own ends but as ends in themselves, whereby social and political differences are valued for the self-reflection they inspire rather than arrayed hierarchically and whereby political, economic, and cultural exchange is genuinely two directional. Reciprocity does not constitute a policy. Rather, it is an attitude likely to increase the success of policies that depend on the good faith and cooperation of the people involved. Nor is reciprocity always practicable. It presupposes an atmosphere of openness and trust quite different from that abroad in the world today. But that hardly makes this exercise irrelevant. I hope the essay will be useful for individuals seeking to understand how the United States got itself into its current predicament and how it might avoid such predicaments in the future.

Arguments on behalf of reciprocity as a model for nonimperial social and political relations exist in the historical record. I will present two case studies illustrating the theme. I will begin by sketching Williams' critique of US imperialism, which in effect charges US policymakers with a failure of reciprocity. Next I will describe a model of reciprocity articulated by Michel de Montaigne in his writing on Spain's encounter with the New World. To my mind, Montaigne comes as close as anyone to realizing the ideal of reciprocity. He has not convinced all critics. The literary scholar Myra Jehlen, for one, has argued that Montaigne maintains an imperial gaze, a charge which if true seems to rule out the possibility of nonimperial social relations. I will explain why I think Jehlen's charge misses its mark. Finally, I will examine William James' criticism of the US treatment of the Philippines in the aftermath of the Spanish–American War, which demonstrates the usefulness of reciprocity as a tool in analyzing foreign policy. I do not presume to give these topics full attention in a short chapter. I hope only to convince readers that they are topics worthy of further pursuit.

Before I go any further I want to say a word about the role of ideas in historical causation. In our materialist age, ideas play second fiddle to economic structure in theories of social stability and change, as if we have paid closer attention to Marx than to Weber. Not only do ideas function as switchmen speeding industrial forces down the rails of history, as Weber argued, but societies, like people, understand themselves principally by what they are not.[4] Ideas provide the essential data in this process. Ideas are also the standard by which we judge reality and plot the course of change. If we cannot identify an alternative to empire even in principle, then what is the point of our indictments of imperialism except as futile attempts to evade responsibility for the policies we enable?

Williams on liberalism

In what sense, then, is imperialism inherent in America's liberal political economy?[5] From its inception, Williams tells us, the United States has construed itself

in world-historical terms – as an enterprise undertaken in the interest of mankind. A peculiar hybrid of natural rights philosophy and messianic religion bred this universal perspective and tied the fate of free Americans and their government to the welfare of the world. This tie exerted both symbolic and practical force in US history. Predicated on abundance, American well-being depended on the possibility of expansion and, ultimately, empire. The US Constitution, with its federal system, proved ideally suited to marshal the resources required of expansion without threatening popular rule.[6] Revolution Era Americans seemed to have established a very good government, especially when compared with their European rivals, and it was not long before they began to view that government as the ultimate solution to the problem of governance itself. Historians still debate the radicalism of the American Revolution, but to Williams there could be no doubting its ideological significance: the Revolution "transformed the Rights of Free Englishmen, rooted in communal experience, into … the Right of Free Americans to Transform the World."[7]

To be sure, this self-image promoted among Americans feelings of grandiosity. But it also inspired profound insecurity – what Williams calls "a deep sense of being *alone*."[8] A nation so far out ahead of the field could not help but incur the envy of lesser rivals and could boast no reliable friends. The logic of expansion at the heart of US nationhood bred suspicion toward the old world, which, in turn, further fed the impetus to empire. From the colonial era onward Americans understood that demographic pressure on the margins of settlement would incur the animus of foreign competitors, hence US officials remained constantly on the lookout for favorable outposts from which to defend the nation's borders. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, continental outposts seemed to provide security enough. Increasing production over the course of the century fueled a demand for greater markets and resources and, eventually, the bases from which to protect them. Long before the American Revolution, Britain's colonial subjects had called for the taking of Cuba; after the Revolution, there arose a general clamor for the annexation not just of Cuba but of other islands and archipelagos across the sea. All of which promised still more contact – more conflict – in an endless cycle that continues to this day.[9]

The idea of Americans as ordained by right to spread out across the land and called by God to serve, save, and give truth to mankind formed the core of US civic identity. This identity held the nation together through the shock of Civil War and the dislocations attending two hundred years of social and structural transformation. Over the long course of US history and despite much change, Williams suggests, the ends and assumptions of the American state remained essentially the same: the happiness of the individual American on whom depended the fate of individuals around the world.

This worldview spawned an attitude toward foreign nations and peoples that rendered them at best very junior partners in the American mission to redeem mankind. As the agents of redemption, Americans elevated their right to security and futurity above others' right to liberty and equality. Other nations would be

judged by their correspondence to US institutions. Knowing what was best for other nations, Americans would demand changes to bring them into line. As resistance to US policy came to be viewed as irresponsibility and license, US foreign policy took on a condescending, bullying character.[10]

Trollope, Tocqueville, Dickens, Bryce, among other foreign observers, long ago noted the peculiar mix of altruism and presumption and generosity and hubris in American political discourse. To John L. Sullivan, coiner of the phrase "manifest destiny," for example, America represented "the beginning of a new history." "Who will, what can, set limits to our onward march?" Sullivan demanded. He charged his compatriots "to smite unto death the tyranny of kings, hierarchs, and oligarchs, and carry the glad tidings of peace and good will where myriads now endure an existence scarcely more enviable than the beast of the field."[11]

US history offers countless variations on this theme. Henry Luce's essay, "The American Century," is archetypical. The essay appeared in *Time* magazine, where Luce was editor, in February 1941. For Americans who would project US power and ideals across the globe, "The American Century" remains a seminal text. William Kristol's "Project for a New American Century" makes explicit reference to Luce; President Bush has repeatedly reiterated Luce's vision, though without invoking its name.[12] "The American Century" reflects the assumptions of US policymakers across the centuries, from America's founding fathers to the platform of Lincoln's Republican Party, from American Progressives to Cold Warrior's and Kennedy liberals, just to name a few.[13]

