Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe & North America

7 Analyzing Patterns of Government Attention and What Drives Them: the Comparative Agendas Project
   Frank Baumgartner and Arco Timmermans

14 Divergence and Convergence of Policy Priorities among Sub-National Units in Federal Systems: The Cases of Canada and Spain
   Laura Chaques, Eric Montpetit, Anna M. Palau, and Luz Munoz

22 The Dynamics of Agenda Expansion and Contraction in the U.S.
   Bryan Jones

29 Media, Politics, and Policymaking: Lessons from Switzerland
   Anke Tresch, Pascal Sciarini, and Frederic Varone

35 Budget Dynamics
   Christian Brenig and Peter B. Mortensen

41 Analyzing the Policy Agenda of the European Council
   Marcello Carammia, Petya Alexandrova, Sebastiaan Princen, and Arco Timmermans

47 The Politics of Competence
   Will Jennings and Jane Green

54 The Power of the Opposition
   Christoffer Green-Pedersen, Peter Mortensen, Henrik Seeberg, and Gunnar Thesen

60 The Politics of Morality in Western Europe
   Isabelle Engeli, Christoffer Green-Pedersen, and Lars Thorup Larsen
Conflicts of Translation in British Modernist Literature
Emily Hayman

Taking a Closer Look at Organized Interests in the European Union
Alexandra Cirone

The Cost of Conflict: Children’s Reasoning about Ethno-religious Identity in Northern Ireland
Jocelyn B. Dautel

The Empire on Display: Exhibitions of Germanic Art and Design in America, 1890-1914
Megan McCarthy

Just One Piece of the Puzzle: Leiharbeit and Institutional Change in German Industrial Relations
Christoph Nguyen

The Consolidation of Ottoman Power in Bosnia, 1463-1580
Ayelet Rosen

Jewish Ethnography in Interwar Poland: The Construction of a Polish Jewish Identity
Sarah Zarrow

‘Who has the Youth, has the Future’: Youth, Gender, and Sexuality in Weimar Germany
Javier Samper Vendrell

From Progress to Pictures and the Texts in Between
Melissa Lo

Birthing the International Community: Motherhood, Precarity and Belonging in Transnational Geneva
Lindsey Wallace
108 The Case for the Ottoman Enlightenment: Natural Philosophy and Cosmopolitanism in Eighteenth-Century Istanbul

B. Harun Kücük

111 Colonial Governance in the Mediterranean: French Administration of the Protectorates and Mandate, 1919-1939

Lisa Maguire

114 An Empire and its Forests: Spanish Forest Management and Conservation, 1560-1600

Harley Davidson

117 “Monsieur le Ministre, we’re waiting for our veteran’s card”: The Struggle for Recognition of French Combatants of the Algerian War, 1956-1974

Anndal Narayanan
Editor’s Note

This year’s second issue of Perspectives on Europe contains a mini-forum devoted to the ongoing body of research and analysis being done in the US and Europe on policy agendas. Over the past decade, the European portion of this exciting policy agendas research programme has been spearheaded by the Comparative Agendas Project (CAP) and has evolved into one of the most extensive transatlantic research programmes in the political sciences. It brings together a large group of political scientists that have been very active in the Council for European Studies (CES), and as a result, it has been particularly well-represented at the Council’s conferences. Indeed, at almost every CES conference, the CAP has organised a particularly well-attended mini-symposium exploring the issues raised by recent research. And it is partly this fact which led me to invite a mini-forum on these issues for inclusion in Perspectives.

Another reason for inviting this mini-forum is that it represents a type of research of particular relevance to European Studies. It has set a benchmark for research that not only collects data and compares policy processes on both sides of the Atlantic, but brings together evidence from both sides in a joint contribution to political science theory and to promoting comparative policy learning for policy makers in North America and Europe. Moreover, I am hopeful that this mini-forum, by providing an overview of recent work in this area, will make this important research available to a broader audience, serve as an example of the types of transatlantic research being done in the field of European Studies and how such research can promote policy learning on both sides of the Atlantic.

Peter Scholten
Editor
The current European crisis of debt, currency, and unemployment takes place at the intersection of highly dynamic creative and destructive forces, such as globalization, resurgent nationalisms, rising inequality, climate change, and sustainable development. And the task of better understanding these forces (and grappling with the challenges they pose to Europe and the world) provides the foundations for an extraordinary conference.

Held in a founding capital of today’s global Europe and sponsored by the leading international organization for the study of Europe, the 20th International Conference of Europeanists will feature the world’s premier scholars and policy researchers working on European issues. An event not to be missed!

For more information visit our website:
www.councilforeuropeanstudies.org
In the wake of crisis in Europe, bits and pieces of the past are being resurrected as a means of understanding the present and imagining the future. Historical figures are re-evaluated and held out as models, once-dismissed ideologies reappear as possibilities or as bogeymen, myths and symbols from the past crop up in new productions, and old political and economic institutions are revived as alternatives for action. But resurrections are not simply about nostalgia, and they aren’t just a restoration of the past in unchanged form. Resurrections necessitate fundamental transformations: inserting old things into new contexts, changing their natures, and assigning them new meanings and values.

Thus, for its 2014 conference the Council for European Studies (CES) invites proposals for panels and papers that relate to the theme of “resurrections.” What elements of Europe’s past, and present, are amenable to reanimation? How do they work in contemporary debate, and how is their relevance to the present disputed? What is the process through which they are revived and how are they changed as they are brought back to life or combined with new elements?

For more information consult our website:
www.councilforeuropeanstudies.org
Information intrusion and pressure on policy agendas

Political agenda-setting is central to governments of all stripes and colors. It is the process by which electoral promises, political deals between parties, and the adjustments to these arrangements as governments take concrete policy decisions. Policy agendas can serve as a planning mechanism to commit parties in office. They direct expectations and are meant to reduce uncertainty as well as mistrust among new incumbents who must share government power. In modern times, the administrative processing of policy agendas involves large-scale organization. Government is unthinkable without departmental structures that deal with old and new information simultaneously. Much of the daily business in policy domains is routine, addressed in specialized policy communities and ‘sub-systems’ that operate below the level where the political agenda is set (Baumgartner and Jones 1993).

*Authors may be contacted at: atimmermans@fsw.leidenuniv.nl and frankb@unc.edu
But in the real political world of agenda-setting, policy planning is just half the story—and at particularly turbulent times it even may be less. At any moment during a term in office, governments can receive policy relevant information that is not anticipated. The inconvenience of such information may lead governments and their administrative apparatus to filter or ignore signals in order to stay on course. Often, however, this kind of selective interpretation of news can be sustained only temporarily. The social and political environment of governments can cause so much pressure that agenda control is simply not possible. Governments may be pushed to shift attention and reset their priorities. Bottlenecks in the institutional and political machinery of governments set limits to responses to social or political alarm; attention can be focused on just one or a few issues with urgency status at a time (Jones and Baumgartner 2005). This type of dynamics appears less sensitive to institutional calendars such as scheduled elections and legislative or budgetary cycles than leaders in government would prefer. Information intrusion and increasing feedback pressure often leads governments to shift attention and priorities mid term. A consequence of the vulnerability of the policy agenda can be that the government itself becomes confused, unable to address unanticipated shifts in urgency, and falls prone to collapse. Thus, political agenda dynamics involves both policy production and government survival.

Policy agendas over time and across space
For almost 10 years now, a still expanding group of scholars from both sides of the Atlantic is collaborating in the analysis of the dynamics of attention to problems and the way in which policy agendas evolve. By ‘policy agendas’ we mean the full range of activities within a given institution of government or politics. And we are interested in a quite diverse range of venues where attention to public policy problems may become manifest. Thus the analysis includes not only policy agendas set within political institutions such as executives, legislatures and political parties with their electoral platforms, but also the media and public opinion. It also encompasses policy output such as laws and budgets. For these types of agendas containing attention to problems and often more or less concrete intentions on them, large-scale datasets have been constructed, and new data continue to be collected. Each dataset consists of a record of each action (for example, a law enacted, a bill introduced, an oral question posed), showing the topic on which it was focused. This simple process then allows a comprehensive assessment of the topics of governmental action over time. At present, the Comparative Agendas Project (<www.comparativeagendas.org>) consists of more than 80 scholars representing 10 European countries, the United States, and Canada. The country teams study national policy agendas back in time for at least 30 years, often considerably further back in the political history of the respective countries. Also, one international team studies the policy agendas of institutions of the European Union (Timmermans and Alexandrova 2011).

The long-term perspective is important because it allows analysts to observe the patterns of attention within government institutions of all types. The central theoretical point of departure is the idea that changes in attention and in policy choices that may follow are not only incremental but also display larger shifts. This is the theory of punctuated equilibrium, analogous to geological processes of continental drift, and first applied by Frank Baumgartner and Bryan Jones in their comprehensive work on the US (1993; 2005). As political parties and other actors in office or engaged in influencing the policy agenda almost always disagree over which matters to prioritize, information and new issues intruding into the scope of these actors fuels the politics of attention to problems.

The comparative perspective that is applied increasingly as datasets become available for a broader range of countries allows critical assessment of theoretical expectations on the occurrence of punctuated equilibrium, and of the relevance of institutional design to the development of policy agendas. Such comparative work looks at the way in which events experienced widely across
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America

National borders intrude in similar ways onto the agenda, or appear to lead to rather different responses (and sometimes non-response). The international credit crunch, for example, shows how national executives all rapidly went into bailouts, despite their differences in ideological affiliation and party composition. But problems do not all get the same response, or indeed, they are not all similarly recognized by national executives or parliaments, nor do they get the same level of attention in the media and in public opinion. What conditions such attention? Consider the diversity in the level of salience of European integration in the media and in national election campaigns in countries of the EU in the past few years. Problems are not just portrayed on the basis of ‘objective’ criteria, and political and social actors show a broad range of creativity and strategies in how they dramatize issues or take a rather technical definition to avoid a loss of control over them. Problems can be more or less local, but simply because they have global features does not mean they acquire priority status in all countries at the same time. And local (or national) problems can show convergence in the level of attention and prioritization, and in the occurrence of policy change.

While properties of political systems and the policymaking institutions within them do not in themselves determine attention or policy change rates, they do channel the processes in which choices about attention, priorities, and policy change take place. In a systems perspective, institutions digest all kinds of inputs, and possible (and observed) variation in policy outputs may be explained by rules and procedures typical to specific institutions. A comparative approach to policy agendas research thus may help us to better understand how similar kinds of input to policymaking institutions may lead to different output decisions due to variation in rules and procedures. This does not mean that such policy choices all follow from policy agendas set by governments in the ‘planning’ mode. They also may occur by way of reaction to events and new information not at all foreseen. In fact, comparing the development of policy agendas across countries may show under what conditions governments are able to respond in proportion to such events and news, appear incapable of timely response, or even collapse.

Common indicators and data collection approach

For the analysis of policy agendas in a long term and comparative perspective, it is key that indicators on input, output and the political process that connects them be valid and systematic. Given the number of countries and the variation in institutions, not all indicators of policy agendas are common to all countries. The research teams in the Comparative Agendas Project deal with this by selecting indicators and data sources for retrieving them that are, as much as possible, functional equivalents across countries. Thus despite obvious differences in formal setting and format, congressional hearings in the US and parliamentary questions in European parliamentary systems are considered indicators for the same basic type of activity: parliamentary control of the executive. When comparing bills and budgets, variation in national legacies of legislative production, in functional types of bills, and in the way in which national spending domains are distinguished are all important to take into account. Likewise, some countries have single-party governments setting out for their term in office on the basis of the winning party’s election program, while other countries have multi-deal agreements between parties forming a coalition. This also means that some specific types of executive or legislative policy agendas are available for some countries, and not

...comparing policy agendas across countries may show under what conditions governments are able to respond in proportion to events and news, appear incapable of timely response, or even collapse.
for others. Finally, the time periods covered in datasets can vary for historical and institutional reasons. For Spain, for example, data collection goes back to the entrance of the country in the EU, shortly after the democratic transition in the country was finished. Some data on the UK and the US go back to the very beginning of the twentieth century or even further back in time. Clearly, democratic transition or fundamental institutional re-design of a national political system can have major implications for the availability or continuity of specific kinds of data on policy agendas.

The country teams use a comprehensive coding scheme for topic classification, which consists of 19 major topics and more than 230 subtopics. Major topics are, for example, macroeconomics, health, education, and government structures and operations. This coding scheme was developed originally in the US by Baumgartner, Jones, and associates in what was the first and pioneering work on policy agendas (1993; 2005), and it has been adapted on minor points by national teams to historical and institutional characteristics that are specific to their country. Likewise, an EU agendas codebook was developed with some modifications to capture the properties of the EU institutional and legal framework. For example, the EU codebook contains a specific subcode for enlargement, and also one for coding attention to the creation of the single market. Overall, national codebooks are highly compatible, with more than 90 percent of all subtopics completely similar across all countries involved in the comparative project. A master codebook is used for overview and for tracking where nationally based subtopics exist. This allows the teams to ensure the comparability of data.

This joint data approach allows the systematic mapping of attention and testing theoretical propositions on the dynamics of political agenda development. The Comparative Agendas Project, however, also includes studies that zoom into specific agendas, policy problems and the way the definition of these single problems or issues has evolved. Examples are the work on the death penalty in the US (Baumgartner, De Boeuf, and Boydstun 2008), environmental and health policy in the EU (Princen 2009), and morality issues such as same-sex marriage and embryo research that may or may not divide political parties within countries in addressing them (Engeli et al. 2012). Central questions in such work are comparative or take us into following policy trajectories over time as topics rise and fall and may become linked or disconnected from other issues. A multi-level perspective adds institutional context to such analysis, as political agenda-setting involves venue shopping. Such work is particularly useful for analyzing agenda-setting in the EU, where problems and solutions travel up and down from EU institutions to policy venues within member states.

Results and the so what-question

The broadening Comparative Agendas Project in the past few years resulted in a volume of cumulated data on problem attention, which now is close to 2 million observations. This increasing pool of policy agendas data has helped to empirically inform comparative work on varying types of democratic systems, indicating that periods of minor change in the policy agenda are interrupted by large attention shifts in all these different systems (Baumgartner, Green-Pedersen, and Jones 2006; Baumgartner et al. 2009; Baumgartner, Jones, and Wilkerson 2011). Analysis of specific agendas shows that change becomes more punctuated, that is, infrequent but intense when it occurs, as the policy process moves from input to output. Legislative outputs and budgets appear more sensitive to punctuations than agendas at the input side of the system, such as media stories or parliamentary questions. Drastically altering government outputs involve higher political and institutional costs compared with, for example, the agenda of parliamentary questions or congressional hearings. These appear to follow the streams of events and information on specific topics more in proportion to their ups and downs (Vliegenthart and Walgrave 2011; Jones and Baumgartner 2005).

