INTER DISCIPLINARY POLITICAL STUDIES

Published by
UNIVERSITY OF SALENTO
Department of History, Social Sciences and Human Studies

IdPS
Volume 6
Number 1
July 2020
ISSN 2039-8573 online

INDEX

SPECIAL ISSUE

5 Dovile Budryte, Erica Almeida Resende, Douglas Becker

Introduction - 'Defending Memory': Exploring the Relationship Between Mnemonical In/Security and Crisis in Global Politics

21 Sybille Reinke de Buitrago

Mnemonic Insecurity: The German Struggle with New Trends of Radicalization

51 Susanne Szkola

Trauma or Nostalgia? 'The Past' as Affective Ontological Security Seeking Playground in the South Caucasus

113 Jessica Auchter

Burial, Reburial, and the Securing of Memory

139 Yohannes Gedamu

Transitional Justice And Memory Politics In Contemporary Ethiopia

RESEARCH ARTICLES

167 Tom de Groot, Salvador Santino F. Regilme Jr.

Drone Warfare and the Obama Administration’s Path-Dependent Struggles on Human Rights and Counterterrorism

BOOK REVIEWS

203 Priya Sara Mathews

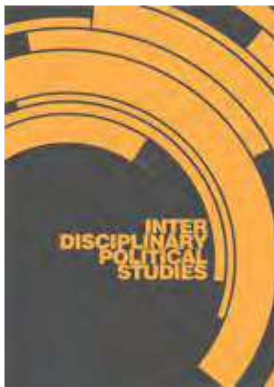
Memory and Securitization in Contemporary Europe, edited by Vlad Strukov and Victor Apryshchenko (eds.). London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, pp. 284

207 Jennifer Ostojski

Memory Laws, Memory Wars: The Politics of the Past in Eu-rope and Russia, by Nikolay Koposov. Cambridge: Cam-bridge University Press, 2018, pp. xvi+322

213 George Kordas

European Memory in Populism: Representations of Self and Other, by Chiara De Cesari and Ayhan Kaya (eds.). Oxon, New York: Routledge, 2020, pp.xviii+302



Interdisciplinary Political Studies
http://siba-ese.unisalento.it/index.php/idps
ISSN: 2039-8573 (electronic version)

IdPS, Issue 6(1) 2020: 5-19
DOI: 10.1285/i20398573v6n1p5
Published: July 15, 2020

INTRODUCTION

'Defending Memory': Exploring the Relationship Between Mnemonical In/Security and Crisis in Global Politics

Dovile Budryte
Georgia Gwinnett College

Erica Resende
Brazilian War College

Douglas Becker
University of Southern California

ABSTRACT

This article outlines the theoretical foundations and the themes covered by this special issue. By focusing on securitization of historical memory, our goal is to contribute to Critical Security studies by highlighting the potential of securitization of memory as an emerging research program in this field. A state's history and how it is presented, interpreted, altered, and contested form an essential element of its identity. In securitized contexts, historical memory becomes a security issue when both state and non-state actors engage in "defending memory"—a situation when "our" past is viewed as misunderstood by "Others", and it becomes critical to defend "our" memory, which is seen as essential for the survival of "our" state. Employing the notion of "defending memory" enriches the study of crises in international relations, allowing us to conceptualize them as engines of new discourses. These theoretical insights are tested by case studies of memory politics in Germany, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Ethiopia and Rwanda, highlighting the importance of emotional discourses and (re)burial practices.

KEYWORDS: Memory; Securitization; Crisis; Identity; Global Politics

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:
Dovile Budryte (dbudryte@ggc.edu)
postal address: Georgia Gwinnett College, 1000 University Center Lane, Lawrenceville, GA 30043, USA

Work licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non commercial-Share alike 3.0 Italian License

1. Securitization of memory: an emerging research agenda in critical security studies

Although highly contested (Smith 2005), security remains a central variable in the study of international relations. While definitions of security vary (Baldwin 1997), the research agenda for the field is increasingly including a critical analysis of the meanings and specifics of security (Krause 1998; Peoples & Vaugh-Williams 2010). One of the more vibrant and important areas of Critical Security Studies is the role of identity in crafting a state's interests in security (see Albert, Jacobson & Lapid 2001; Campbell 1998; Hansen 2006; McSweeney 2009; Neumann 1996b for examples). States consider their own identities as worthy of being secured, and state leaders seek to align their security policies with their perceptions of themselves. First explored in sociology by authors such as Norbert Elias (1985), Anthony Giddens (1991), and Tony Bilton (1996), the concept of ontological security has slowly taken a center stage in security studies in International Relations. While in sociology it is referred to as "a sense of order and continuity" (Giddens 1991), the experience of "positive and stable emotions," thus avoiding "chaos and anxiety" (Elias 1985), and "stable mental state derived from a sense of continuity and order in events" (Bilton 1996: 665), the notion of feeling ontologically secure requires a positive view of one's self, the world, as well as one's expectations towards the future. In simple terms, one feels insecure when facing an event that is not consistent with one's understanding about how the world functions. Applied to the realm of international relations, the concept of ontological security has allowed many authors to explore how states seek to establish and ground their own sense of self-identity (Bially Mattern 2005; Croft 2012; Ejdus 2017; Greve 2018; Kinwall 2004; Lupovici 2012; Mitzen 2006a, 2006b; Steele 2005, 2008; Subotic 2016; Zarakol 2010, 2016). As correctly pointed by Mälksoo (2015), ontological security theory addresses issues of security-as-being rather than security-as-survival, the former being understood as a basic premise for constitution of the self (see Rumelili 2015). In other words, how a state sees itself, its territory, people, institutions as well as its

own story (the biographical self-narrative of a state, using Mälksoo's expression) is an essential element in the conception of security.

In her article "'Memory Must be Defended': Beyond the Politics of Mnemonical Security", Maria Mälksoo (2015) described "the securitization of memory", a phenomenon that is common in Eastern and Central Europe and beyond. As pointed out by Mälksoo and others (Gaufman 2017; Makhortykh 2018; Mälksoo 2015; Strukov & Apryshchenko 2018) in many securitized contexts, historical remembrance becomes a security issue. In such contexts (and elsewhere), the states create biographical narratives, and these processes of narrative creation are inseparable from historical remembrance. Biographical narratives provides these communities with "a sense of being in the world by situating them in an experienced space and an envisioned space, ordered from a particular place and delineated through horizons of experience and of possibility, respectively." (Berenskoetter 2014, p. 282).

As a result, state actors engage themselves in a permanent process of creating and recreating a narrative about its origins, its coming-into-being, within its own borders, thus differentiating itself from the chaos outside its national limits. This way it guarantees its "cohesiveness in order to reduce the fundamental unpredictability of the surrounding environment and its own vulnerability vis-à-vis other political actors" (Mälksoo 2015, p. 224). To accomplish this state leaders mobilize national myths, stories, symbols, and norms to create a self-narrative about its past in order to form a consistent sense of itself in present and for the future. However, any endeavor that attempts to fixate a narrative – and hence an identity to the self – is always contested, and resisted. Therefore, which particular myths, stories, symbols, and norms that are mobilized will matter. As a result, historical memory will take center stage in this process for it serves as a temporal orientation device that make "past meaningful by providing a sense of where 'we' have come from and what 'we' have been through" (Berenskoetter 2014, p. 270). Hence "[m]emory must

be defended." as noted by Mälksoo (2015), skillfully building from Michel Foucault's "society must be defended" (Foucault 2003).

The need for the state to constantly engage in the (re)reproduction of a self-narrative leads to new security dilemmas and negatively affect the sense of security of the involved parties. "Our" narrative, "our" past is viewed as being completely misunderstood and distorted by the "Others," whose own vision of the past is seen as a danger to "our" existence.[1] Thus, it becomes critical to defend "our" memory, which is essential to the survival of "our" state, especially when sudden events shatter the state's self narrative. This is where the notion of "defending memory" encounters the "crisis and change nexus" against the background of a growing literature on ontological security. Whenever an event disrupts, questions, contradicts, or challenges the dominant biographical self-narrative of a state, the state's self-identity becomes dislocated from its privileged position for it has never been fixed to begin with (see Laclau & Mouffe 1985). Crisis opens up opportunities for change because the state needs to reframe, and make-up for the dislocation of meaning it has experienced. Crisis re-politicizes what had become common sense discourse. Additionally, situations of crisis creates demands for more immediate action by raising the potential for violence. In doing so, it also raises the stakes for the consequences of inaction.

Conceptualized in this way, the concept of "defending memory" and how it relates to securitization of memory in context of social crisis opens up a wide range of possibilities for thinking about collective – that is, the state's – identity formation beyond the identity/alterity nexus of self/other relations (see Culliname 2015; Diez 2005; Neumann 1996a, 1996b, 1999; Reinke de Buitrago 2012; Reinke de Buitrago & Resende 2019), and more closely linked to the notion of societal se-

[1] As explained by Maria Mälksoo, similar dynamic can be detected in the interactions between Russia and its former satellites in Eastern Europe in relation to their interpretations of World War II. Constant attempts to 'defend memory' become inseparable from insecurity and ongoing animosity (Mälksoo 2012: 178-179).

curity within securitization theory, as explored by the Copenhagen School (see Balzacq 2011; Buzan et al. 1998; Wæver 1993, 1995), and at the same time linking it to politicization, and hence change.

As a result, a new series of questions arises: How do mnemonic conflicts emerge and develop across space and time? What kind of strategies political actors apply to engage in mnemonic conflicts? What is the difference – if any – between desecuritization and politicization of memory? What kind of events allows for desecuritization and politicization of memory? How do mnemonic conflicts occur and express themselves in national, regional, and global contexts? How do feelings and emotions come to play into the dynamics of mnemonic conflicts? Are there other illustrative examples outside the much explored case studies of the Holocaust during German occupation, of the Baltic-Russian dispute over the interpretation of WWII, and of the legacy of the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe? Are there any instances of mnemonic conflicts in the Global South that confirm the dynamic of "memory must be defended" in times of crisis?

2. Rethinking crises in international relations

The research agenda that grounds the articles of this special issue also takes the notion of securitization of memory to investigate how this process occurs in the context of crisis.[2] Drawing on post-structuralist thought, the editors and contributors in the volume on crisis reconceptualized crises in international relations and related them to social change. Instead of crisis being depicted and represented as "exogenous shocks" in response to with policy and decision-makers react to and solve (i.e., agent-centered approaches), the volume joined a growing number of works that emphasize crisis as "endogenous constructions," where onto-

[2] The choice to look into how processes of securitization occur and develop in contexts of crisis is partly due to two previous works from the editors and contributors of this special issue (Resende & Budryte 2014, Resende, Budrytė & Buhari-Gulmez 2018).

logical questions about the relationship between agent and structure are integrated and thus problematized (for this distinction, see Widmaier, Blyth & Seabrooke 2007, p. 748).

Within a growing body of literature on crisis, Dirk Nabers offered a new and useful way to analyze crises in IR. Nabers argues that the bulk of the traditional IR crisis literature is strictly materialist and objectivist and, as such, privileges agency, decision-making, and crisis management at the expense of more structural accounts of the nature of crisis (Nabers 2015, p. 5). Although crisis and change are inextricably linked, they are only rarely considered jointly in the IR literature, he adds. He offers what he calls a theory of crisis and change in global politics, which is more concerned with the structural aspect of crisis and how it enables an open-ended project for global politics and social change.

Nabers suggested a clear structure for empirical investigations of relations between crisis and change. After the crisis is articulated, there is "a competition between different political forces to hegemonize the political field, resulting in the acceptance of a certain interpretative framework of identification (actual hegemony) and its eventual routinization and political institutionalization. This final act of institutionalization causes feedback effects on the discursive articulation of the crisis, new interpretative frames start to compete, and politics continues" (Nabers 2015, p. 147). Following this framework, crisis is an "engine" of discourses, and politics is constantly linked to identity struggles. Drawing on different case studies and different disciplines, the articles in the volume drew on this framework to conceptualize crises as "engines" of discourses and thus create a link to the study of memory politics.

Therefore, we propose that study of memory and trauma politics is inseparable from the study of identity struggles, and the concept of "defending memory" against the theoretical background of ontological security and securitization theory offers a new and original way to conceptualize complicated relationships between memory, identity and crises in different political and cultural contexts. As argued by Felix Berenskoetter, it is important to understand who "has the authority to create a

hegemonic master narrative and how/under what conditions alternative narratives emerge, capable of challenging and replacing, or significantly altering, the master narrative" (Berenskoetter 2014: 280). The construction of state narratives is "an active and elaborate process" with multiple agents, both domestic and international, involved, and the narrative becomes hegemonic when "a critical mass of social actors accepts it and buys into it as a social fact" (Subotić 2016, p. 615). By paying attention to the construction of biographical narratives by the states and tracing how these narratives are related to crises, we believe that the looking into the securitization of memory in times of crisis could make an important contribution not only to the field of memory and trauma studies, but also to critical security studies within the field of international relations.

2. The outline of this special issue

Drawing on the literature surveyed above, including Ontological Security studies, Sybille Reinke de Buitrago's contribution "Mnemonic Insecurity: The German struggle with New Trends of Radicalization" offers an original and interesting perspective on the so-called "refugee crisis" in Germany. Focusing on the radicalization of sections of German discourse evident during this crisis, Reinke de Buitrago demonstrates how this critical event has dislocated Germany's identity, and resulted in challenges to the country's ontological security. This case study clearly shows how crisis can serve as an engine of new discourses, including exclusive and anti-democratic discourses, challenging the image of a tolerant state. These new discourses exploited the existing tensions in the society and capitalized on people's concerns.

Although Germany's "special responsibility" (drawing on its Nazi past) was constantly evoked during these battles, the author concludes that the so-called "welcome culture" rooted in responsibility and guilt about the Nazi past declined several years after the eruption of the crisis. Reinke de Buitrago's case study points to the importance of emotion when studying the intersection of crisis and

mnemonical (in)security. In the words of Reinke de Buitrago, German society has been engaged in "an intense and emotional struggle over the meaning of German national memory past and present."

Susanne Szkola's contribution "Trauma or Nostalgia? 'The Past' as Affective Ontological Security Seeking Playground in the South Caucasus" develops a theoretical perspective to conceptualize the role of emotions during and after similar situations. Szkola is interested in unpacking the concept of "defending memory," and she constructs a theoretical framework to analyze "affective investments into identity narratives" that are associated with the processes of politization and securitization. Drawing on the cases of the countries in the South Caucasus, Szkola analyzes the roles of emotions in the processes associated with search for ontological security and renegotiation of identities.

Szkola focuses on three anniversaries in 2018-2019 that she describes as "critical situations" or "social markers of history" when leading metanarratives were dislocated, and the desire to defend a certain version of these events became essential in ontological security seeking attempts. These events include the independence from the Russian empire and the creation of independent republics, independence from the USSR after the end of the Cold War, and the creation of the EU's Eastern Partnership. Drawing on the analysis of presidential speech acts (to study the practices of "affective storylines"), Szkola performs "emotion discourse analysis," asking how the presidents talk about emotions when referring to these critical events. Perhaps unsurprisingly, she finds significant differences over narrations about these critical events. The leader of Georgia focuses on the trauma of the Soviet occupation; the leader of Azerbaijan bemoans the breakup of the Soviet Union and the "loss" of Nagorno-Karabakh; the leader of Armenia expresses sadness about the passing of "glorious peace" and expresses the feelings of nostalgia toward the USSR. The analysis of these "affective storylines" help to delineate various "affective landscapes" and document the emergence of "emotion communities" that are an essential part of processes associated with ontological security seeking by the states.

Jessica Auchter's article "Burial, Reburial and the Securing of Memory after Genocide" also explores processes associated with ontological security seeking. She is interested in the practices of memorialization as a way to attempt to achieve ontological security. Auchter demonstrates how burial and reburial can function as "a mechanism of governance by states seeking ontological security." After major traumatic experiences, such as genocide, states and societies feel disoriented and lost. The management of dead bodies is an attempt by the states to "impose linear narrative" and thus to instill a sense of security in their populations. Furthermore, the rituals associated with burial and reburial are essential for state identity construction and reconstruction. Studying such rituals can provide valuable insights into ontological security seeking behavior of the states.

Auchter's analysis is focused on the case of Rwanda, which lost more than 10% of its population during a genocide. At first, the processes of burial and reburial were somewhat chaotic; however, as soon as the Rwandan state built stronger institutions, it started supervising these processes closely, conceiving of "the mass grave as a public space." There are still contestation over these processes; however, the Rwandan state is engaged in attempts to reduce this contestation and produce a unified state-supported memorialization. In other words, "the reburial agenda is a state agenda," and its goal is to provide "a linear understanding of the historical event of genocide."

Yohannes Gedamu's contribution "Transitional Justice and Memory Politics in Contemporary Ethiopia" explores a radically different case in the Global South. Unlike Rwanda, Ethiopia has not been able to create functioning state institutions, and this, according to Gedamu, is one of the reasons for failure in Ethiopia's attempts to achieve transitional justice. During the 20th and 21st centuries, Ethiopia has experienced multiple crises that included ethnic violence, violent regime change, civil wars, a war with Somalia, to mention just a few. Its political elites have focused on "punishing political ideologies" (instead of perpetrators of heinous crimes) and developed "ethnicized" approaches (extension of ethnic autonomy) to address past

crimes. There seems to be no common understanding of the past and no agreement on how to deal with the crimes of the past.

Gedamu's case study provides important insights into how "defending memory" takes place in a state with deep ethnic divides and deep ethnic polarization. He describes the formation of multiple "emotion communities" in ethnic districts, in which each ethnic group constructs its own trauma story and constructs its own "martyrs' commemorative museum." The cycles of "defending memory" are associated with real violence and displacement. As narrated by Gedamu, after 2018, there is a huge displacement of people based on their ethnic belonging, which is a continuation of multiple traumas and multiple crises experienced by Ethiopia.

In sum, these interesting case studies enrich our understanding of the complicated relationship between mnemonical (in)security and crises in international relations. Not only do they provide insights into the cases that are rarely addressed in memory studies and Ontological Security literature (such as Ethiopia and Azerbaijan), they also highlight the importance of linking the study of these processes to the study of emotions and trauma in international relations. These case studies help us to understand how exactly "defending memory" takes place in various contexts, including the understudied global South, and demonstrate the relevance of this research agenda to the study of identity and security.

The essential contribution of such case studies is developing an understanding of the importance of mnemonic security and its links to identity in security discourses. Traditionally, international relations has viewed security as fixed on material issues. Protection of land, resources, and economic assets is the field's traditional definition of security. Critical security studies has called this presumption into question. Ontological security directs researchers to consider a state's identity as a focus of protection in their calculations. Mnemonic security then directly links a state's identity to its memory and its historical narratives, constantly altered and revised yet remaining essential to the state's conception of itself. These cases demonstrate how these processes operate and call for both further theoretical work on the importance of these conceptions and further empirical studies demonstrating its im-

portance. They also contribute significantly to the constructivist agenda reminding researchers of the importance of identity and its construction in considering state action.

References

Albert, M, Jacobson, M & Lapid, Y (eds) 2001, *Identities, borders, orders: rethinking international relations theory*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, MN.

Baldwin, D 1997, 'The Concept of Security, Review of International Studies, vol. 23, no. 01, pp. 5-26.

Balzacq, T (ed) 2011, *Securitization theory: how security problems emerge and dissolve,* Routledge, London.

Berenskoetter, F 2014, 'Friendship, Security, and Power', in S Koschut & A Oelsner, (eds), *Friendship and International Relations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY, pp. 51–71.

Bially Mattern, J 2005, "Why 'Soft Power' Isn't So Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics," *Millennium,* vol. 33, no. 03, pp. 583–612.

Bilton, T et al. 1996, *Introductory sociology*, 3rd ed, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY.

Buzan, B, Wæver, O & de Wilde, J 1998, *Security: a new framework for analysis,* Lynne Rienner, Boulder, CO.

Campbell, D 1998, *Writing security. United States foreign policy and the politics of identity*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, MN.

Croft, S 2012, *Securitizing Islam: identity and the search for security,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Cullinane, M P & Ryan D, eds, 2015, *U.S. Foreign Policy and the Other,* Berghahn, New York, NY.

Diez, T 2005, "Constructing the Self and Changing Others: Reconsidering 'Normative Power Europe'," *Millennium,* vol. 33, no. 03, pp. 613-636.

Ejdus, F 2017, 'Critical Situations, Fundamental Questions and Ontological Insecurity in World Politics,' *Journal of International Relations and Development,* vol. 21, no. 04, pp. 883–908.

Elias, N 1985, *The loneliness of the dying,* Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

Gaufman, E 2017, *Security threats and public perception: digital Russia and the Ukraine crisis,* Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY.

Giddens, A 1991, *Modernity and self-identity: self and society in the late modern age,* Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA.

Greve, P 2018, 'Ontological Security, the Struggle for Recognition, and the Maintenance of Security Communities,' *Journal of International Relations and Development,* vol. 21, no. 04, pp. 858-882.

Hansen, L 2006, Security as practice: discourse analysis and the Bosnian war, Routledge, London.

Krause, K 1998, 'Critical Theory and Security Studies: The Research Programme of Critical Security Studies', *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 33, no. 03, pp. 298-333.

Kinnvall, C 2004, 'Globalization and Religious Nationalism: Self, Identity and the Search for Ontological Security,' *Political Psychology*, vol. 25, no. 05, pp. 741-767.

Laclau, E & Mouffe, C 1985. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics,* Verso, London.

Lupovici, A 2012, 'Ontological Dissonance, Clashing Identities, and Israel's Unilateral Steps towards the Palestinians,' *Review of International Studies,* vol. 38, no. 04, pp. 809-833.

Makhortykh, M 2018. '#NoKievNazi: Social Media, Historical Memory and Securitization in the Ukraine Crisis' in V Strukov & V Apryshchenko (eds), *Memory and Securitization in Contemporary Europe,* Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY, pp. 219-247

Mälksoo, M 2015. "'Memory Must be Defended': Beyond the Politics of Mnemonical
Security," *Security Dialogue,* vol. 46, no. 03, pp. 221-237.

McSweeney, B 2009, *Security, identity and interests: a sociology of International Relations*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Mitzen, J 2016. 'Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security
Dilemma,' *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 12, no. 03, pp. 341–370.

Nabers, D 2015, *A poststructuralist discourse theory of global politics,* Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY.

Neumann, I B 1999, 'Conclusion: Self and Other after the Death of the Sovereign Subject,' in I B Neumann (ed), *Uses of the Other. "The East" in European Identity Formation*, Manchester University Press, pp. 207-228.

_______ 1996a, 'Self and Other in International Relations," *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 2, no. 02, pp. 139-174.

_______ 1996b, *Russia and the Idea of Europe: A Study in Identity and International Relations,* Routledge.

Peoples, C & Vaughan-Williams, N 2010, *Critical Security Studies*, Routledge, New York, NY.

Reinke de Buitrago, S (ed) 2012, *Portraying the Other in International Relations: Cases of Othering, Their Dynamics and the Potential for Transformation*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle-upon-Thyne.

Reinke de Buitrago, S & Resende, E 2019, 'The Politics of Otherness: Illustrating the Identity/Alterity Nexus and Othering in IR' in J Edkins (ed), *Routledge Handbook of Critical International Relations,* Routledge, pp. 179-193.

Resende, E, Budrytė, D & Buhari-Gulmez, D (eds) 2018, *Crisis and Change in Post-Cold War Global Politics: Ukraine in a Comparative Perspective*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY.

Resende, E & Budryte, D (eds) 2014, *Memory and Trauma in International Relations: Theories, Cases and Debates,* Routledge, London.

Rumelili, B (ed) 2015, *Conflict Resolution and Ontological Security,* Routledge, London.

Smith, S 2005, 'The Contested Concept of Security', in K Booth (ed), *Critical Security Studies and World Politics*, Lynne-Rienner, pp. 27-62.

Steele, B J 2005, 'Ontological Security and the Power of Self-Identity: British Neutrality and the American Civil War,' *Review of International Studies,* vol. 31, no. 03, pp. 519–540.

Steele, B J 2008, *Ontological Security in International Relations: Self-Identity and the IR State,* Routledge, London.

Strukov, V & Apryshchenko, V (eds) 2018, *Memory and Securitization in Contemporary Europe,* Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

Subotić, J 2016, 'Narrative, Ontological Security and Foreign Policy Change,' *Foreign Policy Analysis,* vol. 12, no. 01, pp. 610-627.

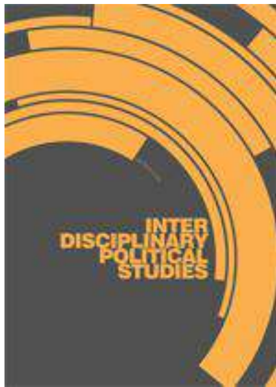
Widmaier, W W, Blyth, M & Seabrooke, L 2007, 'Exogenous Shocks or Endogenous Constructions? The Meanings of Wars and Crises,' *International Studies Quarterly,* vol. 51, no. 04, pp. 747-759.

Wæver, O 1995, 'Securitization and Desecuritization,' in R Lipschutz (ed), *On Security,* Columbia University Press, pp. 46-87.

_______ 1993, 'Societal security: The Concept,' in O Waever et al. (eds), *Identity, Migration, and the New Security Agenda in Europe,* Pinter, pp. 17-40.

Zarakol, A 2016, 'States and Ontological Security: A Historical Rethinking,' *Cooperation and Conflict,* vol. 52, no. 01, pp. 48–68.

______ 2010, 'Ontological (In)security and State Denial of Historical Crimes: Turkey and Japan,' *International Relations*, vol. 24, no. 01, pp. 03–23.



Interdisciplinary Political Studies
http://siba-ese.unisalento.it/index.php/idps
ISSN: 2039-8573 (electronic version)

IdPS, Issue 6(1) 2020: 21-49
DOI: 10.1285/i20398573v6n1p21
Published: July 15, 2020

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Mnemonic Insecurity: The German Struggle with New Trends of Radicalization

Sybille Reinke de Buitrago
PolAk Nds & *IFSH*

ABSTRACT

The so-called refugee crisis of the last years has presented Germany with a massive inflow of refugees and migrants. The scale has disrupted Germany's self-narrative as open and tolerant state that has learned from its Nazi past. With local and national institutions not being prepared logistically, with media images portraying a nearly 'overrun' country, and with a significant upsurge in anti-migrant sentiments, a state of mnemonic insecurity has developed in Germany. Far-right political movements gathered strength and voter support, and right-wing extremist violence increased. On the other side, many people actively engaged in a 'welcome culture'. The contribution traces key developments in Germany's approach to the refugee crisis in the context of radicalization trends. It illustrates the dislocation of Germany's identity and self-narrative in an emotionalized discourse, and the following acts to defend memory. It closes with current attempts at memory's re-politicization to something larger than before.

KEYWORDS: Mnemonic insecurity; Identity; Emotions; Radicalization; Germany

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:
Dr. Sybille Reinke de Buitrago (sybille.rdeb@gmail.com)
Polizeiakademie Niedersachsen, Bgm.-Stahn-Wall 9, 31582 Nienburg/Weser, Germany

Work licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non commercial-Share alike 3.0 Italian License

1. Introduction

How vulnerable is German identity? How has the drastic rise in refugee and migration flows and a following radicalization affected German identity and self-narrative? The article argues that German memory has become challenged and German identity dislocated, creating mnemonic insecurity.

The so-called refugee crisis of the last few years, with highest point around 2015–2016, has ruptured Germany's *self-narrative* of an open and tolerant state, one which has learned the lessons from its Nazi past. With local and national institutions seeming logistically ill prepared, with media showing images of a country nearly 'overrun', and with a significant rise in anti-migrant sentiments, Germany developed a state of mnemonic insecurity. Language and political demands became more polarized and extreme, and far-right political movements gathered strength. From 2014 to 2017, there was a new rise in violence by right-wing extremists (BMI 2019, p. 3), mainly against asylum seekers and migrants and those seen as helping them. Attacks on housing centers for asylum seekers rose by about 500% from before 2014 to the highest in 2016 (BMI 2019, p. 7). Anti-Semitic violence increased by 19.6% from 2017 to 2018 (BMI 2019, p. 5), with a first upsurge already in 2016 (Groll 2019). The instances of violence by Muslim asylum seekers against Germans, particularly Muslim men against German women, were heavily exploited in right-wing extremist and populist narratives (Fleischhauer 2015). At the same time, many people were helping refugees and migrants as part of the "welcome culture". German authorities reacted by both tightening laws to restrict migration and improving integration measures for those with (likely) asylum status. It took a few years, however, for a united and decided rejection of the incitement, polarization attempts and violence by populists and extremists.

In post-1945, the German *self-narrative* as open and tolerant state which has learned from its Nazi past has been frequently and repeatedly activated in acts of historical remembrance across society and politics. The need to learn from the horrors of National Socialism – and never to allow such horrors to occur again – are part of German discourse. Germany's special responsibility (*besondere Verantwortung*)

is a constant evocation. This self-narrative, however, always had tensions: parts of German society post-1945 continued to show anti-foreign sentiment, and even a continuing glorification of Nazism and desires for revindication. The *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers) coming to Germany from the mid-1950s on, mainly from Greece, Italy, Spain and Turkey, often faced xenophobia (Der Spiegel 1973). Fears of "uncontrolled movement" were particularly pertinent already then (Vollmer & Karakayali 2018). Post-Cold War re-unified Germany experienced xenophobia, islamophobia, and racism, too (Ramm 2010; Boulila & Carri 2017; Vollmer & Karakayali 2018). While we should also note the different ways of dealing with the Nazi past in Eastern and Western Germany, the dominant official narrative on both sides was one of having become an open, tolerant, democratic and/or new society and state where there is no place for political extremism and violence. The great majority of public and political discourse has presented a German self-narrative and identity as cleansed from the horrors of National Socialism and as re-integrated into the community of liberal, democratic states. The refugee crisis has illustrated the continuing tensions in this self-narrative and identity.

The contribution traces the key developments of the radicalization of parts of German discourse during the refugee crisis.[1] It concentrates on how Germany has dealt and is dealing with the refugee crisis and grown migration, in light of increased radicalization and populism in Germany. It illustrates aspects of the societal-political struggle, the dislocation of Germany's identity and self-narrative, and the emotionalization in narratives. In closing, the contribution shows the steps taken up until now towards defending and re-politicizing memory for mnemonic security, and thereby strengthening ontological security.

2. Identity, Emotions, and Crises in the Context of Radicalization

Before presenting empirical insights regarding Germany's identity and self-narrative, this section introduces the important role of identity, emotions, and crises

[1] The article builds in part on results of the project VIDEOSTAR – Video-based Strategies against Radicalization, extending to the concept of mnemonic memory. The project is funded by the Internal Security Fund of the European Union.

in the context of radicalization, as well as mnemonic security and ontological security. Identity and, at the level of states, national identity, are constructed and socialized in experience with others. Scholars highlight the role of identity and of emotional needs, as well as how extremists attempt fulfill these with their narratives (Cottee & Hayward 2011, p. 963; Barrelle 2014; Neumann 2016, p. 64). It thus matters in the context of radicalization, how both Self and Other, and their relations, are represented and how such representations either confirm or reject particular aspects of identity and the emotional links (Mercer 2014, p. 522, 530). Self-other constructions and the elements of difference they contain are part of human understanding and interaction. Yet, self-other constructions can also come to include exaggerated difference, the purposeful enlargement of dichotomies, and the application of hierarchies with elements of superiority regarding the Self and of inferiority regarding the Other. Recent work discusses the interplay of identity and alterity, difference and othering practices in several case studies (Reinke de Buitrago & Resende 2019).

Without emotional appeal, extremists could not get their messages across. Emotions play a key role in radicalization narratives. Scholars highlight that emotions are part of our thinking, directly and indirectly shaping social behavior. Emotions are inseparable from cognition and action, for humans rely on and use emotions to understand the world and to act in it in relation to others (Bially Mattern 2014, p. 590-591; Mercer 2014). Extremist groups exploit emotional needs of belonging, and their narratives include up- and de-valuation, thereby creating cohesion towards the inside/Self, but difference and otherness towards the outside/Other(s). Extremists reject the identity of those they speak against and offer their own identity instead. Identity re-constructions can take place by rejecting the identity that connects an individual to mainstream society, and then offering the identity of the extremist group.

Times of crisis can also lead to identity re-construction. Crises often rupture held ideas, foster struggles among dominant, alternative and new ideas, and thereby unsettle current narratives. Such a socio-political struggle for meaning can then also

unsettle identity and create space for new links and constructions. According to Nabers (2016), crises can motivate social change and dislocate identity. When a dominant discourse loses its ability to explain, it produces a crisis in held meaning (Legro 2000, p. 424; Laclau 2005, p. 122). The dislocation of a discourse is always possible (Howarth & Stavrakakis 2000, p. 15), because hegemonic articulations are contingent and precarious (Laclau 1993, p. 283). Political crises can thus create voids of meaning, which the dominant actors fill with new meaning (Nabers 2009). In fact, political actors compete to establish their particular interpretations and representations as dominant. When these new ideas have become identified with, normalized and institutionalized (Nabers 2015, p. 147), the new narratives can become dominant.

When a crisis dislocates identity, however, ontological security can be at risk. Ontological security describes a state of being where the Self feels secure in its surroundings, with some degree of order and continuity (Giddens 1991). Ontological security is part of identity construction and constantly challenged by elements of foreignness and difference, and resulting feelings of insecurity (Cash & Kinnvall 2017, p. 269-270). States too need ontological security, and national decision makers engage in efforts and practices to build and maintain a positive view of Self and national identity (see for example Mitzen 2006; Steele 2008; Croft 2012). For the state's Self to be "internally cohesive", also the "mnemonic vision of itself and its place in the world" must be coherent (Mälksoo 2015, p. 224). To maintain a stable and continuous sense of Self and of "the Self of a state", state agents engage in "collecting the history of a nation-state into a story that informs current actions" (Steele 2008, p. 20). These efforts aim at mnemonic security, which is linked to as well as enables ontological security. A secure self-narrative and memory allows for a secure sense of Self and identity; a secure sense of Self can in turn stabilize a coherent memory and constructive memory work.

Memory efforts though have their pitfalls, particularly when security needs gain too much weight. Mälksoo (2015, p. 222) points to significant consequences when states argue their ontological security. The security lens then covers questions

beyond those of physical survival; state identity becomes more fully linked with security, raising the importance of national memory; and the sovereign states' security dominates politics. Security then appears as most important value to pursue (Mälksoo 2015, p. 224). Memory thus is political. Collective memory then is a process of contestation, a struggle over memory by policy makers and other groups, and a struggle over which policies to pursue (Becker 2014). Acts, practices, rituals, and symbols serve to maintain a national memory, a process called mnemonic reconstruction (Vivian 2010). Political actors may also use such materialized representations to construct boundaries and to sharpen the sense of difference between Self and Other (Cash & Kinnvall 2017, p. 269). Political actors can furthermore foster adaptations of memory by introducing new ideas. National memory thus shapes a state's self-narrative (Mälksoo 2015, p. 222). However, when actors apply ontological security to memory, memory itself can become a question of a secure Self, and may then shape ensuing action to the detriment of other societal domains or other actors (Mälksoo 2015, p. 224). New security dilemmas and entanglements may result, including new demands to secure identity within a security frame (Mitzen 2006). Therefore, when a state's memory is (seen as) endangered and insecure – as mnemonic insecurity – the form of its re-stabilization can create new problems. As alternative, Mälksoo (2010) points to the potential gain from seeing identity as open-ended and constantly becoming, to avoid problematic consequences and entanglements.

Turning to Germany, we observe a country trying to find its role – and to adapt its identity – in response to a world with new challenges and demands. For Karp (2018, p. 59), the case of Germany illustrates well the "interaction between a national self-narrative and a rapidly changing environment", the "ontological anxiety" caused, and the strains and adaptation needs in order to secure identity. The growing calls for German leadership in the world strain German self-narrative and challenge the reluctance to lead. The German struggle to respond involves adaptations in discourse and behavior to satisfy both mnemonic security and ontological security needs in the context of new challenges and grown responsibilities. We thus

see "a determined effort by German leaders to position the country between a traditional culture of restraint that can no longer meet Germany's responsibilities and a position of hegemony that speaks of self-serving behavior and dominance" (Karp 2018, p. 59). In trying to maintain "cognitive order" (Mitzen 2006, p. 346), Germany adjusted its identity to fit the new conditions; this new identity was, however, what Mitzen (2006, p. 347) calls a "second best" identity, a compromise of its goals and self-narrative, and the new context. As of now, German leaders are still attempting to balance the response to ally demands with their public's reluctance to follow (Karp 2018, p. 75).

In German national memory, WWII and National Socialism with its horrors likely figure as the dominant events in the 20th century. Another defining event, though to a lesser degree, is WWI, and on the positive side the fall of the Berlin Wall and German re-unification in 1989 and 1990, respectively. As pointed out, significant events such as catastrophes and other events of broad impact weigh on memory and can motivate adaptations (see for example Zerubavel 2003). German memory work focuses mostly on the time of National Socialism, via continuing public and political debates, memorial sites, exhibitions, and other means. Scholars also point to a renewed strengthening of memory work after re-unification, but also certain normalization trends (see for example Wittlinger & Larose 2007; Langenbacher 2010). The question of how to remember German history remains a societal and political debate, highlighted again in recent years. New radicalization trends in the course of the so-called refugee crisis challenge German mnemonic security and, thus, ontological security. Rising populism, an enormous upsurge in online hatred, and the acts of violence against migrants and refugees, as well as against Jewish people, have unsettled the German sense of Self and self-narrative. The country that thought to have become an open and tolerant state and society had to face the still existing xenophobia, racism, and anti-Semitism, and the fact that those voices were growing louder and gaining broader support.

A few words on the phenomenon of radicalization serve as context here. Radicalization has many social and political facets, and no agreed definition. Some

have criticized this definitional plethora (Hoeft 2015; Ducol et al. 2018), as it hinders an effective management. For the purpose of guidance, this article understands radicalization as a process that can take various forms. It may be relatively quick or more long-term, and often involves multiple aspects such as instabilities in personal and social identity, certain personality types, lacking feelings of belonging, group pressure, social surrounding and family influence, and to a lesser part lack of education or economic means (Hussain 2018, p. 88-95). There may or may not be a perception of the need to defend one's own religion (Ahmed 2016). In radicalization processes, thinking and behavior become more limited and extreme and thus more removed from average views of a society; they then can also evolve to include violence (Neumann 2013c, p. 874; Neumann 2013b, p. 3).

To understand radicalization processes, we need to highlight the involved narratives, and the role of media. Narratives illustrate the self-image and the held ideas for how to fulfill one's aims; they "create coherence and order" by defining meaning (Steele 2008, p. 20, 58). A narrative is "a strategic story", "the telling of a story in a certain way for a certain purpose … [namely] influence" (Ricks 2015). In the spreading of extremist narratives, social media play a key role today. Extremists actively use social media, in open and closed channels, to convey their ideas and spread their ideologies, to connect and network, recruit followers, and mobilize, even though offline contact remains important. Some scholars see online media offering an entirely new dimension of propaganda: after actors have initiated debates, both excitement and interest can be kept on a high level (Neumann 2013a, p. 434). Communication in real-time and global space, and the offering of content according to user preferences, effectively draw attention to certain messages (Baaken & Schlegel 2017, p. 187-188). Extremists build and offer strategically crafted narratives that link up with existing tensions in a society, with people's concerns and their expressed views (Milton 2016; Neumann 2016, p. 84-85). Part of the framing and addressing is highly emotional. Extremists attempt to both evoke emotions and appeal to identity. The rejection of the Other is combined with offers of belonging to convince or create interest, and to strengthen both the internal cohesion and the differ-

entiation to the outside group and threatening Other. The emotionalization of Self and Other is a key tool to make one's own group appear superior, and the Other inferior and threatening (see also Reinke de Buitrago 2018), which is why speakers purposefully and strategically emotionalize narratives. The effect of online radicalization narratives is visible in actual violence (Laub 2019), illustrating the need to attend to these narratives and their dynamics.

3. Unsettling German Self-Narrative: Mnemonic Insecurity and Ontological Security

The refugee crisis motivated developments in Germany that culminated in a crisis of identity, self-narrative and memory. Populism rose significantly. Language and demands showed a polarization and more extreme elements, in turn resulting in actual violence. There was a new quality in the radicalization of the right-wing spectrum. Old and new groups voiced their hatred louder and engaged in violence against asylum seekers and migrants, but also against those who publicly supported migration and the assistance of refugees. In addition, articulations of sentiments against Jewish people in Germany grew significantly, and incidents and attacks against Jewish people and institutions increased – something that the German state and society collectively thought overcome.

On the political side, the awakening to the new, more radical reality in Germany was rather slow. At first, some local and state politicians spoke out against the hatred and violence. In particular, the violence against Jewish institutions garnered attention. Violence against migrants and refugees rose further and gained more media attention in the last years. Even in the thought-to-be tolerant midst of society, social media discussions heated up, too. Finally, the focus on right-wing extremist violence grew: politicians began to condemn the acts of violence strongly, but also the narratives of hate and polarization behind. Overall, it took several years until politicians positioned together broadly and clearly against the rising populism and right-wing extremist violence. We may place the clearer positioning in part also in the context and aftermath of the murder of the state politician Walter Lübcke by a

person afterwards discovered to be a right-wing fanatic in 2019. Significant as well was the unexpected strength of the right-wing nationalist/populist party AfD (*Alternative für Deutschland*) which gained support in state elections of three eastern *Bundesländer* within several months of each other in 2019. Furthermore, in October 2019, on the day of Yom Kippur, a right-wing fanatic attempted to shoot Jewish prayers in a synagogue in Halle, an act he had announced before on social media. These developments uncovered the depth of xenophobic, anti-migration, and anti-Semitic sentiments lingering within German society. They illustrated how easily those sentiments could be re-activated, and what could be the consequences. Contradictions to Germany self-narrative as tolerant society became more visible, challenging mnemonic security, and thereby ontological security. Accompanying the growing societal and political debate was the aftermath of the NSU (*National Socialist Underground/Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund*) crimes, namely of authorities having failed to act in time, and the legal proceedings against the last living NSU member that lasted from 2013 to 2018. The debate around this trial illustrated the difference in views and practices towards right-wing extremism in Germany. Civil society played an important role in stirring politicians to take a clear position against hatred and violence. Not only did many people in Germany organize against extremism and intolerance, they also engaged in assisting refugees and migrants. Civil society began to lobby strongly for refugee and migrant rights. In this, we may also see as a move towards defending or strengthening again mnemonic security.

3.1. The Radicalization of German Discourse

From the end of 2014 on, but particularly in the summer of 2015, the refugee crisis reached a scale that state authorities and the public alike could no longer ignore. The process of unsettling German self-narrative and memory began around this time. Although media had been actively reporting on a rising refugee crisis, where particularly the Italian state had demanded help from its European partners, there was not much more than some political statements on the general need to find a European solution. Most EU countries continued to rely on the Dublin Agree-

ment, outlining that refugees had to register and stay in the country of first arrival. The request of the German chancellor Merkel in 2015 for a European-wide migration policy did not lead to any truly joint or effective answers. Special meetings at the EU level took place; the European Council meeting in April 2015 led to an agreement on an overall strategy that included measures for improved rescue at sea, the fighting of human trafficking, and more cooperation with countries of origin and within the EU. The measure that found most agreement was the strengthening of border patrol at Europe's southern border, mainly via strengthening FRONTEX (*European Border and Coast Guard Agency*). However, with enormous numbers of refugees and migrants continuing to arrive, border patrol alone was insufficient. In addition, Italy had begun to let refugees and migrants transit to other countries; Austria did so as well, leading to unseen numbers of refugees and migrants entering Germany, many of them without being registered. To a significant extent, the German state had no knowledge about who had actually entered the country, and state officials and local communities were often overwhelmed by the logistic and financial needs of providing shelter and assistance. Perhaps of key impact were the often heart-breaking pictures of the plight of refugees and migrants presented in media, the daily reporting of drownings in the Mediterranean Sea, and the desperation at the borders of European states, along with refugees who had arrived and told their story. Not only was there an emotional framing by media or NGOs and other activists, the pictures and experiences of refugees themselves were highly emotional and they moved a great part of German society and policymakers alike. The key contradiction to German self-narrative and identity was how Germany could turn its face from such human plight, with own experiences of flight and human suffering and the experience of the Nazi horrors. In the light of German history, these images began to unsettle German memory and cause mnemonic insecurity, and people began to question if Germany was as tolerant and open as thought, pointing the finger in the lingering historical wounds.