Luce saw the United States as "the sanctuary of the ideals of civilization." It was America's turn, he believed, "to be the powerhouse from which the ideals spread throughout the world and do their mysterious work of lifting the life of mankind from the level of the beasts to what the Psalmist called a little lower than the angels …. America as the dynamic center of ever widening spheres of enterprise, America as the training center of skillful servants of mankind, America as the Good Samaritan, really believing again that it is more blessed to give than to receive … out of these elements surely can be fashioned a vision of the 20th century to which we can and will devote ourselves in joy and gladness and vigor and enthusiasm."[14]

Whether or not it is more *blessed* to give than to receive, it is certainly easier. Ethnographers have long since exposed the moral ambiguity of the gift. The lack of reciprocity in Luce's idea of American service is plain: so much to give the world, America, so little worth taking – except, perhaps, material resources.

Montaigne on reciprocity

Michel de Montaigne studiously avoided being the recipient of gifts. "I avoid subjecting myself to any sort of obligation," Montaigne wrote in "Of Vanity," "but especially any that binds me by a debt of honor. I find nothing so expensive as that which is given me and for which my will remains mortgaged by the claim of gratitude, and I more willingly accept services that are for sale."[15] Not only do

gifts often rob recipients of agency, but they often misconstrue the nature and needs of recipients themselves.[16] Montaigne doubted that one person, one nation, one race could know *anything* definitively. To Montaigne, knowledge was ineluctably perspectival, a conclusion that inspired in him no cynicism or sense of futility but rather curiosity and wonder. Montaigne viewed the pursuit of knowledge as open-ended and infinite, hence infinitely exhilarating. "Each man calls barbarism," he wrote in the late 1570s, "whatever is not his own practice; for indeed it seems we have no other test for truth and reason than the example and pattern of the opinions and customs of the country we live in. There is always the perfect religion, the perfect government, the perfect and accomplished manner in all things."[17] The occasion of this meditation on the myopia of mankind was the return from the New World of an interlocutor who had witnessed the contact between Spaniards and the indigenous denizens of what is now Brazil. Like many of us today, Montaigne's contemporaries were quick with hasty conclusions about Inca inferiority and backwardness. They took for granted that the Inca civilization had nothing to offer Europeans. And they expected the Incas to welcome and adopt Western customs and institutions. This was nothing new.

What was new was Montaigne's response. Stories from the New World provoked in Montaigne self-reflection rather than the customary stultifying self-valorization. Opportunities for self-reflection were evidently rare in sixteenth-century France; hence Montaigne was drawn to news of the New World and, indeed, to travel itself. "Travel seems to me a profitable enterprise," he wrote elsewhere, a few years later. "The mind is continually exercised in observing new and unknown things; and I know no better school … for forming one's life, than to set before it constantly the diversity of so many other lives, ideas, and customs, and to make it taste such a perpetual variety of forms of our nature."[18]

Montaigne's conviction about the benefits of travel is free of the sanctimony that imbues Luce's vision of America's mission in the world. Readers familiar with the *Essays* know that Montaigne was not a saint. Nor did he aspire to sainthood. He ventured forth not to aid or redeem anyone, but in pursuit of insight, understanding, and novel forms of life. Thus motivated, he met those he encountered with an open mind. Like John Stuart Mill, he sought knowledge; unlike Mill, he did not exclude 98 per cent of the world's population from the knowledge pool.[19] Montaigne wrote,

> Even if all that has come down to us by report from the past should be true and known by someone, it would be less than nothing compared with what is unknown. And of this very image of the world which glides along while we live on it, how puny and limited is the knowledge of even the most curious! Not only of particular events … but of the state of great governments and nations, there escapes us a hundred times more than comes to our knowledge …. If we saw as much of the world as we do not see, we would perceive, it is likely, a perpetual multiplication and vicissitude of forms.[20]

Travel – whether literal or figurative, through Italy or to the new world – was valuable precisely to the extent that it exposed the ignorance underlying one's own assumptions and institutions. "There is nothing unique and rare about nature, but there certainly is as regards our knowledge, which is a miserable foundation for our rules and which is apt to represent to us a very false picture."[21] Such ignorance permeated the tales coming from the New World. Who are we to speak of barbarism? Who are we to speak of knowledge? Who are we to speak of progress? "Most of our responses" to the Indians and "most of our dealings with them show that they were not at all behind us in natural brightness of mind and pertinence … not behind us in industry either."[22] Blinded by prejudice and preconceptions, we offered Indians not "brotherly fellowship and understanding," but we merely "made declarations to its people." Surprise, surprise: "they did not want to change!"[23]

In an essay published in Amy Kaplan's and Donald Pease's celebrated volume on imperialism, the literary critic Myra Jehlen sets out to find a "ground for anticolonialism."[24] Jehlen is attracted to Montaigne and his writing on contact between new and old worlds but ultimately concludes that Montaigne maintains an imperial gaze. Her argument relies on a distinction between the concepts "difference" and "other." Naming one's subjects "other", she suggests, "seems to cast the speaker's cultural interlocutors in an inferior position by rendering them mere negative quantities defined by an opposition to which they do not contribute." By contrast, acknowledging their difference corrects "this imbalance by granting others identities of their own," thus rendering the "imperial monologue … two-sided." In sum, difference "denies the centrality of any point of view," while other maintains such centrality. For all Montaigne appears to resist centrality, Jehlen insists, he slides "irresistibly" toward otherness.[25]

In what sense? In analyzing Inca civilization, Montaigne proceeds by comparison. We have "x," they lack "x"; lacking "x" they must do "y." Because the Incas themselves do not recognize or "query that lack themselves," Jehlen tells us (for who can query what they do not know?), Montaigne exercises power over them – in Jehlen's terms he enjoys "epistemological ascendancy." This epistemological power becomes technological power as the things the Incas lack end up destroying them.