Beyond the scientific goals of mapping and explaining patterns of attention to problems, the
Comparative Agenda Project also has relevance for normative questions of responsiveness, legitimacy, and evaluation of institutional design. These are major questions that most Western democracies face, and the sense of urgency surrounding these questions has become quite strong. This also applies to the European Union, which is experiencing major challenges to its functioning and representative performance in addressing economic and monetary issues within member states. Recent developments show remedies of centralization, such as, for example, on the tightening of control over budget deficits in member states of the Eurozone, while critics contend that such remedies are technocratic and further undermine the democratic legitimacy of the EU among the national publics in member states. Likewise, at the sub-national level, political agenda-setting shows increasing attention to matters of identity. The recent developments in Catalunya in Spain, in Scotland and in Belgium after local elections fuelling the debate on splitting the country testify of the significance of attention at different levels of government. In short, at times when matters of national or regional interest and identity are so visibly at stake, the importance of a better understanding of the dynamics in attention and its consequences can hardly be overestimated.

Contributions to this mini-forum

This mini-forum consists of a selection of recent and ongoing studies within the Comparative Agendas Project. While this is a sample of such ongoing work, we believe it covers the variation of types of work that are within the present scope of the project. There are comparative analyses and contributions that deal with a hitherto underexplored aspect of political agenda development, introducing new research questions and presenting new findings.

A first set of articles considers how types of policymaking institutions within a political system deal with problems over a long time period. These articles are on political systems where agenda-setting is multi-level, with a formally federal institutional design, as in Canada, Spain, and the United States, or where the institutional architecture itself is a topic of attention, as in the European Union. In their comparative analysis of Canada and Spain, Laura Chaques, Éric Montpetit, Anna Palau, and Luz Muñoz find that the dynamics of attention and policymaking across sub-national governments follow different patterns. In Canada, intergovernmental dynamics generate increasing similarities in executive agendas, which is due in large part to the symmetric division of policy responsibilities. In contrast, Spain displays a different pattern of priorities to problems, which stems from open and asymmetric arrangements. In this context, party politics and the type of government play a greater part, and recent developments in Catalunya show how politicized the constant negotiation of policy responsibilities between the central and regional level can become.

In dealing with the expansion and contraction of the political agenda in the US, another federal system, Bryan Jones redirects scholarly attention to the historical dimension in studies of the policy process. He shows how the political agenda expanded once issues passed the ‘legitimacy barrier’ and government absorbed them for making public policies. Jones presents empirical data showing a large and aggressive agenda expansion between the early 1950s and late 1970s. All venues of attention show such expansion. While since the 1980s the legislative agenda started to contract, Congressional attention to the consequences of legislative policy remained extensive. This involved a change to a politics of attention allocation, in which institutional capacities and bottlenecks for information processing play an important part.

Marcello Carammia, Arco Timmermans, Sebastiaan Princen, and Petya Alexandrova present the EU policy agendas project, with first systematic data on the European Council since this institution became operative in 1975. While the European Council is unique in its composition and modus operandi, the policy agenda set within it contains topics of central concern to the EU. The authors show that the policy agenda of this institution is volatile and is set to show responsiveness to major concerns and events within the EU and its
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America

member states – it is a venue for ‘high politics’. The contribution also shows how institutional flexibility is used to address rising issues. One part of these issues is about the institutional design of the EU itself, in which the European Council takes a leading role.

A second set of papers consider a particular type of agenda or a specific topic. Anke Tresch, Pascal Sciarini, and Frédéric Varone use the case of Switzerland to demonstrate the mediatization of politics and indicate how this occurs. The authors find that attention to issues is more concentrated in the media than in policymaking arenas, and that is also the case for news items addressing politics. Media attention to specific cases of policymaking is more spread out, and it also appears in their analysis of the Swiss case that over time, the agenda of the media and that of political institutions drift further apart. They conclude their analysis with a discussion of the consequences of this process, and argue that this is a tendency that may also occur in other European countries.

In their analysis of budgets in countries in Europe and in the US, Christian Breunig and Peter Mortensen show that changes in budget allocation become more punctuated and spiked as institutions in countries include more points of veto and arrangements for checks and balances. Thus they show the significance of institutional arrangements in posing thresholds for change in annual spending. Another important finding is that allocational spending on such matters as education, welfare, and health follows more a pattern of small incremental change than spending in other domains, such as infrastructure and defense. The authors argue that legislative rules pertaining to these different domains of spending set conditions favorable to adaptation, and the density of actors with constant attention to these areas is another factor conducive to careful and deliberate budgetary change. These conditions appear even more important than country variation in institutional structure.

Next, Isabelle Engeli, Christoffer Green-Pedersen, and Lars Thorup Larsen compare morality issues in four European countries that vary in the salience of the religious-secular cleavage within their party system. In what they call ‘the religious world’, with Spain and the Netherlands as examples, issues enter into macro-politics in the form of party competition, and the color of government then appears a key determinant of policy development. In the secular world, represented by Denmark and the UK, these issues are far from macro-politics and are driven by issue-specific dynamics. While policy is not more restrictive in countries belonging to the religious world, the policymaking processes is found to be different. The broader aim of their study is to link the policy agenda-setting approach to studies of politics and policy choices on problems with varying levels of controversy and competition between political parties and other actors.

The final two contributions are on aspects of political agenda-setting and the development of policy agendas that affect the space and leeway for governments during their term in office: how the opposition in legislative chambers enters the scene, and how the reputation of competence of incumbent parties is influenced, and often damaged, as matters on the policy agenda appear hard to tackle. Christoffer Green-Pedersen, Peter Mortensen, Henrik Seeberg, and Gunnar Thesen build on work on party competition and turn this work more explicitly toward a relatively ignored element: how does opposition influence the government agenda? They show how the opposition in the Danish legislature takes up news stories and turns them into political issues to challenge the government, place it in a position of defense, and address matters it otherwise would have neglected for political reasons. The authors conclude their contribution with an outlook on other countries, where the structural situation of government versus opposition is different, and point to further work on what may drive the selection of specific topics in opposition strategies.

Finally, Jane Green and Will Jennings present an analysis of competence, in majoritarian systems, with recent data on the UK. Their central argument is that public confidence about political parties increases or decreases on all policy issues alike: a major policy failure in one policy area not
only influences perceptions on that policy but also affects public trust in a party on unrelated issues. If a party improves its reputation on one issue it will also be trusted on a range of other policies. Party competence also has a significant effect on the executive and legislative agendas of governing parties, for which the authors find evidence from the US and the UK. The perceived competence of governing parties to handle problems is crucial at a time of economic uncertainty and news headlines in all countries reporting widespread public dissatisfaction with austerity programs and pressure on levels of trust in political institutions.

These contributions together indicate points on the ‘front line’ of the Comparative Agendas Project, and each of them also shows connections to other work on politics and policy making in Western democracies. As said, this work not only has scientific relevance but also allows us to draw lessons about how priorities are set within governments and other policy making institutions, and how responsive these institutions are.

References


Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America

Introduction

The study of policy dynamics at the sub-national level in federal systems is getting growing attention by scholars of comparative politics and agenda-setting. These studies analyze to what extent the political agendas of regional governments are converging or diverging over time, focusing on: institutional factors (e.g., formal rules defining issue jurisdiction, type of government, intergovernmental arrangements), preferences (mostly of political parties), and agenda capacity (Hooghe et al. 2008). This constitutes an important change from previous analysis on comparative federalism, which traditionally focused on institutions as explanatory variable, providing a static outlook on the vertical distribution of authority between levels of government (Wibbels 2003). It also constitutes an important change in relation to another set of studies (Filippov et al. 2004; Wibbels 2006; Aldrich 1995) that pay attention to party politics and policy preferences, but still deal mainly with the relationship between the national and regional governments as a whole (e.g., Constantelos 2010). Finally, analyses of issue prioritization at the sub-national level (and the relations with the national and supranational level of governance) also make a contribution to the policy

* Authors may be contacted at: laurachaques@ub.edu, e.montpetit@umontreal.ca, apalau@ub.edu, and luzmunozma@ub.edu
...in the case of Canada, results indicate that provincial agendas are converging over time, and this is mainly related to intergovernmental dynamics.

dynamics approach (Jones and Baumgartner 2005, Baumgartner et al. 2011). Thus far, this approach has centered on the national level (Adler and Wilkerson 2012; Breunig 2011) and, more recently, the European level (Timmermans and Alexandrova 2011; Alexandrova et al. 2012).

Recent research (Chaques-Bonafont and Palau 2011; Montpetit 2012) on policy dynamics at the sub-national level uses extensive databases developed according to the methodology of the Comparative Agendas Project. This allows us to go beyond case studies, and provides a comprehensive analysis about the pattern of issue prioritization across sub-national governments and countries' policy sub-systems over time. Our preliminary results already illustrate that agenda dynamics at the sub-national level are shaped by a mix of factors, including party politics and institutions. For example, the constitutional distribution of competencies in a federation imposes important constraints on the capacity of sub-national governments to pursue their policy goals and define their priorities independently over time. Differences in fiscal autonomy between the Basque Country and Navarra, on the one hand, and the other regional governments of Spain partly explain the divergence in patterns of prioritization of issues between these two sets of comunidades autónomas (CCAA). The gap between the revenues and formal responsibilities of the Catalan government, combined with the investment deficit of the Spanish government in public infrastructures, has dominated the Catalan agenda throughout the past few decades. In contrast, these issues have occupied only a minor position on the agenda of the Basque government, which benefits from fiscal powers to set base rates and collect taxes, out of which only a share is sent to the Spanish government.

A comparable asymmetry in the constitutional division of policy responsibilities does not exist in Canada. The Canadian constitution defines the same sets of competencies for all 10 provinces. Likewise, all provinces enjoy similar fiscal powers and equally benefit from federal transfers. In addition, the constitution requires that the federal government equalizes the revenues across provinces, so that less-wealthy provinces can afford to offer services similar to those offered by wealthy provinces. In other words, as policy competencies and revenues are distributed relatively equally across provinces in Canada, nothing in the Canadian federal arrangement prevents provinces from having similar priorities, just as nothing incites them to pay attention to different issues, such as in Spain.

Nevertheless, institutional arrangements do not offer a full explanation of the strength of convergence in Canada in comparison with Spain. In fact, neither convergence – strong or weaker – nor divergence can fully capture the Canadian and Spanish situation over a long period. Examples of divergence can be found in Canada and examples of strong convergence can be found in Spain. In the case of Spain, part of the explanation relies on party preferences and type of governments. Our results indicate that legislative agendas are more similar when the same political party is governing in different CCAA. Likewise, we show that legislative agendas at the national and regional levels are more similar under minority governments. In contrast, in the case of Canada, results indicate that provincial agendas are converging over time, and this is mainly related to intergovernmental dynamics.

In this contribution we present some of the evidence generated by the Comparative Agendas Project in Spain and Canada. We rely on large and comprehensive databases on laws from 1980 to 2007 in Spain and executive speeches from 1960 to 2010 in Canada. The agendas in the two countries were systematically coded following the methodology of the Comparative Agendas
At the current stage of our research, the data are not fully compatible, as they pertain to the legislative agenda in Spain and the executive agenda in Canada. We must be cautious in making direct comparisons between these different types of agendas. Nevertheless, the preliminary analysis suggests that we can learn much about policy dynamics from data on the Canadian and Spanish agendas.

Policy dynamics in Canada and Spain

In Spain, the analysis of legislative agendas in Andalusia, Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque Country indicates that regional policymakers are paying attention to similar issues but with important variations over time. Table 1 presents correlations of agenda priorities for each pair of Spanish regional governments for the period 1980–2007. With a mean correlation of 0.32 and most coefficients being statistically significant, we can conclude that a modest level of correspondence exists in the priorities of sub-national governments. In comparison, the mean correlation of interprovincial priorities in Canada is 0.43 for the period 1985–2010, indicating stronger correlations of priorities.

The Spanish regional law agendas are linked to each other, and this was especially the case in the 1980s, when regional governments had to accomplish two crucial goals: the construction of their basic political institutions and the development of the welfare state. But correlations across the regional law agendas decreased gradually, falling under 0.2 between 2003 and 2007. Figure 1 shows important annual variations and a clear downward trend starting in 2001. In addition, figure 1 indicates that interregional correlations are not systematically higher or lower than regional-state correlations.

In sharp contrast, correlations of policy priorities across provinces have steadily increased since the 1970–1974 period in Canada, as shown in figure 2. Although federal-provincial correlations go up and down in a cycle, interprovincial correlations are systematically above federal-provincial ones. Beginning in the 1990s, legislative agendas in Spain were increasingly diverse, and this is explained not only by the institutional factors mentioned in the introduction, but also by party preferences (Chaqués and Palau 2011). The Spanish Constitution and the Estatutos de Autonomía impose important constraints on the legislative agenda of regional policymakers. The asymmetric and open character of the Spanish quasi-federal state help explain why Catalonia and the Basque Country have more jurisdiction over the civil code in contrast to other CCAA (and why attention to economic issues has increased since the late 1990s in some CCAA such as Catalonia, after the fiscal reform of 1997. The formal distribution of authority constrains or enables given structures of priorities, but its relative static nature cannot account for important variations over time. Our results indicate that party preferences matter. Regional legislative agendas have become similar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Catalonia</th>
<th>Basque Country</th>
<th>Galicia</th>
<th>Andalusia</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catalonia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.247**</td>
<td>.335**</td>
<td>.364**</td>
<td>.340**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basque Country</td>
<td>.247**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.333**</td>
<td>.301**</td>
<td>.378**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galicia</td>
<td>.335**</td>
<td>.333**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.343**</td>
<td>.366**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andalusia</td>
<td>.364**</td>
<td>.301**</td>
<td>.343**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.379**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>.340**</td>
<td>.378**</td>
<td>.366**</td>
<td>.379**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
in regions governed by the same political party, while the legislative agendas of regions governed by competing parties diverge. When the socialists govern in Andalusia and Catalonia, the legislative agendas tended to converge, and the same is true when conservative-nationalist political parties (CIU and PNV) are governing in Catalonia and the Basque Country. When different parties govern these regions, different priorities appear.