As many Germans began to engage in the assistance of refugees and migrants, also anti-foreign sentiments began to rise. On the one side, a great part of

the population was helping to cover needs of hundreds of thousands incomers. Germans offered all kinds of assistance, including donating, the sorting of clothing and other goods, help with the filling out of forms or with visits to government and public offices, giving German lessons and even shelter in their own homes. The internationally highly applauded welcome culture was strong. These efforts also became part of media reporting. On the other side, however, many began to feel anxious regarding the number of refugees and migrants coming to Germany, and if Germany could really handle it, as Merkel had claimed in 2015. By mid-2016, a report showed that Germany had already taken in many more refugees than any other European country (Zeit Online 2016). With state and local institutions frequently being overwhelmed, these rising concerns and anxieties remained insufficiently addressed. The welcome culture significantly weakened already in 2016 (Zick & Preuß 2016). By then, most Germans still considered integration generally as positive but had strong reservations; most were also against further refugees and migrants entering the country. The above study also showed increases in the numbers of people fearing the loss of German values, and more frequent terror attacks, as well as those demanding the refugees' return after an improved situation in their home countries. At the European level, most thought that particularly Muslims do not want to integrate in their new home societies but remain distinct (Wike et al. 2016).

German mainstream political discourse had centered on the integration of refugees and migrants. The drowning of three-year old Syrian boy, Aylan Kurdi, in the Mediterranean Sea in 2015 caused so much criticism of the European refugee policy, also via media pressure, that the Dublin agreement was temporarily suspended. Many in Germany came to see the European migration policy as inhumane, and as not fitting with a German self-narrative of an open state and society. On the other side, incidents by refugees/migrants against German women, for example the events at Cologne central station at New Year's Eve 2015/2016, created resentment and increased the demands for security. For that night, more than 1000 incidents of mostly sexual assault against women by persons described as migrant/non-German were reported; police were unprepared. Questions of who was actually entering the

country became louder. In addition, a Europol report from July 2016 warned of hundreds of potential terrorists having entered Europe, as foreign fighters returning from Syria and Iraq. The Christmas market attack in Berlin in December 2016 by a Tunisian with potential links to the terror network ISIS/Daesh, killing 12 people and injuring 55, was another event that shaped views and discourse. Thus, mnemonic insecurity in Germany resulted in two ways. On the one hand, the contradiction between the German self-narrative as open and tolerant, and the perceived and argued lack to respond to such a humanitarian crisis became impossible to ignore. On the other hand, incidents of violence by migrants and/or refugees in Germany strengthened voices that were critical of migration, including extremist ones, which also contradicted the German self-narrative.

Main voices in the radicalization of German discourse are the German far-right movement PEGIDA (*Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes*/Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the Occident), and the AfD. PEGIDA, claiming a decline of European/Western civilization, culture and values, emerged in Germany in the fall of 2014. The name of the movement illustrates the misuse of the term of *Abendland* (occident) for political objectives; the term facilitates a dichotomy between *Abendland* and *Morgenland* (Orient). As some point out, this was already part of the illiberal ideology of Germany between WWI and WWII (Conze 2005). PEGIDA grew significantly and formed local offshoots.

The now quite strong, right-wing nationalist/populist party AfD actively played on and utilized rising anti-foreign sentiments and anxieties for its aims. Founded initially on an EU-critical and right-wing-liberal platform in 2013, it has turned into the key political force against further migration and against foreigners overall. Despite some diversity of views and continuing internal struggles over future direction, AfD discourse is strongly populist and in part extremist. Since early 2020, the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (*Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz*) is seeing a part of the AfD as case of observation (*Beobachtung*). A key practice of the AfD is to build and strengthen polarization, dichotomies, and resentment, and to play on anxieties. AfD representatives continuously misuse the

differences that people feel between themselves and foreigners, and the concerns of people over what the changes may bring. They represent refugees and migrants as people living off the German social system, never having contributed, and thus living off the work and achievements of Germans, in contrast to the German pensioners who are forced to go through trash to survive (Farle 2018, translated). The refugees and migrants in "this mass migration" are portrayed as "destroying Germany" and its future (Farle 2018, translated). It is of further significance that the AfD also denigrates the German state for allowing such 'danger' to develop.

AfD narratives paint and degrade chancellor Merkel's decision to keep the border to Austria open on 4 September 2015, as thousands of refugees marched to enter Germany, as enormous "breach of law" supported by most of the government. The government is said to "have allowed that terrorists […], that such IS fighters come into our country", and that parallel societies form that "threaten the people in our country" (Farle 2018, translated). Narratives criticize and denigrate the state and the media for pushing and assisting migration, for allowing "chaos" to occur at German borders, and for risking the German *Heimat* and culture. Germany is said to need sensible and patriotic politicians who love their country and the German *Volk*; "for this we stand here, and we will protest until that is reached" (Stürzenberger 2016, translated). AfD narratives not only reject refugees and migrants overall, but also the German authorities who have not prevented it; the German state and government thus become a target as well. The rising protests by AfD, PEGIDA and other groups illustrate that a growing number of people began to believe such narratives. The ease with which such feelings of insecurity and resentment could be activated for political aims contrary to the German self-narrative points to mnemonic insecurity growing.

The active pitting of the claimed-as-superior German culture against the "archaic culture" of Muslim refugees evoke identity and emotions. According to AfD speakers, "archaic" norms and behavior are threatening German identity as part of Western democratic civilization and culture (Farle 2018, translated). A number of AfD figures stand out in their phrasing of the supposed threat by refu-

gees/migrants to Germany and Germans. For example, Alice Weidel, co-chair of the AfD Bundestag parliamentary group, continues to paint a picture of "Burkas! Headscarf girls! Men with knifes who receive alimentation! And others who are good for nothing" (Weidel 2018, translated). In 2015, Björn Höcke, the ultra-right chair of the AfD parliamentary group of Thuringia spoke of Germany's thousand-year old past and of wanting a thousand-year old future for Germany (referring to the Nazi term *tausendjähriges Reich*) (Höcke 2015-2019, translated). He warns: "The Syrian who comes to us still has his Syria. The Afghan who comes to us still has his Afghanistan. And the Senegalese who comes to us still has his Senegal. When we will have lost our Germany, we will have no home anymore". He paints a picture of threat and urgency: "social peace is existentially threatened by the rising misuse and the giving up of the nationally limited solidarity community, as well as by the import of foreign peoples and the necessarily resulting conflicts" (Höcke 2015-2019, translated). He claims that in the large West German cities, Germans are already the minority and are losing their home (Höcke 2015-2019, translated). The theme is one of Germans becoming strangers in their own country, of the German state being overwhelmed, and Germany as country and culture threatened by outside foreigners and by refugees/migrants inside Germany. The dominant means, or practice, is, again, to build on and enlarge both the concerns in the midst of society and the anxieties of some, and to stoke fear, unease, and resentment. AfD representatives depict the refugee/migrant as threatening, archaic/non-modern and inferior, trying to appeal to superiority feelings and identity of the Self, and making the refugee/migrant the scapegoat for all problems. Part of how the AfD goes about this is to give topics an emotional framing and to emotionalize Self/Other.

Narratives of right-wing extremists/populists overall focus heavily on refugees and migration, the claimed threat from migration to Europe and Germany, and from an "Islamization". Populists and extremists alike take up the concerns expressed in media, as part of a strategy and practice to connect to the society's mainstream, to shift discourse and politics, and gain followers. They represent particularly the Muslim refugees and migrants as the threatening Other, and they use the

frame of a claimed Islamization to depict the danger to Western liberal societies and values. Narratives warn that Islamic values are already changing European societies, and that Europeans and Germans will soon feel as strangers in their own land. A linked theme is the claimed threat to German women from Muslim men. In this context, narratives repeatedly refer to the events at Cologne central station at New Year's Eve 2015/2016. Right-wing extremists/populists present this incident as key "evidence" of German authorities and government being unable and unwilling to protect German women. The German government receives further blame for supposedly pushing an experiment of *Multikulti* (multiculturalism), and for the resulting conflicts and violence from which Germans already suffer. The claim is that the German state acts against its own people.

In narratives, the practice is thus to distort issues and developments, to paint a growing threat and create a sense of urgency, and to try to capitalize on diffuse fears in society. Rhetorical/stylistic means serve to increase anxiety. For example, there is a distortion of words relating to scale and size in order to paint a growing threat, but also to support the claim of rising resistance of Germans. Framings are emotional; the aim is to evoke viewers emotionally and thereby mobilize them. Videos on YouTube often depict the Self as quite normal, sympathetic young people, to ease viewer identification, and the dangerous Other in stark contrast. The technique of building and increasing contrast, for example when depicting a calm and peaceful Germany against enormous treks of refugees arriving, serves viewer emotionalization and mobilization. We may argue that the AfD and others like it attempt to move society away from the previous consensus and self-narrative, and to affect respective political change. In painting a picture of threat and evoking security, they – in Mälksoo's view – contribute to mnemonic insecurity and destabilize the German self-understanding.

While there were also voices that reminded of the German experience of flight during and after WWII (Scholz 2016), the anti-refugee/migrant/foreigner narratives became more prominent. Accompanying this change, violence against refugees, asylum seekers and migrants rose, as stated above, and public figures suf-

fered attacks, too. The German self-narrative and identity as tolerant state that has learned its lessons had become challenged.

3.2. Creating Mnemonic Insecurity in Germany

The representation of refugees and migrants as threat to European and German societies, citizens, and cultures has created anxieties and unease in Germany, and facilitated counteractions. These include the significant strengthening of right-wing extremist/populist forces in Germany, but also violence against refugees and migrants and those publicly supporting migration, sentiments against refugees and migrants, and a higher public rejection of further asylum seekers and of migration. German self-narrative and identity as tolerant state was dislocated; mnemonic insecurity has, if not always existing in a small part post-1945, increased. For a significant number of people, memory is unsettled. Mnemonic insecurity though has come about in two ways. On the one side, the challenge to the German self-narrative as open and tolerant state came from the refugee crisis and the involved humanitarian need, and the lacking or insufficient response to this need. For some, the self-narrative was no longer sustainable. On the other side, rising right-wing populism and extremism, and their rejection of the refugee/migrant as the threatening Other would not fit into the German self-narrative and thus led to its questioning. German society and politics are currently facing an intense and emotional struggle over the meaning of German national memory past and present. Memory of National Socialism and its assessment up until now, and the resulting responsibility for the German state and society face a significant challenge. The practices of enlarging difference, playing on anxieties and fostering resentment by populists and extremists – part of a continuing struggle over memory, and how it should define political behavior – currently polarize society and politics.

One way in which mnemonic insecurity resulted was the refugee crisis and the response to it not fitting German self-narrative, in the eyes of many. Heavily criticized by right-wing populists/extremists, German media continued to present pictures of the long refugee treks in the daily news, as well as in-depth reports on

refugees and migrants. NGO lobbying increased further, as well as rescue at sea in the Mediterranean by NGOs or private persons. The often highly emotional pictures and reporting showed the plight of refugees on the one side and the rich, European countries claiming the protection of human rights but not acting enough on the other side. This sharp contrast was daily visualized and discussed in media and politics, highlighting the contradiction between the German self-narrative of tolerance and the lack of solid and effective aid. In light of the German history of National Socialism, of own experience of flight, and what this meant for today's Germany, mnemonic insecurity developed. This unsettling of memory began to scrape at the sense of Self, risking also ontological security.

The other way of creating mnemonic insecurity was more purposeful. Political discourse referring to Germany's thousand-year old past for a thousand-year old future, as stated above, illustrates the distorted glorification of Germany's Nazi past by some, but also how such views are somewhat normalized, in opposition to German self-narrative and memory. It was societal and political understanding that post-1945 Germany would never again go down such a path, but right-wing extremist/populist groups have actively questioned this dictum and moved their narratives towards the midst of society (*Mitte der Gesellschaft*). Part of the understanding was Germany's special responsibility towards other countries due to its history. However, this understanding has weakened in the last few years. Thus, the number of Germans agreeing with Germany's special responsibility towards Israel and Jewish people decreased since 2015. Germans are generally aware of the growing anti-Semitism and they link it to the political success of right-wing extremist/populist parties (Jeder 2019). The number of people agreeing with Germany's special responsibility to help other countries also decreased since 2015, whereas negative attitudes regarding migration, refugees and asylum seekers increased (Gersemann 2019; Zeit Online 2019). A majority in both the West and East of Germany sees it impossible to stem the task of integrating the refugees and migrants having come in the last years, in the East slightly more so (Infratest dimap 2019). Furthermore, 52% of the people see Islam having too much influence in Germany, and 48% fear their

way of life will change too much (Infratest dimap 2019). A study from 2019 finds a consolidation of right-wing populism in German society, both in the East and West: about 20% of the population have right-wing populist attitudes, and 42% exhibit such tendency (Zeit Online 2019). The AfD has gained significant support; many of its voters and supporters agree with its strongly "anti-democratic and misanthropic" views (Zeit Online 2019). With increases in the number of people supporting illiberal statements and questioning equal rights for all people, there is clearly a rupture and dislocation of Germany's self-narrative and identity as tolerant, open state. Right-wing populists/extremists have openly contested the meaning of tolerance in the context of migration. They were successful in shifting discourse and societal/political consensus; they did so via representing refugees/migrants as threatening Other and migration as dangerous development for Germany and Germans, via claiming the state's incapacity, and via appealing to the population to protect themselves. Many more Germans now question the dictum that Germany should act in solidarity with those in need, that Germany is tolerant and has learned from its past. The heated debates in the *Bundestag*, media or even among normal people on the street, and the growing polarization illustrate the unsettling of memory and the creation of mnemonic insecurity.

Another element in the creation of mnemonic insecurity by populists/extremist narratives is the reduced trust in media and politics. A growing number of people believe more the content of social media sites of particular groups rather than official government statements or journalistic media reporting. In the last years, right-wing extremists/populists have engaged in denouncing media as so-called mainstream media and *Lügenpresse* ("lying media") which collude with the state against peoples' interests, as above illustrated. The use of *Lügenpresse*, heavily used by Nazis during National Socialism (and conservatives before), particularly illustrates how right-wing populists/extremists question German self-narrative and memory. With their claims having gained tracked in public and political discourse, they have successfully anchored their narratives within broader society, too. When we consider how National Socialists in the 1930s/1940s defamed pluralist actors

and media, there are still – or again – lessons for today: the grown skepticism of media and politics today strengthens the dislocation of German self-narrative and identity as open and tolerant state that has learned its lessons from history.

In the course of events and reactions by society and politics, polarization has grown. In light of mnemonic insecurity, Germans are engaged in a struggle over the meaning of democracy and tolerance, over their national memory and how to live it, over what is taboo and what is possible, and, thus, over what kind of state and society they want to be, over their sense of Self.

4. Strengthening Mnemonic Security Again: The Fight of Extremism

From mid-2019 on, we are seeing political actors beginning to push back more broadly and clearly the narratives and demands of right-wing populists/extremists. Among the key events motivating this change, there are the murder of the politician Lübcke and the attack on a synagogue in Halle. These events were part of the developments forcing the need to take clear positions and respond to hatred and violence. The condemning of acts of violence against Jewish people, refugees, migrants, and those helping them is now more unified and louder. Citizens in many German cities have been organizing demonstrations for tolerance and against hatred, too. German politics and society has recognized the dangerous polarization, and public and political discourse evidences many more calls for societal cohesion and dialogue. We may see all these efforts as aiming for the stabilization of self-narrative and memory, and thus also for ontological security. The ongoing struggle over meaning illustrates that a secure sense of Self needs a coherent, secure memory.

German officials continue to search for workable solutions for the challenge of migration, seeking also joint European ones. Germany continues to take in a portion of refugees/migrants arriving. Regulations for asylum-seekers are stricter now, while integration measures for those with recognized asylum status were improved. Such steps continue as key topic in news reporting, as well as expert and political talks, and their contestation continues. However, there is a greater awareness now

that online hatred too can incite actual violence. The clearer rejection of hatred, violence and intolerance by political actors in recent months points to a beginning of rebuilding mnemonic security. Statements by high-ranking German politicians, such as Federal President Steinmeier and chancellor Merkel, who clearly re-affirm Germany's historical responsibility and reject the path of hatred are aimed to re-stabilize memory and self-narrative, and thereby the German sense of Self as democratic state in the world and as tolerant society. Steinmeier, speaking in Yad Vashem in January 2020 on Auschwitz, warned "the spirits of evil are emerging in a new guise", and re-affirmed Germany's responsibility for the horrors of Nazi Germany as well as for fighting anti-Semitism in Germany today (Halbfinger et al. 2020). His reference to spreading hatred, but also the increase of democracy-critical and anti-pluralist views, highlight what is at stake.

The last few years then saw the creation of new federal and national task forces and measures against extremist violence and the spreading of hatred online. Funding continues for initiatives that foster pluralism and inclusion, at the level of civil society, academia and politics. Recently, experts warned that German democracy could destabilize in the coming years, calling for more democracy education, efforts to reduce prejudices, and the recognition and naming of anti-democratic opinions for what they are (Zeit Online 2019). The clear naming of anti-democratic views would be a needed element in a successful re-affirming of German self-narrative as democratic state: clearly distinguishing democratic and anti-democratic views draws a clearer boundary towards populists and extremists, and forces to take position, thereby having the potential to re-establish mnemonic security and the Self as democratic state.

Measures for de-radicalization and tolerance include counter- or alternative narratives: depictions of corrected and alternative, democratic readings of developments, and of how Germany should deal with them. To this end, a vast array of initiatives, participatory projects, help centers, information, and teaching material by civil society and federal and national institutions exist (for example Radikal 2017; BfDT 2019; BpB 2019; Datteltäter; Jugendschutz.net 2019; ufuq.de). Both mne-

monic security and ontological security should benefit from the acknowledgment of existing problems and concerns, and their reading in a liberal-democratic frame, as well as when people are touched also at the identity and emotional level. Thus, the pluralistic perspectives of those arguing against populists/extremists now evoke a more open identity, the value of pluralism, tolerance and their benefit for all, and the importance of societal cohesion. They express the idea that all people in Germany can together shape the rules which they want to live by, which has the potential to re-establish both mnemonic security and ontological security, and to make German society and politics more resilient against extremist efforts.

The still ongoing struggle among political actors and within society over memory, self-narrative and identity in Germany is motivating a re-politicization of national memory. A stronger and more inclusive debate tries to re-stabilize national memory, clearly re-affirming Germany's special responsibility grounded in history, but including now a greater awareness of the strength of lingering racism and resentment. The re-stabilization of memory and the beginning renewal of self-narrative will re-establish also the sense of Self; ontological security is in the process of becoming restored. Having experienced that German democracy and a tolerant society need continuous work, the ongoing societal and political debate in Germany may result in a sense of Self with an identity that is more secure than in the years past. New challenges, however, will continue to test both mnemonic and ontological security in Germany.

References

Ahmed, K 2016, 'Radicalism Leading to Violent Extremism in Canada: A Multi-Level Analysis of Muslim Community and University-Based Student Leaders' Perceptions and Experiences', *Journal for Deradicalization,* vol. 6, pp. 231–271.

Baaken, T & Schlegel, L 2017, 'Fishermen or Swarm Dynamics? Should We Understand Jihadist Online-Radicalization as a Top-Down or Bottom-Up Process?', *Journal for Deradicalization,* vol. 13, pp. 178–212.

Barrelle, K 2014, 'Pro-Integration: Disengagement from and Life after Extremism', *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression,* vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 129–142. https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2014.988165

Becker, DJ 2014, 'Memory and Trauma as Elements of Identity in Foreign Policy-making', in E Resende & D Budryte (eds), *Memory and Trauma in International Relations. Theories, Cases and Debates*, Routledge, pp. 71–72.

BfDT, 2019, Bündnis für Demokratie und Toleranz, viewed 8 November 2019, <http://www.buendnis-toleranz.de/>.

Bially Mattern, J 2014, 'On Being Convinced: An Emotional Epistemology of International Relations', *International Theory,* vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 589–594. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1752971914000323

BMI, 2019, 'Politisch motivierte Kriminalität im Jahr 2018. Bundesweite Fallzahlen', Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat, 14 May, viewed 29 October 2019, <https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/downloads/DE/veroeffentlichungen/2019/pmk-2018.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=2>.

Boulila, S & Carri, C 2017, 'On Cologne: Gender, Migration and Unacknowledged Racisms in Germany', *European Journal of Women's Studies*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 286–293. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506817712447

BpB, 2019, 'Extremismus', Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung/Federal Agency for Civic Education, viewed 8 November 2019, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/extremismus/>.

Cash, J & Kinnvall, C 2017, 'Postcolonial Bordering and Ontological Insecurities', *Postcolonial Studies*, vol. 20, no. 3, pp. 267–274. https://doi.org/10.1080/13688790.2017.1391670

Conze, V 2005, *Das Europa der Deutschen. Ideen von Europa in Deutschland zwischen Reichstradition und Westorientierung (1920-1970)*, Oldenbourg Verlag: Munich.

Cottee, S & Hayward, KJ 2011, 'Terrorist (E)motives: The Existential Attractions of Terrorism', *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism,* vol. 34, no. 12, pp. 963–986. https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2011.621116

Croft, S 2012, *Securitizing Islam: Identity and the Search for Security*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

Datteltäter, YouTube channel, viewed 8 November 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF_oOFgq8qwi7HRGTJSsZ-g>.

Der Spiegel, 1973, 'Die Türken kommen – rette sich, wer kann', viewed 4 February 2010, <https://magazin.spiegel.de/EpubDelivery/spiegel/pdf/41955159>.

Ducol, B, Bouchard M, Davies, C, & Neudecker, C 2018, 'Radicalisation et Extrémisme Violent à l'Ére du Web. Numérique et Radicalités Violentes: Au-delà des Discours Communs', *Cahiers de la Sécurité et de la Justice*, vol. 43, viewed 29 October 2019, <https://inhesj.fr/sites/default/files/inhesj_files/cahiers_images/Radicalisation_CSJ43_INHESJ.pdf>.

Farle, R 2018, AfD-State representative, *AfD-Politiker platzt der Kragen wegen Familiennachzug und Weltfremdheit der Linken*, Speech, 26 January, viewed 28 January 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4P-_WsxltOE>.

Fleischhauer, J 2015, 'Warum uns der Islam Angst macht', *Spiegel*, 6 January, viewed 6 January 2019, <https://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/jan-fleischhauer-warum-uns-der-islam-solche-angst-macht-a-1011468.html>.

Gersemann, O 2019, 'Jeder zweite Deutsche verweigert Verantwortung für die Schwachen dieser Welt', *Welt*, 20 January, viewed 27 October 2019, <https://www.welt.de/wirtschaft/article187363068/Umfrage-Jeder-zweite-Deutsche-verweigert-Hilfe-fuer-die-Schwachen-dieser-Welt.html>.

Giddens, A 1991, *Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Polity: Cambridge.

Groll, T 2019, 'Täglich mindestens fünf Attacken gegen Juden', *ZEIT online*, 10 October, viewed 29 October 2019, <https://www.zeit.de/gesellschaft/2019-10/antisemitismus-anschlag-halle-rechtsextremismus-rechte-gewalt-kriminalitaet/komplettansicht>.

Halbfinger, DM, Kershner, I & Rogers, K 2020, 'At Holocaust Memorial, a Survivor and Towering Moral Voice Says He 'Cannot Forgive'', *The New York Times*, 23 January, viewed 7 February 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/23/world/middleeast/auschwitz-liberation-anniversary.html>.

Höcke, B 2015-2019, Collection of citations, *11 Zitate von Björn Höcke, die für den AfD-Chef Jörg Meuthen „nich drüber" sind*, viewed 20 October 2019, <https://www.watson.de/deutschland/best%20of%20watson/988199781-afd-joerg-meuthen-verteidigt-bjoern-hoecke-gegen-kritik-an-der-grenze-aber-nicht-drueber>.

Hoeft, G 2015, '*Soft' Approaches to Counter-Terrorism: An Exploration of the Benefits of Deradicalization Programs*, International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, viewed 29 October 2019, <https://www.ict.org.il/UserFiles/ICT-Soft-Approaches-to-CT-Hoeft.pdf>.

Howarth, D & Stavrakakis, Y 2000, 'Introducing Discourse Theory and Political Analysis', in D Howarth, AJ Norval & Y Stavrakakis (eds), *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis. Identities, Hegemonies and Social Change*, Manchester University Press, pp. 1–23.

Hussain, S 2018, 'Exploring People's Perceptions of Precursors to the Development of Radicalisation and Extremism', *Journal for Deradicalization,* vol. 14, pp. 79–110.

Infratest dimap, 2019, Opinion polls, viewed 5 November 2019, <https://www.infratest-dimap.de/umfragen-analysen/bundesweit/umfragen/aktuell/54-prozent-der-bevoelkerung-meinen-wir-schaffen-es-nicht-die-fluechtlinge-erfolgreich-zu-integrieren/>.

Jeder vierte Deutsche denkt antisemitisch, 2019, 24 October, viewed 24 October 2019, <https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/antisemitismus-studie-105.html>.

Jugendschutz.net, 2019, Program for the protection of children and youth at the national level, viewed 8 November 2019, <http://www.jugendschutz.net/>.

Karp, R 2018, 'Identity and Anxiety: German's Struggle to Lead', *European Security*, vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 58–81. https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2018.1428565

Laclau, E 1993, 'Power and Representation', in M Poster (ed), *Politics, Theory, and Contemporary Culture*, Columbia University Press, pp. 277–296.

Laclau, E 2005, *On Populist Reason*, Verso: London.

Langenbacher, E 2010, 'The Mastered Past? Collective Memory Trends in Germany since Unification', *German Politics and Society*, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 42–68, https://doi.org/10.3167/gps.2010.280104

Laub, Z 2019, 'Hate Speech on Social Media: Global Comparisons', *Council on Foreign Relations*, 7 June, viewed 28 October 2019, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/hate-speech-social-media-global-comparisons>.

Legro, J 2000, 'The Transformation of Policy Ideas', *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 44, no. 3, pp. 419–432. https://doi.org/10.2307/2669256

Mälksoo, M 2010, *The Politics of Becoming European: A Study of Polish and Baltic Post-Cold War Security Imaginaries*, Routledge: London and New York.

Mälksoo, M 2015, 'Memory Must be Defended', *Security Dialogue*, vol 46, no 3, pp. 221–237. https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010614552549

Mercer, J 2014, 'Feeling Like a State: Social Emotion and Identity', *International Theory*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 515–535. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1752971914000244

Milton, D 2016, *Communication Breakdown: Unraveling the Islamic State's Media Efforts*, Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, 10 October, viewed 14 January 2018, <https://www.stratcomcoe.org/milton-d-communication-breakdown-unraveling-islamic-states-media-efforts>.

Mitzen, J 2006, 'Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma', *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 341–370. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066106067346

Nabers, D 2009, 'Filling the Void of Meaning: Identity Construction in U.S. Foreign Policy after September 11, 2001', *Foreign Policy Analysis*, vol. 5, pp. 191–214. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1743-8594.2009.00089.x

Nabers, D 2015, *A Poststructuralist Discourse Theory of Global Politics*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Nabers, D 2016, 'Crisis as Dislocation in Global Politics', *Politics*, vol. 37, no. 4, pp. 418–431. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263395716661341

Neumann, P 2013a, 'Options and Strategies for Countering Online Radicalization in the United States', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol. 36, no. 6, pp. 431–459. https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2013.784568

Neumann, P 2013b, 'Radikalisierung, Deradikalisierung und Extremismus', *APuZ*, vol. 29-31, pp. 3–10.

Neumann, P 2013c, 'The Trouble with Radicalization', *International Affairs*, vol. 89, no. 4, pp. 873–893. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2346.12049

Neumann, P 2016, *Der Terror ist unter uns. Dschihadismus und Radikalisierung in Europa*, Ullstein Buchverlage: Berlin.

Radikal, 2017, Movie against political extremism by the State Government of Hesse, viewed 30 August 2019, <https://hke.hessen.de/film-%E2%80%9Eradikal>.

Ramm, C 2010, 'The Muslim Makers. How Germany 'Islamizes' Turkish Immigrants', *Interventions. International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 183–197. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369801X.2010.489692

Reinke de Buitrago, S 2018, 'Grasping the Role of Emotions in IR via Qualitative Content Analysis and Visual Analysis', in M Clément & E Sangar (eds), *Researching Emotions in International Relations*: *Methodological Perspectives on the Emotional Turn*, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 303–324.

Reinke de Buitrago, S & Resende, R 2019, 'The Politics of Otherness. Illustrating the Identity/Alterity Nexus and Othering in IR', in J Edkins (ed), *Routledge Handbook of Critical International Relations*, Routledge, pp. 179–193.

Ricks, TE 2015, 'Narratives Are about 'Meaning', Not 'Truth'', *Foreign Policy*, 3 December, viewed 5 January 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/12/03/narratives-are-about-meaning-not-truth/>.

Scholz, S 2016, 'Willkommenskultur durch "Schicksalsvergleich". Die deutsche Vertreibungserinnerung in der Flüchtlingsdebatte', *APuZ*, vol. 25-27, 24 June, viewed 27 August 2019, < https://www.bpb.de/apuz/229823/die-deutsche-vertreibungserinnerung-in-der-fluechtlingsdebatte?p=all>.

Steele, BJ 2008, *Ontological Security in International Relations: Self-Identity and the IR State*, Routledge: London.

Stürzenberger, M 2016, Right-wing populist activist, *Krankheiten der* "*Flüchtlinge*", Speech, 29 February, viewed 26 October 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D0oRef10blU>.

ufuq.de, 2019, Program for political education and prevention, viewed 8 November 2019, <https://www.ufuq.de/>.

Vivian, B 2010, *Public Forgetting: The Rhetoric and Politics of Beginning Again*, Pennsylvania State University Press: University Park, PA.

Vollmer, B & Karakayali, S 2018, 'The Volatility of the Discourse on Refugees in Germany', *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, vol. 16, no. 1-2, pp. 118–139. https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2017.1288284

Weidel, A 2018, Co-chair of AfD Bundestag parliamentary group, *Alice Weidel (AfD) über Kopftuchmädchen*, Speech at the Bundestag, 16 May, viewed 20 October 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mtu3MMUph4A>.

Wike, R, Stokes, B & Simmons, K 2016, *Europeans Fear Wave of Refugees Will Mean More Terrorism, Fewer Jobs*, Pew Research Center, 11 July, viewed 14 July 2016, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2016/07/11/europeans-fear-wave-of-refugees-will-mean-more-terrorism-fewer-jobs/>.

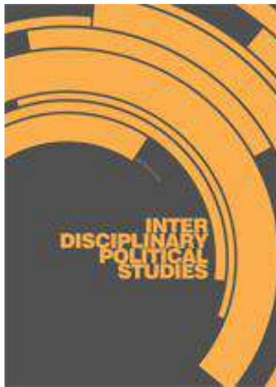
Wittlinger, R & Larose, M 2007, 'No Future for Germany's Past? Collective Memory and German Foreign Policy', *German Politics*, vol. 16, no. 4, pp. 481–495. https://doi.org/10.1080/09644000701652490

Zeit Online, 2016, 'EU-Länder schieben ab, Deutschland nimmt auf', 26 June, viewed 28 June 2016, <http://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2016-06/europaeische-union-fluechtlinge-deutschland>.

Zeit Online, 2019, 'Mehrheit demokratiefreundlich, ein Fünftel rechtspopulistisch', 25 April, viewed 28 October 2019, <https://www.zeit.de/gesellschaft/zeitgeschehen/2019-04/rechtspopulismus-friedrich-ebert-stiftung-fremdenfeindlichkeit-extremismus>.

Zerubavel, E 2003, 'Calendars and History: The Historic Organization of National Memory', in J K Olick (ed), *States of Memory: Continuities, Conflicts, and Transformations in National Retrospection*, Duke University Press: Durham, NC.

Zick, A & Preuß, M 2016, 'Zu Gleich: Zugehörigkeit und (Un)Gleichwertigkeit. Ein Zwischenbericht', University of Bielefeld & Mercator Foundation, viewed 12 July 2016, <http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/ikg/projekte/ZuGleich/ZuGleich_Zwischenbericht.pdf>.



Interdisciplinary Political Studies
http://siba-ese.unisalento.it/index.php/idps
ISSN: 2039-8573 (electronic version)

IdPS, Issue 6(1) 2020: 51-112
DOI: 10.1285/i20398573v6n2p51
Published: July 15, 2020

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Trauma or Nostalgia? 'The Past' as Affective Ontological Security Seeking Playground in the South Caucasus

Susanne Szkola
Brussels School of International Studies

ABSTRACT (max 150 words)

Crises could be understood as dislocations of hegemonic identity narratives. One strategy of seeking ontological security, as re-ordering process to calm and sooth these displacements, is 'defending memory'. But how does 'defending memory' play out? This article argues that to understand those mnemonic processes, one also has to look at the affective investments into these identity narratives informing processes of politicisation and securitisation. The article proposes to look at those processes through the lens of affective geopolitics to shed light onto those in the South Caucasus. In so doing, it explores the affective reproduction of memory and shows how investing, subscribing, questioning or rejecting identity-positionalities is a patch-work process of discursive emotion norm contestations. What emerges is a mosaic of emotion cultures drifting apart (between the South Caucasus countries) and away (internationally) linked to how 'the past' is re-felt either in agony or in gloriousness within presidential discourses.

KEYWORDS: Emotions; Ontological Security; Affective Geopolitics; South Caucasus

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:
Susanne Szkola (sses2@kent.ac.uk)
Brussels School of International Studies, University of Kent
Boulevard Louis Schmidt 2A, 1040 Brussels, Belgium

Work licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non commercial-Share alike 3.0 Italian License

1. Of Crisis and Trauma

'Memory continues to be so deeply troubled—ignored, appropriated, and obfuscated—throughout Eastern Europe.' (Subotić 2019c:summary)

These memory troubles, Subotić further argues, could be observed as part of the Eastern European countries' accession to the European Union during which these states were required to adopt, participate in, and contribute to the established Western narratives of - and feelings towards - the Holocaust in their attempts to seek ontological security (OSS). In line with Krastev and Holmes's (2019) reasoning she implicitly draws on the language of emotions in arguing that this requirement created anxiety and resentment in those post-communist states shifting the attention of whom was legitimate to suffer by the hands of whom from communist terror to predominantly Jewish suffering in World War II[1].

This article illustrates that reconciling, accommodating, challenging or rejecting those memories is an act of affectively seeking ontological security - that is that discursive strategies to console mnemonic security imaginaries not only rely on narrative creativity but on their emotional fit and value. The article thus not only highlights the narrative processes presented by Subotić, but shows the underlying emotional recalibrations, drifts and rifts as additional discursive layer of remembering[2].

Moreover, it sheds light onto a subject which has been relatively sidelined in the study of the South Caucasus where studies on nationalism, protracted conflict, and security have dominated the scholarly debate[3]. It is only within more recent developments that attention was drawn to the study of identity politics[4]. In turn, histori-

[1] See also Gustafsson (2014) for an account of how memory politics are intertwined with ontological security.
[2] See Rauf & Rena (2011) or Ziemer (2018) for some general explorations.
[3] See Rich (2013), Hayoz & Dafflon (2014), Geukjian (2016).
[4] Particularly two conferences spring to mind here: The Heinrich Boell Foundation et al.'s (2019) 'South Caucasus Regional Conference on Memory Politics' and the Academic Swiss Caucasus Net et al.'s (2016) conference on 'Memory and Identity in Post-Soviet Space. Georgia and the Caucasus in a

ography presented as 'neutral description' of history has itself seen attention within the outlined memory politics to justify either Armenia's, Azerbaijan's or Georgia's interpretation of subjectively appropriate political remembrance and claims to political authority and sovereignty[5].

On the occasion of the three South Caucasus states' (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia) three simultaneous anniversaries in 2018/2019 that have shaped their biographies - and interpretations of victimhood (Lim 2020) -, this article therefore takes a look at today's contested identity imaginations there. In so doing, it takes these biography-shaping events as critical junctures within their discursive canvases that construct those ontological narrations in the first place.

These crises, as Leek & Morozov (2018) state, could be understood as dislocations of hegemonic/ privileged identity narratives (Nabers 2015). As brought forward within this special issue, one strategy of seeking ontological security as reordering process to calm and sooth these displacements is 'defending memory' (Mälksoo 2015*)*. But how does 'defending memory' play out? This paper argues that to understand those mnemonic processes, one also has to look at the affective investments into these identity narratives as emotional canvases for processes of politicisation and securitisation.

Thus - in light of the narrative and affective turns in IR - this article highlights the specific role of emotions in shaping those ontological security (OS) rationales and how this has affected change and continuity in renegotiating their identity imaginaries (Browning & Christou 2010; Browning 2015, 2018c; Browning &

Broader Eastern European Context'. See also Grigoryan & Margaryan (2018), Gugushvili, Kabachnik & Kirvalidze (2017), Chikovani (2009), Huseynova (2019), Grant (2009), and Yalçın-Heckmann (2016).

[5]Amongst others see Suny (2004) and de Waal (2019) for an historic overview. Moreover: Agadjanian, Jödicke, & van der Zweerde (2017), Richardson (2010), Cheterian (2008), Dawisha & Parrott (1997), Hille (2010), Oskanian (2013), Eldar & Rauf (2007), Companjen, Marácz, & Versteegh (2010), Kitaevich (2014), and Bursulaia (2020).

Joenniemi 2016). In so doing, it draws particular attention to the affective reproduction of memory and shows how investing, subscribing, questioning or rejecting identity-positionalities is a patch-work process of discursive emotion norm contestations resulting in traumatic or nostalgic representations of the past (Resende & Budryte 2014).

2018/19's triple anniversary character underscores the significance of those three pasts within Armenia's, Azerbaijan's and Georgia's presidential discourses by highlighting the contested nature of their remembrance (Kurilla 2009; Shevel 2011; Bernhard & Kubik 2014; Subotić 2019a; Lim 2020; Yemelianova & Broers 2020).

One, 100 years after their independence from the Russian Empire and formation as independent republics - and thus the re-emergence of independent but contested state biographies located in a volatile 'in-between' of varying, overlapping, clashing and political power claiming empires throughout history (Coppieters 2004; Rayfield 2012; Torbakov & Plokhy 2018; de Waal 2019).

Two, 30 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War - and thus the end of Soviet rule there and their eventual republican independence from the Soviet Union. This furthermore marks the secession wars around Nagorno-Karabakh between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Particularly the break-up of the Soviet Union – for some the hope- and joyful end of history, for some the greatest tragedy in modern history – and the resultant independencies of the three Caucasus countries are focal points within the affective OS politics of remembering the past. In this regard, 30 years afterwards the euphoria[6] of the victory of liberal reason against illiberal oppression has given

[6] See, for example, Fukuyama's (2006) infamous 'The End of History'. However, this was also reflected in an abundance of scholarship on the absolute efficiency and prevalence of (neo)liberal democracy as economic and political governance model after 1989 which was celebrated and justified post-hoc with a litany of relative attractiveness arguments (in comparative transition research) and

way to a resurgence of pessimism and frustration (not only) in the countries which escaped the Iron Curtain. What is more, the hope and optimism in reconciling EU-Russia relations and thus in finding a place (DeBardeleben 2008) for the Central and Eastern European and South Caucasus states - as 'newly independent' neighbours - in-between the EU and Russia has vanished[7]. Moreover, the emergent debates and dynamics around a 'new Cold War', that is the contestation of the form and substance of global order supposedly between 'a declining West' and an 'emergent East' with the fault line to be found in this 'grey zone', have, increasingly so, included the South Caucasus as an area of contestation of ideas of bipolar or multipolar orders amid discourses of multi-order configurations (Bassin et al. 2015; Giragosian 2015; Besier & Stokłosa 2016; Golunov 2017).

Three*,* 10 years of the EU's Eastern Partnership Initiative mark the institutionalisation of neighbourhood relationships in-between the EU and Russia. The extension of this towards the three South Caucasus states mirrors the just mentioned hopes and disappointments. Furthermore, this both marks the 2008 Russo-Georgian 5-Days War and, at the half-way of this timeframe, the 2014 Ukraine Crisis as major reverberations in this neighbourhood. This volatile area 'in-between' the EU and Russia, the Middle East and Central Asia is an intriguing playing field of a variety of actors with often paradoxical agglomerations of interests and values projected through various means. Amongst others, these means include energy links and economic dependencies, passportisation and the stealth moving of fences, the support of de-facto states, and various modus operandi of militaries (bases, coop-

'the victory of reason'. To this day, this line of thought finds some devotees, particularly in the neorealist and neoliberal traditions (see Mousseau 2019).

[7] This affective travel is best represented in relation to footnote one, e.g. Fukuyama's (2018) new - and opposing - appraisal and interpretation of reality as marked by the politics of resentment - through the acclamation of mobilised and exploited identity politics as source and resource of challenging (liberal) order(s).

eration, missions, observations, peace-keeping) as well as the manipulation of public discourses via disinformation (Boyle 2016; Galeotti 2019; Toal & Merabishvili 2019). Moreover, the South Caucasus states find themselves in the vicinity - or periphery - of at least two integration projects (EEU/EU) and potentially overlapping security architectures (NATO/CSTO) (Toal 2016; Buzogány 2019). Conflicting claims to territory and sovereignty mark not-so-frozen conflicts around Abkhazia and South Ossetia between Georgia and Russia and Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The five days war in 2008 between Georgia and Russia and the highly volatile conflict around Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh, expressively marked by cycles of violence, highlight the intensity of these identity politics where (political) belonging is translated through militarised foreign and security policies (Aydın 2011; Altunışık & Tanrisever 2018; Averre and Oskanian 2019).

These outlined three anniversaries can be understood as social markers of history where the abovementioned hegemonic OS narratives were dislocated in a variety of circumstances. Defending a certain version of those events thus becomes a strategy of ontological security seeking, i.e. of recalibrating narrative landscapes to cope with the negatively felt disorientation - a critical juncture - ontological insecurity brings with it.

As such, this article argues that to uphold a positive self-identity, or (state) auto-biography, in form of positive narratives – seeking ontological security – is intricately linked to memory politics (Mitzen 2006; Rumelili 2015a, 2015b, 2018; Mitzen and Larson 2017; Subotić 2018, 2019a, 2019b). However, to make sense of those dynamics it draws attention to the affective reproduction of memory and the construction and contestation of (event) related feeling rules highlighting how 'the past' is re-felt either in agony or in gloriousness. Thus, 'Coming in from the Cold [War]' (Ross 2006) fittingly represents - both literally and figuratively - this line of thought where illuminating the affective underpinnings of OS theory lets us under-

stand the outlined memory dynamics as affective instances of seeking and upholding ontological security.

2. Affective Ontological Security Seeking and Memory Politics

To this effect, this article suggests to re-discover and re-interpret Giddens's (1991) work on OS theory to recalibrate our understanding of OSS through an affective lens. Subsequently, it posits that the need to uphold a positive self-identity (auto-biography) - in form of positive narratives and positive self-affect - drives those affective memory politics where the need for creating or continuing this double positivity trumps physical security. This is denoted as affective ontological security seeking[8] in the following.

In so arguing, this research conceives of those geographies of contested memories as boundaries of identities and emotions - demarcations of 'good and evil' (Lauritzen et al. 2011; Rumelili 2016; Koschut 2017a). This means that these narrated ontologies are interwoven with emotions, for example, fear, anxiety and hate, or friendship, trust and hope (Kinnvall 2016; Browning 2018a, 2018b; Kinnvall et al. 2018; Kinnvall & Mitzen 2018) either supporting or questioning and rejecting claims to 'truthful' history and ontological being throughout it.