I do not quite know what to make of Jehlen's contention that Montaigne's "epistemological ascendancy" makes him complicit in Spain's destruction of the Incas. This would seem to make Montaigne guilty of imperialism as soon as he took up the Incas as a subject. But even before she makes that leap, Jehlen is hobbled by a misunderstanding of the way "otherness" works in philosophers since Hegel, one that has significant repercussions for our understanding of the idea of reciprocity. In existential philosophy, the goal is not to rid the world of the self/other distinction. Without that distinction, individuals could not separate themselves from their world. All would be narcissism. What is crucial, according to existentialists, is to enable every individual to be able to experience herself *as*

"self" and to recognize the reciprocal need in others. Centrality is not the problem. The problem is our failure to recognize that *ours* is not the *only* center.[26] This Montaigne acknowledges. The West does indeed have a certain power, a technical power, so long as technique is defined in a certain way. But the Incas have powers – technical, "industrial" – that we don't have, many beyond our ken.

In the name of difference, Jehlen charges Montaigne with failing to leave *his* differences behind when he encounters the new world, as if the universal perspective she endorses exists outside human experience. However much we may regret the fate of the Incas and reproach the behavior of Spain, that expectation is unattainable. It would never be asked of the Incas themselves.[27]

Comparison is the essence of understanding, as Montaigne demonstrates. Like the contemporary philosopher Judith Butler, Montaigne knew that the path to universalism runs through culture not around it.[28] Reciprocity does not require that we leave our culture – our knowledge – behind when encountering others, only that we recognize it as *ours*. Nor does reciprocity preclude judgment. After hearing about the Incas' gruesome treatment of their prisoners of war, Montaigne confesses no regret "that we notice the barbarous horror of such acts." He only regretted "that, judging their faults rightly, we should be so blind to our own."[29]

In sum, then, reciprocity does not rule out criticism. It does not require us to stop being human. It does not require us to repudiate our own culture. Nor does it require that we always get others right – for how can we if *real* difference exists – but only that we remain open to the possibility of getting them right and, perhaps more importantly, to the likelihood that we have gotten them wrong.

William James on US policy in the Philippines

A similar lack of reciprocity doomed US policy in the Philippines in the aftermath of the Spanish–American War, according to philosopher William James. US officials made no effort to engage the Filipinos on their own terms. Instead, they enacted policies whose presumption, arrogance, and condescension inspired the Filipinos to declare independence from the United States in January 1899, inaugurating a three-year war.

The circumstances of the Spanish–American War are well known.[30] Driven by some combination of idealism, jingoism, and manifest destiny, the United States declared war on Spain in the spring of 1898. Within four months, American forces had demolished the Spanish navy in Manila and Santiago harbors and established US sovereignty over Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. What had begun as a crusade undertaken "for humanity's sake," in the words of one Republican senator, had become a quest for empire. Cuba had been promised independence in the lead-up to the war, but no such pledge constrained American dominion over Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. President McKinley found himself in the eye of a political storm: should the United States annex the "liberated" Spanish colonies? Should the colonies be merely occupied or left

entirely alone? "If old Dewey had just sailed away when he smashed the Spanish fleet," the president is said to have muttered, "what a lot of trouble he would have saved us."[31]

Victory over Spain hung the United States on the horns of a vexing dilemma. Since ancient times, republican theorists have debated the compatibility of liberty and empire. Much of the debate has centered around the question of ultimate ends: was the end of the republic self-preservation, tranquility, or greatness? Machiavelli has confused students of republicanism into concluding that liberty and empire are compatible.[32] After his classical predecessor, Sallus, Machiavelli insisted that republics should indeed pursue empire; however, by doing so, they would invite evils corrosive of liberty. For Machiavelli, the end of citizenship was virtue, the end of republicanism was greatness; only by vying for empire could citizens and republics achieve glory.[33] Machiavelli was unburdened by contemporary faith in progress. From his perspective, every republic's days were numbered. The question was whether a republic would go out nobly or ignobly.[34] The United States joined this old debate with the self-consciousness befitting a nation founded on the principle of popular sovereignty, and with considerable naiveté. "I have been criticized a good deal about the Philippines, but don't deserve it," President McKinley pleaded to a White House audience, in year one of the Philippine–American War. "The truth is I didn't want the Philippines, and when they came to us, as a gift from the gods, I did not know what to do with them."[35] With little warning, circumstances compelled Americans to choose between the country's commitment to self-rule, on the one hand, and its commercial and military interests and "manifest destiny," on the other. Imperialists appropriated republican rhetoric to justify annexation. Anti-imperialists insisted that republicanism did not lend itself to empire. "You can not govern a foreign territory, a foreign people, another people than your own," scolded George F. Hoar. Imperialism violated republican tenets by nullifying popular checks on government policy and by imposing an alien will on the colonized people. Despite initial misgivings, President McKinley justified empire by appealing to manifest destiny. The colonies "must be held," the president proclaimed, "if we are to fulfill our destinies as a nation" and provide the natives with "the benefits of a Christian civilization which has reached its highest development under our republican institutions."[36]

Thus were the terms of debate established: self-determination and consensual government versus American "national destiny" and "civilization." Once thought to be the source of virtue forged in the struggle between good and evil, Christianity and republican government had become gifts, in McKinley's rhetoric, bestowed upon fortunate natives by virtuous missionaries. Anti-imperialists viewed McKinley's conflation of republicanism with empire as evidence that America's civic republican tradition had been emptied of form and content by the end of the nineteenth century. The republic-become-nation-state could no longer countenance political deliberation. "Who will embarrass the government," the president challenged, "by sowing the seeds of dissatisfaction among the brave

men who stand ready to serve and die, if need be, for their country? Who will darken the counsels of the republic in this hour, requiring the united wisdom of all?" The nation's revolutionary legacy was plainly on retreat as the president demanded citizens to embrace a policy that suspended republican principles in the interest of "national destiny."[37]