Party preferences are also important to explain differences in issue attention across levels of government. As figure 1 illustrates, annual correlation between legislative agendas increases when the PSOE is governing in Madrid and the PSC is governing in Catalonia (2004–2007). Our results further show that similarities and/or differences depend in part on the type of government. The Spanish and regional agendas are more similar when the Spanish government depends on the support of regional political parties in government formation. The annual correlation between the Spanish and Catalan legislative agendas increases when the CIU is pivotal in the formation of the national government (1993–2000) and when the CIU depends on the support of the PP (Partido Popular) for the formation of government in Catalonia (1999–2003). Similarly, annual correlations between the Basque and the Spanish law agendas increase when the PNV is pivotal at the national level and when the PNV depends on the support of the socialist party (PSE) for the formation of government in the Basque Country. The opposite occurs when the Spanish government has the majority of seats in the Spanish parliament. The current political situation in Spain supports these observations. The rising of the independence movements in Catalonia and the Basque Country

---

1 The Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya has been governing in coalition with Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC) and Iniciativa per Catalunya-Esquerra Unida (IC-EU) since 2003. In this analysis we consider that the two regional governments are governed by the same political party, or a party of the same federation (such as PSOE, the socialist party in Spain, and PSC, the socialist party of Catalonia).
(two of the three regions – with Andalusia being the third – not governed by the PP) stresses the confrontation between the Spanish government and the regions, most specifically after the PP won the elections by absolute majority in 2011.

Political parties do not have an equal propensity to generate divergence and convergence in Canada. Part of the explanation has to do with the absence of national party federations. In comparison with Spain, the Canadian federation is highly decentralized, to a point where federal and provincial parties are entirely autonomous from each other, organizationally as much as ideologically. For example, the Liberal Party of Canada, a federal party, does not share any organizational capacity with the Liberal Party of British Colombia (the BC Liberals). In addition, the ideology of the BC Liberals has become closer to the ideology of the federal Conservative Party over the years. Therefore, party labels in Canada are poor predictors of priority convergence or divergence. In recent years, there were notorious fights between conservatives (the federal and Newfoundland conservatives, for example), as well as counterintuitive alliances. An example is the rapprochement between the Conservative Harris government in Ontario and the social democrats independentist government of Bouchard in Quebec, which analysts puzzled over at the end of the 1990s.

There is no doubt that the Canadian constitution, which treats all provinces equally, enables a great deal of convergence of provincial priorities. But as in Spain, the Canadian constitution constrains and enables, but fails to drive policy priorities. In fact, the decentralization of the federation enables provinces to set their own priorities in a much larger number of issue areas than in Spain. This maneuvering space makes the importance of interprovincial convergence even more puzzling, although it might contribute to the explanation of the weakness of the convergence between federal and provincial priorities. Studies find that convergence is related to interprovincial relations dominated by civil servants motivated

Figure 2. Difference between federal-provincial and interprovincial correlations
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America

by problem-solving (Inwood, Johns and O’Reilly 2011; Montpetit and Foucault 2012). Facing similar problems, provincial officials interact a great deal to find solutions. And in turn their interactions further encourage their respective governments to prioritize the same issues (Montpetit 2012). In contrast, in Spain, existing analysis shows the lack of this type of interaction and cooperation across regional governments (Subirats and Gallego 2002).

Figure 3 provides evidence of this dynamic. In comparison with Spain, Canada is a very large country, some 6,000 kilometers wide and spanning four time zones. Eastern, central, and western economies significantly differ from each other and therefore the problems facing the east, the center, and the west of Canada are quite different. Logically then, if interprovincial relations are motivated by problem-solving, correlations of priorities should be even stronger within regional blocs. This is exactly what figure 3 shows. The figure features predicted margins, produced from simulations flowing from a regression analysis. Correlations for pairs of provinces from different regions serve as the baseline (the vertical line).

Confirming that overall interprovincial correlations are higher than federal-provincial ones, figure 3 also indicates that western provinces, on the one hand, and eastern provinces on the other have statistically distinct and higher correlations than provinces from different regions. More research is needed, but this pattern is consistent with the willingness of provincial administrations to address concrete problems. In contrast, federal-provincial relations are more frequently plagued by all kinds of dispute, including jurisdictional struggles, which encouraged a differentiation of priorities between the federal capital Ottawa and the provinces. The constitutional disputes of the 1980s and 1990s pushed the federal government and provincial governments in different directions, encouraging the election of the Conservative Party at the federal level in 2006. This party openly promotes a federal agenda limited to policy domains falling under federal jurisdictions.

Conclusion
Policy dynamics across sub-national governments follow different patterns in Canada.
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America and Spain. Intergovernmental dynamics generate increasing similarities in executive agendas in Canada, while in Spain, similarities between legislative agendas are more linked to party politics and type of government. We have argued that institutional features in the two federal arrangements contribute to the explanation of differences in the patterns of prioritization of policy issues in the two countries over time. Canada’s stable and symmetric division of policy responsibilities encourages interprovincial convergence, while Spain’s open and asymmetric division of issue jurisdiction generates a process of permanent negotiation about political autonomy between the Spanish government and the regions. The current extremely tense political situation in Spain illustrates the implications of this institutional arrangement. Legislative agendas are more similar depending on which political party is governing and under what circumstances (minority or majority governments). In Canada, such dynamics do not occur, leaving interprovincial relations mostly in the hands of civil servants concerned with concrete policy problems. As a consequence, government priorities develop in the same direction.

From here, our goal is to go further in the comparison of policy dynamics in federal systems of governance (Chaqués, Palau, and Baumgartner 2013). This means expanding existing datasets about the executive (speeches, executive orders) and legislative agenda (parliamentary bills, laws) in view of comparing policy dynamics, taking into account the institutional characteristics of each political system. This also means further steps in the definition of common hypotheses and theoretical explanations of the way in which regional governments prioritize policy problems over time. With this line of research, we seek to establish a closer link between the policy agendas approach and existing analysis of policy convergence and comparative federalism.

References


Filippov, Mikhail, Peter C. Ordeshook, and Olga Shvetsova. 2004. Designing Federalism: A


One of the great advantages of the Comparative Policy Agendas Projects is the ability to examine policy dynamics over extended periods of time. Most of the research generated by this important comparative research infrastructure initiative has focused on general forces responsible for policy change, because the data from the collaboration allow systematic and quantitative measures of policy change. A recent special issue of Comparative Political Studies reports some of the most important research stemming from this approach (Baumgartner et al. 2011). In line with this, scholars using the US Policy Agendas datasets have focused on isolating policy dynamics and putting them on a plane with traditional political explanations (Jones and Baumgartner 2012).

This has been an exceptionally important development in the study of comparative politics, but it has neglected the impact of these dynamics on history. In this paper I return to addressing historical contingency in the

---

1 This paper relies on work done for a book project with Frank Baumgartner, The Paradox of Search: Information and the Course of Public Policy in Post-War America, and many of the ideas here were developed jointly. The arguments presented here are developed in more detail there.

*Author may be contacted at: bdjones@austin.utexas.edu
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America

manner of the evolutionary approach of Agendas and Instability, in which Frank Baumgartner and I studied both policy dynamics and historical contingency. I take advantage of the US Policy Agendas datasets to study changes in the incorporation of new issues into American politics. Using a measure of issue expansion based on the number of Policy Agendas subtopics in which an activity occurred, I show that a period of aggressive agenda expansion occurred in the US from the 1950s until 1978. In its lawmakers, Congress studied problems and enacted laws in more and more areas previously left to civil society. The expansionary period in lawmaking peaked and a period of contraction occurred through the end of the period of study in 2008. However, we may detect a clear residue of the expansionary period in agenda measures that are not directly related to laws; congressional hearings on non-legislative matters (either on problem detection or oversight of the bureaucracy) and in roll-call votes (as major laws are adjusted and amended) stabilize but do not decline.

The expansion of government

Since the end of the Second World War, the intrusion of scores of new issues transformed the agenda of American politics. New issues are those not previously seriously addressed by government. These issues did not enter the system incrementally; rather in a historically short period of two decades these new issues transformed the political space. They did so by intruding into areas of civil society in a manner that obliterated the distinction between the public and the private sphere, and resulted in a powerful and successful conservative counter-reaction. The successful counter-reaction led to the end of the period of agenda expansion, but the residues of the expansion continue today.

Many observers have noted that government activity in the US rose in the 1950s or early 1960s and peaked in the late 1970s, after which decline set in. Arthur Schlesinger (1986) and Samuel Huntington (1981) both point to the rise and decline of a more progressive and aggressive government between the late 1950s and mid-1970s. Huntington points to a “horseshoe” of political (especially protest) activity. Hacker and Pierson (2010, 99) write “1977 and 1978 marked the rapid demise of the liberal era and the emergence of something radically different.” They offer a list of failures by the huge Democratic majorities in Congress and a Democratic president to enact major reforms in that year as crucial pieces of the evidence. Similarly, Grossman (2011), based on his analyses of secondary accounts of policy development, refers to the period of the 1960s and 1970s as the “Long Great Society.”

Missing from these analyses is the connection between agenda politics and government growth. There is a big difference between the ‘thickening’ of government, in which previously established government functions expand, and the ‘broadening’ of government, in which government moves into new areas previously reserved for civil society. Thickening is far less controversial than broadening. While thickening implies bigger government within a policy area, government may be no more intrusive than before. If government spends more on education or transportation, where it has traditionally been the key actor, it does not necessarily crowd out previously private activity. But if it moves into environmental protection, it has entered a realm previously relegated to the private sphere.

The legitimacy barrier

In a classic essay, James Q. Wilson (1979, 41) wrote, “Once politics was about only a few things, now it is about nearly everything.” Wilson argued that a “legitimacy barrier” deterred government from intruding in civil society, but when that barrier was breached, it did not reemerge in political discussions. Rather, arguments changed...
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America

from whether the proposed policy action was a legitimate activity for the federal government to one of the cost/benefits of further action in the area. It is Wilson’s legitimacy barrier that separates the broadening of government from its thickening.

Clearly, when government addresses new issues it is engaged in a type of agenda politics that involves the fundamental decision of whether government activity is appropriate, or whether it should be left to the private sphere (Cobb and Elder 1972; Kingdon 1984; Baumgartner and Jones 1993). Here, Wilson’s legitimacy barrier is critically involved. We cannot directly observe this legitimacy barrier, but it seems clear that the measure of agenda expansion I use here directly assesses it.

Today, agenda politics has taken a different turn. Instead of centering on breaking the legitimacy barrier, or what amounts to the same thing, deciding when a social problem is a political issue, most issues have already broken the legitimacy barrier. Government is already involved in the issue, and agenda fights are based on the allocation of attention to the topic (Jones and Baumgartner 2005).

Measuring agenda expansion

The US Policy Agendas Project’s policy content coding system includes 19 major topics; each of these 19 major topics is subdivided into several more precise subtopics, for a total of 226 different subtopics of governmental activity. The system includes policy content assessments of congressional hearings, public laws, roll-call votes, Supreme Court decisions, and Congressional Quarterly stories (a periodical concentrating on legislative activity), among others. By tabulating how many subtopics include at least some activity (for example, the number of subtopics on which Congress held at least one hearing), we are able to assess directly agenda expansion.2

Traces of agenda politics through time

Figure 1 graphs the agenda expansion

2 See Baumgartner and Jones 2012 for further justification and analysis.
measure throughout the postwar period for two measures. The first is the number of subtopics on which Congress held at least one hearing; the second is the number of subtopics on which Congress enacted at least one law. The two curves in the graph are least squares estimates of a quadratic, which traces an arc through the period. The estimates are very good, as indicated by the fit equations in the appendix. Data are tabulated by Congress, which is two one-year congressional sessions, and demarcate the period between elections for the House of Representatives. The dataset covers hearings and legislative activity from the 79th to the end of the 110th Congress, the period 1945–2008.

Figure 1 provides good evidence that government expanded through broadening during the third quarter of the twentieth century. Importantly, it shows that the standard story of government expansion starting in the Kennedy-Johnson years is incorrect, or at least incomplete. The process predated that period, although there is clear evidence that Congress passed more landmark statutes during the Johnson Administration (1964–1969) than at any other time in the postwar period (Mayhew 1991). A look at the full policymaking agenda, however, indicates that the Kennedy-Johnson years were a part, albeit an important part, of the systematic breaking down of the legitimacy barrier as more and more social issues became fodder for political discussion and action.

Second, partisan composition means little in the process of agenda expansion and contraction. There are no disjoint breaks between administrations or Congresses; the process peaks in the unified Democratic government under Carter. Moreover, the decline continued in the early Clinton years (1993–1995), when a strong Democratic Congress existed.

It is likely that many of the ideas promulgated during the period of agenda expansion were generating an increasingly strong conservative counter-reaction over time. Hacker and Pierson (2010, chapter 4) speak of an “Unseen Revolution of the 1970s.” Few legitimacy barriers remained to be broken, and the spirited fights during the later period of Democratic governments centered on policies within established areas and the reduction of the expansive agenda, particularly in deregulation and tax policy.

The expansionary agenda was exhausted by 1978 and the conservative counter-reaction had set in. The ‘Reagan Revolution’ pre-dated Reagan. The collapse of the expansionary agenda may be traced on the down side of the arc of figure 1, through the Clinton years and into the G. W. Bush presidency.

**Residues of the expansion**

State-building includes breaking the legitimacy barrier through the establishment of new programs, agencies and procedures, and the building of new policy sub-systems composed of congressional committees, executive branch agencies, and organized interests. These new institutions require continuous oversight and facilitating the adjustment among interests, including those of executive agencies. As a consequence, we expect the period of aggressive issue expansion to have a presence through time, even as the lawmaking agenda contracts. Figure 2 graphs this presence by using our subtopic measure for non-legislative hearings and House roll-call votes (the Senate displays a similar pattern). Both measures peak in the 96th Congress (1979–1981), but fail to contract in the same manner as the lawmaking measures do. Instead, they both continue in a more or less linear pattern after the 96th Congress throughout the period of study, with a downturn at the end of the period.

Non-legislative hearings are those involved in oversight of executive agencies and in detecting new problems. The continued involvement of Congress in a large number of policy matters in its non-legislative hearings seems a clear consequence of the state-building enterprise of the previous 25 years. Similarly, the number of subtopics in which roll-call votes were taken remained steady even as the number of laws and the number of subtopics addressed by those laws declined. The House of Representatives took more roll-calls on
each law being considered because each law was becoming more complex as the corpus of law itself became more complex (Whyman and Jones 2012). Increasing law complexity was a consequence of the state-building exercise that had brought government into so many areas of modern American life.