The volatile research field of OS studies has encountered several critical debates over time: whereas the initial state-centred approach has given way to a multifaceted one embracing the multiplicity of identity/boundary discourses and the in-

[8] 'Affect' was chosen here to denominate this cycle since Giddens speaks of 'emotional and behavioural 'formulae' which have come to be part of their everyday behaviour and thought' (1991: 24) regulating this OSS. As such, these formulae are embedded, generalised emotional scripts or norms relatively automatically - subconsciously - applied. This meaning of 'automatism' of emotional re-calibrations is carried by 'affect' as implicit ('instinctive') need within OSS and reflects the central role of emotions in the everyday (identity struggle discourses). However, these dynamics are subsequently not interpreted in terms of embodied affect here, but in terms of collective identity formation dynamics in line with Koschut and Wodak (see further on pages 11f.).

stability and fragility inherent to those ontics implicated with power and status dynamics[9], 'the inefficient causation of [OSS]' (Mälksoo 2018) and the 'too elastic definition of crisis in OS' (Ejdus 2017, 2019) remain problematisations at the heart of OS theory's epistemology and ontology (Chernobrov 2019; Steele & Homolar 2019).

What runs like a common thread through OS theory literature, furthermore, is that in a keen manner it has jumped towards the language of emotions[10] - particularly anxiety as coined in Laing's (1968, 1969, 1991) and later Giddens's (1991) original works on OS - but has so far discredited or under-conceptualised their role within, where most understandings were limited to rather essentialist readings of anxiety/fear as either ex-ante or ex-post condition of in/security struggles, or conflations within only paying lip service to 'emotions' (Crawford 2019).

However, in Giddens's initial definition, ontological in/security as the disruption of self-narratives[11] is directly linked to emotions, explicitly shame as negative emotion: 'In order to be able to 'go on' an agent has to be able to tell a reasonably consistent story about where it came from and where it is going; it has to

[9] '[…] calls for a more open understanding that: (i) links ontological security to reflexivity and avoids collapsing together the concepts of self, identity and ontological security; (ii) avoids privileging securitization over desecuritisation as a means for generating ontological security; and (iii) opens out the concept beyond a narrow concern with questions of conflict and the conduct of violence more towards the theorization of positive change.' (Browning & Joenniemi 2016; also Croft & Vaughan-Williams 2016) 'Ontics' are here understood as the abundance of all contested narrative constructions and processes within the OS space – inherently unstable and requiring maintenance, especially during periods of crisis or transition (cf. Ejdus 2019).

[10] For example, Mälksoo's (2019) article draws on the language of emotions *(*'doubts' about the EU's efficacy and 'concerns' about the EU's resolution in face of rising populism), but leaves it at that. The same applies to Subotić's (2013a) 'a sense of routine, familiarity, and calm.' However, one has to acknowledge, amongst others, the recent contributions by Browning (2018a&b) and Kinnvall (2016) embracing the intricate nature of emotions within ontological security phenomena.

[11] 'A reasonably consistent story with bearing' implies a multitude of narratives making up the ontic space -given that a story is normally made up of different single narratives casting different angles and details, e.g. an assemblage of various narratives within and across (ontological security) imaginaries.

have a certain bearing. When this is not the case, the agent experiences shame.' (Giddens in Steele 2008: 1).

What is more, for him these crises are not only challenges to those self-understandings leading to shame, if successful, but to emotional disorientation. Most prominently, he mentions anxiety:

> '[t]his cognitive and emotional disorientation – fragility - leads to 'flooding in anxiety'[12] (Giddens 1991:37).

One should note that this emotional disorientation during and after crises is - in the words borrowed and adapted from Leek & Morozov (2018) - a dislocation of emotions which were present before: in a turn to the negative. Insofar, critical junctures shall be understood as the dislocation of dominant emotions linked to OS narratives.

But what is more, in contrast to the preoccupancy with 'existential anxiety', Giddens sketches more specific emotions as relevant against the backdrop of this anxiety: namely shame and guilt (Giddens 1991:65) - as well as trust, confidence and pride. In so doing, he also specifies the strategies with which these are provoked and felt[13], namely humiliation and situations in which feelings of inadequacy are elicited[14]. Moreover, if reality is understood through this affective lens, 'social manage-

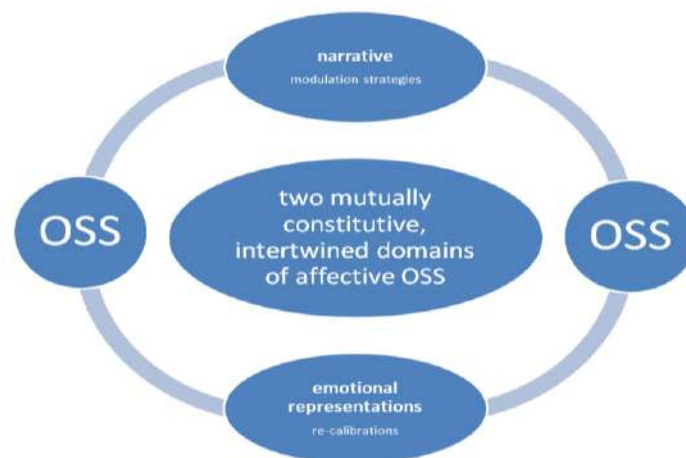
[12] Giddens (1991:44) specifically differentiates between anxiety and fear: 'Anxiety is essentially fear which has lost its object through unconsciously formed emotive tensions that express 'internal dangers' rather than externalised threats. We should understand anxiety essentially as an unconsciously organised state of fear. Anxious feelings can to some degree be experienced consciously, but a person who says 'I feel anxious' is normally also aware of what he or she is anxious about. This situation is specifically different from the 'free-floating' character of anxiety on the level of the unconscious.'

[13] This is congruent with a definition of ‚mobilisation of emotions in discourse', e.g. the hereunder used terminology of emotionalisations.

[14] '[…B]ypassed shame links directly to feelings of ontological insecurity: it consists of repressed fears that the narrative of self-identity cannot withstand engulfing pressures on its coherence or social acceptability. Shame eats at the roots of trust more corrosively than guilt. […] Shame and trust

ment strategies/routines/mechanisms' of anxiety or other emotions are open to include a litany of different emotionalisations[15]. Consequently - given the aforementioned affective conditions of OS(S) - in addition to up-holding just a positive self-narrative there's also a need of balancing (narrations of) emotions linked to this identity[16].

Figure 1. Two mutually constitutive Domains of affective OSS.



Source: Author's own visualisation of elaborated theoretical framework.

Like for identity research, the vocabulary to denote is plentiful - affect, sentiment, attunement, and feeling, amongst others - referring to different concep-

are very closely bound up with one another, since an experience of shame may threaten or destroy trust' (Giddens 1991:66).

15 'Since anxiety, trust and everyday routines of social interaction are so closely bound up with one another, we can readily understand the rituals of day-to-day life as coping mechanisms. This statement does not mean that such rituals should be interpreted in functional terms, as means of anxiety reduction (and therefore of social integration), but that they are bound up with how anxiety is socially managed.' (Giddens 1991: 46)

16 Elemental to this understanding is to re-assess critical junctures - ontological insecurities - as re-inspections and points of departure for recalibrations of emotions (and their representations). This is in line with Laing's (1960, 1961, 1968) foundational thoughts on OS where expressed feelings are taken as explicit impressions of subjective experience.

tualizations of emotions[17]. What they all have in common, however, is that they tackle the 'politics of anxiety' (Eklundh et al. 2017) from varying angles. In this regard, Koschut et al.'s (2017), Clément and Sangar's (2018), and van Rythoven and Sucharov's (2019) edited volumes provide an excellent overview of the richness and diversity of this volatile field[18].

Relevant to this article's approach, the emerging discourse-emotion nexus in IR seeks to systematically integrate emotions within discourse analysis and to highlight the power of language in conveying emotional meaning (Hutchinson 2010, 2016; Solomon 2012, 2013, 2018; Edkins 2013; Ross 2013; Koschut 2014, 2017b, 2017c, 2018, 2019; Åhäll & Gregory 2015; Fierke 2015; van Rythoven 2015, 2018; Bleiker & Hutchinson 2018). As such, emotion discourse refers to the assumption that discourses have affective content and that emotions can be studied via speech acts.

Koschut (2014, 2017a,b,c, 2018, 2019), for example, highlights the relationship between emotion and culture by investigating the affective reproduction of culture in world politics. The most significant term coined by this contribution is

[17] Affect is broadly understood as 'the bodily experience of emotion' (Fierke 2014), or as the inner (embodied) disposition of emotions - as biological, physiological, instinctive process of appraisal (Åhäll 2018). 'In other words, whereas emotion might capture the conscuous throught, subjective experiences and normative judgements […], affect refers to a completely different order of activity where affect can be understood as a ‚set of embodied practices' or as a form of ‚indirect and non-reflective' thinking that never quite rises to the level of an emotion' (Thrift 2008: 175).

[18] In this ambition, Åhäll (2018) fits into a recent surge to make sense of emotions in IR engaged in highlighting the multiplicity and diversity in theoretically interpreting and methodologically grasping emotions (Crawford 2000; Crawford and Hutchinson 2016). Approaches vary according to the ontological *(*emotions in/of the body, individual, collective, social discourse?)*,* epistemological (emotions as rituals, practices, norms, (re-)actions within or in-between the micro or macro level?) and analytical (consequences of emotions on behaviour/empirical phenomena, rationality and instrumentality of emotions, bodily effects by and of emotions?) status of emotions in the chosen research, opening up a vast space of literature discussion those phenomena (Demertzis 2013; Reus-Smit 2014; Ekman and Davidson 2015; Mordka 2016; Boddice 2018; Prior & van Hoef 2018; Agathangelou 2019; Crawford 2019; Schick 2019).

the introduction of the complex of an 'emotion culture' which Koschut understands as a culture-specific complex of emotion vocabularies, feeling rules and beliefs about emotions and their appropriate expression that facilitates the cultural construction of political communities and identity. These (political) communities imagined through emotional representations draw our attention to the affective investments (Solomon 2013; Chatterje-Doody & Crilley 2019) sustaining and challenging those communities as foundations of belonging and alterity - of affective boundary drawings in general. Koschut terms them 'emotio(nal) communities' – 'groups in which people adhere to the same norms of emotional expression and value – or devalue – the same or related emotions' (Rosenwein 2006:2).

As such, affective investments correspond to the vocabulary Giddens (1991) uses when outlining the conditions for the in/stability of OS rationales, namely sufficient emotional commitment. Specifically, he understands trust, hope and courage as relevant commitments in this context, meaning that these emotional representations of OS narratives sustain those against challenges. In this regard, introducing affective investments as theoretical understanding of the emotional commitment to OS narratives draws on the same logic as denominating the outlined OSS logics ‚affective OSS', i.e. that 'affect as an experience […] lies beyond the realm of discourse, yet nevertheless has an effect upon discourse' (Solomon 2013:907). It thus underlines the 'emotional and behavioural 'formulae' which have come to be part of their everyday behaviour and thought' (Giddens 1991:24) regulating this OSS. This meaning of 'automatism' of emotional re-calibrations is carried by 'affect' as implicit (‚instinctive') need within OSS and reflects the central role of emotional commitments in the everyday identity struggles.

As such, emotion communities can also be considered as imagined communities, and going back to Giddens's interpretations of the role of emotions, as security communities where security would then be ontological security.

Koschut furthermore argues that 'emotion norms – the expression of appropriate emotions in a given situation – stabilise a security community'.

This emotional code of an emotional culture prescribes what is regarded as an appropriate emotional performance (and what is not) within a particular group, thereby reproducing its collective identity and power structure (Koschut 2017). Frequent occurrences of emotional states linked to particular group identities build up associations of specific emotions with particular identities and lead to the display of relatively stable emotional profiles, such as an association of a national identity with pride or an identity as a member of a conflictual group with anger[19].

In this context, Koschut goes on to argue that emotional representations and emotionalisations are the discursive containers graspable in discourse, namely the attachment of emotional meaning to narratives and the mobilisation of emotions in discourse as the practice, performance or ritual to give something an emotional quality or to make an emotional display in discourse (Wodak and Schulz 1986; Wodak and Meyer 2009; Wodak 2015; Koschut et al. 2017; Koschut 2017b, 2017c;). Consequently, affective dynamics are here understood in Koschut's and Wodak's discursive understanding.

[19] 'It is argued that emotions provide a socio-psychological mechanism by which culture moves individuals to defend a nation-state, especially in times of war. By emotionally investing in the cultural structure of a nation-state, the individual aligns him/herself with a powerful cultural script, which then dominates over other available scripts.'
See also Fierke (2015): '[narratives] acquire emotional resonance within social, cultural and/or political context. We are socialized to experience the emotions of fear, revulsion or horror that accompany memories of past wars, among others.' This resonates with Giddens's standpoint that identity relations are constituted emotionally first and foremost and that the being comes into the world by acknowledging trust relations.

3. Studying Affective Memory Politics

According to Toal (2018:1) 'affective geopolitics is the study of the powerful forces of emotion, the experience of being outraged, the desire to condemn, to abhor the behaviour of another state' (see also Moïsi 2010 and Gökarıksel & Secor 2018). As such, he is interested in the role of 'shock events' in international relations and how they disturb international order and how these events can, and have, defined community and belonging. In this regard, Toal (2018) understands these affective geopolitics as amalgamation of 'a leader's affective dispositions', 'affective storylines' and 'state-sponsored mobilizations' as well as 'geopolitical culture' and proposes to study them through a combination of thick description, critical discourse-emotion analysis, power structure analysis and survey research[20].

What this article lays out is an understanding of these affective geopolitics through readings of OS theory to substantiate what Toal (2018) calls 'shock events' as critical junctures related to felt ontological insecurities, and to shed light onto constructions of 'the past' through the dynamics of emotion communities within the logics of affective ontological security seeking.

As outlined in the introduction, 2018/19's particular triple anniversary and victimhood character for the three South Caucasus states provides a peculiar entry frame into the affective contestations of 'the pasts'. The chosen comparative design allows exploring those contested affective memories from different discursive angles and highlights the varying affective interpretations and consequences of those events. Accordingly, the timeframe under scrutiny was chosen to account for and trace the discursive dynamics since the last major anniversary marker in 2008/9 up until the most recent feasible present in 2018. This accounts for a one-year buffer to

[20] Nevertheless, this is a relatively thin definition and understanding of what these affective geopolitics are and how they shape identity constellations given that he doesn't delineate the co-constitutive relationships of those aspects/dimensions (Reeves 2011; Gökarıksel & Secor 2018; Laszczkowski & Reeves 2018).

consider a closed corpus at the time of writing this article. This timeframe allows, first, to discern larger trends in the presence, production and rejection of affective OS narratives, second, to identify and qualify these potential changes, variations and adaptions, and third, to map emotional landscapes and affect through various contexts or discursive categories.

Here, what Toal (2018) calls 'a leader's affective dispositions' serves as entry point to the presidential mnemonic processes - under scrutiny via a leadership trait analysis; what he calls 'affective storylines' is re-interpreted as assemblage of narrative and affective landscapes - under scrutiny via an emotion discourse analysis; and what he calls 'state-sponsored mobilizations' is translated into presidential emotionalisations as the practice, performance or ritual to give something - here the remembrance of the past - an emotional quality or to make an emotional display - also under scrutiny via an emotion discourse analysis.

Presidential speech acts as practice of affective storylines thus constitute and contest, tap into or reject emotion norms as function of upholding ontological security along self-gratification or other-rejection motives.

In synthesis of the above, this work argues that one should focus on emotional representations rather than on emotion itself, circumventing the otherwise inevitable epistemic and ontological pitfalls such as individual affective phenomenology or personification of states to trace those OSS dynamics as argued by Koschut (2017b/c, 2018) or Wodak (2009). Therefore, the following methods were applied:

Table 1 - Overview of Methods

What? **Analytical Focus**	How? **Method**	How so? **Instrumental Steps of Method**	Of whom? **Corpus Construction**
- Cognitive drives for behaviour: need for affiliation, achievement, power, reward, risk[21] - temporal orientation of presidential discourses: past, present, future	*Leadership Trait Analysis (LTA)* through an automated cognitive linguist analysis (ACLA)	1. *LIWC 2015* provides a dictionary covering about 4,500 words and word stems from > 70 categories. 2. Automated analysis of pre-given measurement categories for cognitive drives and temporal orientations based on programme dictionary.	Presidential Discourses in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia from 2008-2018[a]
- Imaginaries of ontological security narratives and identity constructions and their emotional representations and respective emotionalisations	*Emotion Discourse Analysis* (EDA)	Three-step inductive coding: 1. sensitive exploratory reading of the text sample 2. Structured coding and classification: emotion categories and locus (self/other), context, emotionalisations 3. Refinement and specifications and cross-check	

[a]Sample: all interviews, messages, speeches and statements of the respective heads of state (presidents) as published on their official webpage (English version) as data entry points from 2008 to 2018. Armenia: in total: 433; transcribed 9; translated 4; missing: 1 (2009), 2 (2017). Azerbaijan: in total: 153; transcribed 11; translated 0; missing 1 (2010), 2 (2011), 2 (2013), 2 (2015),1 (2016), 1 (2017). Georgia: in total: 515; transcribed 12; translated 4; missing: 0. Government tenure: Saakashvili 2008-2013 (in total 309); Margvelashvili 2013-2018 (in total: 206). Based on http://www.president.am, https://en.president.az, http://www.saakashviliarchive.info, https://www.president.gov.ge.
Source: author's own elaboration on method and sample (see above).

[21] Tausczik & Pennebaker 2010.

Emotion discourse analysis is concerned with how actors - here the heads of state of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia - talk about emotions and how they employ emotion categories when talking about subjects, events, or social relations. Theoretically, such an understanding views emotions as socially constructed representations of meaning that are linked to conceptions of identity and power (Koschut in Clément & Sangar 2018: 277ff.). While emotions are, indeed, fluid and shifting, EDA argues that they also display a high degree of attachment and entanglement resulting in relatively stable patterns of emotional meanings and webs of interconnections which can be traced and analysed (Koschut in Clément & Sangar 2018: 297ff.). This approach was chosen because it suggests a remedy to the problem of the subjective ontology of emotions by shifting the analytical focus from their individual internal phenomenological perception and appraisal to their intersubjective articulation and communication in discourse so that one is able to study emotions as intersubjective representations (Capelos & Chrona 2018).

Within this emotion discourse analysis, a special focus lies on the (ontological security) narratives the presidents employ, that is, what stories they create and instrumentalise to interpret social reality in the context of specific social, historical and cultural locations (Somers 1994: 606). Here, the strategic use of narratives is considered as a strategy to promote a particular interpretation of a given issue for understanding both the past and the present in a simplified, schematic, and linear fashion - as 'cognitive molds' (Subotić 2013b, 2016) representing the causal fabric of experience (Goffman 1974)[22].

[22] Like Subotić (2016), it seems fruitful to look at those narratives in a more intertextual manner via 'schematic narrative templates' (Wertsch 2008) - narratives of general patterns across space and time, reflecting a single general story line - instead of focusing on specific narratives of individualities. They are particularly prone to an 'instrumentalisation of narratives': their (state) control, production, and consumption, here through the presidents as collective identity entrepreneurs (Subotić 2016; van Hoef 2018).

The Leadership Trait Analysis sheds light onto the cognitive drives for behaviour (need for affiliation, achievement, power, reward, risk) and the temporal orientation of the presidential discourses (past, present, future).

These cognitive linguistic traits show how frequent specific motivations for behaviour were articulated in discourses and which temporal focus speeches had. This lets us discover both articulated underlying motivations and temporal orientations in presidential reasonings. It distinguishes between the motivations for affiliation - the need of belonging to or identification with something (may it be an elite/ party/ country/ international alliance), for achievement - the need of signalling success and wanting to 'continue winning', for power - the articulation of individual/group power and the constitution of power hierarchies through speeches, for reward - to explicitly please the individual/group, and for risk - to exhibit the willingness to take risk for one's goals.

This serves to discern individual aspects and sets of discursive practices/ cognitive preferences of the scrutinized presidents as identity entrepreneurs to contextualize the EDA.

This combination of methods as outlined in Table 1 reflects upon the manifold spatial and temporal avenues and interlinkages of markers and symbols of (ontological) insecurity and affective subjectivities (Solomon 2012, 2013) and the still experimental nature of exploring them.

4. The Affective Memory Politics of the South Caucasus 2008-2018

As outlined in the introduction, this article interrogates today's contested mnemonic imaginaries in the presidential discourses of the South Caucasus on the occasion of the outlined three simultaneous biography-shaping events in 2018/2019.

The first part of the following analysis contextualises the contested nature of this triple anniversary's remembrance by outlining the leaders' affective disposi-

tions through a leadership trait analysis with specific attention to the temporal focus of their presidential speech acts. As such, it is guided by the question of how the presidents represent their imaginaries stylistically in order to draw attention to their motivational cues and discursive temporalities.

The second part of the following analysis traces the contested nature of this triple anniversary's remembrance within the leaders' affective storylines and mobilisations by interrogating the seven emblematic discursive categories relating to those anniversaries through an emotion discourse analysis.

First, relating to the temporal character of anniversaries and the ontology of being 100 years after their independence from the Russian Empire and their formation as independent republics, it starts by asking 'how is 'the past', or 'history', conceived of and re-narrated - and how is 'the state', or 'the sovereign' imagined within this transitionary time?'.

Second, relating to the ontology-unsettling change 30 years ago with the fall of the Berlin wall and the 'end of the Cold War' and thus the South Caucasus states' independence from the SU but also the start of the secession wars around Nagorno-Karabakh, it interrogates the mnemonical re-construction of those times by looking at the discursive categories of 'the Soviet Union', 'the break-up of the Soviet Union', and '1989-1992' as representations what is or is not remembered as ontologically instable timespan.

Third, relating to the contextual foreign policy change for the South Caucasus states induced by the institutionalisation of the EU's EaP as well as the 2008 Russo-Georgian war 10 years ago and, at the half-way to today, the 2014 Ukraine Crisis, it inquires how both '2008/ Georgia' and '2014/ Ukraine' are remembered and refitted into present ontological discourses.

Fourth, relating to the adaptive nature of ontological security stability seeking narratives and supporting emotional representations, it reflects upon the different notions and meanings of 'crises' emerging from those preceding themes

4.1. Leaders' affective Dispositions: a Leadership Trait Analysis[23]

The LTA as context for the following assemblage of narrative and affective landscapes has revealed distinct drive patterns within the discourses of the four presidents. Both the needs for affiliation and power rest on a high level for all presidents. The need for affiliation explicitly reflects the OS reverberations flowing through all those discourses as a baseline and represent the presidents' coping and creativity in imagining relational identities. The high level of power drive present within those discourses reflects on the authoritarian tendencies of all those presidents - or their imagination of how a consolidation of power within a limited elite serves their policies best. Interestingly, the drive to 'achieve' is constantly higher than the one for 'reward' - this could be interpreted as shallow populism where one rather showcases achievements as act of signal(ling) than to substantivise them in form of rewards towards the population/elite. Moreover, this reflects upon the exuberant narcissism - towards the individual self, the ruling elite and the 'state' as a national construct - shaping the discourses of Aliyev, Sargsyan and Saakashvili and only to a lesser extent that of Margvelashvili.

In this regard, different motivational sets emerge within situations of crises and let us distinguish the quality of those. Around critical junctures, the willingness to signal 'risk' increases for all four presidents. However, cognitive OSS[24] is different after those junctures where either 'affiliation' or 'power' as motivational drives

[23] See Annex 1 for a graph and data overview.
[24] In contrast to affective OSS, cognitive OSS is concerned with the changes in cognitive reasoning to uphold a positive and constant self-image. As such, this is tightly related to Festinger's (1962) theory of cognitive dissonance (Caverni et al. 1990; Sun 2006; Glöckner & Pachur 2012; Findlay & Thagard 2014; Park et al. 2017; Gilmore & Rowling 2018).

peak. For example, the need for 'affiliation' increases after a crisis in Saakashvili's case whereas 'power' emerges dominantly in Margvelashvili's. Aliyev and Sargsyan both tend towards affiliation with a relatively high level of power underlying this. Interestingly, Sargsyan recently exhibits a tendency towards an increase in 'power' in addition to a heightened focus on achievements as a reaction towards critical junctures. This lets us distinguish the quality of those crises in a sense that the affiliation drive rather speaks to identity recalibration crises whereas the power drive rather speaks to ruling system justification/legitimization crises[25].

What is more, all those discourses are caught in the present with more of a focus in the past than in the future. Not only does this reflect the confinement of those (identity) discourses in an everyday struggle of re-interpretation and contestation, but it highlights the potential for 'the past' to be drawn on and mobilized where the future is only a distant utopia.

4.2. Leaders' affective Storylines and Mobilisations: an Emotion Discourse Analysis[26]

Affective OSS highlights that there are two underlying dynamics within what we understand as OSS. Upholding a positive self-understanding is split into two mutually constitutive but separate domains: one, the domain of narrative modulation strategies; two, the domain of affective re-calibrations. This work has argued that what we can observe as affective OSS is sustained and rejected through these intertwined collective identity dynamics.

[25] This is particularly obvious in Sargsyan's case where one could identify his attempts to re-justify the ruling system through the increase in signalling achievements as an act of showcasing output-legitimacy. Of course, it is difficult to discern identity crises from ruling system legitimization crises when looking at presidential discourses given that their (collective) identities overlap and a challenge to state ontics most often is intertwined with narratives about the legitimate rule within.

[26] See Annex 2 for a data overview and coding illustrations.

What is striking in Sargsyan's OS discourses is his engagement in memory politics in order to sustain Armenia's OS. Particularly interesting is here that self-victimisation is Sargsyan's discursive strategy of choice. This could relate back to his construction of Armenia as (ontologically) superior where self-victimization is then a strong marker of frictions to those OS narratives.

To pick and choose from the repertoire of moments in time in order to consolidate own OS narratives is a welcomed strategy by Aliyev. What becomes obvious here are three themes along stressing own historic greatness and using narrations of the past as justifications of current policies. Within these memory politics, first, the Azerbaijan-Nagorno-Karabakh togetherness is re-constructed by blocking any Armenian existence or experience there; second, Armenia/Turkey, Russia and the SU are remembered as the evil and the good respectively; and third, Aliyev's general debate on and interpretation of history reveals intriguing insights into his understanding of Azerbaijan's ontology and of global politics. Aliyev's use of national memory is a stringent one: he only draws on memories supporting his vision of Azerbaijan's OS narratives and blocks all accounts reciting otherwise. This blockage is absolute: there's no defiance of those accounts in his discourse, but a complete absence insofar as these memories shall not even discursively exist.

Saakashvili's and Margvelashvili's mnemonic discourses are different in referent object and qualities, but similar in discursive articulations. For both, falling back onto the past happens in the context of ontological crises such as 2008 and 2014, where the temporal orientations of their speeches change relatively towards the past, decreasing both present and future orientations.

The relative increase in the future and decrease in the past orientation at the end of Saakashvili's tenure hint at two things: one, a relative conflict relief or less strained ontological security; two, 'building a legacy' through a positive future outlook based on his achievements.

In turn, the increase in the temporal orientation towards the past around 2014 could both represent a motivation and tendency to cope with the induced ontological insecurity through the Ukraine Crisis or as reflecting upon the achievements and failures of Margvelashvili's predecessor.

The contestation of and challenges to ontological security rationales have been traumatic for all three South Caucasus countries. Spread over seven emblematic discursive categories relating to the discussed triple anniversary, the contestations of those identity signifiers highlight the makings and breakings of emotion communities as phenomenon of the dynamics of the affective geopolitics of the South Caucasus. Moreover, their contestation highlights the abundance of the rhetoric of memory politics embedded within affective OSS (Bernhard & Kubik 2014; Gustafsson 2014; Resende & Budryte 2014; Mälksoo 2015, 2019; Nicolaïdis et al. 2015; Rumelili 2018; Subotić 2018, 2019; Donnelly & Steele 2019).

History?

History is imagined as source for offensive memory politics, as constant process of struggle and thus as source of pain and anger by all four presidents.

Sargsyan imagines history as source of double agony - that is of genocide remembrance (1915/Ottoman Empire/Turkish genocide denial)[27] and Azerbaijan's

[27] 'In his interview with Der Spiegel, speaking about the genocide which took place during World War I, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan stated that 'there can be no talk of genocide.' Why cannot your neighboring country come to terms with its own past?
- Mr. Erdogan once also said that the Turks couldn't have possibly committed genocide and that Turkish history is "bright as the sun". The Turks are opposed to the definition of the event as Genocide. But no matter how ferociously Turks oppose it, Ankara is not the one to decide on this issue. Now Erdogan is even threatening to expel thousands of Armenians, who reside in Turkey illegally. Unacceptable statements such as that one stir up in our nation the memories of the Genocide. Unfortunately, such statements articulated by the Turkish politicians come as no surprise to me. Statements like that one can be found in not so remote history – similar statements were voiced in Azer-

fascism. As such, seeking OS translates into Sargsyan's appeals to 'redress the mistakes of the past'[28] where 'healing the past' is a metaphor both for a reintegration of Artsakh into Armenia and for genocide recognition by Turkey. This is deeply embedded within the mentioned self-victimization discourse.

Aliyev and Saakashvili are united in their scepticism about Fukuyama's end of history.

'History'[29] is a volatile signifier in Aliyev's discourses: it is both an interpretation of a long tradition (of ontics) stretched over the - unconceivable - past and a pick-and-choose mechanism for specific instances favouring Aliyev's OS narrative constructions. As such, the timelessness of national traditions and patriotism is deeply engrained in this understanding. Against this background, 'the past' is imagined as something very positive, whereas 'modern times' are imagined as negative. This backwards-leaning tendency supports Aliyev's critique of Western modernism as such and finds it utmost articulation in his outspoken scepticism about the iconic 'End of History' by Fukuyama. This scepticism about the 'victory' of liberal democracy after the 'defeat' of the Soviet Union underlines two assumptions of Aliyev's historicised world view: first, his fundamental critique of the Western liberal order

baijan in 1988 and as a result dozens of Armenians became victims of the massacres conducted in Azerbaijani towns Sumgait and Baku."'(Sargsyan, 05.04.2010).

[28] 'It was not about getting the news because it was our calculated step. After the August putsch, Mutalibov was trying to tame the wave of nationalism which was becoming more extremist. On August 30, 1991 Azerbaijan declared that Azerbaijani state of 1918-1920, which Nagorno-Karabakh had never been part of, was being reinstated. Under the circumstances we had to utilize our rights envisaged by the Constitution of the USSR and the Law on Secession from the Union. And we did: on September 2, the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh declared independence.' (Sargsyan, 2.9.2011).

[29] 'I think that we all had great illusions, of course. At the current stage of development there is an increasing awareness of the fact that there is no single model, as you say, liberal-democratic. It does not exist even in the countries that claim to be its authors. And the events unfolding in the euro zone and the crisis show that without government intervention and regulation it will be very difficult to achieve sustained growth. I believe that the blame for the financial crisis lies mainly on the irresponsibility of politicians who, in fact, climbed into the pockets of future generations and could not possibly imagine, and perhaps even on the contrary, what consequences this will lead to.' (Aliyev, 14.04.2013).

and its unwanted intrusions, and second, his positive re-evaluation of the SU and attached governance principles[30]. This feeds into his ritual of shaming potential practices of 'forgetting history' - and thus the 'consequences of fascism' - as acts of securitising memory.

Fascism as the most gruesome experience of the 20th century is being brought up repeatedly in this context to construct Armenia as perpetrator of it, as historically evil other. This lesson from the past is part of the standard repertoire being mobilised around Armenia, together with the counter-narrative of Azeri love for Nagorno-Karabakh. 'Forgetting' history - and the lessons learned, e.g. what Aliyev narrates as Armenian fascism - is a cautious warning frame in Aliyev's interpretation of national memory. This becomes clear when Aliyev expresses worry about attempts to rewrite history[31] - intentionally leaving what he means by that relatively open - in order to harm Azerbaijan and Russia[32].

[30] 'It was only revitalized with the ascent of President Heydar Aliyev to power in 1993, when Victory Day was declared a public holiday. It is a day off now. Thus historical justice has been restored. We have a very good attitude to our veterans. I must say that this year we will complete the program on the provision of all our veterans with cars. We also regularly allocate apartments, areas for recreation and cash rewards to them. They are the pride of our people, and we honor the memory of those killed. And we are convinced that the young generation should be brought up on the example of the selfless heroism and love of the homeland, so that the tradition of heroism and love of the Fatherland continues. Also, as you have pointed out, this is a historic moment that brings all nations of the former Soviet Union together. In principle, it should bring together all those who contributed to the victory over fascism.' (Aliyev, 29.04.2015).

[31] 'We are very concerned about these attempts – first, to rewrite history and belittle the role of the Soviet army in the victory over fascism, as well as the attempts we are seeing in terms of the glorification of Nazi criminals, their followers and those who share their ideology. It probably seemed to us all some time ago that fascism was completely over with and that this evil mankind had not seen in its history is gone forever. Unfortunately, after some time, as a result of the efforts of certain circles and a propaganda campaign, we can see that a part of the younger generation around the world does not know the actual history. Constantly inculcated with distorted historical facts, they somewhat become susceptible to this virus. We see marches, torch processions and demonstrations of neo-fascists in many regions around the world. All this is of great concern.

This securitisation continues along the just outlined motives of critiquing the Western governance model(s) as inapt, as a challenge to regional and global stability. In so doing, his appeal to 'learn from history' in order to not ever be not sovereign anymore could be read as implicit threat and critical engagement with post-Cold War intellectual thought.

For both Saakashvili and Margvelashvili, history is legitimising source of Georgia's Europeanness and constant reminder of Russian offensive behaviour against Georgia. Where Saakashvili joins Aliyev in his pessimistic revaluation of Fukuyama's theory, he extends this to a more securitised vision of the present and future where there was not only no end of history in sight but that tragedies were always possible. This highlights Saakashvili's understanding of history as potentially repeating, as constant precarious struggle of seeking ontological security[33]. In this regard, Margvelashvili is in accord with Saakashvili's historical cataclysms as hurdles to OS which are a recurring theme within his narrated ontological insecurities.

We cherish our history and the heroism of all the peoples of the Soviet Union and other allied countries which put an end to this nightmare. It must live in the memory of generations. So I think that it is now the responsibility of politicians, the leaders of countries and influential public figures who revere the great feat of our fathers and grandfathers. […] I think that at this stage all public entities sharing the convictions I am talking about should coordinate their actions, should work hard in terms of informing the public, especially the younger people, about the historical truth and counter the glorification of fascism and the rewriting of history' (Aliyev, 29.04.2015)

[32] As such, the just described methods are applied by him to both reject the narrations of the past not in line with his interpretation, as well as to stabilise, defend and seal his vision of a consolidated past.

[33] 'I am speaking at the UN and I think the main thing is that it's 20 years after the demise of the Soviet Union which Zbigniew Brzezinsky had lots of things to do with. He predicted it when nobody ever believed it. He didn't predict the exact date but he predicted it correctly. And then it's of course the anniversary of 9/11 and every time pundits were wrong. Both times they said history is finished, that it's all over. You know, history is certainly not finished and things can get very tragic. And certainly we will consider these things. On one hand there is this thing of anniversaries. I mean things have gone reverse after that. You know Russia has become more revisionists - trying to restore some sphere of influence in the former Soviet Union. Terrorists have gone on attacks. But on the other hand the good news is that there is the Arab spring there is a wave of democratization. But it can go both ways among what was the former Soviet Empire.' (Saakashvili, 26.07.2011)

The Soviet Union?

The Soviet Union is imagined on a nostalgia scale from exuberant to non-existent.

Both Armenia and Azerbaijan state a discontinuity between 'the Soviet' and 'Russia', but instead argue in favour of identity continuity through nostalgia for the good old times.

In Armenia Soviet Union nostalgia is excessively displayed, where it is remembered as experience of glorious peace.

In Azerbaijan, Soviet Union nostalgia prevails as well where the SU's positive cultural impact and the fact that Nagorno-Karabakh was designated under Azeri authority are cherished. Particularly the Azeri past of Nagorno-Karabakh in Soviet times is repeatedly mobilized, singularized and contextualised with the Helsinki Final Act, in which Nagorno-Karabakh 'was promised to Azerbaijan' to treasure this specific narration of the past in favour of Azeri ontics. However, this is joined by trauma of the break-up chaos leading to a negation of those ontics.

In Georgia, there's no nostalgia present, but trauma based on the remembrance of gruel Soviet occupation and domination where both presidents see continuity between 'the Soviet' and 'the Russian' as harmful reality[34]. Where Saakashvili imagines the Soviet Union through its totalitarianism as opposite to his ideal of a

[34] 'If I think about our Soviet past, I remember the emotions that Georgians had when they came here; the emotion that they were visiting a nation that has the same attitude towards unacceptance of Soviet occupation and Soviet rule of life. Of course, there could not be much political connections at that time, but the emotion that we cannot accept being forced out of our statehood and forced into this union was uniting at that time. Of course, after that we found each other, embraced each other and now I can say that our cooperation and our support to each other is extremely important. Georgians are so thankful to you because your government, your president, your people support us so much on our way to European and Euro-Atlantic community. You are the ones that are talking in the name of values of freedom and statehood. You are not talking only for yourself, but also for countries like Georgia. I would like to thank every Lithuanian for doing this.' (Margvelashvili, 28.02.2018)

modern state, Margvelashvili underlines the trauma of Soviet dominance and occupation ever since as fundamental ontological insecurity struggle.

Break-up of the Soviet Union?

The SU's break-up is imagined according to its outlined antithetic revaluations.

Sargsyan portrays the break-up as painful, chaotic tragedy.

Aliyev draws on the trauma of the break-up chaos as founding myth of the new Azerbaijan under Heydar Aliyev who mastered successfully the ensuing insecurities.

Both Saakashvili and Margvelashvili represent the break-up as traumatic pain but emphasise the contrasting joy and happiness of ensuing freedoms and sovereignty. The metaphor of falling walls is employed here to mobilise positive emotions around hope and unity since the SU's break-up to represent the obsolescence of old structures to be replaced by new, efficient ones. In contrast to Saakashvili, however, Margvelashvili approaches what he frames as democratic consolidation through a less neoliberal lens, articulating the concerns of people over being left behind and not benefitting enough where living conditions are still difficult. It is within this context that Margvelashvili implies Georgia's fears of a new Cold War, but asserts that in reality this is already a given.

1989-1992?

'1989-1992' is imagined as tumultuous time of transformation, re-orientation and seeking and acquiring ontological security during and after the break-up of the Soviet Union.

In Armenia, these years are imagined as years of struggle and purification of the nation marked by Azeri inimicality.

In Azerbaijan, these years are signifiers of a triple ontological crisis (existence, military power and authority over Nagorno-Karabakh, spiritual re-orientation) and feed into the funding myth of glorious leadership under the Aliyev family.

In Saakashvili's Georgia, these years are portrayed as a quest for purification, modernisation and liberation from the Soviet Union.

In Margvelashvili's Georgia, 1989-1992 is re-imagined as actual start of the Russian occupation and attempted annexation of Georgia. In this regard, Margvelashvili asserts that 'historical justice' was always on Georgia's side against Russia and that the ongoing occupation since 1990 - not 2008 - was to stop. Moreover, all ensuing bad experiences and developments of Georgia are linked to this period in time and justified through Russian malevolent behaviour since then.

2008/Georgia?

'2008 and Georgia' is as disputed as the imaginaries of the Soviet Union and its break-up between the four presidents.

Sargsyan's imaginaries showcase an intensive mixture of affective positivity/negativity. 2008 is signifier of a double crisis, but also signifier of a double relaxation. In this context, 2008 feeds into an imaginary of Armenia as a suffering victim (through the 5 Days War in Georgia and perceived EU/NATO advancements in the neighbourhood having led to this confrontation) and of Armenia as optimist and hopeful agenda setter for conflict resolutions (in Artsakh and normalization efforts with Turkey).

Aliyev's interpretation of 2008 is one of Western normative imposition where Georgia's Western orientation has led to critical instability in the neighbourhood.

Saakashvili sees 2008 as articulation of the cynical revisionist realpolitik by Russia which pursues ambitions of hegemonic reign like the SU. In this regard, 2008 is portrayed as 'verge of life and death' of the Georgian nation, as all-fractioning ontological insecurity[35]. However, it is also remembered through Georgian resolve and Western support as counter-vision to what is labelled experience of existential angst. This existential angst of 2008 signifies a securitised ontological insecurity imaginary where Saakashvili posits 'another 2008' as ever-so-possible.

Margvelashvili draws on Saakashvili's representations of 2008 and represents 2008 as the critical wound at the origin of Georgian suffering: 'the Russian trauma'. Interestingly, he requalifies 2008 also as critical juncture not only for Georgia's OS but for relations with Russia which are portrayed as strong bond beforehand. This requalification of 2008 is also visible when he pessimistically identifies 2008 as pre-set for 2014 and the beginning of the multiple failures of the West.

Here, the trope of unity, sovereignty and stability draws on this asserted new Cold War reality to emphasise the importance of those qualities for Georgia's (ontological) security. Margvelashvili depicts unity as the only, ultimate truth and links this to his discourse of sovereign choices to rally the domestic around the flag against international challenge(r)s. Moreover, he bridges this with the appeal to consolidate Georgia's European democracy as expression of this ontology and mecha-

[35] '- In Ukraine, everybody knows about your friendship with the former Ukrainian President -Viktor Yushchenko. When was the last time you met him?
- Last time - a couple of days ago in Krynica, during the Economic Forum. I shook the hand of Viktor Andreevich. Of course, we have a good relationship! As you know, he came to Georgia during the 2008 Georgia-Russia conflict over South Ossetia. Our country needed support the most back then. After all, we were on the verge of life and death. An army of about 100 thousand soldiers came close to our capital, but we did not have enough weapons and soldiers to defend ourselves! And our main weapons were not the troops. The fact that thousands of people came out into the streets of Tbilisi and our friends arrived - five leaders of the former Soviet Union (as well as president of France) held hands near the Parliament... In short, the main thing was not the fact that Viktor Yushchenko was in Tbilisi at a difficult moment, but the fact that he represented Ukraine in Georgia at that time. Our country will remember it forever.' (Saakashvili, 15.9.2011).

nism to find unity (preferences). In this regard, Margvelashvili narrates Georgia as having overcome the inner turmoil of the past to find this consensus.

Remembering 2008 as a critical wound which has to be healed feeds into these dichotomous memory politics of before-and-after-2008: hopeful narratives about Georgia as peaceful and tranquil country support a vision that is was somehow possible to go back to the better past before-2008 if Russia was as tranquil as Georgia.

2014/Ukraine?

'2014 and Ukraine' is imagined in surprising unison with regards to its nature as critical juncture in and for the neighbourhood with regards to the ensuing security fragility. In contrast, it is imagined in complete oppositional terms with regards to its assumed reasons for onset and consequences.

Armenia and Azerbaijan agree that the Ukraine Crisis is a consequence of Western hegemonic norm imposition.

Armenia depicts 2014 as a painful critical juncture which has made clear the East-West divide and the EU's drive for normative hegemony in the neighbourhood. In this regard, Ukraine is characterized as defiant other. In contrast, satisfaction with EEU accession talks is voiced as an alternative.

Azerbaijan's temporal othering of a favoured Ukraine under Yanukovych pre-2014 and a disfavoured Ukraine post-2014 underlines its evaluation of the Ukraine Crisis as violently fragmenting the neighbourhood.

In contrast to Armenia and Azerbaijan, Georgia identifies Russia's annexation of Crimea as an act undermining and violating liberal norms and global order.

Georgia's Saakashvili, albeit not in power anymore at this point in time, construed Ukraine as ontologically similar to Georgia during his tenure. Moreover,

he saw Georgia as a role model for Ukraine and empathetically and fearfully projects the possibility of historic tragedies towards Ukraine.

Georgia's Margvelashvili initially articulates discourses of hope and optimism in an amelioration of relations with Russia is in parallel to - and later gilded by - discourses of contempt and resentment. These are, falling back into line with Saakashvili's rationales, guided by an understanding of Russia as complete ontological opposite of Georgia from which different understandings of all essential political principles are derived.

This change happens with the Ukraine Crisis which is immediately understood as synonymous to the events and situation in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Thus, the identification of Ukraine as experiencing the same ontological insecurity as Georgia instigated by the very same challenger lets those hopeful discourses collapse into pessimistic visions where perceived similarity with Ukraine (and Moldova) foster Margvelashvili's new narrations of Georgia as best in being able to understand, analyse, question and critique Russian (foreign) policies and propaganda.