William James believed that the United States committed a grievous wrong by invading the Philippines and crushing the Filipino independence movement. The nation had committed wrong before, of course, but never so boldly, so hypocritically, or with so little public opposition. By employing abstractions like "national destiny" and "civilization" to justify theft, imperialists inverted the rational order. On their lips, true became false and false true. "The worst of our imperialists," James wrote in the *Boston Evening Transcript,* "is that they do not themselves know where sincerity ends and insincerity begins. Their state of consciousness is so new, so mixed of primitively human passions and, in political circles, of calculations that are anything but primitively human; so at variance moreover, with their former mental habits; and so empty of data and contents; that they face various ways at once, and their portraits should be taken with a squint." Had American democracy remained robust at the turn of the twentieth century, citizens might have steered their wayward representatives back on course. But democracy proved no match for the expansionist mass politics and culture that characterized the modern age.[38]

James' account of the Philippine–American War may be read as allegory about the destruction of American democracy. The demon of the story is abstraction: "national destiny" and "bigness." The victim is "reality," "popular government," and "plain moral sense." There are no heroes in this allegory, only a slumbering American public that enables the demon to devour the victim while evading responsibility. Writing in March 1899, one month after the American invasion, James claimed to be able to detect the first stirrings of dissent among an awakening citizenry. Whether to banish their slumber or bid his beloved principles good-bye, he wrote several editorials that spring whose "sober seriousness and definite English speech" aimed to expose the president's "precious proclamations," "moral platitudes," and "bland and evasive phraseology," suddenly so popular in America since the 1896 presidential campaign.[39]

When America declared war on Spain in April 1898, even James believed that war "harnessed in a cause which promised to be freedom" might yet produce results "fairly safe." But virtue proved no match for war. Even when motivated by the most laudatory aims, war bred a "savage" and "piratical" passion that negated its justification. James resolved to "keep [war] chained for ever." For over a century, Americans had grasped this point innately; but suddenly they too had been "swept away by [war's] overmastering flood."[40] James' mixed metaphors, uncharacteristic in so lucid a writer, betray exasperation. From his perspective, passion did not excuse America's behavior. Once the "corrupting inwardness" of the Philippines invasion had become evident, McKinley should have called it to a halt. No abstract soldier's virtue could justify national

"ignominy." Citizens' complacency in the face of blatant American "piracy" astounded James. Skeptics who would not acknowledge the pernicious effect of corporate capitalism on civic virtue could now witness the erosion before their very eyes. James saw the fate of Filipinos and American industrial workers and America's African-American minority as inextricably bound. By waging war on the Philippines, Americans "openly engaged in crushing out the sacredest thing in this great human world," he cried, "the attempt of a people long enslaved to attain to the possession of itself, to organize its laws and government, to be free to follow its internal destinies according to its own ideals."[41]

Once McKinley introduced the abstractions of *civilization* and *national destiny* into the Philippines context, the war acquired its own momentum, justifying any and all abuses undertaken in its name. When the Filipinos did not yield in the face of the US invasion, American journalists depicted their resistance as an impudent rejection of American benevolence. Noxious as it may have been, the calumny of the "yellow" press paled compared with the devastation wrecked by the mortars hurled from American gunboats into downtown Manila. "It is horrible," James lamented, "simply horrible. Surely there cannot be many born and bred Americans who, when they look at the bare fact … do not blush with burning shame at the unspeakable meanness and ignominy of the trick."[42]

But shame derives from a sense of moral responsibility. And moral responsibility seemed to James the principal casualty of American modernization. Taking the measure of the American mind in 1899, James claimed to be unfazed by the sway of "war fever" and "pride," for these were "passions that interfere with the reasonable settlement of any affair." He was more interested in the abstract rhetoric of "national destiny" – so apparently "peculiar with our belief," he wrote, "and which for some inscrutable reason it has become infamous for us to disbelieve in or refuse." Having once been champions of self-determination, Americans were now "to be missionaries of civilization," James mocked, "and to bear the white man's burden, painful as it often is." Perhaps it was time to discard the very notion of civilization and its old association with freeing human will from coercive and stultifying provincialism. Indeed, James suggests, by some perversion of logic, "civilization" had come to represent narrow self-interest and the Filipinos the striving for autonomy. "One Christian … one Buddhist or Mohammedan … one ethical reformer or philanthropist" could do more to promote the "inner realities" of the Filipinos, James sighed, than America's "whole army and navy … with our whole civilization at its back."[43]

Surely the Filipino independence movement had warranted America's support. What inspired US officials to treat the Filipino leader Emilio Aguinaldo like a common criminal? James blamed "the great Yankee business concern," whose commercial interest the administration concealed behind the rhetoric of Christian and republican missionizing: "We are here for your own good," James mocked McKinley and Roosevelt; "unconditionally surrender to our tender mercies, or we'll blow you into kingdom come."[44] No doubt market imperatives partly inspired American policy. But undergirding the Western market economy was a

blindness toward non-Western civilizations and cultures that afflicted America's leaders. James's recognition that Filipinos possessed an "inner reality" beyond the ken of Western civilization made him a maverick among anti-imperialists, who generally condemned imperialism from an isolationist, and often racist, perspective. Traditionally, republican theorists emphasized imperialism's cost to the republic itself: empire generated wealth, wealth spawned luxury, luxury promoted decadence, decadence invited conquest. America's founders appended their own concerns to this list: distance created ignorance, ignorance produced dependence, dependence bred indifference, indifference begat decay. James deployed both lines of criticism, but he also argued that distance impeded Americans' understanding of the Filipinos themselves. Nations possessed their own "ideals which are a dead secret to other nations," he wrote; each "has to develop in its own way."[45] The United States had "treated the Filipinos as if they were a painted picture, an amount of mere matter in our way." American diplomats lacked the ability to understand the situation "psychologically." Even European nations would have tried to "ascertain the sentiments of the natives and the ideals they might be led by." Americans presumed to glean Filipino sentiments from afar. Blind to "the secrets of the Philippines soul," even the best-intentioned diplomats could only "work disaster," James concluded. The situation called for "different men."[46]