Conservative big government

The conservative counter-reaction used the language of limited government and the distinction between private and public life, but in policy terms it accepted the results of the agenda expansion period. Today most of the ideational rhetoric from conservatives emphasizes the intrusiveness of government in civic life, as has traditionally been the case. When it comes to practical programs, however, most political battles today center on the mechanism used for the delivery of government services, with conservatives pressing for vouchers and contracting out to private providers. Moreover, Republicans have been more than willing to expand the state using these mechanisms. For instance, the G. W. Bush administration’s Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 added a prescription drug benefit to Medicare using market mechanisms. More generally, the Bush administration engineered a major expansion in government intrusiveness via its policies on counterterrorism, somewhat of a second wave in expansion. These activities are not hard to detect using the Policy Agendas datasets, but they are mostly the politics of attention to existing issues, not the politics of new issues. Government had occupied the area of health care for the elderly since 1965, and counterterrorism since the Cold War.3

Comparative perspectives

When did agenda politics transform from a politics centering on breaking the legitimacy barrier

3 The Policy Agendas Project is very conservative on adding new subtopics because of its emphasis on reliability and ‘backward compatibility’ – making sure that the topics mean the same across time. So, agenda expansions can be underestimated in cases such as the Bush administration’s activities.
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America
to one centering on the allocation of attention? Did other Western democracies experience similar patterns? In particular, can this process be measured in Europe as clearly as it can in the US? Fortunately we are moving rapidly toward a position where we will be able to make these critical comparisons because of the European Policy Agendas Projects as described in the contribution to this special issue by Timmermans and Baumgartner (see also Baumgartner et al. 2011).

European societies experienced major expansions in government after the Second World War, as did the US, but these political systems started from a higher base than did the US. One might expect a quicker move toward the politics of attention than in the US. Whatever occurred can be traced by using the number of subtopics used to code the policy activities of government (see, for example, John and Bevan 2012).

Conclusions

Agenda politics can be divided into two distinct phases: the politics of agenda expansion and the politics of attention. In the first, government enters into areas previously reserved for civic society to address problems. In the second, government has intervened in most of the major areas of civic life to a greater or lesser extent, and politics centers on how much attention to devote to the area. As Hacker and Pierson (2010) show, being inattentive to an area may lead to great policy changes through the mechanism of “policy drift.” Policy actors may exploit whatever policies are in place to yield surprising outcomes. And the legitimacy barrier may be re-imposed, at least rhetorically, to aid in the resistance to directing more attention to the policy area. I have shown here how the US lawmaking agenda contracted through a conservative engineering of a withdrawal from many previously occupied policy areas. Obviously that does not change the importance of the dynamic shift from a politics of agenda expansion to one of attention allocation. Once government has occupied an area, the question becomes ‘how much?’ and ‘with what impact?’ rather than ‘should this be done?’

The country teams in the Comparative Agendas Project are beginning to make comparisons of differences across countries and through time that will allow the core issue of the agenda expansion and its policy effects to be studied in a truly comparative context. Indeed, in my opinion this is the next step toward building a systematic comparative body of knowledge on public policy.

Appendix: Fit Equations

Fit Equations for Figure 1:

Legislative Hearings Subtopics = -2176 + 49.79(Congress) – 0.264(Congress²)
R = .863
Law Subtopics = -1589 + 36.55(Congress) - 0.193(Congress²)
R = .806

Fit Equations for Figure 2:

Non-Legislative Hearings Subtopics = -2280 + 47.33(Congress) – 0.230(Congress²)
R = .904
House Roll-Call Subtopics = -2071 + 43.22(Congress) - 0.205(Congress²)
R = .968
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America


References


Baumgartner, Frank, et al., eds. 2011. “The Dynamics of Policy Change in Comparative Perspective.” Comparative Political Studies 44(8), Special Issue.


Media, Politics, and Policymaking: Lessons from Switzerland

Anke Tresch, University of Geneva
Pascal Sciarini, University of Geneva
Frédéric Varone, University of Geneva*

Media, politics, and policymaking from the perspective of ‘mediatization’

Throughout the past few years, scholarly interest in the relationship between media and political agendas has grown significantly. Although they have mainly developed separately from each other, the growing literatures on the ‘political agenda-setting power’ of the media (e.g., Walgrave and van Aelst 2006) and on the ‘mediatization of politics’ (e.g., Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999) have both focused on how mass media influence politics and policymaking. Whereas the agenda-setting perspective has mainly analyzed to what extent and under which circumstances the media – by devoting attention to some issues and downplaying others – assign political relevance to social problems and force them on political agendas, the mediatization of politics perspective goes beyond the agenda-setting function of the media and stresses how ‘media logic’ (Altheide and Snow 1979) – the specific contents and formats that the media privilege to be competitive and to capture people’s attention (Strömbäck 2008, 233–4) – affects the media-politics relationship. In the era of ‘mediatized politics’, thus, the media essentially act as commercial enterprises that serve the “wants and needs of their audiences” (Strömbäck 2008, 234). This increased audience or market orientation can be expected to have at least three implications for the relationship between media and political agendas: First and most basically, the

*Authors may be contacted at: anke.tresch@unige.ch, pascal.sciarini@unige.ch, and frederic.varone@unige.ch
media are likely to pay more attention to ‘politics’ as compared with ‘policymaking’ over time; second, they should become ever more selective and cover only the most newsworthy or interesting issues, resulting in a stronger concentration on a more limited number of issues, as compared with political agendas; and – as a consequence of the first two expected trends – third, the correlation between the distribution of attention across issues in the media and on political agendas is likely to weaken over the years.

In what follows, we first describe our data and we then present some simple empirical tests of each of these three general assumptions in the Swiss case.

Data: Media and political agendas in Switzerland (1996–2003)

To empirically study the relationships between media, politics, and policymaking, we rely on a large dataset measuring the media agenda and different political agendas in Switzerland for the period 1996–2003. We have applied the classification system of the Comparative Agendas Project to measure issue attention on five political agendas that capture the policymaking process in Switzerland: parliamentary and cantonal initiatives and motions (agenda-setting stage), government messages and consultation procedures (pre-parliamentary stage), legislative acts (parliamentary stage), and direct-democratic votes (referendum stage). Overall, the database contains 4,368 cases.

For the media agenda, we used the same topic system to measure issue attention in the leading quality paper in Switzerland (Neue Zürcher Zeitung). We coded on every other day all front-page articles, all news articles on the first page of the national news section, as well as the main article(s) in the economy section referred to on the front page. We distinguished policy-related news coverage from politics-related stories. During the 1996–2003 period, 1,606 national news articles concerned the policymaking process, and 1,936 dealt with ‘politics’ in the broad sense – that is, events such as electoral campaigns, political scandals, inter- and intra-party conflicts, and public debates that were not clearly tied to policymaking (e.g., discussions about Switzerland’s attitude during World War II).

Level of media attention to politics and policymaking

With the ongoing ‘mediatization’ and growing market-orientation of commercialized media, the media are often accused of portraying politics as a strategic game between opposing actors instead of focusing on social problems and their solutions (e.g., Binderkrantz and Green-Pedersen 2009; Cappella and Jamieson 1996). In a similar way, we expect to see a growing focus of news coverage on ‘politics’ as compared with ‘policymaking’ over time.

The results presented in figure 1 do not confirm this expectation. The relative share of media coverage of politics and policymaking is fairly stable over time, and we do not witness any clear increase of politics-related stories. To the contrary, our data show a slight decrease of the share of articles dealing with politics from 1999 to 2002. However, in 2003 articles on politics are again much more frequent than articles on policymaking processes. A closer look at the data shows that national elections account for the peak of politics-related articles in 2003 and – to a lesser extent – in 1999. This suggests that in Switzerland, media attention to politics does not follow a linear, upward trend but is rather sensitive to the electoral cycle.

One explanation for the absence of a

---

1 We acknowledge financial support by the NCCR Democracy (project “Mediatization of political decision-making”) and the Swiss National Science Foundation (project “Agenda-Setting in Switzerland,” ref. 105511–119245/1). We also thank our six student coders, and especially Roy Gava and Dominik Gerber, for their most appreciated research assistance.

2 We concentrate on political agendas pertaining to the agenda-setting and formulation stages of the policy cycle, and do not consider the policy implementation and policy evaluation stages. Furthermore, we also leave aside media articles covering international negotiations.

3 Among articles dealing with politics there is a stark increase of the sub-issue topic ‘political activities’ in the two years where national elections took place, i.e., 1999 and 2003.
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America

general increase in politics-related media coverage might be the consensus-orientation of the Swiss democracy: With its long-lasting tradition of integration and amicable agreements among parties Switzerland is one of the countries that are least prone to confrontational politics. This may obviously influence the content of media coverage. Another reason might be that our focus on a quality newspaper with a strong emphasis on substantial issues may also play a role. However, given the profound changes of the Swiss party system since the mid-1990s as a result of the steep rise of the Swiss people’s party and a strong increase of competition and polarization among political parties (Kriesi and Trechsel 2008), it is nevertheless surprising that the level of politics-related media coverage remained fairly stable during the same period.

Distribution of issue attention

Second, the ongoing mediatization process is also likely to have several implications for the diversity of media attention across issues. Given that policymakers have an imperative of problem-solving and need to address the full range of societal, ‘politically relevant’ problems, whereas the media have a greater need, but are also more liberty to filter and select information, they can generally be expected to attend to a smaller number of issues as compared with political agendas. In times of ‘mediatized politics’, the media should become even more selective over time and concentrate their attention on the issues that are most relevant or appealing for their audiences while ignoring issues that are more complex, technical or remote from the everyday experiences of ordinary citizens. This increasing concentration on a smaller number of issues over time should be especially marked for media coverage of politics. The reason is a growing propensity of political parties to focus on a selected number of issues and to emphasize issues that they ‘own’ – that is, issues where they are seen as being more competent and able than their rivals (e.g., Petrocik 1996). As a matter of fact, the above-mentioned rise of the Swiss people’s party since the mid-1990s went hand-in-hand with a growing focus on issues related to immigration, law and order, and foreign policy; this also forced the other parties to address these issues, and to pay less attention to their own issues (Varone et al. 2011). Hence, this behavior of political parties should also show up in politics-related media coverage. Given the result above regarding the sensitivity of media coverage on the electoral cycle, we assume that the general trend toward a stronger concentration of attention in politics-related media coverage is
reinforced in election years, when parties try to set the agenda as part of their strategy to attract voters.

To test these assumptions and assess the overall diversity of attention across our 21 policy issues, we rely on entropy scores (Shannon’s H)\(^4\) for the media and political agendas.

First, figure 2 confirms our assumption that issue attention is generally more concentrated in the media than in the political agenda. With an entropy score of 2.91 for the whole period, the political agenda is the most diverse, followed by media coverage of policymaking, which also exhibits a fairly high level of issue dispersion (2.83). Furthermore, there is some correspondence between the issue attention ordering in the political agenda and in media coverage of policymaking. The three policy issues that rank on the top of the political agenda (i.e., government operations, with 8 per cent of relative issue attention; health, with 7.9 percent; and transportation, with 7.8 per cent) are also among the four most reported issues in the media. However, the correspondence between the two agendas is not perfect. The top issue in policy-related media coverage (i.e., macroeconomics, with 12.2 percent) ranks only sixth in the political agenda. In comparison, politics-related media coverage is more concentrated (entropy score of 2.65) on a smaller number of issues (i.e., political activities, with 21.5 percent of relative issue attention; government operations, with 10.3 percent; and foreign policy, with 8.7 percent).

Second, with regard to the impact of the increasing ‘mediatization of politics’ on the diversity of media attention across issues, we see that politics-related coverage tends to become less diverse over time, and concentrate on a smaller number of issues. Most importantly, though, we observe a sudden decline in issue diversity in the two election years covered in our data: In both 1999 and 2003 concentration increases strongly (by roughly 20 percent) as compared with the previous year. In election years, thus, the media concentrate more on the relations between and within parties and the consequences of elections, but pay less attention to public debates on substantive policy.
issues that are not directly linked to policymaking (and are therefore treated as ‘politics’ in the broad sense here). With regard to media coverage of policymaking, by contrast, we do not observe the expected increase of concentration in issue attention over time.

**Correspondence between the media and political agendas**

Finally, with the growing ‘mediatization’, the media are expected to become more autonomous and independent from political actors. Hence, the correlation between the distribution of attention across issues in the media and on political agendas is likely to weaken over the years.

As a general comment, note that figure 3 shows that the yearly correlations between issue attention in the political and media agendas are lower for media coverage of politics than for media coverage of policymaking processes. This suggests, once again, that issue attention in news stories on politics follows its own rules – e.g., focusing very much on political activities – and is therefore fully different from issue attention in the political arena. By contrast, correlations are fairly high for policy-related articles, a finding which confirms the close relationships existing between the political agenda and media coverage of policymaking.

Second, and more importantly, figure 3 displays the expected downward trend of congruence in issue attention between the political agenda and the two media agendas. Even if the time period under investigation is short, this result supports our claim that, in the age of mediatization, issue attention in the media tends to depart from the political realm. The fact that we find such a clear trend for a quality newspaper such as the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, which is presumably a ‘hard case’ as far as the impact of mediatization of politics is concerned, can only reinforce our result.

**Conclusion**

In an era of ‘mediatized politics’, the media are said to predominantly respond to a ‘media logic’ when they deal with politics, and to select stories with the highest newsworthiness and the strongest appeal for their audience. In so doing they maximize their own, commercial interests. Several empirical findings tend to demonstrate that mediatization of politics shows up in Switzerland. We witnessed (1) a higher concentration of issue attention in media coverage than in the political realm, and (2) a higher concentration for media coverage of politics than for media coverage of policymaking. Furthermore, we observed (3) a slight increase of concentration over time for the media. Finally, (4) the congruence...
in the distribution of attention between the media and political agendas is low for articles related to politics, and it decreases over time for both articles dealing with politics and articles dealing with policymaking – but especially for the former.

Given both the long-lasting tradition of consensus politics in Switzerland and the characteristics of the newspaper on which our analysis rests, our case study can be seen as a test case with respect to the impact of mediatization.

The fact that our results are overall in line with our expectations leads us to believe that similar trends are also at work in other European countries. Finally, it should be noted that mediatization as a process is more encompassing than what we have studied in this paper. Most importantly, mediatization also refers to the way in which information is presented, i.e., on format, whereas we have focused here on the content of media coverage, and more specifically on the allocation of issue attention.