2014 as critical juncture thus re-intensifies the uncertainty and insecurity of Margvelashvili's OS narratives in relation to Russia, where he reverts to securitised arguments that meetings with Russia were only possible if they met on Georgia's ontological self-definition terms[36].

[36] 'I think, in 2008, there was no understanding of the essence of the policy pursued by Russia in the international arena. At that time, there were attempts to 'explain' somehow Moscow's absurd actions on locating troops into Georgia. We all have paid a fee for the fact that neither then, nor now, no strong and firm response is given to the Russian policy. After all, it is a fact that Russia has declared clearly and unambiguously: what is in the Russian slang called the ‚near abroad', in fact is a 'zone of privileged interests of the Russian Federation'. Apparently, it is meant that international law quasi does not apply to these states, these 'territories'. But, even if it does, so only in some strange, distorted format, in which international rules are formally in force, still, the final word goes to Russia and the Russian weaponry. This kind of attitude is fraught with problems not only in Russia's relations with its neighbors. If we 'develop' such 'logic' on a global scale, we get destabilization not only on the border with Russia, but in any region of the world, where there is a strong state with nuclear

The metaphorical equation of 2008 and 2014 as similar critical junctures thus securitises and politicises Russia's OS contestations in the neighbourhood. It casts and shames Russia as challenging and re-drawing (b)orders and creating artificial states in the neighbourhood. 'Artificial' describes the different understandings of ontologies between Russia and the states experiencing its occupation - where Russia's reading is framed as unfitting with the existing ontics, thus as creating frictions in these OS narrative webs.

This metaphor is emotionally and morally charged and draws on Margvelashvili's memory politics: it includes narrations of the historical injustice of Russia's OS contestations - framed as genocides - and seeks to dispose of them through assuming that the very historical justice will be on Ukraine's and Georgia's side eventually, which is represented through pain, anger, hate, and disgust but also anxiety, regret and remorse about the current insecurities.

Moreover, this metaphor draws in - voicing disappointment - the failures of the West as preset for and continuity of these critical junctures and in so doing casts Ukraine and Georgia - but also all other EaP countries which are perceived as potentially having to experience Russian meddling - as a different emotion community. This emotion community is one of empathetic understanding of the pain and

capability and a theoretical possibility of treating its weaker neighbors in the same way, as Russia treats its neighbors. Unfortunately, the West failed to comprehend the absurdity and tragedy of what happened in 2008. As a result, in 2014 we got the 'Ukrainian Front'; and Russia, having the 'experience of 2008', was much more organized and rapid, because the Russian leadership considered the aggressive style of action acceptable. I think that today the West's fidelity to principles should be based exactly on this bitter experience. When I communicate with colleagues in the West, I always tell them: ‚the point is to be very honest with Russians and tell them directly: this is unacceptable to us!'; and also, confirm that the West considers Georgia, Ukraine and other Russian neighbors, as equal and sovereign subjects of international law. This is the ‚mere truth' of international relations. This is to say that it is necessary to speak clearly with Russia. I think, the peaceful future can only be achieved through these relations for Russia, as well as for Georgia and other states." (Margvelashvili, 3.10.2016)

sufferance attached to these ontological anxieties and a mirroring of the extensive feelings of hate and disgust towards Russia, and therefore in contrast to what is construed as more restrained emotional reactions of the West.

Crises?

Crises are imagined completely differently based on the abundance of just outlined affective imaginaries (of the past).

For Armenia, regionally exclusive structures imposed by the EU/NATO, Artsakh/Azerbaijan, the domestic opposition, Turkey's genocide denial, and the SU break-up are imagined as crises limiting the ability to go on and feel as before. Moreover, Sargsyan denounces the lecturing of smaller states by bigger ones as crises of status and prestige. Interestingly, a securitised looming global crisis is not only seen as threat, but also as opportunity for new security structures - excluding and being directed against Azerbaijan.

For Azerbaijan, crises are identified in an Azeri ontological crisis on its own, the question of Nagorno-Karabakh, the opposition contesting domestic legitimacy, the global economic crisis and local reverberations, 'the West' - and particularly the EP - critiquing Azerbaijan as well as the inaptness of Western governance models as challenge to regional and global security. As such, Aliyev engages highly critically in a deconstruction of post-Cold War modernist intellectual thought.

For Georgia, crisis signifiers change between the two presidents under scrutiny for this timeframe. Saakashvili identifies the dialectical, entangled relationship between Georgian and Russian ontologies as linchpin to all further security imaginaries. As such, strained ontics as repeated, ever-so-present threats to the survival of the self by Russia dominate his discourses. Moreover, he posits reverberations to global order given the imminent Russian collapse as upcoming crisis of a global power vacuum. In this regard, he supposes that if the US would be weak(ened), subsequently the EU, as implicit ally/vassal of the US, would be

weak(ened) too - leading to the instability of global order. Furthermore, relating to the EU and NATO, feelings of rejection and neglect invoked by those ontological anchors are portrayed as crisis of trust, similar to what he identifies as internal crises of the EU, namely lagging reforms and integration fatigue. Margvelashvili builds upon but also adapts Saakashvili's crises imaginaries. He identifies Russia as all-encompassing threat by expatiating on its aggression/occupation, its wrongful near abroad conceptions, its construction of NATO myths, and its EU undermining. Furthermore, he identifies crises in concentric OS circles: the domestic (Russian sympathies), Russia (where South Ossetia and Abkhazia are linking back to the domestic), Ukraine (as empathetic critical juncture), and a broad category of the international (liberal order's credibility and efficiency, EU/NATO's fatigue/rejections).

5. Reflections

'Cultural issues of identity and history have also been integral to the ascent and consolidation of populism in post-communist East Europe. The fact that East European trauma under communism is not adequately understood and appreciated in the West is the central grievance of these movements, and this feeds into new cycles of victimization – this time the perceived oppression focuses on Western liberal ideals, such as 'gender ideology', feminism, LGBTQ rights, or even more dramatically, Middle Eastern migration and refugee flows. The core of populist resentment is the issue of cultural imposition – and the deepest cultural imposition post-communist Europe feels today is the imposition of the Western memory on their own pasts.' (Subotic 2019b:1)

What this article has laid out is an understanding of these affective geo-politics - marked in the above quote by 'trauma', 'grievance', 'victimization', or 'resentment' as emotional representations of what is construed as imposition of Western memory - through readings of OS theory to substantiate what Toal (2018) calls

'shock events' as critical junctures interpreted as affective ontological insecurities, and to shed light onto constructions of 'the past' through the dynamics of emotion communities within the logics of affective ontological security seeking. This has highlighted the central role of affective markers of ontological insecurities in discourses and how this has affected change and continuity in renegotiating remembrance by the presidents of the South Caucasus states. In so doing, it has drawn particular attention to the affective reproduction of memory and has shown how investing, subscribing, questioning or rejecting identity-positionalities is a patchwork process of discursive emotion norm contestations resulting in traumatic or nostalgic representations of the past.

Here, an analysis of what Toal (2018) called the 'leaders' affective dispositions' of the four presidential discourses from 2008-2018 through a LTA showed the different discursive approaches to identity politics in general. An analysis of what he called 'affective storylines' and 'state-sponsored mobilizations' through an EDA showed the multiplicity of specific affective landscapes and discursive practices to create emotional representations within affective OSS logics.

Spread over seven emblematic discursive categories relating to the discussed triple anniversaries, the contestations of those identity signifiers highlight the makings and breakings of emotion communities as phenomenon of the dynamics of the affective geopolitics of the South Caucasus. Moreover, their contestation highlights the abundance of the rhetoric of memory politics embedded within affective OSS.

'Defending memory' as seeking ontological security is then achieved through articulating opposite emotions towards the same events: to redraw what is perceived as appropriate feeling (rule) towards the past. As such, trauma and nostalgia are affective re-interpretations of those insecurities as well as affective canvases to justify present and future politics. Affective investments as emotional commitments to those re-interpretations vary in their salience and valence. The dissected

presidential discourses highlight the repertoire within affective storylines to imagine a canvas (emotional representations) and paint on it (emotionalisations) to (re-)seek ontological security.

There, the affective difference between politicisation and securitisation gets qualified: discursive moves of politicization exploit the salience of (pre-existing) affective investments, discursive moves of securitization change the valence of (pre-existing) affective investments.

Particularly, the presidential discourses show another dimension of 'how the nation continues to operate as a salient register' (Antonsich et al. 2020), namely through its affective re-appraisal as ontological anchor.

What this work has furthermore shown is that these dynamics are to be understood as way more than scaremongering and blaming, or hate and love, but as amalgamation of a situated variety of emotions and emotionalisations (Hor 2019). Particularly the role of pain and suffering - and subsequent anger - as additional markers of ontological insecurities and critical junctures as well as the delineation of a vast bi-valent variety of emotionalisations within affective OSS adds to the literature which has mostly zoomed in onto anxiety and fear as emotional representations of these insecurities as well as blaming and shaming as emotionalisations.

These findings also speak to what Giddens called 'colonisation of the future': the practice of system justification and political ordering. In turn, this often overlooked aspect of Giddens's work is related to 'risk reduction' (that is, minimising the vulnerability to critical OS junctures) and memory politics: 'People in all cultures, including the most resolutely traditional, distinguish future, present and past, and weigh alternative courses of action in terms of likely future considerations. But as we saw in the previous chapter, where traditional modes of practice are dominant, the past inserts a wide band of 'authenticated practice' into the future. Time is not empty, and a consistent 'mode of being' relates future to past. In addition, tradi-

tion creates a sense of the firmness of things that typically mixes cognitive and moral elements. The world is as it is because it is as it should be.' (Giddens 1991: 48, 133f).

As the above quote highlights, these struggles about the power of (affective) interpretation do not only take place within the South Caucasus countries, but are part and parcel of broader international contestations. These contestations not only encompass identity-positionalities, but attached emotion norms and adjoint emotion communities. The latter communities drift not only apart (between the South Caucasus countries), but also away (different anchors/poles of perceived appropriate emotion norms internationally, e.g. here either the EU or Russia). In this regard, those emotion communities are imagined OS communities bound by empathy and sympathy - to care for the self/other - or by the complete opposite of it - to deny the self/other those emotions when interpreting not only the past.

As such, discussions about a potential revival of Cold War imaginaries should not be limited to tracing narratives, but should pay attention to the widening divergence in emotion (norms) attached to those re-interpretations (Creutziger & Reuber 2019).

References

Academic Swiss Caucasus Net, European Network Remembrance and Solidarity & Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung 2016, *Memory and Identity in Post-Soviet Space*, https://iliauni.edu.ge/uploads/other/36/36751.pdf.

Agadjanian, A, Jödicke, A & van der Zweerde, E 2017, *Religion, Nation and Democracy in the South Caucasus*, Routledge, London.

Agathangelou, A 2019, 'Sexual Affective Empires: Racialized Speculations and Wagers in the Affective IR Turn', in E van Rythoven & M Sucharov (eds), *Methodology and Emotion in International Relations: Parsing the Passions*, Routledge, pp. 205-222.

Åhäll, L 2018, 'Affect as Methodology: Feminism and the Politics of Emotion', *International Political Sociology*, vol. 12, no. 01, pp. 36–52.

Åhäll, L & Gregory, T 2015, *Emotions, Politics and War*, Taylor & Francis, London.

Altunışık, MB & Tanrisever, OF 2018, *The South Caucasus: Security, energy and Europeanization*, Routledge, London.

Aliyev, I 2013, 'Ilham Aliyev was interviewed by 'Russia-24' television channel', viewed 11 December 2018, https://en.president.az/articles/7811.

Aliyev, I 2015, 'Ilham Aliyev was interviewed by 'Russia-24' channel', viewed 11 December 2018, https://en.president.az/articles/14954.

Antonsich, M, Skey, M, Sumartojo, S, Merriman, P, Stephens, AC, Tolia-Kelly, DP, Wilson, HF & Anderson, B 2020, 'The spaces and politics of affective nationalism', *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, vol. 38, no. 04 , pp 579-598.

Averre, D & Oskanian, K 2019, *Security, society and the state in the Caucasus*, Routledge, London.

Aydın, M 2011, *Non-traditional security threats and regional cooperation in the southern caucasus*, IOS Press, Amsterdam, Washington, D.C.

Bassin, M, Glebov, S & Laruelle, M 2015, *Between Europe and Asia: The Origins, Theories, and Legacies of Russian Eurasianism*, University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh PA.

Bernhard, MH & Kubik, J 2014, *Twenty years after communism: The politics of memory and commemoration*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York.

Besier, G & Stokłosa, K 2016, *Neighbourhood Perceptions of the Ukraine Crisis : From the Soviet Union into Eurasia?*, Taylor & Francis, London.

Bleiker, R & Hutchinson, E 2018, 'Methods and Methodologies for the Study of Emotions in World Politics', in M Clément & E Sangar (eds), *Researching Emotions in International Relations: Methodological Perspectives on the Emotional Turn*, Springer International Publishing, Cham, pp. 325–342.

Boddice, R 2018, *The history of emotions*, Manchester University Press, Manchester.

Boyle, E 2016, 'Borderization in Georgia: Sovereignty Materialized', *Eurasia Border Review*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp 1-18.

Broers, L 2019, *Armenia and Azerbaijan: Anatomy of a rivalry*, Edinburgh University Press,Edinburgh.

Browning, CS 2015, 'Nation Branding, National Self-Esteem, and the Constitution of Subjectivity in Late Modernity', *Foreign Policy Analysis*, vol. 11, no. 02, pp. 195–214.

Browning, CS 2018a, ''Je suis en terrasse': Political Violence, Civilizational Politics, and the Everyday Courage to Be', *Political Psychology*, vol. 39, no. 02, pp. 243–261.

Browning, CS 2018b, 'Brexit, existential anxiety and ontological (in)security', *European Security*, vol. 27, no. 03, pp. 336–355.

Browning, CS 2018c, 'Geostrategies, geopolitics and ontological security in the Eastern neighbourhood: The European Union and the 'new Cold War'', *Political Geography*, vol. 62, pp. 106–115.

Browning, CS & Christou, G 2010, 'The constitutive power of outsiders: The European neighbourhood policy and the eastern dimension', *Political Geography*, vol. 29, no. 02, pp. 109–118.

Browning, CS & Joenniemi, P 2016, 'Ontological security, self-articulation and the securitization of identity', *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 52, no. 01, pp. 31–47.

Bursulaia, G 2020, 'The voices of silence: The case of Georgian history textbooks', *Caucasus Survey*, pp. 1–16.

Buzogány, A 2019, 'Europe, Russia, or both?: Popular perspectives on overlapping regionalism in the Southern Caucasus', *East European Politics*, vol. 35, no. 01, pp. 93–109.

Capelos, T & Chrona, S 2018, 'The Map to the Heart: An Analysis of Political Affectivity in Turkey', Politics and Governance, vol. 06, no. 04, pp. 144–158.

Caverni, J-P, Fabre, J-M & Gonzalez, M (eds) 1990, *Cognitive biases*, North-Holland, Amsterdam, New York.

Chatterje-Doody, PN & Crilley, R 2019, 'Making Sense of Emotions and Affective Investments in War: RT and the Syrian Conflict on YouTube', *Media and Communication*, vol. 07, no. 03, p. 167-178.

Chernobrov, D 2019, *Public Perception of International Crises: Identity, Ontological Security and Self-Affirmation*, Rowman & Littlefield International, London.

Cheterian, V 2008, *War and peace in the Caucasus: Russia's troubled frontier*, Hurst & Co., London.

Chikovani, N 2009, 'Narrative of the United Caucasus: Political or Historical Project? ', *Caucasus Journal of Social Sciences*, vol. 02, no. 01, pp. 119–126.

Clément, M & Sangar, E (eds) 2018, *Researching Emotions in International Relations: Methodological Perspectives on the Emotional Turn*, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Companjen, F, Marácz, LK & Versteegh, L 2010, *Exploring the Caucasus in the 21st Century: Essays on Culture, History and Politics in a Dynamic Context*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam.

Coppieters, B 2004, *Europeanization and conflict resolution: Case studies from the European periphery*, Academia Press, Gent.

Crawford, A & Hutchinson, S 2016, 'Mapping the Contours of 'Everyday Security: Time, Space and Emotion', *British Journal of Criminology*, vol. 56, no. 06, pp. 1184–1202.

Crawford, NC 2000, 'The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships', *International Security*, vol. 24, no. 04, pp. 116–156.

Crawford, NC 2019, 'The power of emotions, the emotions of politics: What do we need to know about emotions to make sense of world politics?', in E van Rythoven & M Sucharov (eds), *Methodology and Emotion in International Relations*, Routledge, London.

Creutziger, C & Reuber, P 2019, 'The Cold War as narrative? Old paradigms and new emotions', ZOIS: Centre for East European and International Studies, viewed 14 October 2019, https://en.zois-berlin.de/publications/zois-spotlight/the-cold-war-as-narrative-old-paradigms-and-new-emotions/.

Croft, S & Vaughan-Williams, N 2016, 'Fit for purpose? Fitting ontological security studies 'into' the discipline of International Relations: Towards a vernacular turn', *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 52, no. 01, pp. 12–30.

Dawisha, K & Parrott, B 1997, *Conflict, cleavage, and change in Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

de Waal, T 2019, *The Caucasus: An introduction*, 2nd ed, Oxford University Press, New York.

DeBardeleben, J (ed) 2008, *The boundaries of EU enlargement: Finding a place for neighbours*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.

Demertzis, N 2013, *Emotions in politics: The affect dimension in political tension*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.

Edkins, J 2013, *Trauma and the Memory of Politics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Ejdus, F 2017, "Not a heap of stones'*:* Material environments and ontological security in international relations', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 30, no. 01, pp. 23–43.

Ejdus, F 2019, *Crisis and Ontological Insecurity: Serbia's Anxiety over Kosovo's Secession*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.

Eklundh, E, Zavnik, A & Guittet, E-P (eds) 2017, *The politics of anxiety*, Rowman & Littlefield International, London.

Ekman, P & Davidson, RJ 2015, *The nature of emotion: Fundamental questions*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Eldar, I, & Rauf, G 2007, 'Confrontational collective memory in the Caucasus: how can the "curse of the past" be overcome?', in *The Caucasus & Globalization*, vol. 04, no. 01, pp. 101–108.

Fattah, K & Fierke, KM 2009, 'A Clash of Emotions*:* The Politics of Humiliation and Political Violence in the Middle East', *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 15, no. 01, pp. 67–93.

Festinger, L 1962, *A theory of cognitive dissonance*, Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Fierke, KM 2014, 'Emotion and intentionality', *International Theory*, vol. 06, no. 03, pp. 563–567.

Fierke, KM 2015, 'Emotions in IR: The 'Dog That Did Not Bark", viewed 25 August 2019, https://www.e-ir.info/2015/02/20/emotions-in-ir-the-dog-that-did-not-bark/.

Findlay, SD & Thagard, P 2014, 'Emotional Change in International Negotiation: Analyzing the Camp David Accords Using Cognitive-Affective Maps', *Group Decision and Negotiation*, vol. 23, no. 06, pp. 1281–1300.

Fukuyama, F 2006, *The end of history and the last man*, Free Press, New York.

Fukuyama, F 2018, *Identity: The demand for dignity and the politics of resentment*, Profile Books, London.

Galeotti, M 2019, 'Putin doesn't want to kill liberalism, only optimism', viewed 10 July 2019, https://raamoprusland.nl/dossiers/kremlin/1340-putin-doesn-t-want-to-kill-liberalism-only-optimism.

Geukjian, O 2016, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in the South Caucasus*, Routledge, London.

Giddens, A 1991, *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Gilmore, J & Rowling, C 2018, 'A post-American world?: Assessing the cognitive and attitudinal impacts of challenges to American exceptionalism', *The Communication Review*, vol. 21, no. 01, pp. 46–65.

Giragosian, R 2015, 'Armenia's Eurasian Choice: Is the EU Integration Still at Stake?', viewed 03 September 2019, https://ge.boell.org/en/2015/04/02/armenias-eurasian-choice-eu-integration-still-stake.

Glöckner, A & Pachur, T 2012, 'Cognitive models of risky choice: Parameter stability and predictive accuracy of prospect theory', *Cognition*, vol. 123, no. 01, pp. 21–32.

Goffman, E 1974, *Frame analysis: an essay on the organization of experience*, Harper & Row, New York.

Gökarıksel, B & Secor, AJ 2018, 'Affective geopolitics: Anxiety, pain, and ethics in the encounter with Syrian refugees in Turkey', *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, vol. 25, no. 02, pp. 1-19.

Golunov, SV 2017, *Russian and Chinese Influences in Shared Borderlands*, PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo, no. 453.

Grant, B 2009, *The captive and the gift: Cultural histories of sovereignty in Russia and the Caucasus*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca.

Grigoryan, E & Margaryan, S 2018, 'Memory Politics: The Post-Soviet Memory Landscape in Yerevan', viewed 03 July 2019, https://caucasusedition.net/memory-politics-the-post-soviet-memory-landscape-in-yerevan/.

Gugushvili, A, Kabachnik, P & Kirvalidze, A 2017, 'Collective memory and reputational politics of national heroes and villains', *Nationalities Papers*, vol. 45, no. 03, pp. 464–484.

Gustafsson, K 2014, 'Memory Politics and Ontological Security in Sino-Japanese Relations', *Asian Studies Review*, vol. 38, no. 01, pp. 71–86.

Hayoz, N & Dafflon, D 2014, 'Introduction*:* Political Transformation and Social Change in the South Caucasus', *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, vol. 14, no. 02, pp. 195–198.

Heinrich Boell Foundation (Tbilisi Office - South Caucasus region), Ilia State University & Soviet Past Research Laboratory (SOVLAB) 2019, *The South Caucasus Regional Conference on Memory Politics*, Ilia State University.

Hille, CML 2010, *State building and conflict resolution in the Caucasus*, Brill, Leiden.

Hor, AJY 2019, 'Emotions in-and-out of equilibrium*:* Tracing the everyday defensiveness of identity', in E van Rythoven & M Sucharov (eds), *Methodology and Emotion in International Relations*, Routledge, London.

Huseynova, I 2019, *The Politics of Memory and Commemoration: Centennial Anniversary in the South Caucasus*, MA Thesis, University of Tartu, https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/62d8/83f3ee56dd9302e18dc668f6bba315cf4dcd.pdf.

Hutchinson, E 2010, 'Trauma and the Politics of Emotions: Constituting Identity, Security and Community after the Bali Bombing', *International Relations*, vol. 24, no. 01, pp. 65–86.

Hutchinson, E 2016, *Affective communities in world politics: Collective emotions after trauma*, Cambridge University Press, New York.

Kinnvall, C 2016, 'Feeling ontologically (in)secure: States, traumas and the governing of gendered space', *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 52, no. 01, pp. 90–108.

Kinnvall, C, Manners, I & Mitzen, J 2018, 'Introduction to 2018 special issue of European Security: 'ontological (in)security in the European Union'', *European Security*, vol. 27, no. 03, pp. 249–265.

Kinnvall, C & Mitzen, J 2018, 'Ontological security and conflict: The dynamics of crisis and the constitution of community', *Journal of International Relations and Development*, vol. 21, no. 04, pp. 825–835.

Kitaevich, EJ 2014, 'History that splinters: Education reforms and memory politics in the Republic of Georgia', *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, vol. 14, no. 02, pp. 319–338.

Koschut, S 2014, 'Emotional (security) communities: The significance of emotion norms in inter-allied conflict management', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 40, no. 03, pp. 533–558.

Koschut, S 2017a, 'No sympathy for the devil: Emotions and the social construction of the democratic peace', *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 53, no. 03, pp. 320-338.

Koschut, S 2017b, 'The power of (emotion) words: On the importance of emotions for social constructivist discourse analysis in IR', *Journal of International Relations and Development*, vol 21, pp. 495–522.

Koschut, S 2017c, 'The Structure of Feeling – Emotion Culture and National Self-Sacrifice in World Politics', *Millennium - Journal of International Studies*, vol. 45, no. 02, pp. 174–192.

Koschut, S 2018, 'Appropriately Upset?: A Methodological Framework for Tracing the Emotion Norms of the Transatlantic Security Community', *Politics and Governance*, vol. 06, no. 04, pp. 125–134.

Koschut, S 2019, 'Communitarian emotions in IR: Constructing emotional worlds', in E van Rythoven & M Sucharov (eds), *Methodology and Emotion in International Relations*, Routledge, London, pp. 79-96.

Koschut, S, Hall, TH, Wolf, R, Solomon, T, Hutchinson, E & Bleiker, R 2017, 'Discourse and Emotions in International Relations', *International Studies Review*, vol. 19, no. 03, pp. 481–508.

Krastev, I & Holmes, S 2019, *The Light that Failed: A Reckoning*, Allen Lane, London.

Kurilla, I 2009, *Memory Wars in the Post-Soviet Space*, PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo, no. 63.

Laing, RD 1968, 'Ontological Insecurity', in KJ Gergen & C Gordon (eds), *The self in social interaction*, pp. 415–422.

Laing, RD 1969, *Self and others. 2nd ed*, 2nd ed, Tavistock Publications, London.

Laing, RD 1991, *The divided self: An existential study in sanity and madness*, 2nd ed, Viking, Harmondsworth.

Laszczkowski, M & Reeves, M 2018, *Affective states: Entanglements, suspensions, suspicions*, Berghahn Books, New York.

Lauritzen, M, Beville, M & Sencindiver, SY 2011, *Otherness: A Multilateral Perspective*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main.

Leek, M & Morozov, V 2018, 'Identity beyond othering: Crisis and the politics of decision in the EU's involvement in Libya', *International Theory*, vol. 10, no. 01, pp. 122–152.

Lim, J-H 2020, 'Triple Victimhood: On the Mnemonic Confluence of the Holocaust, Stalinist Crime, and Colonial Genocide', *Journal of Genocide Research*, pp. 1–22.

Mälksoo, M 2015, ''Memory must be defended': Beyond the politics of mnemonical security', *Security Dialogue*, vol. 46, no. 03, pp. 221–237.

Mälksoo, M 2018, 'The Transitional Justice and Foreign Policy Nexus: The Inefficient Causation of State Ontological Security-Seeking', *International Studies Review*, vol. 21, no. 03, pp. 373-397.

Mälksoo, M 2019, 'The normative threat of subtle subversion: The return of 'Eastern Europe' as an ontological insecurity trope', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 32, no. 03, pp. 365–383.

Margvelashvili, G 2016, 'It is Necessary to Speak Very Clearly with Russia', viewed 10 December 2018, https://www.president.gov.ge/en-US/pressamsakhuri/interviuebi/%E2%80%8Bgiorgi-margvelashvili-rusets-dzalian-mkafiod-unda.aspx.

Margvelashvili, G 2018, 'Interview of Lithuanian Public Broadcaster with President Margvelashvili', viewed 10 December 2018, https://www.president.gov.ge/en-US/pressamsakhuri/interviuebi/saqartvelos-prezidentis-interviu-litvis-sazogadoeb.aspx.

Mitzen, J 2006, 'Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma', *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 12, no. 03, pp. 341–370.

Mitzen, J & Larson, K 2017, *Ontological Security and Foreign Policy*, viewed 20 October 2019, http://politics.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-458.

Moïsi, D 2010, *The geopolitics of emotion: How cultures of fear, humiliation, and hope are reshaping the world*, Anchor Books, New York.

Mordka, C 2016, 'What are Emotions?: Structure and Function of Emotions', *Studia Humana*, vol. 05, no. 03, pp. 29-44.

Mousseau, M 2019, 'The End of War: How a Robust Marketplace and Liberal Hegemony Are Leading to Perpetual World Peace', *International Security*, vol. 44, no. 01, pp. 160–196.

Nabers, D 2015, *A Poststructuralist Discourse Theory of Global Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

Nicolaïdis, K, Sèbe, B & Maas, G 2015, *Echoes of empire: Memory, identity and colonial legacies*, I.B. Tauris, London.

Oskanian, K 2013, *Fear, weakness and power in the post-Soviet South Caucasus: A theoretical and empirical analysis*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.

Park, SH, Kim, HJ & Park, YO 2017, 'Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral Responses to Ingroup's Devalued Social Status: A Field Study at a Public University', *Current Psychology*, vol. 36, no. 01, pp. 22–38.

Prior, A & van Hoef, Y 2018, 'Interdisciplinary Approaches to Emotions in Politics and International Relations', *Politics and Governance*, vol. 06, no. 04, pp. 48–52.

Rauf, G & Rena, K 2011, 'Memory, emotions, and behavior of the masses in an ethnopolitical conflict: Nagorno-Karabakh', *The Caucasus & Globalization*, vol. 05, no. 03-04, pp. 77-88.

Rayfield, D 2012, *Edge of empires: A history of Georgia*, Reaktion Books, London.

Reeves, M 2011, 'Fixing the Border: On the Affective Life of the State in Southern Kyrgyzstan', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, vol. 29, no. 05, pp. 905–923.

Resende, ESA & Budryte, D 2014, *Memory and trauma in international relations: Theories, cases, and debates*, Routledge, London.

Reus-Smit, C 2014, 'Emotions and the social', *International Theory*, vol. 06, no. 03, pp. 568–574.

Rich, PB 2013, *Crisis in the Caucasus*, Taylor and Francis, Hoboken.

Richardson, PB 2010, *Crisis in the Caucasus: Russia, Georgia and the West*, Routledge, London.

Rosenwein, BH 2006, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N.Y.

Ross, AAG 2006, 'Coming in from the Cold: Constructivism and Emotions', *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 12, no. 02, pp. 197–222.

Ross, AAG 2013, 'Realism, emotion, and dynamic allegiances in global politics', *International Theory*, vol. 05, no. 02, pp. 273–299.

Rumelili, B 2015a, *Conflict resolution and ontological security*, Routledge, London.

Rumelili, B 2015b, 'Identity and desecuritisation: The pitfalls of conflating ontological and physical security', *Journal of International Relations and Development*, vol. 18, no. 01, pp. 52–74.

Rumelili, B 2016, *Conflict resolution and ontological security: Peace anxieties*, Routledge, London.

Rumelili, B 2018, 'Breaking with Europe's pasts: Memory, reconciliation, and ontological (In)security', *European Security*, vol. 27, no. 03, pp. 280–295.

Saakashvili, M 2011, The interview of the President of Georgia during the morning show of MSNBC - 'Morning Joe', http://www.saakashviliarchive.info/en/PressOffice/News/Interviews?p=6798&i=1.

Saakashvili, M 2011, Interview with Segodnya, http://www.saakashviliarchive.info/en/PressOffice/News/Interviews?p=6800&i=1.

Sargsyan, S 2010, Interview of the President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan to the German Der Spiegel weekly, viewed 04 December 2018, http://www.president.am/en/interviews-and-press-conferences/item/2010/04/05/news-47/.

Sargsyan, S 2011, 'Interview of President Serzh Sargsyan to Free Artsakh newspaper and the NKR State TV station, viewed 04 December 2018, http://www.president.am/en/interviews-and-press-conferences/item/2011/09/02/news-72/.

Scheve, C von 2014, *Emotion and Social Structures: The Affective Foundations of Social Order*, Taylor & Francis, London.

Scheve, C von & Salmella, M 2014, *Collective Emotions*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Schick, K 2019, 'Emotions and the everyday: Ambivalence, power and resistance', *Journal of International Political Theory*, vol. 15, no. 02, pp. 261–268.

Shevel, O 2011, 'The Politics of Memory in a Divided Society: A Comparison of Post-Franco Spain and Post-Soviet Ukraine', *Slavic Review*, vol. 70, no. 01, pp. 137–164.

Solomon, T 2012, "I wasn't angry, because I couldn't believe it was happening': Affect and discourse in responses to 9/11', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 38, no. 04, pp. 907–928.

Solomon, T 2013, 'The affective underpinnings of soft power', *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 20, no. 03, pp. 720–741.

Solomon, T 2018, 'Ontological security, circulations of affect, and the Arab Spring', *Journal of International Relations and Development*, vol. 21, no. 04, pp. 934–958.

Somers, MR 1994, 'The narrative constitution of identity: A relational and network approach', *Theory and Society*, vol. 23, no. 05, pp. 605–649.

Steele, BJ 2008, *Ontological security in international relations: Self-identity and the IR state*, Routledge, London.

Steele, BJ & Homolar, A 2019, 'Ontological insecurities and the politics of contemporary populism', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 32, no. 03, pp. 214–221.

Subotić, J 2013, 'Remembrance, Public Narratives, and Obstacles to Justice in the Western Balkans', *Studies in Social Justice*, vol. 07, no. 02, p. 265.

Subotić, J 2013, 'Stories States Tell: Identity, Narrative, and Human Rights in the Balkans', *Slavic Review*, vol. 72, no. 02, pp. 306–326.

Subotić, J 2016, 'Narrative, Ontological Security, and Foreign Policy Change', *Foreign Policy Analysis*, vol. 12, no. 04, pp. 610–627.

Subotić, J 2018, 'Political memory, ontological security, and Holocaust remembrance in post-communist Europe', *European Security*, vol. 27, no. 03, pp. 296–313.

Subotić, J 2019a, 'History, memory, and politics in post-communist Eastern Europe', viewed 20 October 2019, https://www.cips-cepi.ca/2019/09/19/history-memory-and-politics-in-post-communist-eastern-europe/.

Subotić, J 2019b, 'Political memory after state death: The abandoned Yugoslav national pavilion at Auschwitz', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 32, no. 03, pp. 245–262.

Subotic, J 2019c, *Yellow star, red star: Holocaust remembrance after communism*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca.

Sun, R 2006, *Cognition and multi-agent interaction: From cognitive modeling to social simulation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Suny, RG 2004, *The revenge of the past: Nationalism, revolution, and the collapse of the Soviet Union*, Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Tausczik, YR & Pennebaker, JW 2010, 'The Psychological Meaning of Words*:* LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods', *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, vol. 29, no. 01, pp. 24–54.

Thrift, N 2008, *Non-Representational Theory: Space, Politics, Affect*, Taylor & Francis, London.

Toal, G 2016, *Near abroad: Putin, the west and the contest for russia's rimlands*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Toal, G 2018, 'The Affective Geopolitics of the New Cold War', Global Governance Institute, UCL, https://vimeo.com/267998695.

Toal, G & Merabishvili, G 2019, 'Borderization theatre*:* Geopolitical entrepreneurship on the South Ossetia boundary line, 2008–2018', *Caucasus Survey*, vol. 07, no. 02, pp. 110–133.

Torbakov, IB & Plokhy, S 2018, *After empire: Nationalist imagination and symbolic politics in Russia and Eurasia in the twentieth and twenty-first century*, ibidem-Verlag, Stuttgart.

van Hoef, Y 2018, 'Interpreting Affect Between State Leaders*:* Assessing the Political Friendship Between Winston S. Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt', in M Clément & E Sangar (eds), *Researching Emotions in International Relations*, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 51–73.

van Rythoven, E 2015, 'Learning to feel, learning to fear?*:* Emotions, imaginaries, and limits in the politics of securitization', *Security Dialogue*, vol. 46, no. 05, pp. 458–475.

van Rythoven, E 2018, 'Fear in the crowd or fear of the crowd? The dystopian politics of fear in international relations', *Critical Studies on Security*, vol. 06, no. 01, pp. 33–49.

van Rythoven, E & Sucharov, M (eds) 2019, *Methodology and Emotion in International Relations: Parsing the Passions*, Routledge, New York.

Wertsch, JV 2008, 'The Narrative Organization of Collective Memory', *Ethos*, vol. 36, no. 01, pp. 120–135.

Wodak, R 2015, *The politics of fear: What right-wing populist discourses mean*, Sage, Los Angeles.

Wodak, R & Meyer, M 2009, *Methods of critical discourse analysis*, 2nd. ed., Sage, London.

Wodak, R & Schulz, M 1986, *The Language of Love and Guilt*, John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam.

Yalçın-Heckmann, L 2016, 'Remembering and Living on the Borderlands in the South Caucasus', in T Bringa & H Toje (eds), *Eurasian Borderlands: Spatializing Borders in the Aftermath of State Collapse*, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 133–158.

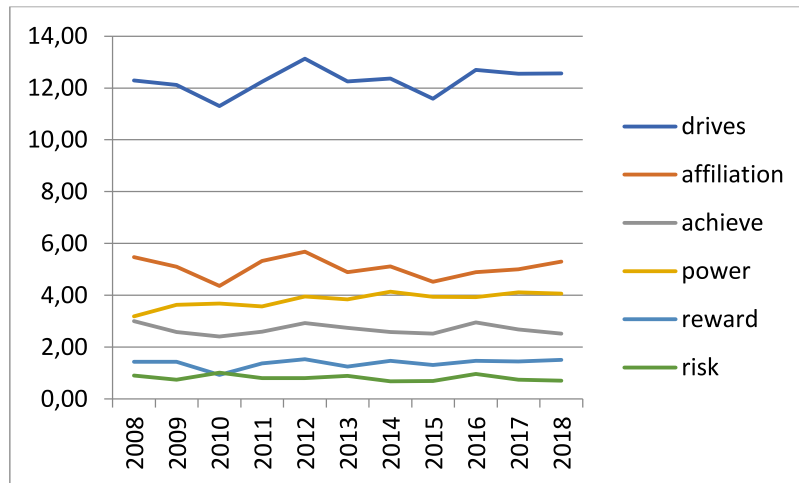
Yemelianova, GM & Broers, L (eds) 2020, *Routledge Handbook of the Caucasus*, Routledge, New York.

Ziemer, U 2018, "The waiting and not knowing can be agonizing': Tracing the power of emotions in a prolonged conflict in the South Caucasus', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, vol. 20, no. 03, pp. 331–349.

Annex 1: Leaders' affective Dispositions and temporal Focus in Discourse in the South Caucasus 2008-2018

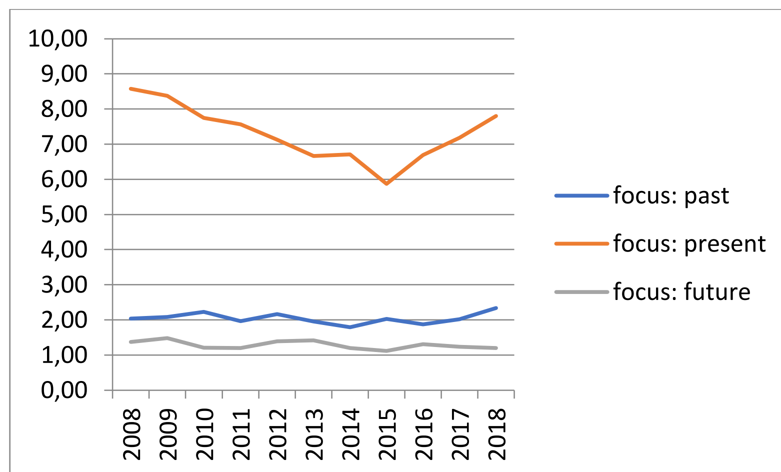
Armenia

Figure 1: Sargsyan's individual Traits and Predispositions: Drives in Discourse 2008-2018 (ACLA)



Source: own elaboration.

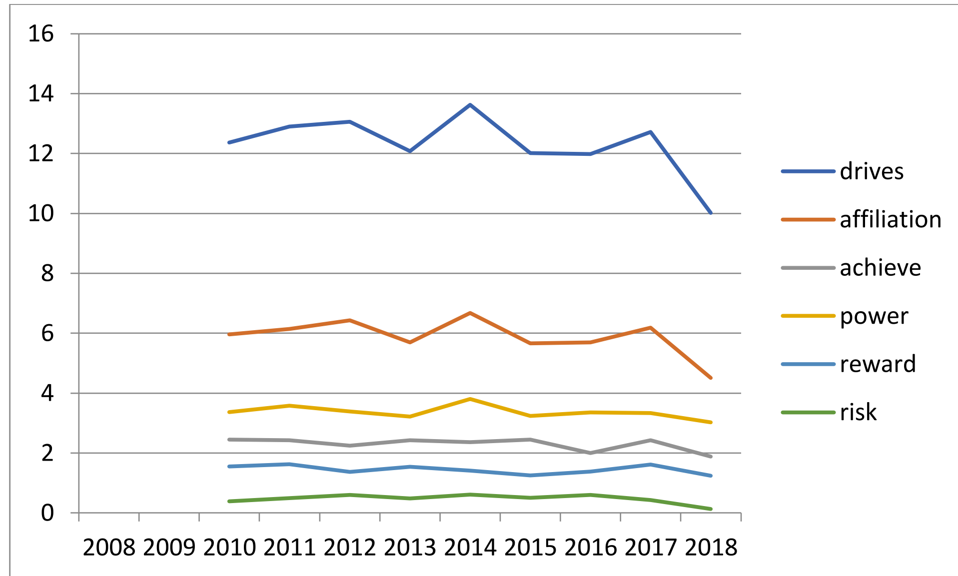
Figure 2: Sargsyan's individual Traits and Predispositions: Temporal Focus of Discourse 2008-2018 (ACLA)



Source: own elaboration.

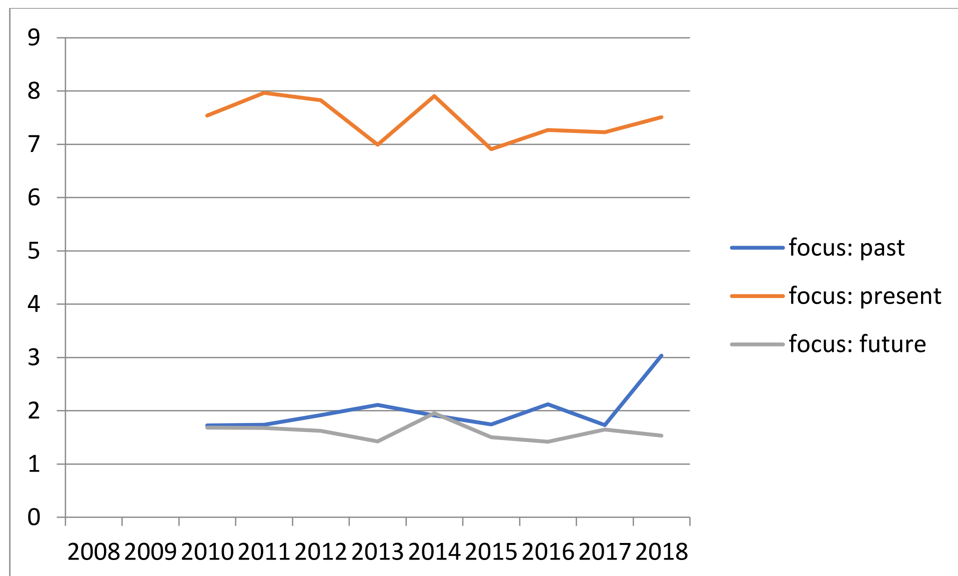
Azerbaijan

Figure 3: Aliyev's individual Traits and Predispositions: Drives in Discourse 2008-2018 (ACLA)



Source: own elaboration.

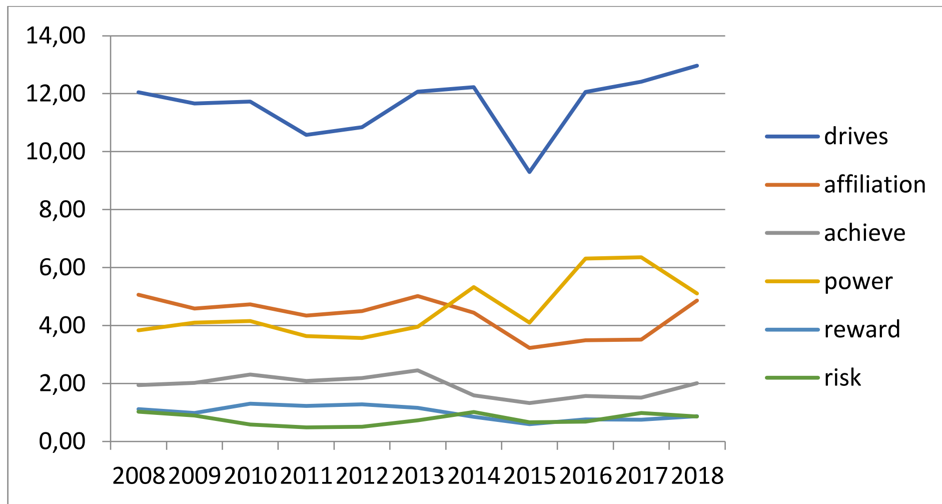
Figure 4: Aliyev's individual Traits and Predispositions: Temporal Focus of Discourse 2008-2018 (ACLA)



Source: own elaboration.