Different men bearing different ideals. James engaged the subject of difference in a collection of popular essays written throughout the 1890s and published as *Talks to Teachers on Psychology: and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals* in May 1899.[47] James wrote the preface to the book several months into the Philippine–American War. "I wish I were able to make [the essay] 'On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings' more impressive," he lamented. "It is more than the mere piece of sentimentalism which it may seem to some readers. It connects itself with a definite view of the world and of our moral relations to the same." Tenet number one of James' "pluralist philosophy" was that "the facts and worth of life need many cognizers to take them in." No individual or nation could boast a perspective "absolutely public and universal. Private and uncommunicable perceptions always remain over, and the worst of it is that those who look for them from the outside never know *where.*" James hoped that a socialized liberal philosophy might dissuade Americans from imposing their "own inner ideals and institutions *vi et armis* upon Orientals."[48]

Most of James' writing on the Philippine–American War rejects the distinction between civilization and savagery deployed by his contemporaries. "On a Certain Blindness" reverses it. Behind Western myopia lay a vocational, or functional, narrowness that overwhelmed individuals confronting exigencies of modern life. Fixated on practical predicaments, individuals failed to comprehend the significance of others' lives. Like Montaigne, James gleaned much of what he understood about human nature from travel. On one excursion through the mountains of North Carolina he encountered a method of settlement that offended his aesthetic taste. "Ugly indeed seemed the life of the squatter," he

mused. "Talk about going back to Nature! I said to myself, oppressed by the dreariness, as I drove by. Talk of a country life for one's old age and for one's children! Never thus, with nothing but the bare ground and one's bare hands to fight the battle! Never, without the best spoils of culture woven in!" James queried his escort about the sort of people who could endure such a life. "All of us," replied the escort to James' amazement; "we ain't happy here unless we are getting one of these coves under cultivation." The scales fell from James' eyes. "I instantly felt that I had been losing the whole inward significance of the situation," he reported.

> Because to me the clearings spoke of naught but denudation, I thought that to those whose sturdy arms and obedient axes had made them they could tell no other story. But when they looked on the hideous stumps, what they thought of was personal victory. The chips, the girdled trees and the vile split rails spoke of honest sweat, persistent toil and final reward.

In short, "the clearing, which to me was a mere ugly picture on the retina, was to them a symbol redolent with moral memories and sang a very paean of duty, struggle, and success" (OCB, 134).

James came to refer to the significance he discovered in those Appalachian coves as "eagerness." Such eagerness could be found outside North Carolina, of course. It came in every shape and form and could be found in every corner of the world. "Sometimes," James observed,

> the eagerness is more knit up with the motor activities, sometimes with the perceptions, sometimes with the imagination, sometimes with reflective thought. But wherever it is found, there is the zest, the tingle, the excitement, of reality; and there is "importance" in the only real and positive sense in which importance ever anywhere can be.
>
>   (OCB, 135).[49]

Contrary to the arguments of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, for example, eagerness was not to be found merely in the West.[50] Progress, James argued in "On a Certain Blindness," resided in the dawning recognition that eagerness, indeed, life itself, consisted of "fundamental static goods" as common among Filipinos as Americans (OCB, 147). Appalachian coves? *There is life,* James wrote. Filipino fields? *And there, a step away, is death.* "Savage" rites? *There is the only kind of beauty there ever was.* Harvard lecture halls? *There is the old human struggle and its fruits together.* Civilization? *There is the text and the sermon, the real and the ideal in one.* Barbarism? *But to the jaded and unquickened eye it is all dead and common, pure vulgarism, flatness and disgust* (OCB, 144).

It should be said that James was ambivalent about progress and the distinction between civilization and savagery that undergirded it. Notwithstanding his

enthusiasm for "eternal truths," he welcomed what he called time's "stable gain" – the fact that "the world does get more human, and the religion of democracy tends toward permanent increase."[51] Like so many turn-of-the-century Americans, James viewed nationalism as an agent of democracy. He repudiated American imperialism partly because it revived "ancient tribal animosities" familiar to so-called savage epochs, and thereby impeded the march of history. James lamented America's arming of "Igorrote savages and Macabebe semi-savages" who, "too low to have a national consciousness," were exploited as mercenaries in the Philippine–American War.[52] "Any national life, however turbulent," James wrote in 1904, "should be respected which exhibits ferments of progress, human individualities, even small ones, struggling in the direction of enlightenment." Yet James knew that progress, like enlightenment, took a variety of forms. "Let them [the Filipinos] work out their own issues," he wrote in the next breath. "We Americans surely do not monopolize all the possible forms of goodness."[53]

Throughout James' anti-imperialist writing courses flows the conviction that moral living is the highest end in life. In the face of a nation driven mad by war, what could be more patriotic than resisting the madness with all the moral and political force at one's command? Nowhere was the significance of James' "civic courage" clearer than in juxtaposition to Theodore Roosevelt's raw warrior ethic. Roosevelt recognized no form of "toil and effort, of labor and strife" that did not involve physical action. Of the many voices of abstraction in America at the turn of the twentieth century, James could tolerate Roosevelt's the least. From James' perspective, Roosevelt's martial ethos contained no moral compass. In Roosevelt's thought, "empty abstractions had unrestricted way …. To enslave a weak but heroic people, or to brazen out a blunder, is good enough cause, it appears, for Colonel Roosevelt. To us Massachusetts anti-imperialists, who have fought in better causes, it is not good enough."[54]

James had long recognized that idealism, and its baser form, abstraction, was a dubious foundation of politics, epistemology, and ethics. Americans' reaction to the Venezuelan incident and Philippines "tangle" confirmed his suspicion that virtue divorced from context would imperil the democratic principles and institutions on which American nationhood was based. Its behavior concerning the Philippines led James to the verge of rejecting war no matter what the circumstance. James could imagine a situation in which war might be defensible; but amid the current crisis of virtue, he feared that even the most justifiable war would devolve into a campaign waged for its own sake. James would eventually get round to addressing this crisis in "The Moral Equivalent of War" (1910) but not until he had spent the immediate post-war years analyzing his historical data. "I think we have candidly to admit that in the manner of our Philippines conquest we … have failed to produce much immediate effect," James told the Anti-Imperialist League, in autumn 1903. "'Duty and Destiny' have rolled over us like a Juggernaut car whose unwieldy bulk the majority of our countrymen were pushing and pulling forward." Anti-imperialists had been living a few illusions of their own, James confessed.