References


Budget Dynamics
Christian Breunig, University of Konstanz
Peter B. Mortensen, University of Aarhus*

Introduction
Budget dynamics may sound as a contradiction in terms to scholars familiar with Wildavsky and colleagues’ seminal work on public budgeting (Wildavsky 1964). As stated by Davis, Dempster, and Wildavsky (1966, 529): “This year’s budget is based on last year’s budget, with special attention given to a narrow range of increases or decreases.”

For some years this simple model was considered something of an empirical law of public budgets. However, already in the 1970s several scholars started to question the empirical validity of Wildavsky’s claim. John F. Padgett (1980) argued that the linear assumptions in normal regression statistics were too resistant to non-linear variation in data. In addition to this methodological criticism, rigorous theoretical criticism has claimed that the concept of incrementalism has never been clearly defined (Dempster and Wildavsky 1979; Berry 1990).

But perhaps the most serious problem is that the incrementalism description of stable public budgets simply does not seem to find support in empirical observations. Most studies find periods of stability, but they also find significant and large changes that cannot be accounted for using the incremental approach (Natchez and Bupp 1973). Although the reputation of incrementalism as a very static model of public budgeting may be a little unfair, the approach is definitely not well suited to account for large changes in public spending. Nevertheless, alternative explanations of this pattern of both stability and changes have been

*Authors may be contacted at: christian.breunig@uni-konstanz.de and peter@ps.au.dk
few, and for many years, as True (2000, 4) puts it: “we have been left with incre-
mentalism by default.” In the past decade, however, the interest in stability and change in public budgeting has been revitalized and in this article we highlight some of the main findings and insights of this research agenda.

A renewed interest in stability and change in public budgets

The prologue of the renewed scholarly interest in budget dynamics is Baumgartner and Jones’ (1993) book, Agendas and Instability in American Politics. The book does not contain public spending data but presents a range of long-time series and shows how political attention in the US is characterized by long periods of stability interrupted by short periods of attention shifts and major policy changes.

Up through the 1990s, Baumgartner, Jones, and True collected time series data on public spending and found in these data a similar pattern of year-to-year stability now and then interrupted by major changes in the budget from one year to the next (Jones, Baumgartner, and True 1998; True 2002). To account for this pattern of stability and change in measures of both political attention and public spending, Baumgartner and Jones (1993) initially developed the punctuated equilibrium theory, which later got a more general expression with the model of disproportionate information processing (Jones and Baumgartner 2005). It is worth noting that this model relies on many of the same assumptions about boundedly rational policymakers as did Wildavsky’s theory of incrementalism. However, whereas Davis, Dempster, and Wildavsky (1974) ascribed major spending changes to special events in the surroundings of the political system – so-called exogenous events – Jones and Baumgartner argue that such major changes are a function of the same basic characteristics of the political decision-making process that causes great stability.

According to the model of disproportionate information processing, the selective attention of policymakers implies that most of the time they ignore most information signals from their environment. This is consistent with classic, incremental decision-making. What incrementalism and most other classic theories with focus on the bounded rationality of decision makers ignore, however, is the ‘serial shift’ in the attention of policy makers. The serial processing capacities of the decision makers, which in periods of stability serve to prevent policy change, also leads to increased focus on new issues to the exclusion of others once the agenda shifts. From this perspective, incrementalism is a special case of the more generalized model of disproportionate information processing (see Jones and Baumgartner 2005).

A (new) general empirical law of public budgets

In a seminal paper John Padgett (1980) developed a decision-making model called the serial judgment model, where decision makers prioritize some budget items in a series of rounds and compare them on a one-by-one basis. Jones and colleagues (Jones et al. 2003; Jones and Baumgartner 2005) adopted this line of inquiry when studying budget changes in the US. They linked the punctuated equilibrium model, which claims that policy change is episodic, and they argued that year-to-year changes in public budgets mostly are small but disrupted by large-scale changes. Visually, the distribution of changes should display fat tails (i.e., some very large changes), sharp central peaks (i.e., an abundance of small changes), and ‘weak shoulders’ (i.e., few moderate changes). This pattern is represented in the top right graph in figure 1. We can maps this distribution onto the logic of disproportionate information processing. A rise in political attention and political reprioritization creates large-scale budget changes, whereas political inattentiveness creates stability in spending. We
can describe the shape of such a distribution by a summary statistic called kurtosis. The more a distribution shows both such small increments and also large shifts, the more 'leptokurtic' it is. The theory of disproportionate information processing implies that budgetary change is leptokurtic.

Research since the mid-2000s finds leptokurtic distributions in a variety of institutional settings. Indeed, these distributional characteristics approach a general empirical law of public budgets (Jones et al. 2009). The bottom row of figure 1 gives two examples and provides some basic evidence. The bottom left displays more than 3,000 annual percent changes in national budget functions from several European countries (Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom). The bottom right shows the distribution of more than 15,000 annual budget changes in Danish local budgets. It appears that long periods of stasis are interrupted by massive and transformative budgetary changes (100 percent increases or sometimes even much more). Hence, both figures

Figure 1. The top row of the figure displays what incrementalism and punctuations look like in theoretical distributions. The bottom row displays pooled budget functions from Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, and the UK, as well as Danish local budgets. The data are from Jones et al. (2009).
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America

at the bottom of figure 1 lend support for the generalized disproportionate information-processing model of public policymaking.

Variation in budget dynamics

While budgetary change appears to be well represented by the disproportionate information model and well characterized by a leptokurtic distribution, with its sharp peak and large outliers, more recent research detected and theorized about the variation that may occur in budgetary dynamics. To find out more about the mechanisms driving these empirical patterns, a major research topic is to explore conditions leading to more or less leptokurtosis. Do institutional arrangements matter, or are there perhaps other forces at work? In particular, two empirical regularities and related theoretical points stand out. First, the degree of punctuation in budgetary outcomes varies across countries. Second, gradations of leptokurtosis also emerge across policy issues (or, more precisely, budgetary categories such as health care, defense, and education).

Research on national variation in the degree of budget punctuations builds on a vast literature in comparative politics and political economy that assigns institutions core explanatory power. The basic idea holds that variation in the institutional structure of policymaking can be linked to the distribution of policy and budgetary outcomes. Researchers found that increasing institutional friction leads to more leptokurtic policy outcomes. Friction is resistance to policy change built into institutions and can be seen as the costs of making and implementing political choices.

Three findings about how institutional friction works stand out. First, Baumgartner et al. (2009) examine policy processes in Belgium, Denmark, and the United States and find that, regardless of country, policy processes that impose higher decision-making costs show a higher level of kurtosis. They identify budgeting as the process with the most institutional friction. This is visible in the most leptokurtic outcomes when compared with other elements in the policy process, such as parliamentary questions or the introduction of bills.

Second, Jones et al. (2009) show that budgets, regardless of the level of government or type of political system, are highly static and are only occasionally disrupted by large changes. They then contend that differences in the magnitude of kurtosis can be attributed to country- and institution-specific features such as executive dominance, single-party government, bicameralism, and decentralization.

Third, Breunig (2011) focuses on the role of institutional friction in budgeting in Denmark, Germany, the UK and the US. He identifies two sources of friction: the number of veto points in the political system and the role of the finance ministry in cobbling a budget together. It is shown that, in particular, increases in decision-making costs due to high numbers of veto points do not just stabilize public budgets. Instead, high institutional barriers prevent policymakers from adapting to exogenous changes. This constraint then forces decision makers to respond more extremely at a later point in time. Again, this dynamics contributes to a leptokurtic pattern of budget changes.

In addition to distinctive cross-national patterns in the magnitude of budget punctuations, researchers also detected variation across different policy issues. One of the first articles that engaged with the variation across budgetary domains was John and Margetts’s (2003) study of British expenditures. They propose several rationales for differences across policy domains, including the size of the budget, the centrality of particular budget items for the government, and ministerial incentives. Mortensen (2005) substantiates this claim in a study of Danish municipal budgets. He shows that areas such as road and library expenditures are more punctuated than school and child-care expenditures. A potential explanation for this difference is that strong and unified interest groups with concentrated benefits are able to continuously increase spending, whereas the lack of interest group involvement makes budgets more malleable and therefore more prone to punctuations.

Breunig and Koski (2012) similarly argue that allocational expenditures (i.e., spending on education, public welfare, or public health) are
more likely to produce incremental changes within budgets than non-allocational ones. This might be the case for two reasons. First, spending on welfare and education is often mandatory and requires a legislative change in entitlements, while non-allocational spending can be adjusted annually in the budget. Second, large entitlement programs receive a constant and multifaceted stream of attention by legislators, lobbyists, and the public, which enables more careful and deliberate budgetary change.

Finally, Breunig, Koski, and Mortensen (2011) show that despite similar levels of punctuations at the aggregate level, differences across issues remain and that these issue-based differences are systematic. By comparing categorical spending in the United States and Denmark, they show that, at all levels of magnitude, budget categories display a similar tendency for punctuation. Regardless of country, agriculture and health-care spending are more punctuated than the domains of justice, health, and education.

Such domain-specific dynamics does not rule out the importance of more universal explanations, but arguments about bounded rationality and information processing alone cannot explain these patterns. Instead, they advocate increased focus on factors operating at the level of budget sub-functions. It is an exciting prospect to understand these domain-specific dynamics better in the future.

Conclusion

We conclude this essay with a few reflections on how this revitalized research agenda on stability and change in public budgets may also improve our understanding of how governments respond to the international economic crisis.

We believe that many of the presented theoretical ideas are consistent with central features of government responses. First, a central assumption of the disproportionate information processing model is that aggregate attention (the whole agenda) of political systems is limited. Issues must be prioritized for action. If policymakers are focused on addressing waiting lists in the hospital sector they are liable to ignore signals of economic imbalances.

In addition to this ‘bottleneck of attention’, various sources of institutional friction in the process of information processing – resources used in gathering, analyzing, and using information but also costs of decision-making in terms of deliberation and converging on a common agreement – imply that the task of prioritizing and acting on new information presents a major challenge for policymakers. In sum, a complex set of institutions and policymaking arrangements filters, blocks, and occasionally amplifies those signals from the environment.

Hence, the central question is not whether political systems respond smoothly or not to the incoming signals of a crisis, but how far out of kilter with the social and political environment the agenda has drifted before the system attended to the changes and responded by correcting existing policies and by changing budgets?

At least in hindsight, it seems that central policymakers across European countries ignored many of the signals of a forthcoming economic crisis. Once they started to attend to the crisis, the issue of economics quickly conquered almost all of the political agenda. This is a characteristic move from ignorance to overshooting that is consistent with the recent models of budget dynamics, and which shows that reality works differently than the classic incrementalism models described.
References


Analyzing the Policy Agenda of the European Council

Marcello Carammia, University of Malta
Arco Timmermans, Montesquieu Institute/University of Leiden
Sebastiaan Princen, University of Utrecht
Petya Alexandrova, Montesquieu Institute/University of Leiden*

Introduction

In recent times, the influence of the European Union (EU) on policy decisions within member states has become more visible and contested than many years before in its political history. In dealing with the financial crisis, the symbol of monetary integration, priorities set in EU institutions are crucial to domestic policies. Member states belonging to the Eurozone in particular face hard choices on their budgets as a consequence of agreements set within the European Council and rules enforced by the Commission. Some critics even contend that the EU ‘dictates’ the policy agendas of its member states.

Within the EU, the European Council has increasingly gained prominence as the institution that sets the parameters for EU policies and makes the most important decisions. Although it has been fuelled by the financial crisis, this preeminent role is the outcome of a longer process in which the European Council has steadily gained political power and has come to be seen as the apex of the EU’s political system. The preeminence of this body manifests itself in its two distinct roles. To begin with, the European Council has become the focal point for

*Authors may be contacted at: marcello.carammia@um.edu.mt, ATimmermans@fsw.leidenuniv.nl, S.B.M.Princen@uu.nl, and p.alexandrova@montesquieu-instituut.nl
setting the EU’s overall agenda and taking the key decisions in important areas. In that vein, the institution effectively determines the EU budget and, for instance, takes all the crucial decisions regarding the financial crisis. In addition, the European Council is the final arbiter for issues stalemated within the Council of Ministers, forging compromises that the last subsequently adopts in a formal sense. As a result, understanding what issues the European Council deals with and how it sets its priorities is crucial for understanding EU politics.

For the European Council, agenda-setting is a particularly pressing issue, since attention to major problems is subjected to strong forces of competition. This has become highly visible in economic crisis management recently. As problems rise and expand in salience and drama, they often are processed one by one. This also means that other problems must wait for their turn. In this regard, the European Council is like any top political institution in domestic political systems, such as full cabinets or prime ministers in parliamentary systems or the president in (semi-)presidential systems. The role at the top of the political pyramid means that only the most urgent issues come onto the agenda of such institutions, while they delegate or leave more routine matters to the plethora of policymaking bodies that operate at lower political levels.

We read about policy and budget proposals of the Commission and about European summit meetings in the news headlines. But we are still at the beginning of understanding the dynamics of agenda-setting and policy change, and their consequences for the way the European Council and EU politics in general work. In this article, we present some of the research on the European Council agenda that we have undertaken throughout the past few years. To introduce our findings, we will first take a closer look at the debate on whether the EU is comparable to other political systems and the challenges this presents for studying agenda setting in the EU. Then, we will highlight three key conclusions that can be drawn from our analyses so far, showing how and why the European Council operates like top political institutions in national polities and where its agenda dynamics are different.

The EU as ‘an N of 1’?

One feature of the EU is that, similar to federal polities, it provides a variety of access points for policy actors aiming to initiate or alter the course of public policy. This is a more specific meaning of what Marks et al. (1996) have called a system of multilevel governance. Political or social actors that want to put an issue onto the EU agenda can target multiple venues – including single general directorates in the European Commission or the Council of the EU, committees and members of the European Parliament, influential non-governmental organizations and interest groups, representatives of member state governments, and so forth. In this constellation, policy actors from member states can direct their attempts to set the agenda ‘upward’ whenever this helps them to overcome domestic opposition, as Guiraudon (2000) described for the case of internal security and migration-control policies in the 1980s. A recent experience of this is how Northern member states of the Eurozone successfully tried to empower the European Commission to enforce national budget discipline – and thus keep Southern Eurozone countries under control. As Princen (2009) shows, actors with stakes in major policy issues also use one of the ‘horizontal’ routes within the EU. This happens with issues on which formal EU jurisdictions are already well established, but this venue shopping also may involve new issues and jurisdictional territory.