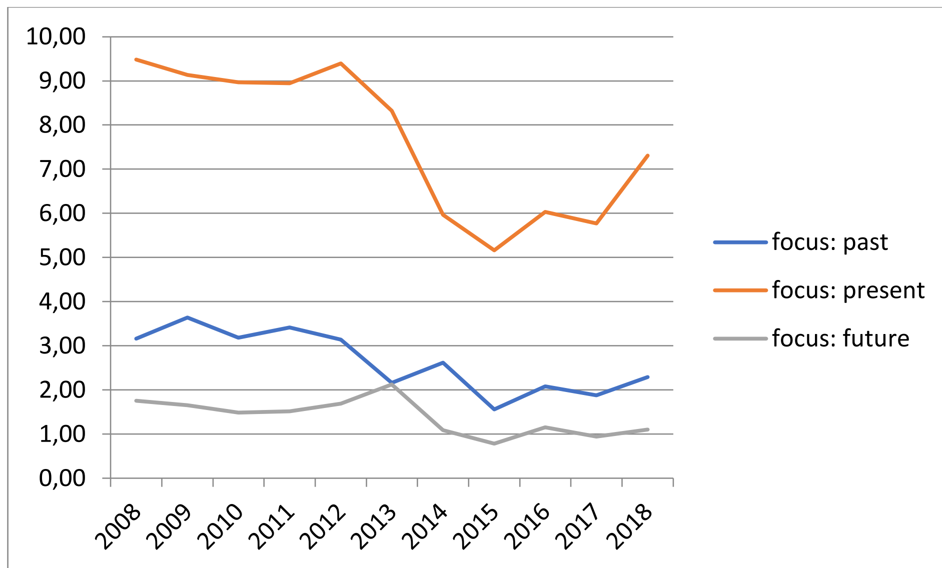
Georgia
(Saakashvili 2008-2013, Margvelashvili 2013-2018)

Figure 5: Saakashvili's and Margvelashvili's individual Traits and Predispositions: Drives in Discourse 2008-2018 (ACLA)



Source: own elaboration.

Figure *6*: Saakashvili's and Margvelashvili's individual Traits and Predispositions: Temporal Focus of Discourse 2008-2018 (ACLA)



Source: own elaboration.

Annex 2: Corpus Overview and Illustrations

a. *Code Sets Overview*

Table 1: Code Sets Overview for Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia (Saakashvili and Margvelashvili), 2008-2018.

			Georgia	
Code Set	**Azerbaijan**	**Armenia**	**Margvelashvili**	**Saakashvili**
Ukraine	14	4	87	15
Crimea	/	/	29	/
CSTO	/	16	/	/
CIS	9	7	/	/
EEU	/	36	2	/
CU	2	14	/	/
Soviet	7	5	5	3
China	3	7	20	/
Iran	9	36	3	/
2008	/	36	31	8
West	6	5	27	1
US	2	14	23	9
EaP, ENP, DCFTA, AA	/	19	18	4
NATO	/	8	50	4

Neighbourhood	7	5	14	14
East-West	5	5	3	/
Kosovo	1	3	1	/
Turkey	44	86	16	3
ontology	96	91	86	38
other-ing	8	24	5	17
enemy	6	5	1	14
friend/ally	20	22	26	5
threat	31	40	23	10
security	27	38	9	2
crisis	12	18	14	2
foreign policy	37	7	36	5
sovereignty/self-determination	3	11	12	1
conflict	8	12	11	/
past, history, memory, tradition, always	37	84	62	20
Nagorno-Karabakh	150	111	8	/
South Ossetia, Abkhazia	/	5	151	21
domestic policy issues, domestic groups	325	109	126	67
emotions and emotionalizations	360	296	165	65

EU topics	25	48	127	6
Russia topics	76	60	219	47
Russia as …	12	15	26	19
		genocide: 51		
	Armenia as…:172	Azerbaijan as … :143		
Codings:	**2653**			
in sets:	**4781**			

Note: '/' means 'no codings' for these categories for the respective country

Source: own sample (see page 16 in this article)

b. Data Exploration and Interpretation: Example of Inductive Coding

Context of the interview:

A correspondent of Radio Liberty met with Georgian President Giorgi Margvelashvili to discuss the future of the country's foreign policy and its relations with Russia, Ukraine and the West. The conversation took place after Margvelashvili's meeting with Pope Francis on October 3rd, 2016.

- Your meeting with Pope Francis ended a few minutes ago. What value do you attach to the Pontiff's visit to Georgia, the Caucasus, and what are the main topics raised in the course of the tête-à-tête conversation?	
This is a historic visit **of the spiritual and state leader of the Catholic Church and the State of Vatican. Of course, the main emphases derive from the** essence of politics, **on the one hand, of the State of Vatican, and, on the other hand, Christianity** as a peacekeeping religion, focused on love **and prosperity of nations. The Pope's political role is enormous.** Emotions and wishes **with which we communicated with each other,** – the wishes of better times, resolving the conflicts and tensions, **so that the countries, individuals, nations could develop peacefully,** - are of the great political significance for millions, **I would say more than a billion of the Catholic Church parish worldwide.** And also for the countries of Christian faith and the principles of good will.	*attachement of positive emotion (love) to Christianity and reference to importance for ontology* *reference to (positive) emotions as main norm of communication and understanding; connection of love, trust, friendship and happiness with faith and greater in-group, c.f. all Christians/not only Georgians*
- What is you opinion on the Russian-Georgian conflict?	
[I]f we look at the status quo that we have in Georgia and generally in the region, we'll see a strange **reality**; the reality, **in which the problems are not actually being solved by any of the conflicting parties.** The situation is simply absurd. **[...]** This is tragic **for our country, the Georgian people, and the Georgian state.** This is the fee that we pay for our freedom and independence. **But, let us look from the other point of view: after all,** no new prospects have opened neither for our fellow Abkhazian and Ossetian citizens! They live in occupied territories without any real perspectives, without future. [...]	*repeated implicit and explicit emotional expression of disgust/annoyance with the other* *rationalization of non-utility of current situation*
Moreover, the issue of dignity **has emerged there:** how can a friendly country **[Russia], a nuclear power that recognized the independence of Georgia in 1990 and contributed to this process,** attack and invade its neighbors - **Georgians, who, along with Russians, developed a common culture, fought against fascism, and, at some point,** created a united cultural social community?! **[...]**	*very explicit emotionalisation of conflict by blaming and shaming the other through contrasting priorly held positive emotions and collective identity formations/in-group understandings with current negative emotions of fear, anger and hatred*
We all have paid a fee for the fact that neither then [2008], nor now, no strong and firm response is given to the Russian policy. After all, it is a fact that Russia has declared clearly and unambiguously: what is in the Russian slang called the "near abroad", in fact is a "zone of privileged interests of the Russian Federation". Apparently, it is meant that international law quasi does not apply to these states, these "territories". When I communicate with colleagues in the West, I always tell them: the point is to be very honest with Russians and tell them directly: this is unacceptable to us!; and also, confirm that the West considers Georgia, Ukraine and other Russian neighbors, as equal and sovereign subjects of international law. This is the 'mere truth' of international relations."	*repeated reference to/emotionalisation by appeal to dignity, honesty and clear intergroup differentiation, e.g. rationalization of intl. law*
Russian leaders have claimed that it was Saakashvili's aggressive position that caused all ills. We mentioned that we were ready to start our relations from a "new page", and offered our colleagues to stop scolding each other and build the relations not based on aggressive rhetoric, but rather on a rational analysis of the situation - the current state and the interests of Russians, Georgians, including Abkhazians and Ossetians, and all ethnic groups living in Georgia. These were emotional expectations. **I was exposed to them too. After all, when there comes a new president, a**	*direct reference to a priori held positive emotional expectations 'clouding' rational decision making: hope,*

new government oriented on a rational dialogue, **this creates an opportunity to escape a problematic situation.**

By the way, there were the first "sprouts", first hints of the fact that the situation was moving towards a real dialogue on the problems between the Russian and Georgian states; we have reestablished economic ties, more Russians began visiting Georgia ... **However, since 2014, we have been witnessing the process that is beyond the logic of the existing opportunities.** I am referring to certain "strategic agreements" between Russia and Abkhazia and Russia and South Ossetia. **That is,** Russia has made a new step towards deepening the problem of the occupied regions and their alleged "recognition" as "independent states".

Well then, you tell me: was not the border between Russia and NATO the calmest and safest one? Does not it remain so? Politicians are namely the ones, who just live with myths that NATO and the EU policy is directed against Russia. **Tell me, what is problematic for Russia, if Georgia, as a member of the EU, would become a much more developed country, including in terms of economy, and also, for the Russian business, which would become able to develop relations? Why is the stable Georgia providing stability to the region, so problematic to Russia?**

It is also necessary to realize that Georgia is a good neighbor for Russia. We wish and hope to build good neighborly relations with Russia, considering the only condition: our sovereignty, our independence should be recognized by Russians.

We, Georgians, are generally known for emotionality and temper; however, in this case the Georgian state has shown the a good level of diplomacy and tact. **In difficult times for the Ukrainian state, we have never raised this sensitive issue [political asylum for the former president M. Saakashvili]. I have approached this topic several times, but only in general terms: the high official of a friendly country should not speak out against the Georgian government and make sharp statements against a friendly state.**

Our relationship with Russia is targeted on the policy of bringing the dialogue to rational discussion, **the policy of maintaining peace and not letting any of the war parties engage the Georgian side in any kind of provocation.**

confidence – contrasted by anger

expression of utilitarian cooperation as sign of hope

reference to irresponsible behaviour of the other; blaming – in-group cohesion and out-group derrogation

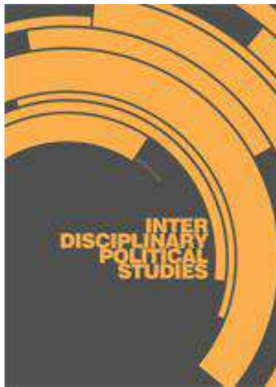
repeated emotional expression of disgust, anger and annoyance

strategy of blaming and shaming – attachement of the source of the problem to the other

securing ontological security as core condition for positive emotions towards the other

explicit expression of importance of emotions for in-group in contrast to utilitarian behaviour; pride of 'right' behaviour; re-constitution of Ukrainian stereotype

explicit claim of intergroup situation being predominantly emotional with aim to bring it to the 'rational level'



Interdisciplinary Political Studies
http://siba-ese.unisalento.it/index.php/idps
ISSN: 2039-8573 (electronic version)

IdPS, Issue 6(1) 2020: 113-137
DOI: 10.1285/i20398573v6n1p113
Published: July 15, 2020

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Burial, Reburial, and the Securing of Memory

Jessica Auchter
University of Tennessee Chattanooga, USA

ABSTRACT (max 150 words)

Drawing on the purported relationship between trauma and the desire to generate collective identity, this paper uses the framing of ontological security to examine burial as a mechanism of memorialization. I argue that states often turn to dead body management as a means of securing themselves and their identities. Burial and reburial can function as a mechanism of governance by states seeking ontological security. What happens to the dead is often politically contested. Because of this, states seek to intervene in contested spaces to solidify their identities through the mechanism of dead body management. I consider burial as a mechanism of state identity construction. Because graves, particularly mass graves, are sites where questions of human dignity are explored, they are also productive sites of examination of the logic of memorialization governing political violence. As a result, I seek to examine the processes by which gravesites and burial and reburial become mechanisms of the state performing ontological security.

KEYWORDS: Genocide; Mass Graves; Trauma; Ontological Security

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:
Jessica Auchter (Jessica-Auchter@utc.edu)
Department of Political Science and Public Service
Department 6356
615 McCallie Ave
Chattanooga, TN 37403 USA

Work licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non commercial-Share alike 3.0 Italian License

1. Introduction

This article argues that memorialization is a key tool for states in their pursuit of ontological security and fulfils what Catarina Kinnvall (2004) has identified in the remit of ontological security as a key need for comfort after trauma. This often functions through the use of narrative construction, which, as Jelena Subotic (2016) has traced, is largely about what ought to be: a normative story told about the state that carries "a desire for a particular social order and a particular set of social practices and policies" (2016, 612). I argue here that memorialization functions as one method states pursue to tell their own stories, to perform who they are and who they want to be by fixing identity through narrative. This becomes essential to statecraft in the context of the ambiguities and contingent identities after a traumatic event. Indeed, several scholars have focused on the impact of narratives of historical memory on foreign policy, which is often seen as the way states project their identity into the world (Wang 2012; Gustafson 2014). Alexandria Innes and Brent Steele (2014, 20) have also emphasized the way in which states may use traumatic events to reconstitute the idea of the nation itself: "a particular trauma might be narrated in such a way in the collective memory as to be formative of the collective identity of a nation."

Drawing on the purported relationship between trauma and this desire to generate collective identity, this paper uses the framing of ontological security to examine burial as a mechanism of memorialization. I argue that states often turn to dead body management as a means of securing themselves and their identities. To do so, I make three related points in the following sections: first, that burial and reburial can function as a mechanism of governance by states seeking ontological security, which I detail in Section Two. In Section Three, I trace what this looks like in a general sense, using several brief examples of contestation over singular dead bodies. I note that what happens to the dead is often politically contested. Because of this, states seek to intervene in contested spaces to solidify their identities through the mechanism of dead body management. In Section Four, I focus specifically on what this mechanism looks like in cases of mass atrocity and genocide,

using the case of Rwanda as an example. In this section, I seek to demonstrate how mass graves in Rwanda are inherently sites of contestation of memorial narratives, and that the project of ontological security in this case is top-down, often at the expense of survivors and their own conceptions of memory and memorialization. While much of my focus is on the post-atrocity context, what I aim to establish here is the existence of a larger politics through which states construct and revitalize their own identities, and thus my key argument is related to the ways in which managing dead bodies is a key part of maintenance of ontological security.

2. Burying the Dead: Ontological Security and Memory Management

Ontological security scholarship emphasizes the way that "states pursue their needs through social action, yet not to impress an external society so much as to satisfy their internal self-identity needs" (Steele 2008, 2). Jelena Subotic has traced the way in which this becomes apparent through the use of narratives, emphasizing how political actors manipulate shared cognitive frames to achieve a particular political purpose (2016, 611). Her focus is on states' autobiographical narratives, something which gestures to how ontological security scholarship emphasizes the importance of the construction and fixing of state identity. In this section, I take this framing of ontological security and examine the connections between the state's desire for ontological security and the state's involvement in burial and reburial of bodies. I acknowledge that not all burial is politicized, but rather argue that some cases of burying the dead are sufficiently public to form a mechanism through which states seek to solidify their identities. My main point in this section is to illustrate how ontological security helps us understand state identity construction through the management of the dead.

Ontological security scholarship focuses on how actors solidify the identity of the self in the midst of a changing world (Mitzen 2006, 342). Brent Steele has emphasized the way in which this becomes most apparent in responding to crises: "when this sense of self-identity is dislocated an actor will seek to re-establish rou-

tines that can, once again, consistently maintain self-identity" (Steele 2008, 3). Jelena Subotic also notes that "states need predictability and order; they thrive for routine and secure relationships with others" (2016, 614, see also Huysmans 1998; McSweeney 1999; Mitzen 2006). In other words, key to the idea of ontological security is the desire for fixity, achieved through an iterative social process.

Ontological security focuses on identity as a key factor. This follows on recent work in the ontological security literature that examines the relationship between trauma and ontological security seeking (Kinnvall 2004). Indeed, as Innes and Steele (2014, 23) note: "national identity and collective memory can be built upon formative traumatic events, but the nature of that identity may be either questioned or re-appropriated and reinforced after an insecurity-inducing trauma." Memory studies scholars have also drawn attention to the relationship between trauma and identity, noting the ways that trauma disrupts linear time and blurs traditional mechanisms of representation, including language (Nichanian 2003; Viebach 2019). Though much of this focus tends to be on the individual level of trauma (Prager 2008), as ontological security scholars have noted (Mitzen 2006), we can allegorize from the psychology of the individual to the level of the state. Maria Malksoo (2009) similarly has noted that coming to terms with the past is reinforcement of one's self-consciousness, following Theodor Adorno, emphasizing the identity-based dimensions of ontological security at larger levels, such as the community or the state. Additionally, Duncan Bell has drawn attention to the way events, such as war and genocide, "generate serious challenges to communal self-understandings" (2006, 5). While the language of community can be broad, I focus explicitly on the way one type of political community (i.e. states) comes together through shared memories of a traumatic event, and the particular efforts of the state to narrate one specific understanding of the event in the midst of contested meanings and trauma's disruptions to linear time.

After a traumatic event or crisis, such as political violence, that poses a challenge to ontological security, the state often steps in to manage trauma via the mechanism of memorialization, primarily because of the threat posed to the cohe-

sion and identity of the self (in this case the state) by the traumatic event. Emma Hutchison and Roland Bleiker note that political elites often seek to impose order as a way of dealing with trauma, which can perpetuate exclusion through the reinforcing of the identity of the community (Hutchison & Bleiker 2008, 386; see also Bell 2006, Edkins 2006). Such language draws on the identity basis for the formation of the primary political community: the state. Indeed, as Andreas Huyssen (2000) notes, though memory discourses are globalized, at their core they remain inextricably connected to specific groups, often states. Others have begun to illustrate the connections between memory and ontological security more explicitly (Gustafsson 2014). Indeed, Alexandria Innes and Brent Steele note that "insecurity develops in the ontological security-seeking process in a variety of ways, and trauma presents a radical form of that insecurity – a rupture of the consistent self through time and space" (2014, 15). While such insecurity calls into question the very identity of the self, Innes and Steele note that "trauma can also serve as a springboard to political contestation, creating space for a biographical narrative to be reaffirmed or rewritten through political action" (2014, 17; see also Steele 2008).

Specifically, burial can act as a mechanism of establishing identity. Burial is a cultural practice which is heavily reliant on the relational bonds that bind families and communities. As Marina Kaneti and Mariana Prandini Assis note, "Because of their materiality and concreteness, dead bodies have the power to localize and give material meaning to a number of political claims and symbolic associations" (2016, 298). While this focus is often on the individual closure provided to family members through burial, burial is often key to our conception of community bonds, and more broadly, to belonging within the state. For this reason, burying those, understood to be outside of these communities, can be hotly contested. As an example, part of recent cultural genocide against the Turkic Uighur minority,[1] the Chinese government has not only destroyed mosques in the Xinjiang region of China, it has

[1] For additional context, please see the Spetmber 2018 report by Human Rights Watch entitled "Eradicating Ideological Viruses": China's Campaign of Repression Against Xinjiang's Muslims, available at https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/09/09/eradicating-ideological-viruses/chinas-campaign-repression-against-xinjiangs

also desecrated Uighur cemeteries under the auspices of "urban development", though some Uighurs also report that China has set up "burial management centres" which carry out an agenda of cultural destruction through unburying bodies. As one Uighur, whose ancestors' graves were demolished, noted: "This is all part of China's campaign to effectively eradicate any evidence of who we are…That's why they're destroying all of these historical sites, these cemeteries, to disconnect us from our history, from our fathers and our ancestors" (Smith 2019). In other words, who is buried and where is not simply a private discussion, but one which sheds light on borders of political communities: burial is one arena that enforces who belongs (Auchter 2013). "Who we are," and perhaps, who "we" are not, is a key facet of state identity, as scholars have demonstrated (Doty 1996; Weldes 1996; Campbell 1998; Neumann 1999), and burying bodies in particular ways or places or desecrating graves can be a powerful message by the state about who belongs.

Ontological security framing extends this further and argues that such understandings of identity are themselves also practices of security, as I argue here. After genocide, this is, perhaps, even more salient, as identity of the state is thrown into disarray, and national memorialization efforts are often twinned with grave management.[2] Specifically, states engage in public grave management through burial, excavation, and reburial, as I illustrate more extensively in later sections, as a means of solidifying a particular identity drawn from an understanding of the past. Reburial was a common practice in the transition from the post-Soviet era, for example, such as in Estonia where de-Sovietization often involved exhumation of gravesites of Soviet soldiers from monuments to military cemeteries to rewrite the memory of the past (Kattago 2009). Katherine Verdery (1999) has similarly described how sovereignty coalesces around particular dead bodies and the use of ex-

[2] For example, Young (1993) traces the way in which remnants of broken Jewish tombstones became iconographic ways of enacting public memory in Poland, and also draws attention to the use of tombstone imagery in the granite shards at the Holocaust memorial at the former site of the Treblinka concentration camp. As another example, at the Kigali Genocide Memorial in Rwanda, interior rooms display skulls and bones in display cases, and the outdoor area contains large slabs in which hundreds of thousands of victims are interred. The dignity given to human remains is then key to the larger story told at the memorial site.

humation as a tool in the context of 1980s Eastern Europe. Her main argument is that dead bodies are used to express a state's territorial claims, similar to my claim about how dead body management functions to construct and express identity. In short, there is widespread agreement that what is done to particular dead bodies can function as a form of crafting state identity in the midst of, or following, times of trauma and crisis which rupture previously held understandings.

To sum up, ontological security helps us understand state identity construction through the management of the dead. Precisely, states seek to impose linear narratives during moments of uncertainty and trauma. This is key to how they imagine themselves and construct notions of national or community identity. Management of graves, whether it be burial, reburial, or desecration, sends a powerful message about "who we are" and is key to the way states establish and reinforce their identities as political communities with particular sets of values and particular understandings of who belongs. These identities, as ontological security theorists note, are essential to states' practices of security.

3. Gravesites as Contested Spaces and State Management of the Dead

Gravesites often raise larger questions about state management of collective memory. The significance of historical memory remains contested, and the debates over what should be done with dead bodies, both single and mass graves, shed light on contestations over state identity itself. Various types of actors seek to intervene in public narration of particular dead bodies, as I will illustrate below. This section uses two vastly different recent cases of individual bodies to draw out the argument that the story of what happened to the dead and the dynamics, in which they come into the public eye, are contested by various groups. This contestation forms a threat to the ontological security of the state, which the state responds to by managing bodies, often through the mechanism of burial or reburial. Specifically, I consider some cases of state burials and exhumations to be instances of the state's exercise of ontological security. First, I use recent debates over the exhumation of

Spanish dictator Francisco Franco to illustrate the relationship between the state and the question of dead body management. I argue that the state's management of this case represents its desire to craft its identity, to shore up its values and to circulate a particular image of the nation in relation to its history. Second, I examine the debate over refugee burial in Germany to illustrate how what happens to particular bodies can be something contested between non-state actors and the state. Ontological security seeking behaviour is a response to the trauma caused by the presence of particular bodies, but challenges to state authority can actually be challenges to state identity.

In September 2019, Spain's Supreme Court ruled that Francisco Franco's body could be legally exhumed by the Spanish government. Franco, whose dictatorial regime was responsible for the deaths of approximately 200,000 people (Payne 2012), had been buried in an underground basilica and monumental memorial which he had constructed. The Spanish government sought to excavate this grave as a means of atoning for the perpetration of atrocity under Franco. Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez noted that the exhumation was motivated by "the determination to compensate for the suffering of the victims" (Minder 2019). The exhumation was contested by Franco's estate and descendants, and by right-wing party Vox, which labelled the plan to exhume Franco's body a "profanation of graves" (Minder 2019). What is most interesting about this example is, first, that the debate over historical memory of political violence in Spain came to a head over one very singular dead body and its fate, and second, that the plan to exhume Franco's body was characterized by the state as "a great victory of Spanish democracy," (Minder 2019), in the words of Prime Minister Sanchez. In other words, Franco's exhumation was situated within a larger logic of dead body management in which particular dead bodies in particular places are potentially dangerous symbols of something which the state does not want to symbolize, and that the success of Spanish democracy was directly connected to the management of this particular body. There is also a wider context, here, of the way in which Prime Minister Sanchez came to power on a platform, that would seek to reckon with Spanish history. In 2007, Spain passed a law to fi-

nance the excavation of more than 2000 mass graves of Franco's victims from the 1930s Spanish Civil War era, but this policy was deprived of funding under Mariano Rajoy's government. Sanchez, then, seeks to expand the focus on historical memory through attention not only to these mass graves, but also to Franco's grave itself. In other words, dead body management is here envisioned as a kind of statecraft.

To connect this back to the larger discussion of ontological security, the decision of the Spanish government to exhume Franco's body, to be reburied in a private cemetery, is an attempt to construct, reinforce, and solidify the identity of the state by advancing a particular narrative of how Spain should relate to its past. In this case, Sanchez's goal is to mark a distance between the state as it was under Franco and the modern Spanish state, the need for a "stable self", that so many theorists of ontological security emphasize as a key component (Kinnvall & Mitzen 2017). The significance, then, is in the way that states tell stories of themselves as a means to construct their identities as stable selves (Steele 2008; Subotic 2016).

While states are often the key actors engaged in ontological security-seeking behaviour, non-state groups may use burial sites or debates about human dignity of the dead to raise critiques about state identity and management. In 2015, groups of protesters, critical of the failure of the European Union to account for the refugee crisis and the rising anti-immigrant and anti-refugee sentiment across Europe, converged in Berlin. The protesters' week of action art was entitled "Die Toten Kommen": The Dead Are Coming. Their focus was on the deaths of refugees crossing the Mediterranean to Europe. As detailed by von Bieberstein and Evren:

> "The group had invited the residents of Berlin to join them in giving a proper burial to the dead refugees of the European border regime, often laid to rest in unmarked graves or simply crammed into morgues along the coasts and borders. 'The Dead Are Coming' began with the transport of the bodies of Syrian refugees who had died in the Mediterranean and were brought by the ZPS from Italy to Berlin to be given a proper funeral ceremony… According to news reporting of the initiative at the time it was first launched, ten grave sites had been opened, bodies had been exhumed, and hundreds of drowned dead were on their way to Berlin. According

> to their own information, members of the group had collaborated with local authorities and networks. They had inspected graves and cold storage houses, where they found corpses in garbage bags negligently stacked upon one another. They succeeded in identifying and determining relatives, and together with the consent and support of those relatives exhumed bodies that had been buried without any care or dignity" (2015, 454-6).

What we see here is groups seeking to unbury the dead in an attempt to put into question the identity of the state: in this case specifically to critique its policy towards refugees. By articulating refugee dead as a contested issue, the protesters put into question the ability of the state to manage the crisis, but even more substantively for my analysis here, they put into question the very identity claims of the state as one which engages humanely with the vulnerable refugee figure. This not only demonstrates how dead bodies and the question of burial are contested, but also how burial can become an issue at the heart of how states build and structure their own identities, key to the framing of ontological security. There are also similar cases where family groups seek to materialize the bodies of the missing, such as the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, who demand the reappearance of the missing from the Dirty War, or where relatives of those who die from drug cartel violence in Mexico have taken up their own forensic examination of the dead (Schwartz-Marin & Cruz-Santiago 2016, 484). These acts challenge the state's narrative and its inability to protect people, and elucidate the everyday circumstances of political violence.

To sum up, dead body management becomes significant in its reflection on the state's functioning (Auchter 2016) and to go further, on its identity. Gravesites are contested spaces that are local, national, and transnational. In both the cases of the exhumation of Franco's dead body and in the debate over refugee dead in the European Union, dead bodies act as potent political symbols. Managing and narrating these symbols, then becomes key to the identity construction of the state, as a means to manage the disruption these bodies, and the contestation over them, can cause. When it comes to mass graves, appropriate management is often envisioned in very different ways by genocide survivors, national governments and in-

ternational observers (Wagner 2008). What counts as giving dignity to the victims often wars with larger political narratives, as I explore in the next section.

4. Reburial: Excavating Mass Graves and the Politics of Memorialization in Rwanda

This section focuses on instances of genocide and mass atrocity and on the excavation of mass graves for the purposes of reburying the bodies, specifically in the case of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. I argue here that the burial of bodies after mass atrocity demonstrates how states secure identity through memorialization. In Rwanda, bodies were exhumed for the purposes of proper reburial and such reburial became a public exercise of memory that served to construct state identity in the face of the non-linearity of trauma. Because mass graves are sites where questions of human dignity come to the fore, they are also productive sites of examination of the role of the state and its management in memorialization as a form of governance, particularly considering their status as transnational memorial sites. It is, indeed, precisely because of their transnational nature that they become significant sites for the reassertion of governance via statecraft. As a result, I seek to examine the processes by which burial and reburial become mechanisms of the state performing ontological security. Specifically, I argue that imposing structure and organization on the bodies through reburial is exemplary of the state's desire to tell a particular memorial narrative that is inherently about constructing the nation, a key facet of identity construction identified by ontological security scholars as security-seeking behaviour, though it is often done in the name of providing dignity to the dead. This is not to suggest that it cannot do both at the same time. Instead, we should acknowledge that memorial practices have their own associated politics and are not necessarily apolitical the way they often claim to be. Burying the dead can be a useful tool of statecraft to construct and reinforce particular identities, and graves can be key material sites at which historical memory is contested or delineated. In other words, the Rwandan case should be seen as exemplary of a larger context of

the politics of burial as a mechanism of governance and identity construction and management, where states bury or rebury bodies as a way to assert particular features of identity, particularly in times of crisis or when they perceive that identity as under threat.

Rwanda, as a case, fits the larger discussion of ontological security in earlier parts of this paper in terms of the state's need to construct identity: after the genocide, individuals, communities, and the new government had to reckon with the larger trauma of the genocide itself. More than ten percent of the country's population had been killed (Cobban 2007). Because of the intimate nature of the killing and the large percentage of society that had been perpetrators, the Rwandan state had to deal with problems of social reconciliation, legal prosecution, economic instability, political rehabilitation, and international intervention. This trauma shattered conventional notions of time (Viebach 2019). Though the material problem of what to do about a large number of bodies was an issue for state management in these early days after the genocide, as I have noted elsewhere (Auchter 2014). My focus here is on the time period a decade later, when the Rwandan state began a large-scale effort to memorialize the genocide, a key feature of reconstructing the very identity of the Rwandan state. Along with this came the policy of excavating these primary mass graves to create proper gravesites for the dead.

I should note here that in the Rwandan case, there were often multiple burials, excavations, and reburials over time. Initial burials were often done at the sites of large-scale killing themselves, typically by the perpetrators, at times using heavy construction equipment (Korman 2015). Sometimes initial burials were done by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) forces as they took over the country and felt the need to hastily bury bodies that they came across, and by returned survivors in the immediate months following the genocide, as they returned to their towns and villages, with bodies that had been left in situ where they had been killed. Some survivors, upon returning to their areas, exhumed bodies from graves and reburied them individually, typically on their own property (Jessee 2012). Though it is a bit imprecise, I adopt the term "primary graves" to refer to these.

Though at first, survivors organized ad hoc exhumations when they returned to their former homes, this posed some difficulty because of the cost associated with exhumation and reburial, particularly given that most survivor returnees were quite poor (Korman 2015). The Catholic Church often provided funding and logistical assistance, as Remi Korman (2015, 205) notes. In the years immediately following the genocide, burials took place under the auspices of the church. If a victim was identified after the exhumation by the clothing worn, families often wanted to bury the remains on their own property (Korman 2015). Still, due to the cost and logistics, "temporary mass graves would become permanent because it was too much work to find and exhume loved ones who might be entangled in the compost of cadavers underground" (Off 2001, 243).

In 1995 and 1996, a more substantive set of exhumations occurred, primarily in Kigali and Kibuye, conducted by the non-governmental organization Physicians for Human Rights, working alongside the new Rwandan government. These primarily served the purpose of evidence gathering for the growing body of evidence being used to support the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda's indictment (Jessee 2012; Koff 2005). The government characterized these exhumations in terms of assuaging the "spiritual violence experienced by many Rwandans as a result of having been unable to bury and mourn their missing loved ones according to tradition" (Jessee 2013, unpaginated).

Over time, however, as state institutions rebuilt themselves, the government fully took over exhumations and reburials, focusing on the mass grave as a public space. The Ministry of Work and Social Affairs created the "emergency decent burial programme," the objective of which was "collective reburial of victims exhumed from primary mass graves" (Korman 2015, 205). I refer to these new gravesites as "secondary graves."[3] While it was first funded by the World Health Organization and UNICEF, in 1996, it became officially incorporated within the

[3] This is complicated further by the fact that some of these secondary mass graves were also excavated and reburied, primarily for practical reasons such as they were not watertight. While significant, this is beyond the scope of my argument here, and thus I focus primarily on the state excavation of primary graves.

budget of the Genocide Memorial Commission within the Ministry of Culture (Korman 2015). In 2008, Rwanda passed a law that focused on genocide cemeteries and memorials: "memorial sites and cemeteries for victims of the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi shall be in the public domain…remains of genocide victims which were formerly buried shall be transferred to genocide memorial sites and cemeteries as provided for by this Law" (as quoted in Korman 2015, 207). Indeed, the Rwandan government requires that all victims be reburied at a local state-funded genocide memorial (Jessee 2013 unpaginated). Burial, which started out as an individual process and event, over time became part of the state's mechanism for reasserting its identity.

The official state policy of the Rwandan government, then, is that each genocide victim deserves a dignified burial. Concealing the location of graves from the genocide is a crime in Rwanda (Camino-Gonzalez 2019). This is why, even twenty-five years after the genocide, when new primary graves are discovered, the bodies are disinterred and then reburied at a central memorial site. In 2019, for example, 84,437 new bodies were discovered in a neighbourhood, underneath the foundation of houses, disinterred, and then reburied at Nyanza genocide memorial (Camino-Gonzalez 2019). At the reburial ceremony, Justice Minister Johnston Busingye noted: "Commemorating the genocide against the Tutsi is every Rwandan's responsibility—and so is giving them [the victims] a decent burial" (Camino-Gonzalez 2019, unpaginated).

However, as Remi Korman (2015, 206) notes, the meaning of "decent burial" has shifted and been re-interpreted over time. Early on this meant

> "bodies simply being placed in mass graves on top of plastic sheeting, sometimes still clothed and mixed in with the personal effects of the dead. With the improving economic situation of the early 2000s, this type of burial came to be seen as degrading. Some of the new exhumations of secondary mass graves can thus be explained by a desire to give a 'proper' decent burial, involving the washing of bones, the separation of bodies from other objects, and the placing of human remains in draped coffins…Lastly, this new interpretation of decent burial was accompanied from the mid-2000s onwards by an economic and administrative rationalization of

the treatment of bodies. This rationalization was first and foremost economic, owing to the cost of preserving and maintaining the cemeteries and memorials to the genocide. Genocide cemeteries were thus grouped with larger cemeteries and memorial sites…The most contentious matter in this respect concerned bodies being buried by surviving family members on their own land. Following numerous land reforms, in particular in the city of Kigali, large-scale expropriations and population movements have occurred since the end of the 1990s. This new situation has made keeping bodies on private land very difficult. These exhumation policies are often carried out in difficult circumstances. Such repeated exhumations are extremely painful for survivors. If the burial of a body is commonly considered as a moment of closure in the mourning process, what is one to make of the impact of a second, third, or even fourth official exhumation/reburial of this same body? These various policies of exhumation and reburial cut across one another, sometimes in quite contradictory ways, making the process of burial at a national level difficult to read" (Korman 2015, 206).

While Korman's point is that burial narratives at the national level are muddled and contradictory, I would argue, instead, that the multiple layers of exhumation and reburial offer significant insight into the Rwandan state's attempts to construct, reinforce, and reiterate its ontological security relative to the memory of the genocide. As Laura Major notes, "for the RPF, the genocide corpse as a symbol and as a spectacle is an entrenched and constantly circulating tool of political power, and these collective memorial remains have important capital in this respect" (Major 2015, 167). The repeated exhumations may seem contradictory, as Korman articulates, but when viewed within the context of the "genocide corpse" as a key political symbol to be managed by the Rwandan government, the repetitive process of exhumation and burial makes sense. That is, it can be contextualized within the larger need of the Rwandan state to perform its identity relative to the genocide.

When I last visited Rwanda in 2011, I stopped at the offices of IBUKA, the umbrella survivor's organization, in Kigali. Outside, I saw people sitting on fabric that was spread out across the ground, sorting small pieces of something into stacks. Behind that was large excavator equipment turning over the ground. I as-

sumed something was being built. When I asked, I was told that this was the former site of a garbage collection area, that during the genocide had been used to dump bodies of the dead. The entire hillside had been covered with corpses that had, over time, been covered by dirt to form makeshift shallow mass graves. This was the site where many of the bodies of the victims, who had died at the ETO, had been placed. The construction project I had perceived was in fact an excavation project, to exhume the bodies, separate the fabric and other personal items from the bones, and to clean and organize the bones so that they could be buried in a mass grave. One interesting disjuncture in many of the mass graves in Rwanda is that they contain both individual coffins, which may hold multiple sets of human remains each, and typically shelving that holds bones sorted by type: a shelf of skulls, a shelf of long leg bones. The coffins are usually from more recent additions. As noted above, the sorting and cleaning of bones has become a ritualized part of dignified burial, even as the wishes of some survivors for individual gravesites and for private burials on their own land have been disregarded (Jessee 2012; Korman 2015).

This is not to say that all survivors want individual private burials. Indeed, many survivors have found comfort in the national forms of commemoration that have bolstered a strong sense of state identity. Some have suggested that, though mass burials were not part of Rwandan culture in the past, neither was genocide, extraordinary events require changes in cultural frames regarding what is done with the dead, as Julia Viebach has noted (2015). Other survivors believe that the government effort to excavate primary mass graves and rebury bodies is undignified and legitimizes government power rather than honoring victims, as Erin Jessee has noted (2013). This disagreement demonstrates that survivors in Rwanda are not a monolithic category, and their understandings of dignity and memory are varied. Viebach has also noted that survivors may experience time differently than others, and that the process of care-taking at memorial sites generates a different type of trauma time than we see typically attributed to memorialization (Viebach 2019). In this sense, graves and memorials are contested spaces in Rwanda, even among survivors, who do not necessarily agree on what constitutes dignity. Yet, the significant

process, for my purposes here, is how the state seeks to simplify some of this contestation and tension as a means to generate state-level memorial and reburial processes. For the Rwandan state, genocide memory is something which itself resides at the level of the state, key to its understanding of its own security.[4]

Laura Major notes the same thing with regards to her field work in Rwanda, emphasizing the way in which teams of largely Tutsi genocide survivors carry out the work of exhumation and sorting bones: "the human remains are unravelled, with personal possessions, clothes, identity cards, bones, flesh and other soft tissues separated one from another. If a skeletal structure is recovered intact, it is disarticulated. Separate piles of collected bones and amassed soft flesh are created. These exhumations therefore have a very particular outcome, regardless of their status when unearthed. Human remains that could bear the traces of individual identity are almost always rendered anonymous" (Major 2015, 165). She emphasizes the way in which these survivor-exhumers operate within a larger political context of tenuous economic and social security, making their allegiance to the RPF government a key way to ensure social and economic stability. She notes that, as a result, many survivors see the interment in central memorial sites as "an acceptable compromise in the absence of more traditional funerary rites and burial customs" (Major 2015, 167). The notion of what constitutes dignified burial is imposed from the top down, as part of the identity performance of the Rwandan state relative to the history of the genocide. Again, this is not to say that survivors may not in many cases support this type of memorialization, but rather that the reburial agenda is a state agenda, designed to reimpose a linear understanding of the historical event of genocide, rather than solely a communal mourning ritual.

The Rwandan state, then, has a larger aim in the context of these reburials. As Korman (2015, 207) notes, "for the majority of survivors, the priority since 1994

[4] I should clarify here that I am not making a normative judgement about the Rwandan government in this regard. Rather, all states engage in ontological security seeking behavior. This provides an interesting case for what that looks like in a post-atrocity context. While there is room to critique the process in Rwanda, the creation of national memory and unity out of genocide is also a monumental and impressive task.

has been to identify individuals. Every survivor would like to find the body of every member of their family. For the state, the principal concern is the collective identification of victims. Victims are thus identified purely as victims of the genocide, and for the state this anonymity is a reflection of the identity of the crime itself. Genocide does not target individuals but rather a collective, and it is the latter which is identified as the victim". The burial of victims, then, is part of the mechanism by which the state constructs the narrative of the genocide via its victims. State management of the exhumation process emphasizes the public nature of burial by invoking the exceptional circumstances of genocide. As a result, the state can secure its own identity with reference to the event. Out of the trauma, the rupture to state identity, ontological security can be performed by regulating genocide discourse, a part of which is the ability to define what constitutes human dignity and instructing the memorial site visitor to engage with victims as a class of persons more so than as individuals, as I have noted elsewhere (Auchter 2014).

I want to return to the question posed in Korman's (2015) lengthy quote above, about the impact of multiple exhumations of the same body. While one way the state regulates genocide discourse, as a mechanism of ontological security, is via the idea of a "dignified burial", there is another narrative at play here, that invokes the importance of human remains as evidence of the genocide. Laura Major (2015, 168) describes the reburial at Nyanza as exemplary of this: A mass grave was constructed in 1995 by the new post-genocide state to give the victims a dignified burial. Yet, the graves were not watertight. A government official at the ceremony to open the graves suggested the bodies were at risk of "disappearing" and that they needed to be properly buried again to remain as "proof of genocide."[5] The government law about reburial emphasizes the significance of new secondary mass graves as memorial sites. These memorial sites function to perform a particular narrative

[5] There is an interesting dynamic here with regards to bodies-as-evidence, since this same argument is made about proof to justify the display of bodies at memorial sites such as Murambi, as I have noted elsewhere (Auchter 2014). While a full analysis of body display is outside the scope of this project, given my focus on burial, the fact that the argument of evidence is mustered to justify multiple types of outcomes with regards to dead bodies does lend credence to my argument that this is a political narrative rather than one directly related to body dignity.

about the genocide, but perhaps more importantly, about the importance of evidence to guard against genocide denial. The current Rwandan government under Kagame paints the threat of genocide denial as ever-present. While genocide denial is certainly an issue, both for Rwanda and more broadly, the need for the state to control the way memorial sites function and the way they commemorate the past should be interpreted in light of ontological security seeking behaviours, specifically to solidify state identity in the face of contestation. The evidentiary component of mass graves, then, acts as a reminder that the potential for ethnic division remains, and if this is the case, there is increased legitimacy to the authoritarian moves the government has made to control the media and limit dissent (see Sundaram 2016).

To sum up, the Rwandan governments reburial programmes can be read in the context of ontological security seeking behaviour. Memory management emerges through exhumation and reburial of genocide victims as a means to construct the identity of the Rwandan state in relation to a particular understanding of its past, by performing the role of memory-actor through the reburial process. When the state defines and manages human dignity, this may bring order to a society fractured by genocide. At times this may be exclusionary, by coming at the expense of survivor perspectives, while at other times, it may be in line with the wishes of survivors. Memorialization in general may be a complex negotiation of multiple perspectives, holding inherent tensions within (Ibreck 2010). Regardless, we should consider memorial sites and processes of burial and reburial to be key meaning-making practices.

5. Conclusions

This paper has suggested that burial and reburial are key mechanisms of governance utilized by states in seeking ontological security. In Section Two, I first traced how burial fits with the larger focus on national identity and memorialization in trauma governance in recent ontological security literature. Burying bodies can become public exercises that construct and reinforce state identity by delineating

notions of who belongs in the state and by emphasizing particular ways of engaging with the past. Examining multiple different cases in the rest of the paper allowed me to show how this logic manifests in in different ways, even while the constant is state involvement in managing the dead as a mechanism of ontological security construction. In Section Three, I mobilized two disparate examples to illustrate how dead bodies and what happens to them can be politically contested. As a result of this contestation, states exert control over contested spaces by establishing a unitary narrative of the past through management of the dead that functions to solidify their identities. This has important implications for a variety of contexts, not least the post-genocide context, which I addressed in Section Four.