> We used to believe then that we were of a different clay from other
> nations, that there was something deep in the American heart that
> answered to our happy birth, free from that hereditary burden which the
> nations of Europe bear, and which obliges them to grow by preying on
> their neighbors.

As difficult as it was to witness the bastardization of American principles, the truth nonetheless braced this pragmatic philosopher. "Idle dream! pure Fourth of July fancy, scattered in five minutes by the first temptation. In every national soul there lie potentialities of the most barefaced piracy," James now knew; America's "soul is no exception to the rule." This had been a comforting dream, James acknowledged; but it was better "to rid ourselves of cant and humbug, and to know the truth about ourselves."[55]

The truth was that an appeal to the nation's conscience based on the principles enumerated in the American Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights was out of date by 1903. "To the ordinary citizen, the word anti-imperialist suggests a thin-haired being just waked up from the day before yesterday, brandishing the Declaration of Independence excitedly, and shrieking after a railroad train thundering towards its destination to turn upon its tracks and come back." If James and his colleagues proposed to slow the imperialist juggernaut, they would have to chip away at its abstraction gradually. Nations were "masses with too enormous a momentum to reverse with a jerk," he observed. They could only "be brought round in a curve." But there would be no reversing this juggernaut. Nor, try as he might, could James bring it round in a curve. By the turn of the twentieth century, his reading of American national identity was plainly on retreat, repelled by an abstract ideal of nationalism in which the so-called moral will of the nation eclipsed the old commitment to individual liberty, equal opportunity, and government by consent.[56] The question of America's role in the world was thereby sealed. Having "regurgitated" its founding Declaration, the United States had "deliberately pushed itself into the circle of international hatreds, and joined the common pack of wolves."[57]

In contrast to Roosevelt and Wilson, who envisioned the expansion of US law across space, James anticipated the evolution of law itself. Ideas that did not evolve with time could not keep up with necessity. It was not enough for James that Indians and Filipinos would one day be incorporated into civilization; he expected civilization – the storehouse of cultural wisdom and experience – to go equally far to meet them, as his brother Henry had put it in *The American Scene.*[58] Nor did James believe Aguinaldo to be "a second Washington," as Wilson cynically charged.[59] James merely insisted that we lacked the information to conclude that Aguinaldo was *not.* Herein lay the cogency of James' anti-imperialism. The dialectical logic of the civilization/savagery opposition relieved Americans of the obligation to confront the Filipinos with an open mind. No familiarity with Philippines society was required to conclude that it was chaotic, lawless, blood thirsty; Filipinos themselves could not possibly govern a society so disintegrate.

Of course, the apologists of empire knew very little about Philippines culture. But they were all too familiar with savagery.

Of the many misconceptions promoted by the opposition of civilization to savagery, none seem more misleading than US officials' portrayals of Filipino society as lawless and chaotic. Viewed as a form of projection, this characterization of the Philippines reveals much about the social chaos besetting American society at the turn of the twentieth century and the anxiety of embattled elites. Nineteenth-century republican theorists had feared giving immigrants suffrage not because they were accustomed to anarchy and chaos but because they allegedly had no familiarity with liberty, so gripped were they by local strictures. Savage society, as portrayed by James' adversaries bears no resemblance to any society ever encountered: no local customs, no local ministry prevailed to stem disorder. More surprising, perhaps, savage society had no solidarity. Individuals simply preyed on one another in what amounted to endless, remorseless war.[60]

US officials' assumptions about savage society led to logical inconsistencies in their thought. One might fairly wonder how the barbarian Turks and Tartars of Roosevelt's and Wilson's accounts marshaled the soldiers and equipment required to plunder Western civilization. What degree of order, hierarchy, organization, strategy did these "barbarian" campaigns demand? How were they funded? Were they too not carried out in the interest of glory and national greatness? By assuming that savages had no civilization of their own, and thus nothing that distinguished one savage group from another, Roosevelt and Wilson deprived them of memory. This engendered a simplistic account of the problems that might beset colonial rule. Once the Philippines' insurrection was crushed, they supposed, Filipinos would accept the rule of masters. Having no memory, Filipinos could harbor no bitterness. Violence had no legacy. Brutality could serve the ends of peace.

Sure that economic imperatives spurred American imperialism, James looked to ideas to help bring into line the forces of production. James did not expect to overturn the corporate-capitalist order, but he understood intuitively that individuals and peoples once given a face and granted a voice would be harder to exploit. Listen to Roosevelt, some years later, applying James' logic to American society. America confronted a dire absence of social reciprocity. Citizens lacked a "spirit of brotherhood, of fellow-feeling and understanding between man and man, and the willingness to treat a man as a man, which are the essential factors in American democracy." The principal impediment to such an ethic, Roosevelt maintained, was ignorance.

> Any healthy-minded American is bound to think well of his fellow Americans if he only gets to know them. The trouble is that he does not know them. If the banker and the farmer never meet, or meet only in the most perfunctory business way, if the banking is not done by men whom the farmer knows as his friends and associates, a spirit of mistrust is almost sure to spring up.[61]

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And again, "The average man, when he has no means of being brought into contact with another, or of gaining any insight into that other's ideas and aspirations, either ignores these ideas and aspirations completely, or feels toward them a more or less tepid dislike. The result is a complete and perhaps fatal misunderstanding, due primarily to the fact that the capacity for fellow-feeling is given no opportunity to flourish."[62] Such a lack of fellow feeling on the part of Americans like Roosevelt and Wilson doomed the Filipino revolution.