A theoretical point made just over a decade ago by Peters is that, with all these venues for policy initiative, the EU is still struggling to find its own ‘policy equilibrium’ in most domains where it has moved to develop initiatives. The EU in this view is a recently emerged institutional setting where, unlike in national political systems, the pattern is one of ‘rapidly shifting policy agendas’ (Peters 2001, 85). Princen (2009) points to an important feature of the EU that may affect agenda-setting and the extent to which it is, as Peters argues, in constant policy agenda movement and tinkering about the
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America

boundaries of jurisdictions. This feature is the rather indirect link between decision makers and public opinion and the weakness of a ‘European public sphere’. Most importantly, agenda-setting in the EU involves a ‘scale dimension’: it is not sufficient to show that an issue is relevant to the EU; there also must be strong testimony for EU policy initiative rather than national activity. This rationale bears on the effectiveness and legitimacy of EU instruments (Princen 2009, 36–43).

These and other ideas about the institutional design of the EU and its consequences for policymaking often led analysts to stress the ‘unique’ nature of the Union; from a comparative perspective it has been called ‘an N of 1’ (Caporaso et al. 1997). While there is no doubt that the historical and institutional legacy of the EU is quite unlike those of traditional nation-states, it is an empirical question whether the way in which this political system allocates attention to problems and seeks stability in its policy choices is really different from political decision making within countries. The work on political agendas of different states has shown that ‘equilibrium’, that is, stability in attention to problems on the agenda and mostly incremental changes in policy are interrupted by large shifts, punctuations (Baumgartner et al. 2009). Thus, one central question here is whether the EU displays a similar pattern or a different path of agenda development.

Given the high level of institutional complexity of the EU, Peter John has called the EU "the toughest test for the Policy Agendas Project."

Agenda dynamics in the European Council

The European Council project was the first large-scale data collection on EU policy agendas. The European Council consists of the heads of state or government of the EU member states, and it meets between some three and six times per year. In the European integration process, it has been characterized as ‘unstopable’ (Werts 2008). Until the Lisbon Treaty went into force at the end of 2009, the formal presidency of this institution rotated each semester between member states. At summit meetings, so-called Conclusions are produced that contain the main points on the agenda and the headlines of policy story behind them. Conclusions contain expressions of concern and many instances of attention to matters to be delegated to other policymaking institutions within the EU. Following the EU agendas codebook, we content-coded all Conclusions produced between 1975 and 2011, resulting in a dataset of some 42,000 observations.

The results of our first analyses suggest that agenda-setting processes within the European Council have some EU-specific features, while at the same time a comparative perspective tells us that the emerging pattern resembles that observed in national political institutions where ‘high politics’ are expressed. Three main findings regarding the European Council’s agenda need to be stressed:

First, this agenda shows that some topics are, to paraphrase George Orwell, ‘more equal’ in obtaining attention than other ones. International affairs, the economy, and matters of structure and governance of the EU together cover a large part of the European Council agenda most of the time, and they condition the space for all other topics (Alexandrova, Carammia, and Timmermans 2012,
As a result, the European Council agenda is highly skewed toward a limited set of issues. This pattern is similar to what has been found in a comparative analysis of executive agendas in six countries, including the US (Jennings et al. 2011). If political systems, despite their institutional variation, display similarity in the process of allocating attention to some categories of problems versus others, this points to general core issues of government. As the formal policy jurisdictions of the EU are quite dissimilar to institutional arrangements within countries, whether federal or unitary states, this is a striking finding. It suggests that there is a basic set of matters that not only is addressed in all political systems, but also takes prevalence over other policy problems whenever the chips are down.

A second key finding is that the agenda of the European Council shows a punctuated pattern of attention change: small, incremental changes in attention to problems are frequent, but large shifts also occur. Indeed, the European Council agenda appears to be quite volatile, with issues that previously obtained summit attention being dropped entirely (Alexandrova, Carammia, and Timmermans 2012, 76–79). However, compared with other political agendas mapped so far, the European Council shows a higher tendency to sacrifice attention to some problems in order to highlight others. The degree to which topics completely disappear from the agenda, be it often temporarily, is not found in analyses of national executives that also are venues of expressive high politics. In the UK and the Netherlands, for example, it is more rare to see individual policy topics disappear from the annual agenda presented in the Queen’s Speech (John and Jennings 2010; Breeman et al. 2009). Intuitively, this pattern of small and larger shifts in which matters on the agenda are replaced may be connected to the institutional properties of the European Council. Heads of State and Government within this institution often form coalitions on individual policy issues, and while some of these can be stable, coalitional realignments are made.

as members of the European Council change, and topics move up and down in priority.

A third finding sheds some light on the factors influencing the setting of the agenda. There does not appear to be a clear effect of the presidency in determining the prioritization of issues in the European Council. The rotation of this office until December 2009 from one country to another had little effect on the overall composition of the policy agenda, irrespective of which member state was presiding over the European Council (Alexandrova and Timmermans, forthcoming).

As a consequence, there are more indications that attention volatility is an effect of the location of the European Council within the institutional architecture of the EU. Through its composition, the institution is exposed to multiple pressures and demands from member states, and as the arena for expressing high politics it also must respond to issues from the broader international environment. With so much stress on processing diverse matters, the agenda becomes more volatile. Further, as more issues intrude the agenda, the European Council uses its institutional flexibility to adapt and schedule more summit meetings. Thus, issues disappear, but they may re-appear as political coalitions within the institution are reshaped and matters become more urgent. Moreover, low-key attention or disappearance from the European Council agenda does not mean an issue is ignored in European policymaking. Indeed, low attention may actually indicate that an issue has been delegated successfully to other policymaking arenas where policy output is in production.

Conclusions

The EU is becoming increasingly central to the politics and policy of European member states, while at the same time its democratic legitimacy is widely at stake. The policy agendas perspective provides an analytical view informed by theory and applied in large-scale empirical inquiry that can help to obtain a better understanding of the way priorities are set in the EU. The European Council Project – of which some findings are presented in this contribution – is one example, with other projects in the other EU institutions being underway. A similar data-coding approach is conducted for the European Commission and the European Parliament, which all will be presented on the EU agendas project website (<www.policyagendas.eu>). These are not ‘just’ data collection enterprises. The projects are meant to cast a better long-term view on the dynamics of issue attention within EU institutions. And they are meant to be related, in order to show how agendas of different bodies may vary together, or follow different rhythms. These processes are induced by characteristics of single institutions, but also by the logic of interaction between them, a central object of debate on the EU, of which our understanding is still limited. Thus, in this way, we are able to track problems over time, determine the conditions under which they acquire urgency status or drop off the political radar screen, and see how problems ‘travel’ across policymaking arenas until they are turned into output or left undecided and shelved until a new upsurge of attention to them occurs.

Further research within the EU Agendas Project will also focus on specific major policy topics, analyzing not only waves of attention to them but also tracking how portraits and definitions of issues in the relevant domain evolve. This type of analysis complements the initial mapping of attention in order to show how the mobilization of bias – that central concept in political science – actually works, and how such mobilization happens for different types of problems. The context of these processes is that attention to problems is always contingent and priorities are relative and often temporary. This inherently political nature of attention and agenda-setting also applies to the EU. Mapping and explaining this process is not just important from an academic point of view, but also for understanding international institutions that play increasingly central roles in European politics.
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America

References


A reputation for policy performance and competence is an important ingredient for electoral success, with evaluations of parties’ and candidates’ handling of issues forming a key battleground at election time. In his seminal work, Donald Stokes (1963) argued that on certain issues – known as ‘valence issues’ – where there is broad consensus with regard to objectives that are considered to be desirable, vote choice would be based on the ability of candidates or parties to deliver on those issues, i.e., on competence. Valence issues refer to policy areas such as economic growth or crime, where voters are in broad agreement, almost always preferring more growth to less, and less crime to more. This model of electoral calculus is influential. Fiorina (1981, 608) argued that, “In making his voting decisions the citizen looks at the incumbent’s performance, the alternative platforms of the incumbent and challenger and (perhaps) imagines a hypothetical past performance term for the previous challenger.” Valence, and issue handling, is now increasingly viewed as important to understanding vote choice (e.g., Clarke et al. 2004; 2009; Green and Hobolt 2008; Be-
Issue competence reputations influence the strategic behavior of political parties (Budge and Farlie 1983; Petrocik 1996). A party with a long-standing commitment to an issue, and a record of delivery on it, will tend to possess an association with that issue, i.e., ‘ownership’ (Petrocik 1996). Because of this, parties have strong incentives to emphasize and prime issues in the mind of voters when they hold a positive reputation for competence and delivery on those issues. A party’s ratings on one issue relative to other issues and relative to other parties are often quite stable (e.g., in Britain, the Labour Party tends to be rated higher on healthcare than crime, while its rating on immigration tends to be consistently lower than that for the Conservative Party). This leads parties to be associated with certain issues in the public mind. We are increasingly, however, coming to understand issue ownership as a dynamic construct (Green and Jennings 2012a, 2012b).

In our ESRC-funded project about the politics of competence, we argue that alongside these long-term stabilities of relative ownership, reputations for issue competence vary both due to domain-specific information on policy performance and also due to the transfer of evaluations across issues and the accumulation of negative information over time. Domain-specific evaluations are often responsive to policy outputs; publics update their evaluations of the governing party according to exogenous information about policy performance. In addition, voters use information on the handling of one issue – and important cues from political events – to re-evaluate parties across a wide set of seemingly unrelated policy areas. We observe competency ‘costs of governing’, as incumbents lose their reputation for policy competence on issues spanning the policy domain. These mechanisms give rise to a generalized evaluation of party competence across the issue agenda: a prevailing ‘mood’ in public opinion, or ‘macro-competence’ (a concept that draws heavily on the work of Stimson 1991). We expect (and observe) a high degree of common movement in party competence ratings over time, akin to the idea of ‘parallel publics’ (Page and Shapiro 1992). To elaborate, our theory suggests three specific mechanisms through which this common movement occurs:

**Issue transfer:** Voters use informational shortcuts or heuristics in making political judgments, especially on issues where they lack information. In such circumstances, it is rational for voters to link a party’s handling of issues on which information is available to those subject to uncertainty. Because of this, high-salience issues provide a cue to voters about the competence of parties across a range of issues. The economy is an obvious policy issue that can lead to improvement or deterioration of the reputation for competence of a party in government across a wide range of issues. It is difficult for voters to evaluate the policy competence of parties in opposition, meaning it is possible for competence evaluations to be transferred between parties as well as across issues.

**Events and economic shocks:** As an extension of this, major events or economic shocks can provide informational signals to voters, providing a heuristic through which to evaluate the competence of a party on a wider spectrum of issues. Economic crises can do long-term damage to the reputation of governments, as can unpopular military conflicts, such as Iraq or Vietnam. Critical failures in the management of key public services can also damage the reputation of governing parties.

**Costs of governing:** Lastly, parties in government suffer from accumulation of performance information over time, which reinforce these heuristics. The ‘costs of governing’ lead to a decline in competence as negative information accumulates,
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America

whereas gains are discounted, consistent with the idea of negativity bias in political judgments (Lau 1985). This build-up of bad news and policy failures exerts a permanent drag on the reputation of a party after its honeymoon in office is over.

From micro theories to macro measures: Mood in policy competence

If there is parallel movement of party competence across the issue agenda, it follows that handling evaluations should load onto an underlying dimension of public opinion. This should explain much of the variation in evaluations of party competence, representing our construct of ‘macro-competence’. Our research uses Stimson’s (1991) dyad ratios algorithm method to extract the common underlying dimension of survey items on party competence over time. The method is especially useful because it allows us to construct a continuous and reliable index of party competence in circumstances where there is a great deal of irregular and missing data (i.e., polls on competence are asked infrequently, and are subject to variation in question wording or the issue evaluated). We can therefore estimate new issue and general competence time series, and have done so for four countries to date: Australia, Canada, the UK and the US. Some of the series span over seven decades.

Data on policy competence

Our ESRC-funded project, “The Politics of Competence: Longitudinal and Comparative Analysis,” has gathered thousands of survey items about party competence in Britain, the United States, Australia and Canada, dating as far back as 1939. Polling organizations in these countries have historically fielded a number of questions relating to issue handling, competence, performance, effectiveness, trust, and delivery. Searches of archives of opinion polls and survey datasets identified a large number of survey items relating to competence, using terms such as ‘handle’, ‘better job’, ‘manage’, and ‘trust’. A standard question format in the US asks respondents, “…Who do you trust to do a better job of handling the economy: the Democrats or the Republicans?” In Britain the wording tends to be somewhat different: two common variants are, “If Britain were in economic difficulties, which party do you think could handle the problem best – the Conservatives or Labour?” and, “I am going to read out a list of problems facing the country. Could you tell me for each of them which political party you personally think would handle the problem best? Crime…” (with responses being recorded for each of the main parties, i.e., the Conservatives, Labour or the Liberal Democrats). These questions ask about issues ranging from the economy and taxation to public services and the environment. We therefore have a large amount of information about competence evaluations of parties, but often discontinuous data, with questions either sometimes being asked just a few times or at irregular intervals. In the UK, this totals some 4,190 survey items and in the US 2,512. The data are drawn from commercial pollsters such as Gallup and national election studies, such as the American National Election Studies and the British Election Studies.

Measuring policy competence

Stimson’s (1991) dyad ratios algorithm generates an estimation of longitudinal co-variation in competence ratings for each party, capturing the underlying latent construct for all issues (see Stimson 1991 and Jennings and Green 2012b for details of the method). In this respect, the algorithm extracts the central tendency of survey items relating to policy competence, analogous to a principal components approach. This measure is comparable over time, indicating when a party holds a reputation for competence and when it does not. Data (and supporting documentation) from the project are available at: <http://competence-politics.co.uk/data>.

We extract the first dimension of party competence in both the US and the UK that explains at
least 50 percent of variation in public evaluations of party competence (see table 1). In the US, this figure is equal to 63 percent for the Democratic Party and 53 percent for the Republican Party. The figures are not much different in the UK, with 64 percent of shared variation for evaluations of the Conservative Party, 57 percent for the Labour Party, and 69 percent for the Liberal Democrats. Overall, the findings reveal a dominant underlying first dimension in competence evaluations, which exhibit a substantial degree of common movement. These findings are consistent with the mechanisms outlined earlier. They are also substantively high: Stimson’s (1991) measure of “public policy mood” finds that the first dimension accounts for 27 percent variation in preferences.