I noted that in Rwanda, processes of burial and reburial illustrate the ways in which memory is key to the identity of the Rwandan state, and they function as ways for the state to fix its identity in the face of the disruption of the trauma of the genocide. This generates some complex implications for the role of survivors in memorialization, as at times they benefit from the comfort provided by the fixity of state identity, while other survivors may feel excluded by state-centric processes. While I limited my focus to Rwanda, there is room for additional research on what this ontological security seeking behaviour looks like and the alternative forms it may take in other cases, such as Bosnia or Cambodia. Lingering questions still remain about how ontological security seeking behaviour, largely regarded as normatively positive by many scholars, may intersect with democratic decline when states mobilize control over the past in ways that are exclusionary. While it was beyond the scope of this paper to examine this, my focus on state control over memory raises questions about these dynamics that could be taken up in future research.

References

Auchter, J 2013, 'Border Monuments: Memory, Counter-Memory, and (B)ordering Practices Along the US-Mexico Border', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 39, no. 2, pp. 291-311. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210512000174

Auchter, J 2014, *The Politics of Haunting and Memory in International Relations*, Routledge, London.

Auchter, J 2016, 'Paying Attention to Dead Bodies: The Future of Security Studies?', *Journal of Global Security Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 36-50. https://doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogv005

Bell, D 2006, ed, Memory, *Trauma, and World Politics*, Palgrave, London.

Campbell, D 1998, *Writing Security*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Camino-Gonzalez, J 2019, 'Rwanda Buries Remains of Nearly 85,000 Genocide Victims', *DW*, May 5, viewed 17 June, 2020, <https://www.dw.com/en/rwanda-buries-remains-of-nearly-85000-genocide-victims/a-48604654>

Cobban, H 2007, *Amnesty After Atrocity*, Routledge, London.

Doty, R 1996, *Imperial Encounters: The Politics of Representation in North-South Relations*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Edkins, J 2006, 'Remembering Relationality: Trauma Time and Politics in D Bell, (ed), *Memory, Trauma, and World Politics*, pp. 99-115.

Gustafsson, K 2014, 'Memory Politics and Ontological Security in Sino-Japanese Relations', *Asian Studies Review*, vol. 38, no. 1, pp. 71-86. https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2013.852156

Hutchison, E & Bleiker, R 2008, 'Emotional Reconciliation: Reconstituting Identity and Community After Trauma', *European Journal of Social Theory*, vol. 11, no. 3, pp. 385-403.

Huysmans, J 1998, 'Security! What Do You Mean?: From Concept to Thick Signifier', *European Journal of International Relations* , vol. 4, pp. 226–255. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066198004002004

Huyssen, A, 2000, 'Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia', *Public Culture*, vol.12, no. 1, pp. 21–38.

Ibreck, R 2010, 'The Politics of Mourning: Survivor Contributions to Memorials in Post-Genocide Rwanda', *Memory Studies* vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 330-343. https://doi.org/10.1177/1750698010374921

Innes, AJ & Steele, B 2014, 'Memory, Trauma and Ontological Security', In E Resende & D Budryte (eds), Routledge, London.

Jessee, E 2012, 'Promoting Reconciliation Through Exhuming and Identifying Victims in the 1994 Rwandan Genocide'*, CIGI Africa Discussion Paper,* vol. 4, pp. 4-22.

Jessee, E 2013, 'Lessons From Post-Genocide Rwanda: The Location, Identification, and Respectful Burial of the Anonymous Victims of Mass Atrocities', *Justice and Reconciliation Project*, January 22, viewed 17 June, 2020, <http://www.justiceandreconciliation.org/uncategorized/2013/lessons-from-post-genocide-rwanda/>

Kaneti, M & Prandini Assis, M 2016, '(Re)Branding the State: Humanitarian Border Control and the Moral Imperative of State Sovereignty', *Social Research,* vol. 83, no. 2, pp. 295-325.

Kattago, S 2009, 'War Memorials and the Politics of Memory: The Soviet War Memorial in Tallinn', *Constellations,* vol 16, no. 1, pp. 150-166. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8675.2009.00525.x

Kinnvall, C 2004, 'Globalization and Religious Nationalism: Self, Identity, and the Search for Ontological Security', *Political Psychology*, vol.25, no. 5, pp. 741-767.

Kinnvall, C, & Mitzen, J 2017, 'An Introduction to the Special Issue: Ontological Securities in World Politics', *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 52, no. 1, pp. 3-11. https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836716653162

Koff, C 2005, *The Bone Woman*, Random House, New York.

Korman, R 2015, 'Bury or Display? The Politics of Exhumation in post-genocide Rwanda', in Anstett E and Dreyfus J-M (eds), *Human Remains and Identification: Mass Violence, Genocide, and the Forensic Turn*, Manchester University Press, pp. 203-220.

Major, L 2015, 'Unearthing, untangling and re-articulating genocide corpses in Rwanda', *Critical African Studies,* vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 164-181. https://doi.org/10.1080/21681392.2015.1028206

Malksoo, M 2009, 'The Memory Politics of Becoming European: The East European Subalterns and the Collective Memory of Europe', *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 653-680. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066109345049

McSweeney, B 1999, *Security, Identity, and Interests: A Sociology of International Relations*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Minder, R 2019, 'Spanish Court Approves Franco's Exhumation', *The New York Times*, September 24, viewed 17 June, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/24/world/europe/spain-franco-exhume.html>

Mitzen, J 2006, 'Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma', *European Journal of International Relations,* vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 341-370. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066106067346

Neumann, I 1999, 'Uses of The Other: The East in European Identity Formation', University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Nichanian, M 2003, 'Catastrophic Mourning', in Eng S & Kazanjian S (eds), *Loss*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, pp. 99-124.

Off, C 2001, *The Lion, The Fox, and The Eagle*, Vintage Canada, Toronto.

Payne, S 2012, *The Spanish Civil War*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Prager, J 2008, 'Healing From History: Psychoanalytic Considerations on Traumatic Pasts and Social Repair', *European Journal of Social Theory*, vol. 11, no. 3, pp. 405-420. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368431008092570

Schwartz-Marin, E & Cruz-Santiago, A 2016, 'Pure Corpses, Dangerous Citizens: Transgressing the Boundaries between Experts and Mourners in the Search for the Disappeared in Mexico', *Social Research,* vol. 83, no. 2, pp. 483-510.

Smith, N 2019, 'China destroys dozens of Uighur cemeteries in drive to 'eradicate' cultural history of Muslims', *The Telegraph*, October 9, viewed 17 June, 2020.

Steele, B 2008, *Ontological Security in International Relations*, Routledge, London.

Subotic, J 2016, 'Narrative, ontological Security, and Foreign Policy Change', *Foreign Policy Analysi*s, vol. 12, pp. 610-627. https://doi.org/10.1111/fpa.12089

Sundaram, A 2016, *Bad News: Last Journalists in a Dictatorship*, Anchor, New York.

Verdery, K 1999, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies*, Columbia University Press, New York.

Viebach, J 2015, 'Talking to Julia Viebach, Rwandan Memorial Researcher',Genocide Archive of Rwanda, 13 May, available at http://genocidearchiverwanda.org.rw/blog/?p=191

Viebach, J 2019, 'Of Other Times: Temporality, Memory, and Trauma in Post-Genocide Rwanda', *International Review of Victimology*, vol.25, no. 3, pp. 277-301. https://doi.org/10.1177/0269758019833281

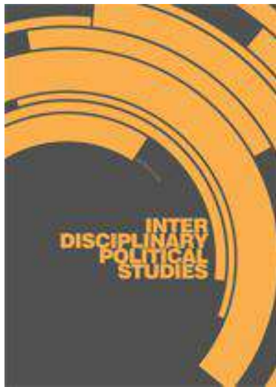
von Bieberstein, A and Evren, A 2016, 'From Aggressive Humanism to Improper Mourning: Burying the Victims of Europe's Border Regime in Berlin', *Social Research,* vol. 83, no. 2, pp. 453-479.

Wagner, S 2008, *To Know Where He Lies: DNA Technology and the Search for Srebrenica's Missing*, University of California Press, Los Angeles.

Wang, Z 2012, *Never forget national humiliation: Historical memory in Chinese politics and foreign relations*, Columbia University Press, New York.

Weldes, J 1996, *Constructing National Interests: The US and the Cuban Missile Crisis*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Young, J 1993, *The Texture of Memory*, Yale University Press, New Haven.



Interdisciplinary Political Studies
http://siba-ese.unisalento.it/index.php/idps
ISSN: 2039-8573 (electronic version)

IdPS, Issue 6(1) 2020: 139-166
DOI: 10.1285/i20398573v6n1p139
Published: July 15, 2020

RESEARCH ARTICLE

TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE AND MEMORY POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY ETHIOPIA

Yohannes Gedamu
Georgia Gwinnett College

ABSTRACT
Ethiopia's successive regimes have encountered challenges of implementing transitional justice mechanisms in post transitional periods. Tracing implementation of transitional justice mechanisms, how such attempts shaped memory politics and by reviewing the country's contemporary history, the article shows that justice has mostly transpired in the form of punishing a political ideology than holding individuals accountable. The recording of history and understanding of the past events and memories also lack consensus. Moreover, entrenched ethnic politics has also made implementation of justice mechanisms and addressing issues of memory politics extremely challenging. Taking these into account, the article concludes that institutional ineffectiveness and entrenched ethnic politics have affected transitional justice processes and issues of memory politics in Ethiopia's context.

KEYWORDS: Ethiopia; Transitional Justice; Memory Politics; Punishing Ideology; Ethnic Politics; Ethnic Federalism

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:
Yohannes Gedamu (ygedamu@ggc.edu)
1000 University Center Lane, Lawrenceville, GA 30043. USA

Work licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non commercial-Share alike 3.0 Italian License

1. Introduction

Transitional justice, as this paper posits, refers to legal as well as political efforts, whereby past crimes are investigated, suspects are tried and those with verified history of perpetration of crimes against humanity or other broader sets of crimes against the state and the citizenry are held accountable. In doing so, transitional justice mechanisms, whether implemented via restorative or retributive approaches, help make an important departure from the unwanted past and the transition into a fresh start serve as well as a necessary step to reach a relative success in addressing memory politics challenges. In that regard, transitional justice, according to this article, weighs more on whether the laws were aptly served or applied in post transitional periods, with respect to the case in contemporary Ethiopia (Teitel 2000). However, the article also recognizes the evolutionary growth in the study of transitional justice as it pertains to matters of advocacy related to conflict resolution and processes of democratization, among many others (Subotic 2012). With regards to the topic of memory politics, this article also focuses on how successive Ethiopian political regimes portrayed their perceptions of what happened in the regimes they replaced, in similar ways with Stefan Troebst's (2011) assertion, which refers to how some contemporary Eastern European regimes attempted to portray what happened in the prior communist regimes or other forms of governments, that preceded them. Indeed, regimes' attempts either to justify or receive easy passes on current mistakes by citing old regimes' weak points might not be that surprising; however, the fact that regimes in Ethiopia seemed to justify recent decisions made or lack thereof by comparing it with the failures of their predecessors seem common as well.

Nevertheless, the issue of transitional justice and memory politics in Ethiopia still remain understudied. The trials and court rulings targeting former politicians and groups that had controlled political power during different eras and absence of important justice procedures in certain cases have, however, contributed in shaping different and at times tensely conflicting perceptions on such topics. Indeed, undealt with past traumatic experiences from the 1970s and 1980s -

especially with respect to what happened in the history of urban warfare from the era that is commonly known as 'reign of terror' - remain by in large understudied. Moreover, the ways in which the military regime known as *Dergue* (1974-1991) punished former government officials, that had served under Emperor Haile Selassie's regime, and how such actions transpired, deserve in particular further research since much is not known on how these events might have affected the national politics of memory in general terms (Shifaw 2012). The lack of both dealing with past memory and proper implementation of transitional justice mechanisms have therefore caused unending debates and generational assignments, that need to be addressed further.

This article hence argues that the fact that Ethiopia's legal institutional capacities are weaker, political elites and regimes' greater focus on punishing political ideologies than the crimes, and ethnicization of approaches to address past crimes have created gaps in the implementation of transitional justice mechanisms in Ethiopia. In doing so, it argues such causal assumptions are responsible for the failure of transitional justice mechanisms in bringing about a desired result, i.e. the need to break from the past with relative consensus on the solution rendered. Of course, targets of achieving wide consensus on most debates inevitably will be difficult. However, although justice mechanisms usually could fail to achieve all of their goals, relative successes should also be recognized (Olsen, Payne & Reiter 2010). In the case of Ethiopia, however, the fact that the country has not succeeded in addressing such issues appropriately has resulted in lack of consensus as well as direction on the issue of addressing memory or whether the justice mechanisms achieved the desired results or not. The article utilizes historical analysis of critical events from what transpired in two consecutive political regimes (1974 – 2019) in the country. In doing so, it mainly uses method of qualitative process tracing.

2. The Case of Ethiopia: Overview

Ethiopia is the second most populous state in Africa. With history of civil wars, political instability and violence, and several regime changes, the

contemporary Ethiopian state has had several attempts at transitional justice efforts as well as attempts to address politics of memory. Nevertheless, the mechanisms in play seemed more political than justice driven (Allo 2012). Nevertheless, this is not to claim politics should not play a role in the application of justice in any way. Rather, transitional justice mechanisms are mostly shaped by political goals of regimes that aspire to address past wrongs. Sadly, when the political goals of the regime, that persecute past crimes give more emphasis to political expedience than to efforts in service of justice, transitional justice processes could risk becoming political tools (Leebaw 2008). In that regard, it could suffice to look at a brief recap of how transitions transpired in Ethiopia.

When Emperor Haile Selassie I led monarchy was overthrown in 1974, soldiers that toppled the regime went on to establish a military socialist regime and enacted and implemented pseudo-communist policies under the leadership of Colonel Mengistu Hailemariam. When the military regime finally collapsed in 1991, ethnic rebel forces that established the EPRDF (Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front) seized political power thereby replacing the military era socialist policies with what they referred to as revolutionary democratic ideology, that also, in part, emerged from the rebels' socialist roots from the era of military struggle (Vaughan 2011). Finally in 2018, when a once minority party dominated EPRDF (Ethiopian People's Revolution Democratic Front) coalition responded to popular uprisings and protests that rocked the country for more than two years, a group of reformers led by current leader, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, slowly started to enact liberal policies while employing what the regime referred to as a new homegrown ideology of *Medemer*, an Amharic word that loosely translates into a coming together of forces. Although *Medemer* is said to be a homegrown ideology inspired by Prime Minister Ahmed's personal 'philosophy' of governance, however, the ways in which new reformist incumbent elites tout the ideology makes it seem more of a neo-liberal political economic governance ideology that promotes ideals of cooperation at home and abroad as new approach to everything Ethiopian politics.

These series of political transitions and the ways in which the events transpired, as described above, have caused major political ruptures. Regardless, the above brief history of two regime changes and a major political reform of 2018 shows that Ethiopia's successive regimes were provided with three different opportunities towards implementation of transitional justice mechanisms that could hold individuals, who perpetrated crimes against humanity accountable. Moreover, such regimes were also presented with opportunities to break from the past with a possible vision of reconciliation for the revival and consolidation of national unity by addressing issues of collective memory (Abbay 2004; Meckelburg 2015). Indeed, one way to enact policies that help a nation and its citizens to break from an unwanted past could be accomplished via a successful effort towards reaching a persuasive understanding of history and reaching consensus on issues of collective memory, by creating a path towards national reconciliation (Chapman 2009). It's important to note, however, that transitional mechanisms might not be favored by all groups when they were utilized as a means for national reconciliation (Leebaw 2008). Unfortunately, the fact that almost all political transitions in Ethiopia failed to find that common understanding towards a solution is contributing to ongoing debates along the lines of memory politics.

Apart from either the lack of political commitment or institutional ineffectiveness that left historical inter-group disagreements unaddressed, from one regime change to the other and from the recent political reform that emerged in 2018, Ethiopia's contemporary history of transitional justice and the ways in which the mechanism are implemented raise more questions than answers. The practices show that, instead of a focus on persecuting past crimes by utilizing legal approaches that befit the country's institutional capabilities regardless of their strength, a greater emphasis was placed on past ideology of suspects that served outgoing regimes. In addition, lack of research-based evidence to arrive at a consensus on historic group grievances and institutional inability to address issues of memory politics remain common challenges. Moreover, the fact that the country remains engulfed by a ticking time bomb of ever-severing ethnic relations with a

highly entrenched ethnocentric politics, that is emboldened by an ethnic federal arrangement, means most contemporary transitional justice trials have become increasingly divisive along ethnic lines. This has resulted in a growing fear that any justice acquired might not be well received by many different groups given high level ethnic polarization.

In addition, ethnic tensions, inter-ethnic competition for influence and infightings for political control have also exacerbated the debates on the topic of memory politics and is more politicized today than ever before. This is mainly because as interpretations and continuing analysis of transitional justice trials focus on the ethnic identity of suspect perpetrators as well as victims, the consequences have resulted in inter-group animosity and groups have grown to continually shield suspects of crimes against humanity (Adugna 2008). The overall societal understanding of transitional justice processes in the country was also low, regardless of their successes or failures. As a result, referring to courts as 'kangaroo courts' and the trials as 'sham trials' was common. Moreover, elites from groups like the Oromo of Ethiopia have continued to push narratives of political marginalization even further by disregarding efforts of past political regimes to address the issue of political inequality in the country (Pausewang 2009). As a result, in broader terms, such a reality has hampered inter-group tolerance and impeded further efforts towards reaching a consensus on the interpretation of the historic past of Ethiopia's ethnic relations. Moreover, in particular terms, Ethiopia's successive regimes' expectations, from groups in charge of local and regional administrations to turn human rights violation suspects (even those accused of corruption) to the hands of law enforcement forces across different political eras, have become challenging.

To comprehend why an emphasis on past ideology of human rights violators and the ethnocentric nature of persecution, looking into structural problems and institutional foundations of these challenges is essential. Thus, this article attempts to show how such structural or institutional reasons, together with entrenched ethnic politics, led to increasing debates on the mechanisms utilized or

under-utilized in the service of justice in the country. Furthermore, in two important ways, the ethnocentric nature of politics in the country has also made the issue of addressing challenges related to memory politics in the contemporary Ethiopian history a difficult one. Firstly, instead of pursuing debates, listening groups with perceived grievances and fomenting potential framework for future coexistence, successive regimes seem to have ignored the issue most likely fearing that some of the debates could alter the national mood and could serve as a recipe for violence.

The critiques of justice mechanism usually come from groups that perceive justice trials as legal efforts targeting members of their group. Moreover, political elites from various groups in a large part also make analogies of past history with current events, which at times could also lead to crucial and mostly negative consequences in the realm of understanding memory politics as well. The fact that such analogies are also used mainly as organizing principles and narratives to garner political support for groups and individuals from one group or another means that transitional justice implementation efforts are increasingly scrutinized. Such critiques mostly disregard the positives from these institutional efforts as well. The positives from the Ethiopian experience could be that the political elites that came to power after the demise of the *Dergue* in 1991, had used the transitional justice processes as a way of signaling an attempt at democratization and good governance although the end results of such attempts remained a failure for quite some time (Sarkin 1999). Moreover, when it comes to the negative evaluation of the processes, different Ethiopian regimes' efforts to better ethnic relations are also debunked as political strategies and disingenuous plots, mainly because such works lacked a clear strategy and focus towards promoting and researching causes related to memory politics, in addition to the failure to use indigenous or traditional methods of solving conflict and enmity that emerged as a result of it (Denbel 2013).

So far, towards an effort to explain challenges to transitional justice practices, the article has presented causal explanations related to the structural

problems, concerns about ethnic relations and how the political elite managed those challenges as they are main factors impeding success of the process. However, to understand the rationale behind Ethiopia's style of transitional justice, that punished ideologies and not crimes, it is critical to briefly assess the country's contemporary history. Here, the concept of punishing ideologies is explained in detail below. It is also vital to keep in mind that punishment of ideologies pursued by one regime after another showed that the issue of memory politics was left intact due to overemphasized ideological battles blurring discussions of critical situations that might have helped define ways of addressing memory. To comprehend the Ethiopian case, a brief look into the historical evolution of the state is thus crucial.

Ethiopia's modern political era began in 1855 with the coming to power of Emperor Tewodros II who ended the unruly political period known as *Zamana Mesafint* an Amharic phrase for, 'the Era of Princes' (Marcus 2002). Although Ethiopia's modern history was said to have been emerged since that era, the country was not modern in every sense of the term. With a primitive government structure, no clear separation between state and religion, and no constitutional framework whatsoever, opportunities for democratic governance was indeed unimaginable nor expected. More than three decades later, however, with the coming of Emperor Menelik II, the introduction of some modernization schemes started (Zewde 1991; Tibebu 1995; Marcus 2002). Moreover, Emperor Menelik's popularity from the domestic political arena to international press (that had especially increased when the emperor led Ethiopia defeated colonial Italy's aspirations of establishing a wider colonial empire in the Horn of Africa at the Battle of Adwa in 1896) aided his plan of the modernization scheme to continue uninterrupted. Nonetheless, tumultuous political transitions, that were evident before and after the advent of the country's modern political period, continued unabated. After the death of the Emperor Menelik and the country witnessed successive eras of two younger rulers, i.e., Lij Iyasu and Empress Zewditu, the gradual ascendance to political power of Emperor Haile Selassie I happened. The prior two decades of political periods were engulfed by debates about succession plans. But with the coming of Emperor Haile Selassie

I, the country transitioned into a more stable political era and the country witnessed further attempts at modernization and the first constitution came in to existence in 1931.

With the constitution outlining the supreme status of Ethiopia's monarchy and his majesty's government and no attempt at making the government more representative, however, various political forces, mostly coming out of Addis Ababa University student groups, started to voice their major political concerns. Eventually, newly emerged movements calling for land reforms with famed slogan, 'land to the tiller' dominated the political scene. As a solution, the Emperor's regime promised some political reforms and attempted to introduce a stronger parliament and even floated the idea of a constitutional monarchy. However, subsequent student protests accompanied by series of soldiers' mutinies complicated those efforts (Zewde 1991). Finally in 1974, a group of hundreds of soldiers that were organized by the military to undertake negotiations with the emperor and the nobility changed the prior agreed plans of the military and went on to depose the emperor, arrest the ruling elites and declared a revolution. The events in 1974 ended Ethiopia's legendary *Solomonic* dynasty and the brutal military era began (Zewde 1991; Tibebu 1995).

With these group of soldiers establishing the *Dergue* (a Geez word meaning "committee") which had constituted a collective rule, competition for political power among the elites becomes the new normal and unrest at the higher echelon of political power emerges as the hallmark of the new administration.

3. Ethiopia's First Opportunity to Address Transitional Justice and Memory Politics

With Emperor Haile Selassie I's regime now overthrown, key question would be what happened to the fate of hundreds of individuals from the imperial era that are now in the jails controlled by the new military regime. Indeed, the events that transpired following the political revolution opened the gates to one of the most notorious political era, known as Red Terror and White Terror, ideological

skirmishes and extreme violence that led to the murder of thousands of Ethiopians from all walks of life (Tareke 2009). And Ethiopia's style of transitional justice practices seemed to have its key precedents as a result of these events. Such events eventually emerged as the most popular critical situations in the memory politics discourse in the Ethiopian state. Unfortunately, therefore, most efforts at transitional justice and efforts to deal with the issue of defending memory would become dependent on the structurally incompetent and highly political or ideology-oriented justice system and government bureaucracy. Persecution of crimes against humanity or any kind, then, becomes ideologically influenced than being substantively about investigation of atrocities committed by individuals or groups. As Firew Tiba (2011) states,

> "The ideological battle of controlling the hearts and minds of the populace reached a new level when adversaries from both sides decided to physically eliminate each other's key figures. The lexicons of White Terror and Red Terror, copycats from the brutal Russian and other revolutions, became the staples of Ethiopian 'revolutionaries'. To this date, many Ethiopian political parties – including the governing party – carry the word 'revolutionary' as part of their official names" (p. 164).

As the author's argument shows, the ideological battles among many groups struggling to control the center of politics, which happened to be the urban areas, ensued. Nonetheless, as the purpose here is reviewing the transitional justice mechanisms in the wake of the revolutionary transition and how memory politics is dealt with (if any), it is important to reiterate the question of what had happened to the ruling elite from the previous imperial political period. After the military takeover of the country and darker months of assassinations of political elites and military generals had passed on, the fate of the imprisoned hundreds and especially sixty of the highest officials that had served the monarchy led to the birth of one of the darkest periods in the country's history. Such an event also shaped the debates on the collective memory of the state for the times to come. As notable historian Bahru Zewde (1991) states,

> "The bloody October confrontation augured darker days. On 24 November (1974) the *Dergue* (the military regime) announced to a shocked national and international audience that it had shot its chairman, Aman Andom, and executed some sixty people it had held in detention, most of them dignitaries and high functionaries of the imperial regime" (p. 238).

Such developments, indeed, put the country in more arduous path. As Girmachew Alemu Aneme (2006) explains on how the country's future became the most challenging one, the Dergue "executed 60 officials of the former imperial government without a court hearing, This event marked the beginning of 17 years of state-sponsored terror and violence against the people of Ethiopia" (Aneme 2016, p. 65). On one hand, the political transition that had replaced the monarchy emerged incompetent. Even though the regime remained in charge of the further politically tumultuous period until 1991, dictatorship became its defining character. As Bahru Zewde (1991) further explains regarding the incompetence of the elite in charge of the state past the revolution, the violent change "certainly did explode in the faces of both the regime and its opponents. How to handle, let alone direct, that explosion became one long process of adjustment and improvisation that ultimately delivered the country into the clutches of a totalitarian dictatorship" (p. 228).

On the other hand, the fact that the political transition's handling of the fate of political prisoners that were arrested as suspects of crimes from the previous regime and civilians jailed due to accusations of sympathizing with the ancient regime ended with the use of gun shots and murders indicated the worst was still yet to come. Even more so, the fact that the horrific news of murders of former regime officials took place within the confines of the national palace signaled that, instead of the use of proper mechanisms towards efforts at delivering transitional justice in Ethiopia, the military regime had just delivered the worst possible precedent, i.e. justice via the power of the gun.

With the tens of highest officials now killed, the fate of other imprisoned officials and civilians from the imperial regime and how the military regime attempted to deliver justice was still worse. As an eye witness account written by Mekasha Getachew (1977) states that the political prisoners,

> "…were subjected to innumerable indignities, including forced shaving of their heads, beatings, and floggings, and daily insults. After languishing in high-security detention camps for nearly a year, where they were treated as common criminals, they had to undergo the humiliation of being paraded in public each time they appeared before a Commission of Enquiry set up by the *Dergue* to investigate their share of responsibility for all the misdeeds committed in the country over the past thirty years. Since everything they said wrote pointed to the main culprit, Haile Selassie, and since the much publicized Commission of Enquiry to pin down any of those who appeared before it on any specific charge, let alone get a conviction, the whole exercise was a fiasco" (p. 16).

Moreover, the bizarre and shocking actions taken by the regime, from killings at the top level that were instigated by competition for political power to the emergence of the most terrorizing events that led to urban violence motivated by ideological differences, all summed together led to the rise of new divisive political narratives and debates across ethnic lines. Both rebellions that had waged armed struggles against the state before the military overthrew the monarchy and rebel organizations that were established during the military era eventually embraced ethnicity as organizing principle. Political decisions made by previous monarchical regimes and ongoing decisions made by the military regime also went on to be criticized by these ethnic rebellions and ethnocentric arguments they promote. The murder of officials from Emperor Haile Selassie I's regime as well as killings of elites that were members of military officials that took place on ideological grounds also continued to be interpreted based on what ethnic identities those murdered had embraced, especially in the scholarly discussions that happened after the *Dergue* itself was overthrown in 1991.

Simply put, the country's political discourse and debates, that transpired within such an arena, further evolved by including ethnicity, as the new epicenter of the political debacle across the Ethiopian state, alongside deeply entrenched ideological infightings. Ethnic rebellions continued armed struggle. The *Dergue* regime continued to fight the rebellions and created a popular narrative, which stated that these ethnic rebels are organized and fighting with the purpose of taking

over the Ethiopian state and then dismembering it along ethnic lines. The military regime that had aligned with the socialist camp during the cold war era had to also fight neighboring states supported by foreign powers. As a result, for seventeen years, Ethiopia would be engulfed by civil wars, war with neighboring state Somalia, and lost tens of thousands of citizens in senseless wars as well as urban violence incited by ideological infightings.

Finally, in May 1991, ethnic rebels made progress towards the capital, and the military regime crumbled. The national army dispersed. After the military regime's leader, Colonel Mengistu Hailemariam fled to Zimbabwe, the ethnic rebels immediately took over the capital and declared themselves in charge. Among the most formidable rebel groups, the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) emerged the strongest and went on to form a grand coalition known as Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a coalition of four ethnic political parties that would serve its creator, the TPLF, without any pre-conditions. With former ethnic rebels now in charge, ethnic politics becomes the characterizing feature of the new Ethiopian state. New federal arrangement established along ethnic and linguistic lines further emboldened ethnic divisions while creating a ticking time bomb situation for the fate of the country and its potential to taint ethnic relations. The new administration that replaced the military however, continued the legacy of its predecessor in terms of one critical issue, i.e., used political ideology of former elites in order to jail them. However, the transitional justice mechanisms used for trials of the imprisoned differed greatly.

3.1 Transitional Justice in Post-1991 Ethiopia: EPRDF and Ethno-Nationalist State's Missed Opportunities

In May 1991, EPRDF (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front), a political coalition and its leader, Mr. Meles Zenawi, arrived at the helm of the Ethiopian state and its Provisional Government. The coalition and its leader declared democratic aspirations and stated their development programs as matters of survival. What had become problematic though was that the causal explanations

that this article utilizes to explain the most common challenges concerning the country's transitional justice practices, i.e., structural (legal-institutional) constraints as well as the difficulty in navigating the contours of ethnicity also emerged critical hinderances in post-1991 Ethiopia. Here, let's first look at what these structural challenges were followed by how ethno-nationalism went on to taint both ethnic relations in general and the service of justice in particular.

Although institutional unpreparedness by EPRDF's regime - when it comes to managing effective trial of those accused of gross human rights violations from the *Dergue's* military regime - could be blamed for lack of coherent strategy, other state induced structural problems were plenty as well. As Girmachew Alemu Amene (2006) states, "there are numerous problems involved in the effective investigation and prosecution of the violations at national level in the case of past human rights violations. The state apparatus creates some of these obstacles and others result from long-standing political, social and economic problems in society" (p. 71). Here, the question is how to outline those impediments made by the state as the author rightly explained. How the structural problems manifested shows that more than punishing the individuals that had committed the crimes, the regime sought ways by which the trial focuses on the ideology of the imprisoned. In doing so, the regime was able to show the public the destruction caused by the socialist military regime, as that seemed the most appropriate political move on the regime's part.

The way in which the *Dergue* military officials invoked the 'feudal' past of the monarchy in delegitimizing the past and use the process to signify the merits of their socialist ideology, the EPRDF regime seem to have the same pattern of punishing ideology more than the crimes committed by those in trial. How James Ogude (2000) eloquently attempts to describe the past is interesting. Ogude states that,

> "Socialist rhetoric is seen… as a guise to perpetuate the repressive feudal tendencies under a new cloak of proletarian internationalism. Old repressive tactics are invoked but under a new legitimating ideology. The deification of the rulers as omnipotent and

all knowing, and the sheer contempt for the people under the new regime, is a direct reproduction of the very same tendencies under the reign of Haile Selassie" (p. 88).

Moreover, as over two-hundred crimes that the EPRDF regime charged the accused with and that were eventually confirmed by the Ethiopia's High Court as crimes of genocide show, although the crimes were committed and punishment could be validated, the use of the term 'genocide' was debatable. From the court's decision, one could also learn that a dissenting judge, while agreeing on the forms of the charges and the punishment sought by the prosecutors, had disagreed on whether the crimes committed could be attributed to the most accepted definitions of genocide (Tiba 2007). The fact that the regime stressed on the need of trials for genocide, despite the crimes committed were debatable when it comes to fitting the bills of genocidal crimes had thus raised many questions. It also become evident that the legal system that was supposed to be inclusive and just was used as a political tool to punish a political ideology more than that holding the accused accountable for the crimes they might have committed. The legal approaches used for management of transitional justice trials were also entirely the laws and legal traditions of Ethiopia's justice system and no new approach was borrowed from the experience of other countries. The reliance in the country's laws and legal system for transitional justice efforts, according to Jeremy Sarkin (1999) was that the Ethiopian law was chosen instead of international customary law on genocide because the former was considered more inclusive.

One critical misstep for the EPRDF regime was also its inability or lack of interest to deal with the genocide discourse pushed by some groups like the Oromo of Ethiopia and address the issue of memory that usually comes from the Oromo group. Of course, there is never been a case where those who push the agenda were able to provide evidence supporting their claims. Even if there were some attempts (Hassan 2002; Dugo & Eisen 2018), arguments they presented are widely contentious. Regardless, the regime's inability to take the issue as an agenda and finally attempt to study, solve and close the issue to rest - no matter how

challenging it could be - has unfortunately made claims of genocide no matter small or big to remain in the public discourse.

Earlier, this piece mentioned that the unpreparedness of the EPRDF regime and the lack of interest to do so had also made the post-1991 trials of officials from the *Dergue* era, the most exhaustive, expensive and one of the longest in the world. Moreover, apart from the institutional deficiencies, it is also important to address how ethnic politics and ethno-nationalism played its part in the way Ethiopia's style of transitional justice practices are scrutinized. After ethnic rebels toppled the military regime, established a provisional administration known as Transitional Government of Ethiopia, then designing a new institutional arrangement that transformed Ethiopia's historic unitary form of government into a federal setting constituted along ethnic and linguistic classifications. The newly minted members of the ethnic federation, known as regional-states, would then be made the sole owners of the regional administrations they administer (Gedamu 2017). By doing so, the EPRDF regime declared that ethnic groups, that had been oppressed by the previous feudal and socialist regimes, are now liberated. Thus, the new ideology of revolutionary democracy, which ironically draws itself from socialist roots, was praised as EPRDF's guide in protecting ethnic groups' rights. Unfortunately, Ethiopia's diverse groups are also live spread out across the country. However, the fact that new members of the ethnic federation perceived citizens outside of their ethnic identity as settlers led to the development of native versus settler debate, that further severed ethnic relations in the country and that, also, aided detractors from different sides to draw issues of memory to further attack one another. Making matters worse, ethnic conflicts under ethnic federal Ethiopia further grew as a critical challenge to the idea of promotion of inter-group tolerance, let alone towards efforts to address issues related to collective memory (Kefale 2013).

The promotion of group rights at the expense of individual rights and the inability as well as the lack of interest to enact policies that safeguard both interests led, indeed, to ethnic violence of highest proportions, displacement of groups and

individuals from one region to the other and human rights violations that would be perpetrated targeting one group or the other (Selassie 2003; Temesgen 2015; Gedamu 2017; Tronvoll 2018; Djigsa 2019). Furthermore, the revolutionary democracy ideology and the framework of ethnic federal arrangement also enabled some regional states to embark on the construction of martyrs statutes to commemorate those that they perceived were oppressed, persecuted and murdered by the old regimes and their political bases, that they argued were mostly Ethiopians from the Northern highlands, which made the Amhara people political targets.

Key, among the memorial commemorative statues that were erected in Ethiopia's largest region, Oromia National Regional State, is the *Anoole* statute that was built to show the crimes allegedly committed by Amhara led regimes and their Amhara leaders in the past. The statute, that shows a hand holding a cut breast, was meant to show that Amhara political elites had targeted ethnic Oromos that were opposed to such old regime's (particularly Emperor Menelil II) expansionist policy and state in the 19th century. As a result, the ethnic Oromo administration of the regional state stressed that, in order to remember the suffering of past Oromo victims, the construction of the statute was justified (Tola 2017). The debates on the justification for and against the statute that mostly occur among the country's two largest ethnic majorities, now signifies how EPRDF's ethno-nationalist regime lacked the interest to address deteriorating ethnic relations. And most importantly, the issue signifies the fact that dealing with it in more appropriate ways was sadly relegated to the bottom of priorities for a political coalition, which was dominated by political elites from Tigray. Rather, it seemed as though by enabling ethnic groups implement ways of commemorating past victims without reaching a historical consensus based on evidences backed by independent research, the regime's permissive actions implied that such outcomes were executed by design. Most Amharas argue that the *Anoole* statute is designed to inaccurately portray their group's as well as the country's history and the regime's desire of dividing Ethiopia's two largest groups (Amharas and Oromos) on fabricated history so that these groups would not unite to fight the divisive and corrupt policies that cemented

EPRDF's authoritarian rule for more than twenty-seven years. To the contrary, ethnic Oromo elites and some of the public believe that such statute is "perceived as an emblem and outcome of the contemporary Ethiopia political system (ethno-linguistics-based federalism)" (Tola 2017, p. 46). By justifying the significance of the statute in such a way, the Oromia regional state administration, indeed, prides its decision as a victory that was gained as a result of EPRDF's post-1991 policies that championed rights of ethnic groups and its ability to defend memory of Oromo victims of the past.

Figure 1. *Anoole* Statute.

Source: Image taken from, Girma (2016).

The Anole statute is not, however, the only attempt by a regional state administration built to commemorate memory. Indeed, many regions in the country had constructed martyrs' commemorative museums that attempted to record, keep and defend memory. Such museums although fall short of envisaging what impact they will have in shaping collective memory of future generations. As Bridget Conley (2019) accurately states,

> "Memorializing violent history does not settle a question about the meaning of the past. It localizes, materializes and invokes this question for a new set of protagonists in the present. Memory is thus an endeavor to make meaning for a new community through reference to past events. To make meaning in the particular form of a museum, is to deploy techniques of assemblage for a visiting public in an institution designed to be permanent. Inherent in these museal traits are a constellation of tensions. There is the intended permanency of the structure for making meaning, and the reality that the visiting public changes over time and in relation to evolving concerns about the past and present. An exhibition juxtaposes elements (structure, texts, objects, photos, testimony) that do not seamlessly adhere to a unitary narrative arc. Tension also derives from the traumatic, or red, character of violence: unruly and unpredictable, it travels a different path from that of pedagogical goals that form the stated aims of any museum. In the end, the point of a museum is not to resolve these tensions, but to issue an invitation to pay attention to them" (p. 2).

Therefore, as the article tries to explain so far and as the above author concurs, the ways in which regimes attempted to deal with critical situations like the 'red terror' have not contributed to the management of both transitional justice implementations as well as the problems related to defending memory for once and for all. Hence, such traumatic experiences in the conscious of the public live on and remain challenges unaddressed at large.

The discussions in this part of the article has attempted to present two issues with regards to Ethiopia's anomalies in its transitional justice practices and they ways in which authorities attempted to deal with the issue of defending memory. Firstly, the country had suffered from institutional infectiveness when post transition attempts at transitional justice transpired. Secondly, the ways in which post political transitions had managed ethnic relations evolved could also be dubbed as divisive and anti-coexistence for the country's diverse ethnic groups and thus, every effort to deal with memory seems to have been negatively influenced by the issue of tense ethnic relations.

Indeed, an authoritarian regime (for instance, in the case of Rwanda) could in one way or another use ethnic divisions to cement the dictatorship's primary ambition, i.e., to stay in power at any cost at times by undermining the need to address past traumatic memories like those rape victims have suffered from (Mageza-Barthel 2012). The difference, however, is that while Rwanda's regime used the possible fallout from degrading ethnic relations and sought to address it at least to the minimum by deconstructing ethnic identities and societal norms, the Ethiopian experience used it in ways that made matters worse than what they were. Nonetheless, one issue visibly looms large, and that is, the state's inability or lack of desire to break from the past by making sure more of the internationally accepted ways of pursuing national reconciliation practices are instituted.

As the regime was standing on shallow grounds as it struggled to keep itself in power however, EPRDF, which was mostly dominated by ethnic Tigrayan political party (Tigray Peoples Liberation Front), that was behind the creation of the coalition itself back in 1991, faced huge protests and a push for political reforms from below that started early in 2016. The coalition therefore was forced to enact reforms that led to the emergence of hope towards a democratic transition although that still remain open for interpretation and time is needed towards relatively complete assessment as the transitional process is ongoing. Nevertheless, the fact that EPRDF's political reforms would be considered sweeping led to an assumption that the changes, that recently occurred in the country, could even be equated a regime change and the beginning of a new political transition. After such a transition, in November 2019, three of the parties that made the EPRDF coalition (except TPLF) formed the Prosperity Party (PP) along with five small regional political parties to establish a nationally unified party.

3.2 Ethiopia's post-2018 political reforms: Return of old challenges?

Ironically, the post 2018 EPRDF led political reforms emerged as a result of the formation of strategic alliance formed by Amhara and Oromo political elites from the grand coalition (Gedamu 2018). However, the fact that the country is

engulfed in ethno-national political rivalry means that some of the expected positive outcomes of political moderation and national reconciliation continue to face extreme challenges due to the still entrenched ethnic federal arrangement that some of Ethiopia's politically influential ethnic groups aspire to keep intact (Mamdani 2019). Nonetheless, one major challenge that is still evident is that of the inability to address the gross violation of human rights that happened from the pre-2018 political period as well as memory politics that stretches well past in to a century ago.

In that regard, the Prosperity Party, under the leadership of the country's current Prime Minister, Mr. Abiy Ahmed Ali, has faced a new challenge, which is the result of the making of the EPRDF coalition prevalent for more than two decades. For instance, Ethiopia's former spy chief, Getachew Assefa, whom the government accused of extreme violations of human rights of the imprisoned that range from forced rape, tortures, and even making some of the jailed infertile remains free from persecutions given he was successfully sheltered by an ethnic group that he identified with. Because, for ethnic Tigrayans, that identify the former spy chief as the member of their group, he is still revered as a hero (Kahsay 2019), the fact that the spy chief remains popular among Tigrayan Ethiopians means that the regional state, that is in charge of administering the Tigrayan state, is opposed to handing over the individual that remains at large in a region, that is ignoring the federal government's quest to arrest him (Wolde 2019). But this is not an isolated case to look into as there are plenty similar stories across the country.

Yet again, the issue here raises a critical element that this article attempts to discuss in detail thus far, i.e., the structural challenges that are mostly presented in the form of institutional ineffectiveness as well as unpreparedness in the political regime's part. Indeed, the fact that the federal government located in the capital, Addis Ababa, is unable to coordinate with a member of the federation, that is holding an individual suspected of extreme violations of human rights shows the institutional weakness of the administration's justice apparatus and the state's lack of capacity in upholding the rule of law within its jurisdiction.

However, the problems in the arena of institutional ineffectiveness coupled with the severing ethnic relations in the country mean that even after the 2018 political changes, the displacement of peoples due to their ethnic backgrounds had made the country number one in the world in relation to the country's size of internally displaced peoples (Keating 2019). For instance, hundreds of thousands of ethnic Gedeo were displaced from the Oromia regional state and many Amharas were subjected to similar experiences (Gedamu 2018; Gardner 2019). Until recently, regardless of how much the Prosperity Party led regime attempts to calm ethnic violence and implement ways in which some of these challenges (both institutional as well as ethnic rivalries) are addressed, the end seems never in sight. A notable effort by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali's administration to broker the long sought practice of national reconciliation by forming a National Reconciliation Commission, for instance, is yet to be effectively negotiated and start its task of addressing ethnic tensions and most importantly, instituting a transitional justice mechanism that leads to a major break from the animosity and intolerance of the past that is primarily also related with the issue of addressing issues in the arena of memory politics for once and for all.

4. Conclusion

The article has attempted to show Ethiopia's style of the implementation of transitional justice mechanisms in three regime frameworks and how such ineffectiveness also adversely shaped conversations as well as political discourses in the realm of memory politics. As the patterns from the utilization of the mechanisms indicate however, structural problems, that are identified with the challenges of transitional justice practices in some of the established cases from Sub-Saharan African states are also prevalent in Ethiopia. The murders of officials from the monarchy in the hands of the military regime's firing squad, the institutional unpreparedness and unwillingness to address its traumatic past by subsequent regimes by reaching evidence based consensuses, and the heavy use of

ethnicity and severing ethnic relations witnessed across the three different transitional periods indeed show the challenges are deep rooted.