But perhaps fellow feeling for unknown peoples is too much to expect. Then "hands off," James warned: "Neither the whole of truth nor the whole of good is revealed to any single observer …. It is enough to ask of each of us that he should be faithful to his own opportunities and make the most of his own blessings, without presuming to regulate the rest of the vast field."[63]

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 See Hans Kohn, *American Nationalism: An Interpretive Essay*.
2 This was attributed to Paul Wolfowitz and Lewis Libby. Quoted in Michael Meacher. 'This war on terrorism is bogus', *Guardian*.
3 Two authors argue that 'The imperial temptation has arisen, in the first instance, because of the novel circumstances in international relations brought on by the end of the Cold War. By virtue of the balance that existed in international politics during the Cold War, which restrained both the Soviet Union and the United States, certain actions were foreclosed on both sides because they seemed altogether too dangerous'. The argument goes onto show that in the post-Cold War period, these restraints have disappeared and there is no central balance. This has allowed the United States to go to war of its own accord without any of the restraints previously seem. See Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson, *The Imperial Temptation The New World Order and America's Purpose*, p. 15.

1 VICTORY AND IDENTITY: THE END OF THE COLD WAR IN AMERICAN IMAGINATION

1 Franklin D. Roosevelt, 'Address to Congress Requesting a Declaration of War', speech given December, 1941.
2 David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country*, p. 197.
3 David Thelen, 'Introduction' in David Thelen (ed.), *Memory and American History*, pp. ix–xii.
4 Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, pp. 53–4.
5 Tom Englehardt, *The End of Victory Culture*, pp. 4–6.
6 Brian Bond, *The Pursuit of Victory from Napolean to Saddam Hussein* , p. 181.
7 Joseph McCarthy, *America's Retreat from Victory: The Story of George Catlett Marshall*, p. 138.
8 Richard Gid Powers, *Not Without Honor: The History of American Anticommunism*, p. 300.
9 Barry Goldwater, *Why Not Victory? A Fresh Look at American Foreign Policy*, pp. 104–6.
10 Powers, op. cit., p. 316.
11 Peter Schweizer, *Reagan's War: The Epic Story of his Forty-Year Struggle and Final Triumph over Communism*, p. 106.
12 Ronald W. Reagan, 'Radio Address to the Nation on Nuclear Weapons', speech given April 1982.
13 Michael Schaller, *Reckoning with Reagan*, p. 130.
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11 Mickelthwait and Wooldridge argue that, after 9/11, 'the views of one hitherto eccentric part of the [conservative] coalition suddenly coincided with the movement as a whole. The neocons were … saying out in the open what so many conservatives privately found themselves thinking. After 9/11, the neo-con solution seemed, to conservatives at least, to be the American solution'; pp. 209–10. This is a vital, often overlooked, point. However, it is important also to consider the important degree to which liberal hawks also shared neo-cons' and conservative hawks' post-9/11 attitudes. Indeed, liberal hawkishness had a longer intellectual pedigree than that of the conservatives.

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4 PATRIOTISM, NATIONAL IDENTITY, AND FOREIGN POLICY: THE US–ISRAELI ALLIANCE IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

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5 THE COMPLEX FATE OF BEING AMERICA: THE CONSTITUTION OF IDENTITY AND THE POLITICS OF SECURITY

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6 REPUBLIC, EMPIRE OR GOOD INTERNATIONAL CITIZEN? INTERNATIONAL LAW AND AMERICAN IDENTITY

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7 THE GREEKS OF OLD: MODELLING THE BRITISH EMPIRE FOR A TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY AMERICA

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8 EMPIRE AS A WAY OF LIFE? A SEARCH FOR HISTORICAL ALTERNATIVES

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32 See, for example, Mark Hulliung, *Citizen Machiavelli* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983).

33 Armitage, 'Empire and liberty: a republican dilemma', 2–5; Armitage, David, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) pp. 127–36.

34 Drew R. McCoy's *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), remains the best account of the American debate about republicanism and empire.

35 'Remarks to the Methodist delegation, President William McKinley', in Daniel B. Schirmer and Stephen Rosskamm Shalom (eds), *The Philippines Reader: A History of Colonialism, Neocolonialism, Dictatorship, and Resistance* (Boston: South End Press, 1987), pp. 22–3.

36 Hoar and McKinley quoted in ibid., p. 265. Rogers M. Smith observes that republican theorists differed about the compatibility of republicanism and foreign conquest. Because of the hazards confronting republican governments, Smith writes, 'virtually all republican theorists accepted that a small republic could rule large numbers of non-citizens as slaves, as Sparta did. Some, like Machiavelli, urged further an imperial policy through which martial republics could rule conquered rivals as subject peoples, not as citizens. Less bellicose writers like Montesquieu and Vattel pointed instead to the formation of defensive confederations with other republican regimes'. See Rogers M. Smith, 'The "American Creed" and American identity: the limits of liberal citizenship in the United States', *Western Political Quarterly*, 1988;41: 232. Except for Machiavelli, conquest and empire were different matters; empire implied a bigness antithetical to republicanism. As far as William James was concerned, republicanism's ambiguity about the rectitude of foreign conquest *should* have been settled by America's universal principles, which denied, theoretically, individuals and nations the right to rule others.

37 McKinley quoted in Schirmer and Shalom (eds), *The Philippines Reader*, p. 266.

38 William James, 'The Philippines tangle', *Boston Evening Transcript*, March 1, 1899, 16, in Frederick H. Burkhardt (ed.), *Essays, Comments, and Reviews* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), p. 156.