An analysis of macro-competence and the vote in Britain

The measure of macro-competence enables us to understand how parties gain and lose reputations for policy competence, how competence ratings decline during a period of government, and how policy competence ratings change with other performance indicators, for example, partisanship, leader ratings, events, and economic outcomes. It is also possible to test its implications for vote choice. Here, we summarize findings on the drivers of macro-competence and its effect on party support in Britain (see Green and Jennings 2012b for more detailed analysis). First we plot macro-competence for the Conservatives and Labour from 1950 to 2012, and then we discuss findings from time-series analysis of these and other measures (restricted to shorter time periods, due to availability of other co-variates).

What drives macro-competence?

As noted in the discussion of the dynamic properties of party competence, a build-up of performance information over time is expected to contribute to a downward trend in handling ratings over time. Consistent with this, we find that time in government has a negative effect on party competence between 1950 and 2008. Parties in government tend to lose around 0.5 percent a year of their mean level of macro-competence, which amounts to a 2.5 percent drop over the course of a full five-year parliament.

Political and economic events also provide information signals about performance, which influence party competence. Through a fine-grained analysis of the period between 1979 and 2008, we find that a few major events had lasting effects on the reputations of parties for competence across the issue agenda. The Falklands War in 1982 led to an increase of 3 percent in the competence rating of the Conservative Party (interestingly, the Labour Party did not experience a symmetrical fall in its ratings). In contrast, the Exchange Rate Mechanism Crisis of 1992 (also known as Black Wednesday) led to a drop of almost 3 percent in competence ratings across the board. Another economic crisis, the run on Northern Rock bank in 2007, led to an increase in the perceived competence of the Conservative opposition. At the same time, we find that leader ratings and personal economic expectations are significantly related to macro-competence (Green and Jennings 2012b, 328–35). Importantly, too, party competence exhibits a high degree of

---

4 The algorithm also extracts a second dimension, but this is less easy to interpret (Stimson 2012) and accounts for much less variation.

Table 1. ‘Mood’ in party competence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/Parties</th>
<th>Percentage of variance explained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First dimension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>United States, 1939-2011</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>United Kingdom, 1945-2012</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Democrat</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America

Competition and the vote

In other work we demonstrated the significant effect of issue competence on party support when compared against other predictors of vote choice, such as partisanship, government approval, prime ministerial approval, national economic retrospections, and personal economic expectations (Green and Jennings 2012a). Through an analysis of the period between 1979 and 2008, we find that macro-competence has a positive and significant effect on vote choice, with a 1-point increase in competence translating into a 0.3-point increase in party support. The additional variance that is explained by inclusion of competence in the model is around 4 percent. Party competence is therefore an important component of vote choice at the macro-level.

Competence and governing party agendas

Party competence also matters for the behavior of parties in government. Building on theories of issue ownership, we argue that a party’s reputation for competence on a given issue might be expected to be translated into attention to that issue in the policy agenda of government. These effects of issue ownership are expected to be increased when parties are unpopular, where parties lacking in public support will tend to rely on emphasizing their few policy strengths/advantages. Additionally, the scarcity of attention in government requires decision makers to prioritize between an abundance of policy problems and public concerns (e.g., Jones and Baumgartner 2005; Jennings and John 2009). Parties in government do not always have the luxury of attending to their favored issues, and must often deal with the issues of the day to demonstrate competence and policy handling. In our analysis of policy agendas in the US and UK between 1947 and 2007, we find some evidence of the effect of issue competence on the policy agenda of government, and of the mediating role of issue salience (i.e., public concern about the ‘most important problem’) and of party popularity.

To summarize, our research analyzes the

Figure 1. Party competence in Britain, 1950–2012
way in which the public rates political parties for their competence on issues such as the economy, health care, education, crime, and the environment. The media often reports public ratings of parties on individual issues, and political parties take notice of whether the public rate them positively or negatively on different policy concerns. We show that public confidence about political parties increases or decreases on all policy issues alike: a major policy failure in one policy area doesn’t just influence perceptions on that policy; it can taint the public’s trust in a party on unrelated issues. Therefore, if a party improves its reputation on one issue it will also be trusted on a range of other policies. Party competence also has a significant effect on the executive and legislative agendas of governing parties, as we find in the US and the UK.

Impact and relevance for practice
The perceived competence of political parties – and particularly governing parties – to handle problems is crucial at a time of economic uncertainty, with the aftershocks of the global financial crisis and the continued Eurozone crisis, widespread public dissatisfaction with austerity programs in some countries and an erosion of trust in political institutions in others. It is important to reconcile this dynamic construct of mood in public opinion with responsiveness of policy performance in specific domains. For delivery to matter, the public must be able to detect changes in performance and outcomes, rather than just the rhetoric of government. Ours is an ongoing project that will have implications for governments at local, national and transnational levels. We will increasingly undertake cross-national comparisons as data allow, and as it becomes possible to assess the role of political institutions in the public evaluation of performance and the attribution of responsibility for good or bad government. We hope to add new countries to our analysis, building up a large dataset on party handling of policy domains outside these four countries. We are currently compiling data in several other countries, for use by us and the wider community of researchers.

References


ed at the annual conference of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago.


**FRENCH POLITICS, CULTURE & SOCIETY**

*FPC&S* is the journal of the Conference Group on French Politics & Society. It is jointly sponsored by the Institute of French Studies at New York University and the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies at Harvard University.

**Editor:** Herrick Chapman, New York University

*FPC&S* explores modern and contemporary France from the perspectives of the social sciences, history, and cultural analysis. It also examines the relationship of France to the larger world, especially Europe, the United States, and the former French Empire. The editors also welcome pieces on recent debates and events, as well as articles that explore the connections between French society and cultural expression of all sorts (such as art, film, literature, and popular culture). Issues devoted to a single theme appear from time to time.

With refereed research articles, timely essays, and reviews of books in many disciplines, *FPC&S* provides a forum for learned opinion and the latest scholarship on France.

**RECENT ARTICLES**

France Votes

IRWIN M WALL

Logiques de mobilisation et inégalités sociales de participation électorale en France, 2002–2012

CELINE BRACONNIER AND JEAN-YVES DORMAGEN

Progress But Still No Présidente: Women and the 2012 French Presidential Elections

RAINBOW MURRAY

Les ambivalences de la rationalisation: À propos du rôle joué par les médias dans la présidentielle 2012

ERIC LAGNEAU AND CYRIL LEMIEUX

The EU Discourse in the 2012 French Presidential Election

FRANCESCA VASSALLO

Franco-American Cultures in a New World Perspective

JONATHAN GOSNELL

L’histoire et la politique hors-la-loi? Réflexions autour d’un film sur des indépendantistes algériens

NEDJIB SIDI MOUSSA

Rescue of the Jews and the Resistance in France: From History to Historiography

RENEE POZNANSKI

**ISSN 1537-6370 (Print) • ISSN 1558-5271 (Online)**

Volume 31/2013, 3 issues p.a.

**journals.berghahnbooks.com/fpcs**
The Power of the Opposition

Christoffer Green-Pedersen, University of Aarhus, Denmark
Peter B. Mortensen, University of Aarhus, Denmark
Henrik Bech Seeberg, University of Aarhus, Denmark
Gunnar Thesen, University of Aarhus, Denmark*

Being in government automatically means having the power to influence public policy. Therefore, governments and what they do have always been a core focus within political science. For instance, does the party color of the government matter for public policy? Under the heading “do politics matter,” this question has been the subject of an extensive literature (for reviews, see Schmidt 1996; Imbeau et al. 2001). Another question is how the support for the government is affected by how the economy develops. Do voters, for instance, punish government when unemployment rises? Such questions have also been researched intensively (e.g., Lewis-Beck and Paldam 2000; Anderson 2007).

For good reasons the opposition has received much less scholarly interest. As noted by Klingemann et al. (1994, 28), the opposition only has its words, whereas governments can act. When parties are in government they typically command a majority in parliament or are sup-

*Authors may be contacted at: cgp@ps.au.dk, peter@ps.au.dk, h.seeberg@ps.au.dk, and thesen@ps.au.dk
Further, government power implies control over an extensive bureaucracy that may assist in formulating as well as implementing a wide range of public policies.

But is government really so powerful and the opposition really so weak? The downside of focusing so strongly on the government is that we know very little about the extent of the opposition’s influence on public policy and the mechanisms through which the opposition may influence public policy. What if opposition parties are capable of forcing government to address political issues they would otherwise have ignored? And what if this makes governments implement policies they would otherwise not have implemented? Exactly because governments hold power, governments are also likely to act on an issue when they start talking about it in public. With power also comes an expectation from the public that governments are capable of solving problems. So for governments, talking will not always be enough, as the public expects actions.

Studying the relationship between government and opposition parties from an agenda-setting perspective is thus a new way to address the otherwise neglected question of opposition influence. The following presents the findings from a number of recent agenda-setting studies dealing with the relationship between opposition and government. Together they illustrate how the opposition may take up news stories and turn these stories into political issues, which governments then have to address, and they show how this may force governments to implement policies they would otherwise not have implemented.

Government and opposition from an agenda-setting perspective

The starting point for researching government and opposition from an agenda setting perspective is the idea of policy responsibility (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen 2010). The government holds power, but power is often followed by an expectation that the government is capable of addressing almost any societal problem. Regardless of whether solutions are actually at hand or not, the government is to blame for the problem in the first place. This has important implications for how governments behave in public debate. Public debate is mostly about societal problems, like what do we do about climate change, the financial crisis, rising unemployment, wait-lists for health-care treatments, etc. If a government does not respond to such issues, it is automatically accused of being in trouble and of being unable to deliver the expected policy solutions. Hence, ignoring issues on the public agenda is almost impossible for government parties. Governments find themselves in a situation where they are expected to respond to societal problems, and response means policy measures.

Opposition parties are in a different position. Unlike government parties, they are not held responsible to the same extent for policy solutions. Instead, they can focus on criticizing the government on whatever issues they deem advantageous. The opposition has the freedom to choose which of the various policy problems that are raised in the public debate it wishes to focus on, i.e., it has the freedom to choose which societal problems it wants to turn into politics by following up with public attacks on the government.

This basic understanding of the role of government and opposition in agenda-setting has been pivotal in a number of studies, primarily based on data from the Danish policy agendas project (www.agenda-setting.dk). In the next sections, we summarize the main findings of these studies structured around three questions: 1) When does the opposition attack the government?; 2) Does the opposition agenda influence the government agenda?; and 3) Does the opposition agenda influence government policies?

When does the opposition attack the government?

From an agenda-setting perspective, news stories are an important source of information in politics because it is through news that information on societal problems enters politics (Soroka 2012), either because the media document otherwise neglected societal problems or because they report
on statistics, reports etc., that document the development of societal problems. One important question is thus which news stories opposition parties respond to.

Green-Pedersen and Stubager (2010) investigate this question by looking at opposition responses to news stories. Empirically, the article is based on a time-series study of the effects of mass-media attention (measured by radio news) on opposition party attention (measured by questions to the minister) in Denmark covering the entire policy agenda from 1984 to 2003. Furthermore, the news agenda and the opposition agenda are divided into issue groups such as environment, welfare, justice, economic conditions, business, foreign affairs, culture, and religion.

The study shows that whether an issue group is ‘owned’ by the opposition or not is a key variable in understanding opposition response to news stories. The logic of issue ownership is that voters consider one party alternative better at handling certain problems (Petrocik 1996). During the 1980s, when the opposition in Denmark was Social Democratic, opposition parties responded primarily to issues like environment and welfare, but after 1993 when the opposition became center-right, the opposition responded to news on issues like law and order and immigration. Thus, with the exception of foreign affairs, mass-media attention only generates opposition-party attention when it is about issues owned by the opposition. When the opposition parties change, so do the issues in which mass-media attention generates party attention.

This study has been expanded upon by Thesen (forthcoming), who investigates both opposition and government responses to news stories. Unlike Green-Pedersen and Stubager (2010), who focus on issue ownership, Thesen focuses on the tone of the news as the key variable influencing both opposition and government responses. Thesen argues that ownership is only part of the picture and that government policy responsibility, together with news tone, constitutes a stronger explanation of news politicization. Opposition parties respond to bad news because they reflect negative developments in societal problems for which the government could be held responsible. The government, on the other hand, responds to good news that reflects positive developments in societal problems because this could politicize policy success. The government, however, is also forced to react when news explicitly addresses government responsibility and thereby threatens its image as responsive and competent.

The arguments are tested on a large-N sample of radio news stories from Denmark (2003–2004). Opposition response is measured through parliamentary questions spurred by the news stories, while government response is indicated by references to these stories in the prime minister’s weekly press meeting. Thesen’s results generally confirm the expectations, suggesting that parties care more about the tone of news stories and the type of attention they might produce than about what type of issues they could serve to politicize. Furthermore, it is shown that news tone and policy responsibility condition the incentive to politicize owned issues from the media agenda. Thus, opposition parties will not politicize owned issues when news is good because this could draw attention to government success, while government is unable and unwilling to prioritize owned issues when news is bad and instead is likely to make use of its ownership strengths when news is good.

Thesen’s study utilizes the idea of policy responsibility to develop a detailed model of how opposition and government respond to news. Both have their preferences in the sense that the op-
position would like to focus on negative news and the government on good news, but the opposition has better opportunities to keep its preferred issue focus. Hence, the opposition is less constrained than the government in choosing what issues in the news it prefers to emphasize and politicize. The next question is whether the opposition’s issue emphasis influences the government’s issue agenda.

Opposition agenda and government agenda

To understand the issue interaction of opposition and government parties, Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2010) outline a new model of issue competition and agenda-setting. Unlike previous studies of issue competition between political parties, the model makes it possible to answer questions such as why some parties have greater success than others in forcing other parties to address unpleasant issues. In line with the research referred to above, one of the central implications of the model is that opposition parties are freer to continually focus on issues that are advantageous to themselves, whereas government parties more often are forced to respond to issues brought up on the party system agenda.

Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2010) evaluate the issue competition model using data-mapping issue competition in Denmark over a period of 25 years. The dataset comprises approximately 100,000 observations of parliamentary activities (questions to the minister, debates, sentences in prime ministers’ speeches, etc.), thus providing a unique opportunity to study issue competition in politics. While the existing literature primarily consists of studies of election campaigns, this study broadens the perspective to the continuing interaction among political parties outside election campaign periods.