The most important solutions could emerge if the incumbent regime in power shows a genuine desire towards democratization, as that might open up unaddressed issues like the issue of addressing traumatic memory in one way or another. Regardless, democracy alone will not suffice. Hence, making sure proper transitional justice mechanisms are implemented to address past crimes, finding ways to also correct the ethnic federal arrangement in ways that safeguard both group and individual rights, and embarking on a full scale national reconciliation project that could provide proper avenues to address past crimes, trauma, and memory is critical. To reiterate what is stated above nevertheless, the most vital prerequisite becomes that the regime is ready to consider such options. For that to happen, the need for political solutions remain extremely essential so that both intertwined challenges of structural or institutional challenges as well as the tensions fueled by ethno-nationalist debates and puzzles are addressed. Moreover, such solutions would put the country in the path of the construction of more tolerant society, that could go beyond the debates over hate statutes, that are dividing ethnic groups than bringing them together. Furthermore, such practices could also open the door towards reaching a major consensus with regards to the need for independent and nationally commissioned research to document history of the country's violent past and potentially use it for educational purposes targeting present and future generations.

References

Abbay, A 2004, 'Diversity and state-building in Ethiopia', *African Affairs,* vol. 103, no. 413 , pp. 593-614. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adh043.

Abbink, J 2006, 'Discomfiture of democracy? The 2005 election crisis in Ethiopia and its aftermath', *African affairs*, vol. 105, no. 419, pp. 173-199. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adi122.

Adugna, F 2008, 'Negotiating Identity: Politics of Identification among the Borana, Gabra and Garri around the Oromo-Somali boundary in Southern Ethiopia' (Synopsis of a PhD Dissertation), *Ethiopian Journal of the Social Sciences and Humanities*, Volume 6 (1-2), pp.83-92. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ejossah.v6i1-2.72259.

Allo, A 2012, November 30, 'The 'politics' in Ethiopia's political trials', *Open Democracy*, pp.1-6.

Aneme, G.A 2006, 'Apology and trials: the case of the Red Terror trials in Ethiopia', *African human rights law journal*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 64-84.

Chapman, AR 2009, 'Approaches to studying reconciliation', in Van Der Merwe H et al (eds), *Assessing the impact of transitional justice: Challenges for empirical research*, pp.143-172.

Conley, B 2019, *Memory from the Margins*: *Ethiopia's Red Terror Martyrs Memorial Museum*, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. pp. 1-46. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-13495-2_1.

Denbel, JD 2013, 'Transitional Justice in the Context of Ethiopia', International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences, Volume 10, pp. 73-83. https://doi.org/10.18052/www.scipress.com/ILSHS.10.73

Djigsa, WK 2019, 'The Protection of Internally Displaced Persons in Ethiopi'a, *Journal of Internal Displacement*, Volume 9(1), pp.36-50.

Gardner, T 2019, 'Shadow falls over Ethiopia reforms as warnings of crisis go unheeded', *The Guardian*, viewed 28 October 2019, < https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/mar/14/shadow-falls-over-ethiopia-reforms-warnings-of-crisis-ignored-abiy-ahmed>.

Gedamu, Y 2017, *Ethnic Federalism and Authoritarian Survival in Ethiopia*, Doctoral Dissertation, Georgia State University.

Gedamu, Y 2018, 'Persecution of ethnic Amharas will harm Ethiopia's reform agenda', *The Conversation*, viewed 26 October 2019, < https://theconversation.com/persecution-of-ethnic-amharas-will-harm-ethiopias-reform-agenda-98201>.

Gedamu, Y 2019, 'How change happened in Ethiopia: a review of how Abiy rose to power', *The Conversation Africa*, viewed 3 February 2019, <https://theconversation.com/how-change-happened-in-ethiopia-a-review-of-how-abiy-rose-to-power-110737.>

Getachew, M 1977, 'An inside view of the Ethiopian revolution', Munger Africana Library Notes, vol. 39, p. 3-39. California Institute of Technology.

Girma, M 2016, 'Hijab for Aanolee, Please', *Zehabesha*, Viewed 28 October 2019, < https://www.zehabesha.com/hijab-for-aanolee-please-melaku-girma/>.

Hassen, M 2002, 'Conquest, tyranny, and ethnocide against the Oromo: A historical assessment of human rights conditions in Ethiopia, ca. 1880s-2002', *Northeast African Studies*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 15-49. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/nas.2007.0013.

Kahsay, B 2019, 'Getachew Assefa a revered hero of our generation', *Tigray Online*, viewed 28 October 2019, <http://www.tigraionline.com/articles/getachew-assefa-our-hero.html>.

Keating, J 2019, 'The Biggest Displacement Crisis That Almost No One Is Talking About', *Slate Online Magazine*, viewed 29 October 2019, < https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2019/06/ethiopia-displacement-crisis-violence-unhcr-report.html>.

Kefale, A, 2013, *Federalism and ethnic conflict in Ethiopia: A comparative regional study*, New York, USA. Routledge.

Leebaw, BA 2008, 'The irreconcilable goals of transitional justice', *Human Rights Quarterly*, vol. 30, p.95 Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/hrq.2008.0014.

Mageza-Barthel R, 2012, 'Asserting their presence! Women's quest for transitional justice in post-genocide Rwanda', in S Buckley-Zistel and Stanley (eds) *Gender in transitional justice*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, pp. 163-190.

Mamdani, M 2002, 'Amnesty or impunity? A preliminary critique of the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa (TRC)', *diacritics*, vol. 32, no. 3, pp. 33-59. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/dia.2005.0005.

Mamdani, M 2019, 'The Trouble with Ethiopia's Ethnic Federalism', New York Times, *Opinion Section*. Viewed 25 October 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/03/opinion/ethiopia-abiy-ahmed-reforms-ethnic-conflict-ethnic-federalism.html.>

Marcus, HG 2002, *A history of Ethiopia*, Berkeley and Los Angeles University of California Press.

Meckelburg, A 2015, 'Slavery, emancipation, and memory: Exploratory notes on Western Ethiopia', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 345-362.

Ogude, J 2000, 'Political Satire and the Trial of Mengistu's Ethiopia in Hama Tuma's The Socialist Witchdoctor and Other Stories', *English Studies in Africa*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 87-97. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/00138390008691290 .

Olsen, T, Payne, L & Reiter, A 2010, *Transitional justice in balance. Comparing Processes, Weighing Efficacy.*, US Institute of Peace, Washington, DC

Pausewang, S 2009, *Exploring new political alternatives for the Oromo in Ethiopia*, Report from Oromo workshop and its after-effects, Postterminalen, Norway. Chr. Michelsen Institute.

Sarkin, J 1999, 'Transitional justice and the prosecution model: The experience of Ethiopia', *Law, Democracy & Development*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 253-266.

Selassie, AG 2003, 'Ethnic federalism: Its promise and pitfalls for Africa', *Yale Journal of International Law*, vol. 28, p.51.

Shifaw, D 2012, *The Diary of Terror: Ethiopia 1974 to 1991*, United States of America, Trafford Publishing.

Tareke, G 2009, *The Ethiopian revolution: war in the Horn of Africa*, New Haven, Yale University Press.

Teitel, RG 2000, *Transitional justice*, Oxford University Press on Demand, Oxford and New York.

Temesgen, SM 2015, 'Weaknesses of ethnic federalism in Ethiopia', *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Inventio*n, vol. 4, no. 11, pp. 49-54.

Tiba, FK. 2007, 'The Mengistu genocide trial in Ethiopia', *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 513-528. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/jicj/mqm021.

Tiba, FK 2011, 'The Trial of Mengistu and other Derg Members for Genocide, Torture and Summary Execution in Ethiopia', *Murungu, C and Biegon, J, (eds) Prosecuting International Crimes in Africa,* PULP (Pretoria University Law Press), Pretoria, South Africa, pp.163-184.

Tibebu, T 1995, *The making of modern Ethiopia: 1896-1974*, The Red Sea Press, Lawrenceville, New Jersey.

Tola, MD 2017, 'The Theses and Antitheses of Anoole Statue in the Ethiopian Polity', *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol.7, No 9.

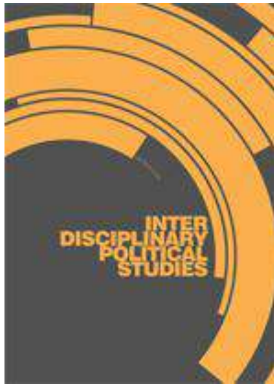
Troebst, S 2011, 'Halecki revisited: Europe's conflicting cultures of remembrance', in Pakier M and Wawrzyniak J (eds) C*ultural Memories*, Springer, Dordrecht, pp. 145-154

Tronvoll, K 2008, 'Human rights violations in federal Ethiopia: When ethnic identity is a political stigma', *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 49-79. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/138548708x272528.

Vaughan, S 2011, 'Revolutionary democratic state-building: party, state and people in the EPRDF's Ethiopia', *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, vol. 5, no. 4, pp. 619-640. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/17531055.2011.642520 .

Wolde, E 2019, 'Ethiopia: Tigray regional govt refuses to handover fugitive former spy chief', *ESAT News*, viewed 29 October 2019, < https://ethsat.com/2019/01/ethiopia-tigray-regional-govt-refuses-to-handover-fugitive-former-spy-chief/>.

Zewde, B 1991, *A history of modern Ethiopia*, 1855-1974, Athens, Ohio, Ohio Univ Press.



Interdisciplinary Political Studies
http://siba-ese.unisalento.it/index.php/idps
ISSN: 2039-8573 (electronic version)

IdPS, Issue 6(1) 2020: 167-201
DOI: 10.1285/i20398573v6n1p167
Published: July 15, 2020

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Drone Warfare and the Obama Administration's Path-Dependent Struggles on Human Rights and Counterterror-ism

Tom de Groot
Leiden University

Salvador Santino F. Regilme, Jr.
Leiden University

ABSTRACT

Why did the use of drone strikes proliferate during the first term of the Obama administration? This paper espouses two key preliminary and exploratory arguments. First, deploying theoretical insights from historical institutionalism, we argue that the Obama administration, despite its initial resistance to the existing counterterror agenda, found it extremely difficult to reverse the war on terror narrative and the institutions that emerged therefrom in US domestic and foreign politics. This continuation provided strong incentives to maintain militaristic approaches to counterterrorism, considering President Obama's inclination to continue the use of military power against terrorists. Second, upon realising the stickiness and institutional endurance of post-9/11 security agencies, Obama's opposition to war on terror-oriented policies motivated the administration to wage a supposedly more morally justifiable and effective counterterror strategy with the use of armed drones.

KEYWORDS: Drones; War on terror; Obama; Human rights; Historical institu-tionalism

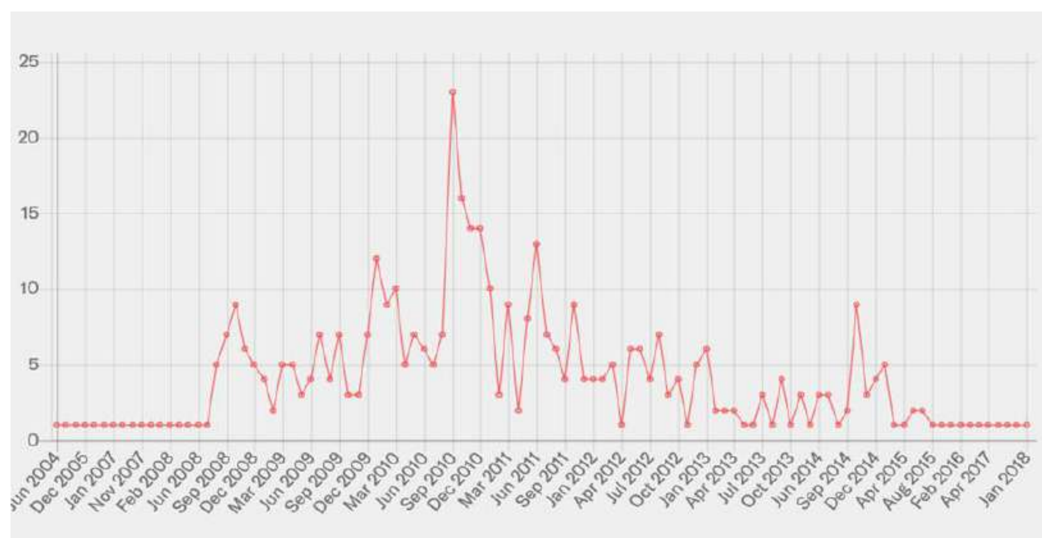
CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:
Salvador Santino F. Regilme, Jr. (s.s.regilme@hum.leidenuniv.nl)
Leiden University – Institute for History, Johan Huizinga Building
Doelensteeg 16, 2311 VL Leiden, The Netherlands

Work licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non commercial-Share alike 3.0 Italian License

Introduction

During his presidential campaign, Barack Obama called for a military withdrawal from Iraq, the end of torture, the indefinite detention of suspected terrorists, the closing of Guantanamo Bay, and the abolition of the use of the term 'war on terror' (Davis 2011, pp. 165-189). In his widely-read essay in Foreign Affairs, Barack Obama, then a presidential candidate, argued that "to renew American leadership in the world, we must first bring the Iraq war to a responsible end […] we cannot impose a military solution on a civil war between Sunni and Shiite factions […] we must launch a comprehensive regional and international diplomatic initiative to help broker an end to the civil war in Iraq, prevent its spread, and limit the suffering of the Iraqi people" (Obama 2007, pp. 8-10). Consequently, the American public widely believed that President Obama intended to end the war on terror begun by the Bush administration after the attacks on September 11, 2001. Although Barack Obama's campaign in 2008 did not explicitly advocate for drone strikes despite his critical opposition to the Bush administration's war on terror, the graph below shows the drastic increase in the number of US drone strikes in Pakistan during the first term of the Obama administration (2009–2013):

Figure 1. Number of US drone strikes in Pakistan.



Source: The Bureau of Investigative Journalism (2019).

The US government dramatically expanded the use of drones, as shown by the data on the number of strikes and the geographical scope of drone operations (Fisk & Ramos 2016). Notably, several investigative journalists estimated that "there were ten times more air strikes in the covert war on terror during President Barack Obama's presidency than under his predecessor, George W. Bush" (Purkiss & Serle 2017, p. 1). These strikes took place in Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Somalia, and Pakistan (Birdsall 2018). Drone strikes are used for targeted killing, particularly through the use of precision strikes on suspected terrorists. The fact that the number of US counterterrorist drone strikes increased under the Obama administration defies the expectation that the administration wanted to end the war on terror.

Hence, this paper addresses the following puzzle: why did the use of drone strikes proliferate during the first term of the Obama administration? Our response to that puzzle constitutes two key preliminary arguments. First, deploying theoretical insights from historical institutionalism, we argue that the Obama administration, despite its initial resistance to the existing counterterror agenda, found it extremely difficult to reverse the war on terror narrative and the institutions that emerged therefrom in US domestic and foreign politics. This continuation provided strong incentives to maintain militaristic approaches to counterterrorism, considering President Obama's inclination to continue the use of military power against terrorists. Second, upon realising the stickiness and institutional endurance of post-9/11 security agencies, Obama's opposition to war on terror-oriented policies motivated the administration to wage a supposedly more morally justifiable and effective counterterror strategy.

This paper seeks to identify the conditions that facilitated the strong reliance on drone warfare, particularly by situating that strategy within the broader context of the continuation of the war on terror during Obama's first term. This paper emphasizes the path-dependent role of post-9/11 state security institutions and the need for transforming a counterterror strategy that is more justifiable, at least from the perspective of the Obama administration. The first section reviews current debates on drone warfare and situates our argument within the scholarly literatures in

International Relations, US foreign policy, and security studies. The first discussion section reflects on how and why the war on terror continued during Obama's first term as President and argues the path-dependent effects of a militaristic policy agenda that gained traction after the 9/11 attacks. This analysis provides the context for the main argument discussed in the second discussion section of this paper: Drone strikes increased because the Obama administration pursued a war on terror that was, from its perspective, more strategically effective and legally justifiable. On the other hand, the Obama administration's expansion of the drone strikes program facilitated a global human rights crisis that killed thousands of lives. As such, Kenneth Roth of the Human Rights Watch (2017, p. 1) maintains that Obama has a "shaky legacy on human rights", particularly because "for all his promises – and a Nobel Peace Prize – the Obama presidency delivered more hope than change". Hence, this article underscores how militaristic and violent approaches to counterterrorism can generate a human rights crisis that all states must seek to avoid. In normative terms, every human being has an inherent and inviolable right to life that not even the US, as the most powerful state, should undermine for the sake of ambiguously defined geostrategic interests or national security.

1. Our state of knowledge: causes of reliance on drone warfare

This section reflects on the academic debate about drone warfare and identifies two distinctive strands of literature that explain why the Obama administration relied on drone strikes in counterterrorism. The first focuses on key political developments in the US' war on terror. We maintain that the perceived failures of the Bush administration's counterterror strategy motivated the Obama administration to maintain a militaristic policy stance to global terrorism, yet reforming such a policy agenda by making counterterrorism more strategically effective and legally justifiable. In doing so, the Obama administration resorted to bolstering the drone program in order to limit casualties in the US military, thereby making the war on terror more strategically effective, and offered political and legal justifications in ways that reframed the war on terror in a more legitimate way. The second strand of literature

stresses that the legal framework established under the Bush Doctrine was maintained by the Obama administration. This formed the core justification for the Obama administration's increased use of drone strikes. This section highlights some of the shortcomings in current understandings of the increase of drone strikes under Obama and explains where this paper contributes to the debate.

Within the literature pertaining to political developments in the war on terror, Walsh (2018) notes that the two wars in Afghanistan and Iraq had become lengthy and costly campaigns that produced few concrete results in terms of protecting the US from the threat of terrorism. Concerns about the domestic political costs of military casualties and the (financial) strains of both state-building operations led Obama to move to a different strategy to combat terrorists (Walsh 2018). Targeted killings enabled the US to continue the fight against terrorists while lowering the domestic political costs that this fight entailed. Kreuzer (2014) and Horowitz et al. (2016) furthermore point at a number of advantages of drones. First, American lives are not put at risk in operations because they are unmanned aircrafts. Second, drones are cheaper than soldiers or other aircrafts. Third, drones can be used for long-term surveillance. They are therefore more capable of identifying individual targets than F-16s or Apache helicopters and thus more accurate (Kreuzer 2014; Horowitz et al. 2016). Kindervater (2016) argues that the merger of surveillance technique with lethal striking made drones more capable of attacking dynamic targets, where conventional weapons focus primarily on fixed sites. This is a tactical benefit when the targets are individual terrorists. Byman (2013) maintains that drones are effective in counterterrorism because they contribute to the weakening of the chain of command and operational effectiveness of terrorist organisations by killing its leaders. Fourth, drone operations require a smaller military logistical footprint, while simultaneously broadening the geographical scope of counterterrorist operations. Reduced military presence abroad limits the anti-American sentiments that may motivate terrorists (Horowitz et al. 2016). In addition, Shelby (2017) points out that the public is generally aware of the benefits of drones. They support the use of drone strikes more than other alternatives, even in cases where the payoff

for the use of force is minimal. Sauer and Schörnig (2012) concur with Shelby that public support therefore enables and encourages the increased use of drone strikes (Sauer & Schörnig 2012; Shelby 2017). This led the Obama administration to increasingly rely on drones (Sauer & Schörnig 2012). In sum, the need to change important aspects the war on terror combined with the strategic advantages that armed drones offer, led to an increase in drone strikes. This was reinforced by a generally favourable public opinion.

The literature focused on the Bush Doctrine emphasises that the continuation of the Bush administration's legal reasoning under Obama is the main factor why drone strikes increased. Fisk and Ramos (2016) note that the Bush Doctrine, exemplified by the National Security Strategy 2002 and the Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF), blurred the distinction between pre-emptive and preventive use of force (p. 5). The Bush administration argued that the US "must adapt the concept of imminent threat to the capabilities and objectives of today's adversaries" (Fish & Ramos 2016, p. 10). This claim was used to justify the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Moreover, as Birdsall notes, it was applied to targeting individual terrorists on foreign territory, claiming that some states were 'unwilling or unable' to aid the US in self-defence against the imminent threat of terrorism (2018, p. 255). Existing international law was perceived to constrain the US capabilities in effectively repressing transnational terrorist networks like Al Qaeda. The Bush administration therefore claimed to be in 'armed conflict' with terrorism: Terrorists were treated as 'unlawful combatants' rather than criminals, denying them certain judicial protections while claiming they constitute imminent threats to national security. McDonald argues that the terror threat constituted a new type of war, particularly with its focus on non-state terror networks, "but waged, justified and defined primarily according to rules devised for inter-state politics and war" (2017, p. 26). While the Obama administration was widely perceived (at least initially) to be less supportive of a strong militaristic stance against terror networks, President Obama nevertheless maintained that the US was in armed conflict with terrorism and maintained the importance of the role of militaristic responses (Fairhead 2016; McDon-

ald 2017). It continued to invoke the concept of imminent threat as it was applied by the Bush administration to justify, among others, targeted killings. As Jason Ralph (2013, p. 46) notes, the administration consistently referred to the AUMF to justify its drone strikes. Harald Koh, a key legal advisor for the Obama administration, defended the administration's use of drone strikes by arguing that "a state that is engaged in an armed conflict or in legitimate self-defence is not required to provide targets with legal process before the state may use lethal force" (Koh 2010, p. 48). The continuation of key elements of the Bush Doctrine thus served to justify the Obama administration's drone policies.

The literature focused on strategic/political developments is compelling because it explains how drones served to perpetuate the war on terror while reducing the most contentious aspects of it. However, these scholars did not extensively focus on why the Obama administration continued the war on terrorism in the first place and the rationale for bolstering the drone program as a quintessential component of Obama's counterterror strategy. In contrast, the literature pertaining to the Bush Doctrine recognises that despite Obama's objections to the war on terror, many of its core features persisted. This enabled and justified the administration's drone policies. However, this literature offers no explanation as to why drone warfare became the quintessential military tactic of the Obama administration. This paper combines the explanatory power of both strands of literature by considering the patterns of continuity in the war on terror from Bush to Obama while also uncovering the justificatory premises that underpinned the Obama administration's unprecedented reliance on drone warfare. Furthermore, it considers which strategic and political changes motivated the Obama administration to increase its use of drones.

2. Arguments and theory

The core question that this paper seeks to address is this: why did the use of drone strikes increase during the first term of the Obama administration? We maintain two main arguments which are substantiated into two discussion sections. First,

the Obama administration found itself entrapped in the cobweb of post-9/11 security institutions that constitute the Global war on terror. Although Obama's presidential campaign inspired widespread hope that a strong militaristic response to non-state terrorism may be abandoned, the Obama-led White House found it difficult to reverse the counterterror narrative which identified terrorism as an exceptional threat to the US national security (Regilme 2019, p. 159). Furthermore, the Bush administration promoted the view that strong leadership on terrorism in the post-9/11 era was characterised by a militaristic approach to national security. The Obama administration found it difficult to successfully challenge these post-9/11 institutional structures and political expectations, as it did not want to risk being perceived as being weak on terrorism. Thereby, it continued to rely on a militaristic strategy against terrorism as it appears to be, at least for the Obama administration, an effective and legitimate response to the enduring threat of non-state terrorism.

Second, the Obama administration invested in the drone warfare strategy in an effort to reduce public disapproval of the war on terror policies (by minimizing the risks to the lives of US ground forces operating abroad), while continuing the Bush administration's militaristic approach to counterterrorism. The Obama administration continued to use force against terrorists in order to be perceived as politically determined to keep the US safe from terrorism. Simultaneously, the administration increasingly relied on drones to fight terrorists to reduce the most contentious aspects of that war. Notably, a high number of collateral damages emerged from the conventional ground wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and Bush's detention policies, which facilitated the horrific human rights abuses committed in Guantanamo Bay. Through the increased reliance on drones, the Obama administration sought to minimise the collateral human rights abuses brought by the Bush administration's war on terror while still seeking to reinforce his legitimacy through militaristic counterterror policies.

2.1. Theoretical framework

In building our empirical arguments, we deploy the theoretical perspectives from the literature on historical institutionalism, which underscores the 'stickiness' of previously chosen policy choices in order to explain the continuity of particular political outcomes. The analytical concepts from historical institutionalist literature provide insights on how the war on terror became institutionalised in US politics. This made it extremely difficult for Obama to dismiss the war on terror narrative. The administration's increased reliance on drone strikes thus represents a reform initiative in US counterterrorism policy within the confines of the existing policy trajectory of post-9/11 US foreign policy strategy.

In some cases, political institutions 'lock in' their position in social and political structures through self-reinforcing mechanisms. Institutional development begins at a critical moment in time, which historical institutionalists call a 'critical juncture' (Rixen & Viola 2016, p. 12). According to Rixen and Viola (2016), "critical junctures are exogenous decisions or events that interrupt long periods of stability and set institutions on one path of development rather than another". We maintain that the 9/11 attacks constitute a critical juncture that enabled the Bush administration to drastically change US domestic- and foreign politics (Regilme 2018a, 2018b). The umbrella term used to label and justify this new political pathway became the 'war on terror'. The war on terror pertains to a broad overarching political narrative created in response to the 9/11 attacks, which facilitated the creation of a wide panoply of governmental institutions, rules, strategies, and discursive practices – all of which focus on state security. In a lot of ways, state security through the war on terror became a normative political order, whereby politicians and government leaders invoke militaristic responses and state violence as the quintessential policy response to the perceived threat of non-state terror groups. The war on terror approach claims that the 9/11 attacks constitute a new kind of adversary on the part of the US, and therefore the laws of war and international human rights law on armed conflict do not apply to the counterterror policies of the Bush administration (Ralph 2013). In practice, such an approach bolstered the discretionary powers of

the US government in using its military forces and coercive apparatus in its counter-terror operations in ways that did not fully comply with treaty obligations on laws of war and armed conflict.

Historical institutionalists use the term 'policy feedback' as the process through which social and political processes facilitate institutional continuity (Pierson & Skocpol 2002, p. 6). Policy feedback is a political development which is set in motion by the existence of a particular political institution. This development entrenches and reinforces the institution's position in the political ecosystem. An example of policy feedback in the case of the war on terror pertains to the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which was created through the invocation of counterterror narratives and discourses, particularly by positing the importance of exceptionalist state security measures as necessary in repressing terror threats within the American homeland (Jackson 2011). The creation of the department enlarged the budget of the federal security apparatus and introduced new career opportunities. As such, thousands of jobs (directly or indirectly) became dependent on the continuation of the DHS. This policy feedback did not only ensure the continuation of the department itself. The war on terror narratives and discourses facilitated the continued legitimation of the existence of the DHS and many other post-9/11 security agencies. As the department continued to exist, so would its foundational narrative; policy feedback that resulted from war on terror policy entrenched the perceived necessary presence of post-9/11 state security institutions. Many critics have since pointed out that this narrative is misguided by demonstrating that terrorism is in reality a comparatively minimal security threat (Croft 2006; Lustick 2013; Bentley 2014). Nevertheless, policy feedback mechanisms made it difficult for the Obama administration to challenge the underlying assumptions on which major components of the US political system like the DHS functioned after the institutionalisation of the war on terror.

Policy feedback entrenches institutions in political systems and facilitates institutional continuity. Historical institutionalists call this effect 'path dependence' (Pierson & Skocpol 2002, p. 6). Path dependence does not mean that institutions

remain the same irrespective of the changing political environment in which they are situated. Institutional change is possible in two ways. Either a new critical juncture emerges which puts the political system on a very different pathway, or the existing institution changes gradually in ways that are 'constrained by past trajectories' (Thelen 1999, p. 387). While policy feedback constrains the scope conditions of political change, it could allow some incremental alterations. Thus, if policymakers endeavour to change institutions, they are constrained by existing institutional structures. Especially in the case of a particularly stable institution, policy makers are likely to define their goals and strategies in line with the prevailing institution rather than working against it (Jackson 2011).

Over time, the war on terror became firmly established as an institution. Therefore, the scope of political possibilities and intended policy changes intended by the Obama administration had to consider (or at least refer to) the state security-oriented discourses and pre-existing institutional apparatus that underpinned the War on terror: notably, that terrorism was an exceptionally immense threat to US national security; that the US continued to be in armed conflict with terrorist networks; and that military force was needed to counter the threat.

3. Continuing the war on terror

This section answers the question: Why did the Obama administration continue to depend primarily on military force to undermine the threat from global terror networks? We discuss in this section that the Obama administration was trapped in the war on terror, which primarily emphasized non-state terrorism as an exceptional threat to national security and subsequently provided a militaristic policy agenda. Domestically, this meant a drastic expansion of the state security apparatus, the expansion of highly secretive intelligence services, and the increasing reliance on private contractors for state security services (Priest & Arkin 2011). In post-/11 world politics, counterterrorism came to be defined as a war against terrorists using military force. This section first argues that the perception of the serious threat posed by terrorism was self-reinforcing and therefore difficult to reverse for the

Obama administration. In order to be perceived as politically determined to keep the US safe from terrorism, President Obama was inclined to continue to use military force against terrorists.

3.1. 9/11, the critical juncture

To address public confusion, anxiety, and frustration, the Bush administration had to assure the public how the threat could be repressed by resorting to military force (Krebs & Lobasz 2009). The declaration of the war on terror was not a natural or neutral response to the attacks, considering that a multitude of policy options were plausible and could have been implemented instead. Although unlikely, the administration could have stated that the attacks represented a backlash against globalisation and as a violent response to the US' support of repressive regimes overseas. The attacks could have been labelled as 'horrific crimes,' as terrorist attacks were often labelled before 9/11. That designation would have legitimised domestic law enforcement operations as the appropriate response (Hodges 2011). In any case, the way the attacks were characterised determined how the US responded to it. The Bush administration labelled the attacks as 'acts of war against our country' and asserted that the US was at 'war with terrorism' (Bush 2001). This was not merely a metaphor. As Bentley notes: "The American response to 9/11 was constructed as a very specific form of conflict, where that form of conflict had significant implications for the structure of what would happen next" (2014, p. 92). In foreign policy, the war on terror meant that the US was at war with terrorist networks of global reach, thereby invoking the possibilities of deploying the full force of the US military and expansive global intelligence operations to counter the perceived threat of non-state terror networks. Notably, the war on terror implies some form of discretionary decision-making processes in determining non-state terror networks as the key targets for repression by the US military. This overarching yet ambiguous militaristic policy stance against loosely defined terror networks also facilitated various detention programmes such as the one in Guantanamo Bay and the two wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. It is now widely accepted that those policies

would simply not have been possible without the rhetorical discourses of the war on terror (Bentley 2014). The war on terror transformed many aspects of domestic US politics as well. The next section demonstrates how Bush's depiction of the terrorist threat within US borders justified the vast expansion of the security apparatus. Terrorism was not only portrayed as a foreign threat. At home, the War on terror meant increasing resolve against terrorism on all levels of governance and society.

The war on terror narrative gained traction because the Bush administration framed the 9/11 attacks as a direct attack on America's political order and its existential security as a democratic society (Lustick 2013). The administration capitalised on fear to rally broad national support for the drastic political changes in domestic- and foreign politics that it introduced. This is a phenomenon that Cramer and Thrall call 'threat inflation' (2009, p. 1). Threat inflation pertains to "the attempt by elites to create concern for a threat that goes beyond the scope and urgency that a disinterested analysis would justify" (Cramer & Thrall 2009). As Lustick (2006) points out, the chances of being killed by a terrorist attack in the US are very small. Nevertheless, the war on terror became such an all-encompassing narrative that "every national policy […] must be evaluated on the basis of whether or not they contribute to victory in that war" (Lustick 2006, p. 18). Political opponents did not only rally behind Bush's policies but also adopted his rhetoric. Furthermore, virtually all reportage took up the discourse (Krebs & Lobasz 2009). The treatment of terrorism as an exceptional threat would continue even when many policies of the war on terror became heavily criticised. For the lasting impact of the war on terror narrative on US domestic- and foreign politics the 9/11 attacks were a critical juncture for drastic institutional change. Exactly how did the institutionalisation of the war on terror occur?

3.2. The war on terror in domestic politics

Even if the Obama administration wanted to abandon the militaristic response to global terrorism and resorted instead to law enforcement-oriented policy strategy, it would have been difficult to overcome the enduring belief that terrorism

constituted an extraordinary threat to America's national security – much less to substantially change the policies based on that premise. The expansion of the security apparatus is a good example, as it demonstrates that inflated threat perceptions of terrorism were self-reinforcing. Inflated threat perceptions in turn justified the war on terror narrative as a self-evident discourse, including the policy framework it introduced to counter terrorism. The expansion of the security apparatus is a major reason why inflated threat perceptions of terrorism persisted throughout Obama's first term.

The expansion of the state security apparatus included the drastic reformation of existing law enforcement institutions such as the FBI, which made counterterrorism its top priority after 9/11. These changes resulted from the vast expansion of the federal budget on security and the introduction of new legislation such as the PATRIOT-acts, which gave law enforcement institutions more operational freedoms such as warrantless wiretapping (Lustick 2006). According to Lustick, these changes would not have been possible without the war on terror narrative as they required 'dangerous suspensions of civil liberties' (2013, p. 182). Moreover, the intelligence community dramatically expanded in response to the post-9/11 terror threats. As *The Washington Post*'s Priest and Arkin (2011) show, around 1.271 government agencies and 1.931 private firms are employed in intelligence gathering operations, homeland security, and counterterrorism. Accordingly, almost a decade after the 9/11 terror attacks, nearly 900.000 individuals hold top-secret security clearances, and various counterterror and intelligence operations were conducted in 10.000 locations across the US Moreover, the institutionalisation of the war on terror narrative that legitimised the expansion of security apparatus also included the drastic increase in the number of terror cases produced by law enforcement agencies. Inflated threat perceptions within law enforcement agencies created a tendency to treat any potential terrorism case seriously. This was famously expressed in the 'one-percent doctrine', which maintained that "the US government should act without respect to evidence of a threat, and only on the basis that it may be possible or even conceivable" (Lustick 2013, p. 182).

The war on terror discourses and policy strategies facilitated the drastic increase in law enforcement operations against suspected terrorists all over the US The visibility of these operations reaffirmed the image that terrorism was an overwhelming threat. It confirmed, for example, that the increased funding of the security apparatus was warranted. However, according to Lustick (2013), from 2005 to 2009 federal prosecutors refused to seek indictments for 67% of all proposed terrorism cases. Terrorist threat perceptions were largely misguided considering the high number of failed lawsuits that came after the arrests. In reality the increase in terrorism cases reflected mostly an expansion of working capacity and operational freedom in the security apparatus instead of an increase in terrorism. Nevertheless, distorted threat perceptions encouraged politicians and the public to continuously support the expanded security apparatus. As such, over-productive law enforcement agencies reaffirmed the war on terror narrative. This made it difficult for policy makers to argue that expanded security apparatus was unnecessary. The policies that were justified by the war on terror narrative thus ended up serving as policy feedback for this narrative, which became increasingly difficult to dispute.

The high government spending on domestic counterterrorism also attracted other non-state institutions and social actors to focus on counterterrorism as a key policy agenda. According to Lustick, this created a political environment in which "any government agency, company, think tank, professional association, or university that has wanted more funding or more contracts was encouraged if not forced to exaggerate the scale of the terrorist threat and to exaggerate its capacity […] to help counter that threat" (2013, p. 185). Instead of working against it, actors in the political system redefined their interests in line with the dominant institutional order. Consequently, a vast array of governmental institutions and private actors adopted the War on terror narrative and hundreds of thousands of jobs and careers became dependent on the continuation of the War on terror (Lustick 2006). The effect, as Jackson argues, was that "politicians, lobby groups or individuals who attempt to contradict its central narratives and assumptions are likely to gain little purchase and may even risk their careers" (2011, p. 400). The war on terror's trans-

formative impact on the domestic political system made it difficult for the Obama administration to argue against the narrative that terrorism ought to be treated as an exceptional threat. Hence, the Obama succumbed to the path-dependent discursive and institutionalised militaristic practices it inherited from the Bush administration.

3.3. The war on terror in foreign politics

Whereas the war on terror led to the drastic expansion of the security apparatus domestically, it was primarily defined as a military struggle in foreign policy. Militaristic approaches to counterterrorism redefined what it meant to be committed to advancing national security in the post-9/11 era. Furthermore, because many of these post-9/11 policy initiatives and state security agencies continued during Obama's presidency, this would have made it difficult to de-militarise US foreign policy abroad even if the administration wanted to.

The Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF), one of the defining documents of the war on terror, stated that terrorist networks such as Al Qaeda and related organisations constitute an imminent threat to the US national security (Deeks 2016). Defining the 9/11 attacks as acts of war meant that the US could deploy militaristic tactics against terrorists. The Bush administration's declaration of war soon materialised into two major wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Similar to domestic politics, inflated threat perceptions constituted the core justification for a completely different approach to counterterrorism, namely a global military operation against loosely defined terror groups. As such, the notion of 'war' (a physical, military struggle) became central to the expectation of how the US would counter terrorism in the post-9/11 era (Bentley 2014). In order to be perceived as an assertive leader, Bush invoked the necessity of war and military firepower, which were legitimised by the war on terror narrative. Thus, Bentley notes, "strong leadership came to be equated with the ability to act as a war president" (2014, p. 101).

Despite the detrimental consequences of the militaristic approach to human rights, the war on terror sets a new standard on what it meant to be committed to national security, at least from the perspective of the US security policy establish-

ment. As inflated threat perceptions of terrorism persisted in American politics throughout Obama's first term, the war continued to be regarded as necessary. Therefore, in order to be perceived as politically determined to keep the US safe from the threat of terrorism, Obama was inclined to continue to use the war on terror framework as a path-dependent basis for foreign policy, while ensuring that legal and political justifications support his counterterror policy initiatives.

President Obama's efforts to make his new counterterror strategies more legitimate and effective depended on the support and availability of existing post-9/11 institutions and practices such as drone operations, the rapidly expanding state security apparatus, and an enduring domestic public support for a strong militaristic stance against global terror networks. For instance, the Pew Research Center reported that the "the US public has consistently supported the use of drone strikes — and that support has been bipartisan", at a time when the Obama administration has dramatically expanded his drone program (Drake 2013). Particularly, in a February 2013 survey, 56% of total number of American respondents approved the drone program (only 26% disapproved it). If Obama abandoned the narrative that the US was in a war, he potentially risked being perceived as weak in comparison to Bush and he could have undermined his political legitimacy and chances for re-election. Declaring the war unnecessary would likely be perceived as a denial of the global terror threat.

The Obama administration found it difficult to immediately close Guantanamo Bay. On his second day in office Obama signed an executive order to close Guantanamo (Klaidman 2012). Yet, closing the detention facility eventually proved to be very challenging. There could be several reasons for this, and one factor pertains to the idea that the war on terror narrative had created a new status for prisoners of that war. Terrorists detained in Guantanamo were not regular criminals, considering that they did not have constitutional protections and they were imprisoned without a trial (Bentley 2014). Nor were they prisoners of war. They were deemed 'unlawful enemy combatants', a status created by the war on terror narrative. This

newly created status was used to justify torture and holding suspected terrorists indefinitely.

Closing Guantanamo meant that the prisoners held there would either be freed or transferred to civilian courts to be prosecuted as criminals instead of held as enemy combatants (Klaidman 2012). Freeing detainees was perceived as highly controversial as American military and intelligence personnel had taken big risks to capture terrorist suspects (Klaidman 2012). Many of them were widely believed to be a threat to the national security. On the other hand, in many cases, detainees could not be prosecuted in civilian courts as there was either insufficient evidence or the evidence was tainted by torture, which was problematic for legal prosecution. As many detainees could not be taken out of Guantanamo, Obama was inclined to continue the war narrative even though he objected to the policy: Without the war on terror policy frame, terrorists could not be discursively considered as enemy combatants. Thus, there were strong incentives to continue to use the framework of war as the basis of counterterrorism policy (Bentley 2014, p. 103). Even though the Obama administration stopped using the phrase 'war on terror', it essentially maintained the policy framework created by Bush. The continuation of war on terror policies thus functioned as policy feedback to reinforce the war on terror narrative. According to Bentley (2014, p. 96), this contradiction is noticeable in the 2010 National Security Strategy: "While this explicitly states that the US is no longer fighting the 'war on terror', it then continues to discuss the response to terrorist activity as an act of warfare; the world is still portrayed as a battlefield".

To conclude, the Bush administration capitalised on the fears of terrorism after the attacks on 9/11 in order to justify continued reliance on a militaristic approach. The path-dependent and self-reinforcing effects of expanding post-9/11 security apparatus, enduring public support for military force, and widespread perception of the severe threat posed by global terror networks demonstrate the lasting impacts of the Bush administration's war on terror. As such, the Obama administration was inclined to maintain the narrative and policy frameworks created by the previous administration. An important causal factor was that inflated threat percep-

tions of terrorism were self-reinforcing. Domestically, the treatment of terrorism as an exceptional threat reaffirmed the view that terrorism should continue to be treated as such. At the international front, inflated threat perceptions continued to justify Bush's war framework as a warranted response to the terrorist threat, even if some policies that were justified by this framework were strongly criticised. In order to be perceived as politically determined to keep the US safe from terrorism, Obama had to continue to project himself as a war president. The US therefore continued to use force against terrorists during Obama's first term as president.

4. The strong reliance on drone strikes

This section focuses on the main research question: Why did the use of drone strikes increase during the first term of the Obama administration? Drone strikes increased because the Obama administration sought to provide a more compelling justification for the use of military force against terrorism, without necessarily abandoning the 'war on terror' policy frameworks and discourses he inherited from his predecessor. Historical institutionalism suggests that institutional change is possible either when a new critical juncture emerges, or existing institutions reform in ways that are substantially constrained by past trajectories. This section analyses how the reliance on drones was both the continuation of the war framework and the result of Obama's attempt to change the most contentious aspects of that war. Hence, we discussed how the drone warfare program emerged as a product of strategic and political choices made by the Obama administration. The reliance on drone warfare became an appealing policy choice for the Obama administration because of two key reasons. First, by relying on drone strikes, the Obama administration could wage war against a more precisely defined terrorist enemy while signalling an interest in self-constraint in that war, while also limiting the risks of deaths of US military forces on the ground. Second, the use of drones enabled the administration to present and pursue a purportedly justifiable mode of conducting the war on terror. While the administration maintained the same militaristic policy framework as the previous administration, the Obama administration provided more sus-

tained legal justifications in support of military force, despite its detrimental consequences to human rights.

4.1. Self-constraint in the war against terrorists

According to President Obama, some excessive policies that were justified by the war on terror narrative had alienated the Muslim world. Obama wanted to clarify that the US was not at war with Islam. Unless this perception was fundamentally changed, the US would not be able to win the war against terrorism (Klaidman 2012). Shortly after becoming president, Obama travelled to Cairo to deliver a much-anticipated speech, whereby he responded to misconceptions that Bush's policies had created: "America is not, and never will be, at war with Islam" (Obama 2009b). To Obama, one of the main errors of the previous administration had been the invasion of Iraq. The US had squandered the goodwill of the international community after 9/11 while fighting a disastrous war against the wrong enemy (Klaidman 2012). In response to the backlash emerging from detrimental costs of the global war on terror, Obama wanted to reduce the US military footprint and refocus war efforts on the perceived right enemy. This policy change was expressed in the National Security Strategy 2010: "this is not a global war against a tactic—terrorism or a religion—Islam. We are at war with a specific network, Al Qaeda, and its terrorist affiliates" (TWH 2010, p. 20). President Obama had announced a troop withdrawal from Iraq in order to redirect efforts on Afghanistan, which he considered to be the real war on terrorism (McCrisken 2011). The troop increase in Afghanistan was announced within a limited timeframe. Troops would soon come home, but Obama argued it was crucial to increase military operations outside of the official warzones in order to paralyze Al-Qaeda operational capacities. In a speech at the West Point military academy, President Obama announced the implementation of "a strategy recognising the fundamental connection between our war effort in Afghanistan and the extremist safe havens in Pakistan" (Obama 2009a, p. 6). The strategy was "narrowly defined as disrupting, dismantling, and defeating Al Qaeda and its extremist allies" (Obama 2009a, p. 7).