39 Ibid., p. 155; "The Philippines question', *Boston Evening Transcript*, March 4, 1899, in ibid., p. 160.

40 '[S]wept away by the overmastering flood': William James, 'The Philippines tangle', *Boston Evening Transcript*, March 1, 1899, 16, in Burkhardt, *Essays, Comments, and Reviews*, pp. 154–5; James first remarked 'on the way in which history is made' in a letter to his friend Flournoy the previous summer, when what had begun as 'perfectly honest humanitarianism, and an absolutely disinterested desire on the part of our people to set the Cubans free' had yielded to abstract and inexorable war mania: 'this whole business … has illustrated to perfection the *psychologie des foules!*' James wrote. 'We were winning the most extraordinary diplomatic victories, but they were of no use. We were ready (as we supposed) for war and nothing but war has come'. William James to Flournoy, June 17, 1898, in Ralph Barton Perry, *The Thought and Character of William James*, Vol. 2 (Boston: Little, Brown, 1935), p. 307.

41 'according to its own ideals': William James, 'The Philippines Tangle,' p. 156. James repeated the analogy of America as a 'big material corporation against a small one' in 'The Philippines question', *Boston Evening Transcript*, March 4, 1899, in Burkhardt, *Essays, Comments, and Reviews*, p. 160. See also his letter to Mrs Henry Whitman, June 7, 1899, quoted in Perry, *Thought and Character*, Vol. 2, p. 315, and George Cotkin, *William James, Public Philosopher* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), p. 141, where he explains why James is 'against bigness and greatness in all their forms…. The bigger the unit you deal with, the hollower, the more brutal, the more mendacious is the life displayed', he wrote. Stuart McConnell corroborates James' observation of the 'emergence of the flag as a symbol of abstract nationalism' in *Glorious Contentment: The Grand Army of the Republic, 1865–1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), p. 230.

42 'yellow journals … the meanness and ignominy of the trick': 'The Philippines tangle', p. 157.

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid., p. 155.

45 James' conviction that nations develop 'ideals which are a dead secret to other nations' should not be mistaken for a claim about cultural incommensurability. Context is crucial here: James' rhetorical burden in these essays was not to resolve questions about cultural commensurability but to galvanize his readership. 'Hands off', as he put it, at the conclusion to 'On a certain blindness in human beings.' James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), p. 149.

46 'entirely different men': William James, 'The Philippines again', *New York Evening Post*, March 10, 1899, 4, in Burkhardt, *Essays, Comments, and Reviews*, p. 161; 'the ideals they might be led by': 'The Philippines question', in ibid., p. 159; 'an amount of mere matter in our way': ibid., p. 160; 'to develop in its own way': William James to Miss Frances R. Morse, September 17, 1899, in Henry James (ed.), *The Letters of William James* (New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1969), p. 102. On James' place among the anti-imperialists, see Robert L. Beisner, *Twelve Against Empire*, introduction and chapter 3, and Cotkin, *William James,* chapter 6, especially p. 132.

47 James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1958 [1899]), p. 3.

48 Ibid., pp. 4–5.

49 Here James comes remarkably close to anticipating the argument that Josiah Royce would make in *The Philosophy of Loyalty.* There Royce, in promoting 'loyalty to loyalty', aims to preserve the opportunity for individuals to remain loyal to *something* (though not, pace Christopher Lasch in *The True and Only Heaven*, to *anything*) in the face of a soul-sapping modernity. See Royce, *The Philosophy of Loyalty* (New York: Macmillan, 1908).

50 For a taste of Roosevelt's and Wilson's writing on the Philippines, see Theodore Roosevelt, 'The strenuous life', in *The Strenuous Life: Essays and Addresses* (New York: Century Co., 1918) and Woodrow Wilson, 'The ideals of America', *Atlantic Monthly*, December 1902; 90: 721–34.

51 "What makes a life signficant', in James, *Talks to Teachers*, p. 178.

52 William James, 'Address on the Philippines question', p. 82.

53 'Secretary taft a biased judge', in Burkhardt, *Essays, Comments, and Reviews*, p. 176.

54 'empty abstractions had unrestricted way … it is not good enough': William James, 'Governor Roosevelt's oration', *Boston Evening Transcript*, April 15, 1899, in *Essays, Comments, and Reviews*, pp. 165–6; 'the life of toil and effort, of labor and strife': Theodore Roosevelt, 'The strenuous life', quoted in ibid., p. 159, n. 163.9. For a comparison between Holmes' and Roosevelt's 'set pieces', see Christopher Lasch, *The True and Only Heaven*, pp. 296–8.

55 'were pushing and pulling forward': William James, quoted in Perry, *Thought and Character*, Vol. 2; also in 'Address on the Philippines question', in *Essays, Comments, and Reviews*, p. 81; 'and to know the truth about ourselves': ibid., p. 85; 'shrill voice lifted in reply': William James, 'Governor Roosevelt's oration', *Boston Evening Transcript*, April 15, 1899, in ibid., p. 162. The inadequacy of 'The moral equivalent of war' as the source for national and political rejuvenation is well publicized. Readers familiar with James's oeuvre, however, will recognize that James' death cut short further reflection on that subject. See Perry, *Thought and Character*, p. 272 and chapter 5. On James' distinction between idealism and abstraction, see 'Governor Roosevelt's oration', in *Essays, Comments, and Reviews*, p. 162, where he writes: 'In the hegelian philosophy the worst vice that an orator or any other expression of human nature can have is abstractness. Abstractness means empty simplicity, non-reference to features essential to the case. Of all the carnivals of emptiness and abstractness that the world has seen, our national discussions over the Philippines policy probably bear away the palm.'

56 James, 'Address on the Philippines question', p. 83.

57 Ibid., p. 85.

58 Henry James, *The American Scene* (New York: Penguin, 1994), chapter 3.

59 Wilson, 'The ideals of America', p. 727.

60 For an account of the republican tradition and theories of citizenship in literature about the United States, see Smith, 'The"American Creed" and American identity', *Western Political Quarterly*, p. 225–51, and Smith, *Civic Ideals: Conflicting Visions of Citizenship in U.S. History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), especially chapters 7–9.

61 Roosevelt, 'Fellow-feeling as a political factor', in *The Strenuous Life: Essays and Addresses*, p. 71.

62 Ibid., p. 80.

63 'On a certain blindness', in *Talks to Teachers*, p. 168.

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