To fight a more effective war against the 'real enemy', the US government required a military force that could be easily deployed globally. As early as 2002, as a state senator in Illinois, Obama strongly opposed the Bush administration's imminent military invasion of Iraq, but entertained the idea that militaristic options may be necessary in some conflicts: "I don't oppose all wars […] What I am opposed to is a dumb war" (Sunday Independent 2012, p. 5). During his early months of his administration, President Obama argued during his December 2009 acceptance speech for the Nobel Peace Prize the following: "There will be times when nations acting individually or in concert will find the use of force not only necessary but morally justified" (Sunday Independent 2012, p. 5). Consequently, that moralistic justification of military violence was invoked as US forces were deployed in Libya, Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere. Obama wanted to undermine Al Qaeda and affiliated networks while limiting American military footprint, which he believed was important to reducing tensions in the Middle East. That objective, from the perspective of the Obama administration, could be achieved through a bolstered drone warfare program. As McCrisken notes: "During the first year of the Obama administration there were 51 reported uses of unmanned Predator drones against targets housing alleged terrorists in Pakistan alone, more than the 45 used during the entire presidency of George W. Bush. In 2010 this number more than doubled to 118" (2011, p. 793). As the US was bolstering the fight against Al Qaeda on the Afghan-Pakistani border, affiliated organisation AQAP (Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula) was on the rise in Yemen (Klaidman 2012). In 2010, US intelligence officials also observed growing ties between AQAP and al-Shabab in Somalia. If Obama wanted to effectively undermine the Al Qaeda network, it became necessary to increase war efforts in Yemen and move military operations into Somalia. Obama avoided ground operations, as they risked forcing the US into another ground conflict. On the other hand, conventional airstrikes did not offer the precision Obama desired. As Klaidman (2012) notes, particularly in countries where the US was not officially at war, Obama wanted a surgical approach to the war on terror. His administration argued that drone operations are "exceptionally surgical and precise that they pluck

off terror suspects while not putting innocent men, women and children in danger" (Purkiss & Serle 2017, p. 4). US counterterrorism expert Brian Jenkins (2016) explained how Obama revamped the war on terror by bolstering pre-existing drone operations program and by consolidating executive power in order to manage effectively the burgeoning post-9/11 security institutions that were inherited from the Bush administration:

> "Using drone strikes to kill terrorist commanders began with the previous administration, but became a major component of Obama's counterterrorist efforts. The strikes enabled the United States to directly attack terrorist organizations without taking on counterinsurgency or nation-building missions. Drone strikes also remain directly under White House control. With advice from the intelligence community and military commanders, the president determines the target. As Obama has said, "I am pretty good at killing people".

As such, drones became the weapon of choice for the Obama administration. The presumed precision of these weapons was firmly in line with Obama's determination to wage war on global terror networks while limiting the risks to the lives of US military agents. As investigative journalist Jeremy Scahill argues:

> "The use of private companies like Blackwater for sensitive operations such as drone strikes or other covert work undoubtedly comes with the benefit of plausible deniability that places an additional barrier in an already deeply flawed system of accountability. When things go wrong, it's the contractors' fault, not the government's" (Boggs 2011, p. 119).

Hence, the use of drone warfare, in cooperation with contracted private companies, allows the US federal government to escape from any form of culpability amidst the increasing number of civilian casualties that were killed by US drone strikes. Thus, by resorting to drone strikes, the Obama administration could minimise legal culpability in two ways: (1) limit the number of American lives being killed abroad by sending killer drones rather than American military agents that could have been de-

ployed for on-the-ground operations abroad, and (2) outsource some drone operations programs to US private contractors for some form of plausible deniability for the collateral damages. By relying on drone warfare, the Obama administration hoped to demonstrate self-constraint in the use of American power, yet depended on the discursive and institutional structures that were inherited from its predecessor.

4.2. Emphasising the rule of law and human rights

Another issue with Bush's war on terror policies was the perceived disregard of the US government's human rights obligations and the rule of law, particularly when such counterterror operations have deployed abusive and morally despicable tactics such as torture and indefinite detention of terrorist suspects. It was difficult for Obama to close the detention centre in Guantanamo Bay. Nevertheless, the administration believed that these policies undermined US' moral authority in the struggle against terrorism. As the National Security Strategy 2010 states: "some methods employed in pursuit of our security have compromised our fidelity to the values that we promote" (TWH 2010, p. 21). Furthermore, the administration argued that the policies had become a potent recruitment tool for Al Qaeda. Obama wanted to wage a war on terror that was not only more effective, but also more morally justifiable and conform the rule of law. The increased use of drone strikes was an important way in which the administration hoped to achieve this for a number of reasons.

First, although Obama failed to close Guantanamo Bay, no new detainees were transferred therein during his tenure. As it became increasingly difficult to capture and detain terrorists, drone strikes were more often used to kill terrorist targets in the battlefield. That strategy does not necessarily suggest that the Obama administration explicitly made the decision to replace detention policies with lethal striking – although some have argued this (Mazzetti 2013). At least publicly, the Obama administration claimed to prefer capturing terrorist suspects over killing them (Klaidman 2012). However, as President Obama attempted to move away from re-

lying on detention and interrogation of suspected terrorists, this "would foreclose important tactical avenues in the war on terror. The inability to detain terror suspects was creating perverse incentives that favoured killing or releasing suspected terrorists over capturing them" (Klaidman 2012, p. 126). Therefore, the ambition to reduce one of the most controversial aspects of Bush's war on terror facilitated an increase in drone strikes. Instead of expanding Bush's controversial detention policies, the Obama administration launched covert drone operations that were expected to attract less domestic public outcry (in the US) than detaining Al Qaeda operatives. Although individual drone operations were covert and therefore not known to the public, the administration wanted to be transparent about the justifications for that policy. Rather than undermining the role of sophisticated legal justifications for militaristic policy actions, as the Bush administration did, Obama wanted to send a clear signal that the rule of law stood at the centre of the new counterterrorism strategy (Klaidman 2012). Harold Koh, legal advisor to the State Department, became the public face of the drone program. Koh played an important role in ensuring that the administration's military actions conformed with the laws of war. Similar to Bush's detention policies or the invasion of Iraq, drone strikes were legitimised through the promotion of the war on terror narrative and political discourses and the need for military force as the only effective response to global non-state terror networks.

While the Obama administration's drone program tried to limit human rights abuses brought by the Bush administration's detention policies, drone attacks were framed to be a more precise way of conducting warfare. During his first term, President Obama emphasized why drone operations effectively curtailed the significant threat of terrorism – the policy that eventually led to the dramatic increase of dead casualties because of drone strikes. At the start of his second term, faced with pressures to comply with the government's human rights obligations, Obama vowed to use drone strikes when a specific threat was 'continuing and imminent', which was a much more nuanced transformation from the old policy of drone de-

ployment in response to a supposedly significant threat (Spetalnick & Rampton 2013, p. 4)

The Obama administration stressed the accuracy of drone strikes and the thorough vetting procedure behind every targeted killing. Using the administration's official term 'targeted strikes', the Obama-led White House argued that drone operations aimed only at particular individuals who are usually described as 'senior members' of Al-Qaeda (Zenko 2012). Besides Herald Koh, John Brennan would also publicly advocate the use of drones. As former head of the CIA and former director of the DHS, Brennan had been involved in the war on terrorism from the beginning. Brennan argues that the Obama administration's "counterterrorism efforts outside of Afghanistan and Iraq are focused on those individuals who are a threat to the United States", which was also echoed by US Attorney General Eric Holder, who maintained that drones "target specific senior operational leaders of Al Qaeda and associated forces" (Zenko 2012, pp. 12-13). At the American Society of International Law, Koh defended the use of force with drones by stating: "using such advanced technologies can ensure both that the best intelligence is available for planning operations, and that civilian casualties are minimised in carrying out such operations" (Koh 2010). This argument was repeated by Brennan in a speech at the Wilson Center in 2012 when he argued that:

> "Targeted strikes conform to the principles of distinction, the idea that only military objectives may be intentionally targeted and that civilians are protected from being intentionally targeted. With the unprecedented ability of remotely piloted aircraft to precisely target a military objective while minimizing collateral damage, one could argue that never before has there been a weapon that allows us to distinguish more effectively between an al-Qaida terrorist and innocent civilians" (Brennan 2012).

Subsequently, Brennan concluded: "it is hard to imagine a tool that can better minimize the risk to civilians than remotely piloted aircraft" (Brennan 2012). According to Klaidman, Koh would often respond to criticisms from the human rights community by saying: "I would have preferred targeted killings to Hiroshima"

(2012, p. 203). These communications conveyed the message that instead of waging large-scale ground wars or treating terrorist suspects inhumanely at Guantanamo, the administration was interested in fighting a supposedly 'cleaner' war with discursive pretension of concern for human rights and the rule of law. Because military operations outside of the official combat zones were so sensitive, an elaborate set of permissions was required to authorise targeted killings. In many instances, proposed operations would not even be taken up the chain to the president if there was a reasonable chance that civilians would be killed (Klaidman 2012). Obama became so intimately involved with drone policy that "he personally signed off on each kill or capture operation conducted in Yemen and Somalia" (Klaidman, p. 205).

Drone warfare represented the enduring legacy of war on terror policies. While the US remained at war with terrorism, the Obama administration sought to implement incremental strategic changes in the way it deployed drone strikes and maintained the large state security apparatus he inherited from the Bush administration. Notably, drone operations, which Obama argued to be more accurate and discriminatory in targeting terrorists, constituted one of the two other key pillars of his revamped war on terror: those two pillars included the reliance on the cooperation of foreign governments' ground forces as well as the expansion of electronic surveillance (Stern 2015, pp. 64-66). In contrast to his predecessor, who launched the war on terror without attempting to provide sustained legal justifications, Obama tried to situate counterterrorism within the bounds of allegedly consistent legal reasoning. That was the case when "he established new decision-making procedures within the executive, had new justifications for the legality of measures drawn up and, with the involvement of Congress, succeeded in creating a new statutory basis for existing practices" (Thimm 2018, p. 12). Building on the wide-ranging state security institutions that the Bush administration built in response to the 9/11 attacks, the Obama administration reinforced intensive vetting of targets of drone strikes in an effort to ensure the precision of such operations:

> "It is the strangest of bureaucratic rituals: Every week or so, more than 100 members of the government's sprawling national security apparatus gather, by secure video teleconference, to pore over terrorist suspects' biographies and recommend to the president who should be the next to die. This secret "nominations" process is an invention of the Obama administration, a grim debating society that vets the PowerPoint slides bearing the names, aliases and life stories of suspected members of Al Qaeda's branch in Yemen or its allies in Somalia's Shabab militia" (Becker & Shane 2012, pp. 56-57).

Meanwhile, the use of drones enabled Obama to present himself as an effective war president. A clear example is the killing of Anwar Al-Awlaki, who was an American citizen who had become a prominent figure of AQAP in Yemen. As a propagandist, he had inspired among others the Christmas Day Bomber, who nearly managed to blow up an airplane above Detroit on 25 December 2009. The failed attack was a shocking reminder that the US remained under threat of terrorism. In response to the events, Obama invoked militaristic discursive rhetoric similar to Bush: "We are at war. We are at war against al Qaeda, a far-reaching network of violence and hatred that attacked us on 9/11, that killed nearly 3,000 innocent people, and that is plotting to strike us again. And we will do whatever it takes to defeat them" (McCrisken 2011, p. 788). One and a half years later, a drone strike had killed Awlaki. Obama proudly announced: "The death of Awlaki is a major blow to Al Qaida's most active operational affiliate". Furthermore, he concluded: "The death of Awlaki marks another significant milestone in the broader effort to defeat Al Qaida and its affiliates" (Obama 2011). The drone war had allowed the administration to continue Bush's war in a way that was sold as more constrained and morally acceptable.

Despite such incremental institutional changes in the war on terror, the US government killed hundreds, if not thousands, of civilians through drone strikes. By his third year in office, Obama had killed more terrorist suspects than had even been detained in Guantanamo Bay (Klaidman 2012). Attempting to stop its reliance on the presence of US forces abroad and other contentious war policies of his predecessor, President Obama refocused his administration's resources and political

capital on drone strikes, which essentially retained the enduring militaristic approach to US foreign policy abroad. Consequently, Obama's war on terror has undermined the quality of democratic governance and respect for human rights. For instance, the Obama administration subverted transparency and accountability by discouraging whistle-blowers and covering up information about the war on terror, thereby making it structurally difficult for investigative journalists to scrutinise the detrimental consequences of US military operations abroad (Greenwald 2013). That is particularly the case when the White House did not make any clear policy stance on many legislative initiatives that call for greater transparency in the conduct of drone operations. Even former policy advisers of the Obama administration expressed their disappointment in the failures of the war on terror, including former State Department official (under Secretary Hillary Clinton's leadership) and renowned International Relations scholar Anne Marie Slaughter, who argued that:

> "The idea that this president would leave office having dramatically expanded the use of drones - including [against] American citizens - without any public standards and no checks and balances [...] that there are no checks, and there is no international agreement; I would find that to be both terrible and ultimately will undermine a great deal of what this president will have done for good…I cannot believe this is what he wants to be his legacy" (Greenwald 2013, p. 17).

Conclusion

This paper maintained two main arguments. The first argument addressed a critical gap in the literature on drone warfare by demonstrating that the Obama administration was trapped in the war on terror policy framework, expansive post-9/11 state security apparatus, as well as considerable and enduring US domestic public support for strong militaristic stance against terrorism. Indeed, historical institutionalist insights provided useful concepts to understand how the Obama administration adopted counterterror narratives and policy paradigms in ways that made them purportedly more legitimate and strategically effective than the way they were used by the preceding administration.

Using historical institutionalist insights, we show how the Obama administration reduced the US military footprint and limited Bush's detention policies by relying instead on drone strikes. Concurrently, the Obama-led White House seriously considered the transnational nature of the terrorist enemy and decided to use force in a way that could be argued as purportedly more compliant with the government's view of its human rights obligations and other legal considerations. At the same time, the use of drones enabled President Obama to convincingly present himself as a war president in a way that could further bolster his political legitimacy amidst an American public that is largely supportive of militaristic responses to global terrorism.

Our analysis contributes to scholarly and policy debates in various ways. First, we provide a theoretically grounded explanation for the politics of continuity and change in American foreign security policies, particularly on drone strikes. The overarching structures of post-9/11 security establishment severely weakened the optimism and moral ambitions that fuelled Obama's presidential campaign, which once sought to undo the damages of the Bush administration's war on terror. Second, our analysis demonstrates the explanatory power of historical institutionalist insights in understanding contemporary puzzles in foreign policy analysis. While such insights are usually employed in comparative politics, scholars of International Relations and foreign policy analysis could benefit from deploying a historical-institutionalist approach as one of the several toolkits in understanding two key processes: the interactions between broad institutional structures vis-à-vis the political agency of particular actors and the patterns of continuity and change of policy paradigms over time. Most importantly, the US drone warfare programme has led to the death of civilians, and it is important that state responses should focus on addressing the structural causes of violence, including poverty and inequalities, rather than investing in militaristic approaches that undermine the right to life of individuals caught in the midst of war.

References

Becker, J & Shane, S 2012, 'Secret 'Kill List' Tests Obama's Principles', *The New York Times*, May 29, viewed 10 July 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/29/world/obamas-leadership-in-war-on-al-qaeda.html>.

Bentley, M 2014, 'Continuity we can believe in: escaping the War on terror', in M Bentley & J Holland (eds), *Obama's Foreign Policy – Ending the War on terror*, Routledge, pp. 91–107.

Birdsall, A 2018, 'Drone warfare in counterterrorism and normative change: US policy and the politics of international law', *Global Society*, vol. 32, no. 3, pp. 241–262. https://doi.org/10.1080/13600826.2018.1456409

Brennan, J 2012, 'The ethics and efficacy of the President's Counterterrorism Strategy', *Council on Foreign Relations*, 30 April, viewed 10 July 2020, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/the-efficacy-and-ethics-us-counterterrorism-strategy>.

Bush, GW 2001, 'September 22, 2001: Address on the US response to the attacks on September 11', *Miller Center*, 22 September, viewed 10 July 2020, <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/september-22-2001-address-us-response-attacks-september-11>.

Byman, D 2013, 'Why drones work: The case for Washington's weapon of choice', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 92, no. 4, pp. 32–43.

Cramer, JK & Thrall, AT 2009, 'Introduction: Understanding threat inflation', in AT Thrall & J Cramer (eds), *American foreign policy and the politics of fear: Threat inflation since 9/11*, Routledge, pp. 1–15.

Davis, J 2011, 'Assessing Obama's Efforts to Redefine the War on terror', in J Davis (ed), *The Barack Obama Presidency*, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 165–189.

Deeks, AS 2016, 'The Obama Administration, International Law, and Executive Minimalism', *American Journal of International Law*, vol. 110, no. 4, pp. 646–662. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0002930000763159

Drake, B 2013, Obama and drone strikes: Support but questions at home, opposition abroad, *Pew Research Center*, 24 May, viewed 10 July 2020, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/05/24/obama-and-drone-strikes-support-but-questions-at-home-opposition-abroad/>.

Fairhead, E 2016, 'Schmittian politics in the age of drones: an analysis of Obama's War on terror', PhD thesis, University of Kent.

Fisk, K & Ramos, J 2016, 'Introduction: The preventive force continuum', in K Fisk & J Ramos (eds), *Preventive force*, New York University Press, pp. 1–29.

Greenwald, G 2013, 'Three key lessons from the Obama administration's drone lies', *The Guardian*, April 13, viewed 10 July 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/apr/11/three-lessons-obama-drone-lies>.

Hodges, A 2011, *The "War on terror" narrative: Discourse and intertextuality in the construction and contestation of sociopolitical reality*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Horowitz, MC, Kreps, S & Fuhrmann, M 2016, 'Separating fact from fiction in the debate over drone proliferation', *International Security*, vol. 41, no. 2, pp. 7–42. http://dx.doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00257

Jackson, R 2011, 'Culture, identity and hegemony: Continuity and (the lack of) change in counterterrorism policy from Bush to Obama', *International Politics*, vol. 48, no. 1, pp. 390–411. https://doi.org/10.1057/ip.2011.5

Jenkins, B 2016, 'President Obama's Controversial Legacy as Counterterrorism-in-Chief', *The RAND Blog*, August 22, viewed 10 July 2020, <https://www.rand.org/blog/2016/08/president-obamas-controversial-legacy-as-counterterrorism.html>.

Kindervater, KH 2016, 'The emergence of lethal surveillance: Watching and killing in the history of drone technology', *Security Dialogue*, vol. 47, no. 3, pp. 223–238. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0967010615616011

Klaidman, D 2012, *Kill or Capture: The War on terror and the soul of the Obama presidency*, Mariner Books, New York.

Krebs, R & Lobasz, J 2009, 'The sound of silence: Rhetorical coercion, Democratic acquiescence, and the Iraq War', in A Thrall & J Cramer (eds), *American foreign policy and the politics of fear: Threat inflation since 9/11*, Routledge, pp. 117–134.

Kreuzer, M 2014, 'Remotely Piloted Aircraft: Evolution, Diffusion, and the Future of Air Warfare', PhD Diss., Princeton University.

Koh, H 2010, 'The Obama administration and International Law', Keynote speech at the Annual Meeting of the American Society of International Law.

Lustick, IS 2006, *Trapped in the War on terror*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Pennsylvania.

Lustick, IS 2013, 'Trapped, or not, in the War on terror', in M Ayoob & E Ugur (eds), *Assessing the War on terror*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, pp. 173–192.

Mazzetti, M 2013, *The way of the knife: The CIA, a secret army, and a war at the ends of the earth*, Penguin Books, New York.

McCrisken, T 2011, 'Ten years on: Obama's war on terrorism in rhetoric and practice', *International Affairs*, vol. 87, no. 4, pp. 781–801. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2011.01004.x

McDonald, J 2017, *Enemies known and unknown: targeted killings in America's transnational war*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Obama, B 2007, 'Renewing American Leadership', *Foreign Affairs*, July/August, vol. 86, no. 4, pp. 2–16.

Obama, B 2009a, 'December 1, 2009: Speech on strategy in Afghanistan and Pakistan', *Miller Center*, 1 December, viewed 10 July 2020, <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/december-1-2009-speech-strategy-afghanistan-and-pakistan>.

Obama, B 2009b, 'June 4, 2009: Address at Cairo University', *Miller Center*, 4 June, viewed 10 July 2020, <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/june-4-2009-address-cairo-university>.

Obama, B 2011, 'Remarks at the Change of Command Ceremony for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff', *Government of the United States of America*, 30 September, viewed 10 July 2020, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PPP-2011-book2/pdf/PPP-2011-book2-doc-pg1183.pdf>.

Pierson, P & Skocpol, T 2002, 'Historical Institutionalism in Contemporary Political Science', in I Katznelson & H Milner (eds), *Political Science: State of the Discipline*, WW Norton, pp. 693–721.

Priest, D & Arkin, W 2011, *Top Secret America: The Rise of the New American Security State*, Little, Brown, and Company, New York.

Purkiss, J & Serle, J 2017, 'Obama's Covert Drone War in Numbers: Ten Times More Strikes than Bush', *The Bureau of Investigative Journalism*, 17 January, viewed 10 July 2020, <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2017-01-17/obamas-covert-drone-war-in-numbers-ten-times-more-strikes-than-bush>.

Ralph, J 2013, *America's War on terror: The State of the 9/11 Exception from Bush to Obama*, Oxford University Press, New York.

Regilme, SSFJ 2018a, 'Does US Foreign Aid Undermine Human Rights? The "Thaksinification" of the War on terror Discourses and the Human Rights Crisis in Thailand, 2001 to 2006', *Human Rights Review*, vol. 19, no. 1, pp. 73–95. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12142-017-0482-2

Regilme, SSFJ 2018b, 'A human rights tragedy: Strategic localization of US foreign policy in Colombia', *International Relations*, vol. 32, no. 3, pp. 343–365. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117818777830

Regilme, SSFJ 2019, 'The Decline of American Power and Donald Trump: Reflections on Human Rights, Neoliberalism, and the World Order', *Geoforum*, vol. 102, pp. 157–166. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2019.04.010

Rixen, T & Viola, LA 2016, 'Historical Institutionalism and International Relations: Towards Explaining Change and Stability in International Institutions', in T

Rixen & LA Viola (eds), *Historical Institutionalism and International Politics*, Oxford University Press, pp. 3–36.

Sauer, F & Schörnig, N 2012, 'Killer drones: the 'silver bullet' of democratic warfare?' *Security Dialogue*, vol. 43, no. 4, pp. 343–380. https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010612450207

Shelby, W 2017, 'Prone to drone: Unmanned Aircraft System's effect on public support for the use of force', PhD Diss., Purdue University.

Spetalnick, M & Rampton, R 2013, 'Obama shifts US from 'perpetual war-footing', limits drone strikes', *Reuters*, 23 May, 10 July 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-obama-speech-idUSBRE94M04Y20130523>.

Stern, J 2015, 'Obama and Terrorism', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 94, no. 62, pp. 62–71.

Sunday Independent, 2012, 'How Obama became adept at waging war. E1-18', *Factiva*, March 11, 10 July 2020, <https://global-factiva-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/ga/default.aspx>.

Thelen, K 1999, 'Historical institutionalism in comparative politics', *Annual review of political science*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 369–404. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.2.1.369

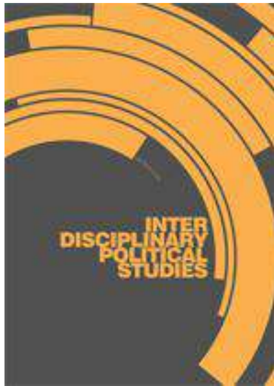
Thimm, J 2018, 'From Exception to Normalcy: The United States and the War on terrorism', Working Paper, SWP Berlin, viewed 10 July 2020, <https://css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/resources/docs/SWP_2018RP07_tmm(1).pdf >.

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, 2019, 'Drone strikes in Pakistan', 2 January, 10 July 2020, <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/projects/drone-war/charts?show_casualties=1&show_injuries=1&show_strikes=1&location=pakistan&from=2004-1-1&to=now>.

TWH (The White House), 2010, *National Security Strategy*, 1 May, viewed 10 July 2020,
<http://nssarchive.us/NSSR/2010.pdf>.

Walsh, J 2018, 'The rise of targeted killing', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol. 41, no. 1-2, pp. 143–159. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2017.1393035

Zenko, M 2012, 'Targeted Killings and Signature Strikes', *Council on Foreign Relations*, July 16, viewed 10 July 2020, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/targeted-killings-and-signature-strikes>.



Interdisciplinary Political Studies
http://siba-ese.unisalento.it/index.php/idps
ISSN: 2039-8573 (electronic version)

IdPS, Issue 6(1) 2020: 203-206
DOI: 10.1285/i20398573v6n1p203
Published in July 15, 2020

BOOK REVIEWS

Memory and Securitization in Contemporary Europe, edited by Vlad Strukov and Victor Apryshchenko (eds.). London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, pp. 284.

Priya Sara Mathews
Independent Researcher

In the past decade, Europe has been suffering multiple and intersecting crises such as the economic downturn, the influx of refugees and immigrants and the exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union (EU) following the Brexit referendum. These crises have shed a light on some of the limitations of a purely economic union with little political and socio-cultural unity and have brought to the fore the question of who exactly is European?. However, it is not only the European Identity that is facing an upheaval but also the very notion of Europe. What is Europe? Is it a merely a geographical entity? Does it allude only to those that are within the economic union or is it a representation of certain values and cultures that have been birthed through a joint history of war and peace? *Memory and Securitization in Contemporary Europe*, puts these nuanced questions in stark relief.

The use of discourse as an instrument of securitization has become a topic of increasing research interest, particularly in the area of Critical Security Studies. Discourse helps create the identity of those who are the consumers of this securitization. This book expands that notion and explores the relationship between

Work licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non commercial-Share alike 3.0 Italian License

memory and security by highlighting how memory is used to shape the discourse on security. To this end, Strukov and Apryshchenko's edited volume analyzes the dominant discourse in a diverse range of cases from Scottish referendum of independence to the Ukraine crisis looking mainly at speech acts.

Several authors draw out how historical memory is invoked to securitize certain aspects of politics. In Chapter 2, for example, Victor Apryshchenko considers the three referenda that took place in 2014 - Crimean, Scottish and Catalan - to indicate and examine how history is instrumentalized to create identities. Ewen A. Cameron further explores this idea, in Chapter 3, demonstrating how collective memory of important historic events are alternately used in the Scottish referendum by both those who were pro-Scottish independence as well as those against.

However, the book does not consider only the impact of historic memory on contemporary securitization but also analyses the creation of "new" memories as a part of the contemporary strategy of securitization that is visible in different parts of Europe. By examining the movies in the *Best Foreign Language Film* category of the 2015 Oscars Vlad Strukov, in Chapter 6, illustrates the dual function of the films chosen: on the one hand, they help an American audience imagine a Europe that is a single albeit erratic cultural space, on the other hand, it demonstrates to the European audience the European Identity is divided and connected to a complex network of individual and collective memories. Furthermore, he shows that both the selection of the movies and the choices made by the filmmakers reflect the concerns of the time.

Chapter 7, by Stephen Hutchings and Kenzie Burchell, considers the parallels in the remembering/forgetting dichotomy that is a fundamental part of the workings of media and the contemporary security culture which instills fear of the unknown while striving to convey a "sense of control based on past threats". Ex-

ploring the reporting of Lee Rigby's murder by the BBC and the French news program *Journal de 20 heures* the authors demonstrate how varying definitions of 'terrorist' created by the media through the years, result in an inability to rely on the memory of who a 'terrorist' is. Moreover, the interconnected nature of our world means that security and securitization span multiple countries thus, different approaches to securitization are filtered through the media while dealing with a Europe that has conflicting views on its history and values.

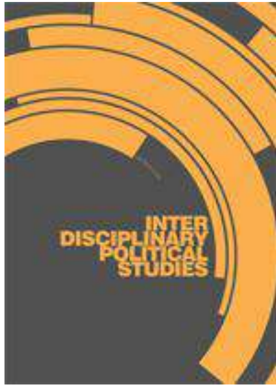
While the first part of this book mainly looks at the United Kingdom, the last few chapters consider Eastern Europe, with Chapter 8 acting almost as a bridge, with the exploration of memory and discourse in the securitization of climate change in both Russian and British media. The author argues that climate change being a relatively newly discussed issue with the first instances of this discourse formed only in 1988, thus discursive memory surrounding it is pretty short and it is precisely this lack of collective memory that has had an impact on its process of securitization. Mykola Makhortykh, in Chapter 9, on the other hand examines the use of social media during the Ukrainian crisis noting that "historical memory featured as a factor in securitization and de-securitization on Twitter" (p.232). Finally, in the last chapter, the formation of the Eurasian Economic Union and its basis on memory and securitization is considered. The author notes that the choice of Russian as the official language of the union belies that the project is not simply an economic one but rather a political one with roots in its historical past.

The book is cohesive and the chapters are structured in a way that in most cases one chapter almost leads into the other. There are however, a couple of missteps. For instance in Chapter 4, commemorations are used as 'speech acts' that according to the author, demonstrates a threat that needs to appear to be resolved in the collective memory so that in the present it is neutralised. This argumentation

seems to be a little weak as while commemorations can be considered to inform or reflect the wider discourse the monuments and art pieces discussed appear to be a product of rather than to shape the political, social and cultural situation of the time. And in Chapter 5, the researcher looks at memory and securitization in Belfast by using a semi-fictional essay to demonstrate the discourse surrounding the Troubles. Although effective in illustrating the author's point, considering that all the other chapters followed similar methodological approaches, this chapter hits a slightly jarring note.

Securitization theory forms an important part of Critical Security Studies and this book looks at the interesting aspect of memory as an instrument of securitization. Furthermore, it gives a broad overview of some of the pressing security issues in contemporary Europe such as climate change or the problems facing East Europe. Thus, it provides a useful framework for understanding some of the security mechanisms for those students who are interested in broadening their understanding on the subject.

Priya Sara Mathews



Interdisciplinary Political Studies
http://siba-ese.unisalento.it/index.php/idps
ISSN: 2039-8573 (electronic version)

IdPS, Issue 6(1) 2020: 207-211
DOI: 10.1285/i20398573v6n1p207
Published in July 15, 2020

BOOK REVIEWS

Memory Laws, Memory Wars: The Politics of the Past in Europe and Russia, by Nikolay Koposov. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018, pp. xvi+322.

Jennifer Ostojski
Northeastern University, Boston, MA

In "*Memory Laws, Memory Wars – The Politics of the Past in Europe and Russia*", Nikolay Koposov explains that the general term "memory laws" encompasses a wide span of understandings, including but not limited to state symbols, museums and education policies, and commemorations. His book focuses on one type of memory laws: the "criminalizing statements" about past tragedies, especially the denial of atrocities committed by the state. While the broad notion of memory laws dates back to the late 1940s and 1950s, criminalizing statements are an invention of the late 20th century, and first emerged in Germany in 1985 as a response to rising anti-Semitism in the country.

Through a comparative historical analysis, Koposov explores to what extent Western and Eastern European countries as well as Russia distinguish in their approach to criminalize certain statements about the past, and argues that the states' different political goals structure the way in which these laws are phrased. Western Europeans countries face their participation – to varying degrees – to the Holocaust and grapple with their own narratives of perpetrators to benefit culturally and eco-

Work licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non commercial-Share alike 3.0 Italian License

nomically from their admission of guilt. By contrast, in the issuing of memory laws, Eastern European countries not only struggle with their past during the Holocaust but also with their involvement with the Soviet Union. Since the 2000s, they have been attempting to use memory laws to distance themselves from Nazi and Soviet oppression and to potentially escape from Russia's influence. Koposov demonstrates that both Western and Eastern European countries manipulate historical consciousness through legislation to advance their interests and solidify their position in the global sphere. The two models collide in Koposov's case study of the Ukraine and its tenuous past with Russia.

The book's structure guides the reader eloquently from the broad discussion of the historical, philosophical, and legal foundation that constitute memory laws in Europe to in-depth case studies in Western and Eastern Europe, culminating in the application of the author's main argument. Koposov warns of the steady increase of memory legislation, in particular the criminalization of statements, as history has become more and more politicized. The legislating of memory no longer serves the purpose of propagating the historical truthful facts – as its initial purpose was to counter Holocaust negations in Western Europe -, but rather it is utilized to advance domestic and foreign policy agendas.

Koposov paints a clear differentiation between Western European memory laws and Eastern European memory laws (Chapters 2 and 3). Western Europe has (reluctantly) over time structured the Shoah as an universal evil, in which remembrance is tied to repentance, and – unlike the Eastern narrative – self-victimization is not key in creating memory laws. Eastern Europe, however, has developed two competing frameworks and narratives further complicating remembrances: one in the footsteps of Poland; and the other Western-like. The choice for which model, so Koposov, largely depends on the country's relation to Russia –the former Soviet

Union –, as Eastern European memory laws not only account for the Holocaust like in Western European countries but also for the crimes committed by the Communist regime. The stronger the Soviet influence and presence in a specific country in the past, the greater the distance the country wishes to take from it now, like Poland, for instance. By implementing this model, mainstream narrative favors national self-victimization, an equalizing of Jewish and national sufferings; avoids any allusion to potential collaboration with the Nazis or the Communists; and puts Soviet crimes on the same level of crimes committed in the Holocaust.

The novelty and excitement of his actual scholarly contribution is found in in the second half of the book devoted to modern Ukraine (Chapter 4), a case in point for its complex ties and history with Russia which have split the country essentially in half. He illustrates a fascinating and intricate story of a country which is struggling to define a unifying historical narrative. Its attempts of accomplishing that through the Holodomor narrative, the man-made famine in the 1930s killing millions of people, do not seem to succeed. Memory laws are treated as sophisticated weaponry in the fight over Ukraine's national memory. Parliamentary battles show the difficult relationship the government has with Russia, its former Soviet satellite mothership. Both narratives for and against Russia are frequently proposed by members of government and parliament, shifting back and forth between a decommunization effort and a neglecting of Ukraine's fascist history.

Russia's impact on the country's ideological conflicts becomes even more complex, when Koposov delves into Russia's own history with memory laws (Chapters 5 and 6). He details the different approaches to memory laws by presidents Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin, and demonstrates the many changes experienced by the country. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia has been dealing with its Communist past through a different approach to memory laws. This is where the

author's title truly comes into play, as he illustrates all the elements that contribute to a memory war. Namely, Russia's current celebration of Soviet culture, the marginal acknowledgement of Holocaust memory, and the limiting of Nazi-style crimes to Nazis - and not to the Fascist, for instance - in order to avoid any association of Russia with the memory of perpetrators. Russia is not just fighting this war with itself but also - in its obsession over Ukraine- against potential Western narratives flourishing in the ideologically split country.

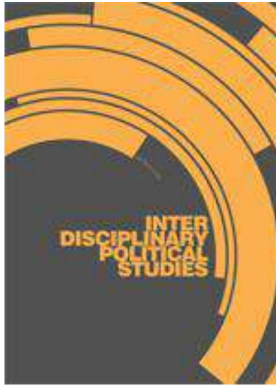
Invoking a lot of the key literature in the field, Koposov succeeds at presenting a highly detailed overview of what the current legal situation in many key European countries looks like. Additionally, he offers a fascinating narrative of how the states' current laws have developed since their common foundation in the Nuremburg trial judgements. He does so through the assessment of political conditions surrounding the legislative process, and through his portrayal of the biggest contentions between the wording of those laws. Necessary on one hand, the overtly descriptive nature of information presented sometimes appears redundant – especially the quoting of lengthy potential memory laws which then are not passed.

Koposov's categorization of memory laws which criminalize statements about the past, while new due to a definitive account of the historical process, is not novel in its contribution to the larger literature. The differentiation between Eastern and Western Holocaust and Communist narratives is well documented. Koposov, however, brings it all together in his book, adding to the academic debate by discussing also some underexplored European countries, for instance Western Balkan or Scandinavian countries.

To conclude, Koposov's book provides a foundational text in European memory laws, recalling known arguments and shedding new light on the power these laws can have on a country's self-consciousness and national identity, as well as

on its foreign policy in Eastern Europe. Memory laws serve dual goals: banning untrue facts about history and creating more historical consciousness amongst the public. On paper this sounds innocuous. As Koposov shows, though, they are also being utilized to reshape historical narratives in individual countries as a means to whitewash the guilt of perpetrators and advance political goals. His book is timely as it offers an additional layer of understanding to policy making and national narrative making, particularly in countries which have recently been experiencing a democratic backsliding.

Jennifer Ostojski



Interdisciplinary Political Studies
http://siba-ese.unisalento.it/index.php/idps
ISSN: 2039-8573 (electronic version)

IdPS, Issue 6(1) 2020: 213-217
DOI: 10.1285/i20398573v6n1p213
Published in July 15, 2020

BOOK REVIEWS

European Memory in Populism: Representations of Self and Other, by Chiara De Cesari and Ayhan Kaya (Eds.). New York: Routledge, 2020, pp. xviii+302.

George Kordas
Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences

The 2008 economic crisis triggered socio-political upheaval, bringing forth widespread disillusion against the mainstream political classes. Populism prominently entered the public vocabulary, and so-called populist forces have since been on the rise. In recent years, growing anti-EU rhetoric has attempted to normalise the idea of nation-states and to halt the European integration process. The differentiation in the construction of memories and nation-building processes has deeply affected the overall unit of Europe, as its fractured reaction to the Covid19 pandemic has further shown. The representation of the past, for the traditional values it brings along, plays a crucial role in populist discourses.

This relationship between memories of the past and populism is at the core of the collective volume *European Memory in Populism: Representations of Self and Other,* edited by Chiara De Cesari and Ayhan Kaya. They emphasise the intertwined role of memory and cultural heritage in the far-right populist discourse, and their significance in the enduring construction of the nation. As the editors explain, the volume

Work licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non commercial-Share alike 3.0 Italian License

critically examines the populist meaning of "Europeanism", whereby European culture and heritage is problematically framed according to specific territorial boundaries and thus associates Europeans with Christianity and, implicitly, whiteness. Constructed like this, European heritage erases the reality of multiculturalism as well as its colonial past.

Remarkably, it might be the case of the acceptance of both a common European history and a common European culture, as De Cesari, Bosilkov and Piacentini present us. Drawing on an unusual grounded theory approach in political science and history, they interview the supporters of eight populist parties and find out an increasingly imagined construction of Europe.

Gal Kirn's contribution focuses on anti-totalitarian monuments in Ljubljana and Brussels. Moving from the similarities between these two cities, Kirn indicates a shift in the EU's anti-totalitarian memory, omitting its anti-fascist legacy, in favour of its anti-communist legacy. Thus, we are in front of a new pan-European, revisionist trend, namely one memorial for all the victims of totalitarianism.

In Italy, Gabriele Proglio looks at how Matteo Salvini – leader of the Lega and then-deputy prime minister – has adopted the symbols and vocabulary of the colonialist propaganda into his anti-migrant populist rhetoric. Patterns as the defence of national frontiers from non-Italian people and Salvini's transformation as the "father of the nation", can be better understood through the author's two-dimensional model: from the colonial legacies (the ghost) to the recognition of the self in a national imagined community (the mirror).

Luiza Bialasiewicz's and Lora Sariaslan's chapter deals with the geopolitics of the 'oriental rug'. By illustrating the shift of oriental rugs from being markers of status to fearful objects, the authors focus on how the emotions created by the pub-

lic reactions on materials, frame the politics of resentment constructed in contemporary Europe against Islam.

The volume also explores the religious side of populism. In his chapter on the Netherlands, Ernst van den Hemel examines the Party for Freedom's tweets to map the party's references to religious and cultural traditions and shows how social media construct a given heritage as well. Later on, Markus Balkenhol and Wayne Modest explore the links between the postcolonial melancholia, the right-wing populism and the narratives of caring for the nation. Susannah Eckersley follows a darker path of the European heritage, as she examines the firebombing of Dresden in 1945 by the Allies. Notably, Eckersley brings to light the manipulation taking place in the management of heritage and memory, both from a victim/perpetrator narrative and the politics of fear and pity. By identifying two axes - the appropriation of the past and the appropriateness in the present - she creates an analytical framework that can be used to analyse similar phenomena elsewhere.

The instrumentalisation of the past by the Finns Party through four core discourses represents the content of Tuuli Lahdesmaki's chapter. Those are the naturalisation of a nationalist Europe; the past in the meaning-making of the EU; Europe's cultural-religious-moral entity; and the defence of Europe's liberal heritage against "Islamisation".

In Poland, as Ireneusz Pawel Karolewski argues, memory is a form of symbolic power. The politics of "lustration" has covered an essential part of the political discourse, stigmatising political opponents and creating a populist division in the Polish society between the "true people" and the "traitors".

Although *European Memory* is the main focus of the volume, it also goes beyond Europe's conventional borders and covers Turkey and Israel. Ayhan Kaya and Ayse Tecmen's discourse analysis of the Justice and Development Party (AKP)'s

statements on the past illustrate how populism, Islamism, and neo-Ottomanism have been instrumentalised in the party's political discourses. Likewise, Gonul Bozoglu examines how the AKP attempted to replace Ataturk and the First Republic's secularist memories with neo-Ottomanism's Islamism through the case of the Panorama 1453 Museum in Istanbul. Israel is another case in point to show how memory plays a crucial role in the state-formation process. Through a typical populist dichotomy, between "the people" (Askenazi Israelites of the diaspora) and "the elites" (Jews of the Middle East), similarities can be found between Israel's repressions against its non-European people: first the Jews of the Middle East and then the Palestinian people.

Lastly, Ruth Wodak highlights the complex process from the construction of history to its share and general acceptance from the people's majority, whereas Astrid Erll takes collective identity as a crucial characteristic of the constructed nature of memories.

To conclude, De Cesari and Kaya meritoriously highlight the interplay between populism and memory, and the ways the latter is (re)constructed, instrumentalised and exploited to the benefit of the former. The variety of disciplines through which these themes are explored interestingly enriches the volume and truly contributes to the literature on populism. At the same time, the dominant qualitative approach allows the reader to delve deeply into the complex construction and public acceptance of memories. Nevertheless, adding some quantitative analyses could have further strengthened this contribution by making it even more innovative. Although a more coherent organisation of the chapters according to geographic, thematic or disciplinary clusters would make reading the book more straightforward, it nonetheless remains a crucial research study. Also, the absence of a chapter drawing a general conclusion of the collective volume is quite surprising and disappointing

in the end. The book shall certainly inspire additional analyses not only on the rest of Europe but also on non-European countries to shed further light on the complexity of memory studies and their significance in the study of the rising populism trends.

George Kordas

July 2020

INTER
DISCIPLINARY
POLITICAL
STUDIES

editors

Federico Russo, University of Salento, Italy
Alessandra Russo, University of Trento, Italy

editorial board

Alice Cavalieri, Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies, Italy
Giulia Cimini, University of Bologna, Italy
Senem Ertan, Social Sciences University of Ankara, Turkey
Alessandra Fasano, University of Salento, Italy
Amandine Hostein, University of Portsmouth, UK
Silvio Labbate, University of Salento, Italy
Arianna Marcolin, Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies, Italy

advisory board

Frank R. Baumgartner, University of North Carolina, USA
Paolo Bellucci, University of Siena, Italy
Stefano Braghiroli, University of Tartu, Estonia
Manuela Caiani, Scuola Normale Superiore, Italy
Michele Carducci, University of Salento, Italy
Chiara de Franco, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark
Fabio De Nardis, University of Salento, Italy
Caroline Dufy, University of Bordeaux, France
J. Andrew Grant, Queen's University, Canada
Christoffer Green-Pedersen, University of Aahrus, Denmark
Ruth Hanau Santini, University of Naples L'Orientale, Italy
Stephanie Hofmann, Graduate Institute Geneva, Switzerland
Cristina Leston-Bandeira, University of Leeds, UK
David Lewis, University of Exeter, UK
Sonia Lucarelli, University of Bologna, Italy
Catherine Moury, New University of Lisbon, Portugal
Thomas Saalfeld, University of Bamberg, Germany
Francesco Strazzari, Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies, Italy