Using time series analyses the findings generally corroborate the idea that the opposition is less responsive to changes in the party-system agenda, but rather influential in setting that agenda. Furthermore, the analyses show that government parties are generally more responsive to changes in the party-system agenda than the opposition, but less powerful in setting that agenda.

According to these findings, parties actually affect each other in a complex but understandable manner when issue competition is modeled as a set of reciprocal relationships between the opposition, the government and the party-system agenda.

An example of how this dynamic has been evident in Danish politics is the issue of immigration during the period of left-wing governments from 1993 to 2001 (see Green-Pedersen and Krogstrup 2008). For the right-wing opposition, drawing attention to the issue was electorally advantageous, as these parties had clear issue ownership in this area, whereas the government – also due to internal disagreements – preferred but was unable to avoid the issue. The opposition consistently focused on the issue – for instance, when the mass media brought up stories about problems related to integrating young immigrants into Danish society (see Green-Pedersen and Stubager 2010). The government responded with a series of policy measures, but none could prevent the issue from constantly popping up on the party-system agenda, in the end forcing the government parties to pay attention to the issue, for instance in the Prime Minister’s opening speeches. That this case might illustrate a more general mechanism is suggested by Estrada’s (2004, 438) conclusion on his study of the politicization of the issue of crime across a range of Western countries: “Crime is a social problem that is primarily placed on the political agenda by conservatives when social democratic governments are in power.”

The opposition’s policy influence through issue politicization

The opposition may force the government to talk about unpleasant issues in public addresses, but does it matter for real policy decisions? A recent study by Seeberg (forthcoming) follows up on Estrada’s conclusion and shows that opposition may exert substantial influence on government policy initiatives by successful politicization of an issue. More particularly, in a quantitative study using unique Danish quarterly data across two decades, Seeberg’s analysis addresses the center-right opposition’s opportunities to influ-
ence policy on crime during the Danish left-wing government in the 1990s. Contrary to the government’s policy position when it took office in 1993, the left-wing government repeatedly adopted severe restrictions to penal policy. The policy position of the right-wing opposition and its vehement and persistent criticism of the government provide an explanation, the article argues. Taking media coverage, public opinion, violence statistics, and the government’s performance into account, the analysis shows that opposition criticism spurred the penal policy restrictions. Hence, by incorporating a policy agenda perspective, Seeberg’s study encourages a broadening of the perspective on parties’ policy influence. The question “do politics matter,” i.e., do parties matter for public policy, cannot be reduced to simply a question of the color of the government. In particular, the opposition’s opportunities to politicize issues and hereby influence public policy must be taken into account.

Conclusion

The studies conducted in relation to government and opposition are examples of how an agenda-setting perspective can offer new perspectives on a basic relationship in politics, namely that between government and opposition. The traditional focus on who holds government power implicitly comes to portray the opposition as powerless, or at least it presents no mechanism through which the opposition should be able to influence the government. An agenda-setting perspective does exactly this, and the studies discussed here show initial empirical support for this. Thus the relationship between government and opposition deserves more attention and raises a series of questions for further research.

One question is whether opposition influence is stronger in some systems than in others. The studies conducted so far are mainly based on Danish material, i.e., a multiparty bloc system. Would the same finding come out in a British two-party system? Or what about systems like the Netherlands and Belgium, which are dominated by broad centrist majority governments where a complete change of government parties rarely happens? In such systems, the opposition knows that it will have to cooperate with some of the current government parties to win power. Another question relates to issue variation. If the opposition uses bad news stories as its main artillery, will it be more influential on issues where such stories are more likely? And what about development over time? It is broadly accepted that politics has been media-ized and the media is known to have a “negativity bias” (Soroka 2012). Does this imply that over time the opposition has gained increased opportunities to attack the government?

References


Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America


Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America

Introduction

Aside from core topics on political agendas such as economic affairs, welfare state reforms, or environmental issues, a growing set of atypical issues from time to time find their way into political agendas across Western Europe: the so-called morality issues such as abortion, same-sex marriage and stem cell research. Such issues relate to fundamental questions about societal organization: Who has the right to make decisions about the beginning of life? Does one have the right to choose one’s own time of death? Sometimes morality issues rank among top political issues on political agendas. In the Netherlands, questions relating to euthanasia constituted a major obstacle to the formation of the coalition government with the Christian Democrats in the 1980s. In Spain, 1 million people gathered in a massive protest against liberalization of abortion in Madrid in 2009. In contrast, morality issues have always been considered a non-political issue in Denmark and the United Kingdom and have never assumed a prominent position in party competition. The

The Politics of Morality in Western Europe

Isabelle Engeli, University of Ottawa
Christoffer Green-Pedersen, Aarhus University
Lars Thorup Larsen, Aarhus University*

* Authors may be contacted at: Isabelle.Engeli@uOttawa.ca, cgp@ps.au.dk, and lars@ps.au.dk
Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America

question is why, how, and under which conditions morality issues become politicized and integrated in party competition and when are they left outside political struggles. Further, what are the policy implications of such differences? Does politicization lead to more permissive policies such as legalizing euthanasia?

This short article presents the core findings of a comparative research project on morality politics in Western Europe, which investigates the dynamics of the political conflict over abortion, reproductive technology, stem cell research, euthanasia, and same-sex marriage in five Western European countries – Denmark, Spain, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom (UK) (Engeli et al. 2012; Engeli et al. 2013). We argue that to understand why and how morality issues rise on and drop off political agendas, we need to focus on the conflict definition of morality issues. Based on the policy agenda-setting theory (Baumgartner et al. 2006), the concept of conflict definition is an attempt to offer a more operational understanding of the extent to which morality issues receive attention from political actors. Equally important are the configuration of actors involved in the political conflict concerning morality issues and the distribution of positions across the political spectrum. This research project on morality issues thus also represents an attempt to develop ideas from policy agenda-setting theory into a comparative framework explaining comparative differences in issue conflicts and their effects on public policy.

The two worlds of morality politics

We analyze the politics of morality issues through a typology with “two worlds of morality politics” (Engeli et al. 2012) – what we label the religious and the secular world. The two worlds do not refer to a specific level of secularization in a society or the preeminence of one religious confession over others. In other terms, the distinction between the religious and the secular world is thus not the same as between Roman Catholic and Protestant countries. The notion of the religious vs. the secular world refers to whether or not a conflict between religiously based and secular political parties exists in the party system. The religious world comprises countries where the party system embodies a significant conflict between secular and confessional parties – either Christian Democratic or Conservative parties with a confessional orientation. In the religious world, morality issues often play a significant role in party competition; they become politicized and receive considerable political attention. Examples are euthanasia in the Netherlands and abortion in Spain. In the religious world, politics thus matters for morality issues in the sense that permissive regulation may be passed when confessional parties are not in government, whereas this is unlikely to happen when they are in government. Furthermore, the varying degrees of secularization can explain cross-national differences in permissiveness here, since it provides secular parties with electoral support for increasingly permissive regulation.

In the secular world, there is no important conflict in the party system between religious and secular parties, and the conflict definition concerning morality issues is characterized by the fact that these issues only receive very little political attention. As there is no significant religious conflict in the party system, morality issues cannot be framed in the usual political conflict lines and are thus often seen as being essentially non-political or ethical questions that do not belong in the realm of politics. In turn, the composition of parties in government is not central for understanding policy decisions on morality issues, which depend on issue-specific coalitions with no unifying tendency toward permissive regulation across all issues.

Among our cases, the Netherlands and Spain exemplify the religious world due to the significant conflict between secular and confessional parties in their respective party systems. Switzerland also exemplifies the religious world, but is more complicated due to its political system and is therefore left out of this presentation. Denmark and the UK both exemplify the secular world because there is no religious base underneath party conflicts, and morality issues have never played an important role in party competition.
The religious world: Spain and the Netherlands

The Netherlands and Spain are examples of countries belonging to the religious world where there is a conflict in the party system between religious and secular parties. In the Netherlands, the conflict in the party system between Christian Democratic parties, primarily the CDA, and secular parties (PvdA (Social Democrats), VVD (Liberals), and D66 (Social Liberals)) is well established (Andeweg and Irwin 2009). In Spain, the Conservative Party has a strong historical association with the Catholic Church, and the party competition between the Socialist Party (PSOE) and the Conservative Party (PP) represents the conflict between secular and confessional (Chaques and Roqué 2012). Since both the Dutch and the Spanish party systems harbor a conflict between confessional and secular parties, we expect morality issues to be subject to party competition, which is indeed the case. In the Netherlands, morality issues have attracted substantial party attention in party manifestoes and in parliamentary activities, and both abortion and euthanasia have been central issues in negotiations over Dutch government coalitions (Timmermans and Breeman 2012). In Spain, abortion has been a central political issue since the 1980s, and after 2000 other issues like same-sex marriage, assisted reproductive technology (ART), and, to a lesser extent, euthanasia have attracted attention in party competition (Chaques and Roqué 2012).

In the Netherlands, the women’s movement and secular political parties, especially PvdA, started lobbying for a more permissive regulation of abortion already in the late 1960s (Outshoorn 2001). However, the Christian Democrats participated in all Dutch coalition governments through the 1970s, most often in coalition with VVD, and systematically tried to avoid a government decision, for example by setting up a commission to investigate the issue. In the end, the CDA and VVD compromised on a permissive abortion law in 1981 (Timmermans and Breeman 2012). After the abortion conflict settled, the religious-secular conflict on morality issues did not end – it simply shifted to euthanasia, which had attracted public attention via court cases in the 1970s, and now made its way into party politics. For the CDA and its secular coalition partners, the VVD until 1989 and PvdA until 1994, euthanasia became a precarious issue. The secular parties supported more permissive legislation, as they did on abortion, whereas the CDA was strongly opposed and managed to avoid a decision on the issue until 1994 (Green-Pedersen 2007). Same-sex marriage resembles euthanasia with growing pressure from the secular parties, including PvdA in government after 1989, for permissive legislation. The CDA accepted the introduction of a same-sex union in 1994, but not same-sex marriage, and 1994 saw the first government coalition without the CDA, more or less since 1918, which consisted of PvdA, VVD, and D66. It seized on morality issues and implemented permissive legislation on euthanasia in 2000, same-sex marriage in 1997, and a relatively permissive embryo act in 2002. The regulation of ART was not changed, as the regulation from 1991 was already quite permissive (Timmermans and Breeman 2012).

In Spain, the political debate on morality issues only started in the 1980s due to the late democratization. The Social Democratic government taking office in 1982 only introduced minor permissive changes on abortion due to a skeptical public opinion (Chaques and Roqué 2012). This had all changed radically when the social democrats regained office in 2004 led by Zapatero, who dedicated a great deal of attention to morality issues during the campaign in order to profile the party as the ‘modern’ party in Spanish politics. Once in power, the government first introduced same-sex marriage in 2005 (Platero 2007) and then a per-
missive abortion law in 2010. These laws were met with fierce resistance from the Conservative party and the Roman Catholic Church, but had the support of the majority of the Spanish population (Chaques and Roqué 2012). Policies on ART and stem cells have been subject to much of the same party political battles, although were first seen as strictly medical issues. The first policies introduced in the 1980s and 1990s were thus relatively permissive, but were later restricted by the Conservative government in 2003. The PSOE government from 2004 turned these policies back in a permissive direction. Finally, euthanasia is slowly emerging as a political issue, but remains restrictively regulated.

The secular world: Denmark and the UK

Denmark and the UK have no conflict between confessional parties in their party systems, and politics is strongly dominated by traditional left-right competition. Morality issues are most often seen as non-partisan and outside of normal party competition, and they rarely find their way into party manifestoes or parliamentary activities like interpellations in Denmark or Prime Minister’s Questions in the UK. Instead, decisions on these issues typically depend on the activities of interest groups and individual MPs, and the color of government has little impact on the success of these activities (Albæk et al. 2012; Larsen et al. 2012; Cowley 2001).

In Denmark, abortion reached the political decision-making process in the late 1960s and early 1970s due to pressure from women’s organizations and individual left-wing MPs. The proposal met with some reluctance, but no strong resistance from any political parties. First, a broad majority of the parties agreed on having a commission investigate the issue, which led to a more permissive regulation in 1971 under a right-wing government and then the very permissive law in 1973 under a left-wing government. When this law was passed, the parties allowed their MPs to vote freely on the issue with strong internal divisions within the major right-wing parties and, to some extent, the Social Democrats (Albæk et al. 2012). The early settlement of the abortion issue did not have much impact on other morality issues in Denmark. In fact, they did not receive any political attention until the mid-1980s when a debate about same-sex marriage emerged due to pressure from gay rights interest groups and individual MPs from the Social Liberals who seized on the issue to appear more progressive than the right-wing government (which included the very small Christian Democratic Party). In 1989, Denmark was the first country in the world to introduce same-sex unions with several legal rights for homosexuals (Albæk 2003). ART started to emerge as a political issue from the mid-1980s, mainly pushed by left-wing politicians who called for very restrictive legislation in opposition to medical and economic interests. Parliament passed a very restrictive moratorium on embryo research in 1987 with partial liberalizations in 1992 and 1997 (Albæk et al. 2012). The policy processes were often quite chaotic because parties allowed free votes and thereby cancelled the normal party-based structure of decision-making. Although relatively permissive, the 1997 law excluded lesbians and singles from ART, based on an amendment proposal from three Social Democratic MPs (Albæk 2003). Stem cell research was partially liberalized in 2003 with broad support. The major gay rights organizations pressured for lifting the exclusion of homosexuals from ART and adoption rights, which reached the decision agenda in the late 2000s by way of a new small libertarian party that managed to get MPs from the right-wing government parties to break rank and support the bills. The government tolerated this because of the non-political understanding of the question. Same-sex marriage was finally introduced in 2012 after having been stalled in many years of discussion within the national Church, and a broad majority in Parliament supported it. Finally, there has been no political debate in Denmark about allowing euthanasia, which remains restrictively regulated (Green-Pedersen 2007).

The policy process concerning morality issues in the UK resembles that of Denmark in many respects. The UK was an early mover in terms of abortion when a permissive law was passed in 1967. Like in Denmark, this law was not the re-
result of party politics but of pressure from interest groups that had support from individual MPs like the Liberals’ MP David Steel, who introduced the private member bill that ultimately passed. The Labour government allowed the bill to come to a vote, but the Labour party never moved the issue into party competition (Lovenduski 1986; Larsen et al. 2012). Like in Denmark, the early passing of an abortion law did not lead to pressure for more permissive regulation of morality issues. The next issue to gain political attention was ART in the late 1980s. The Conservative government was reluctant to introduce regulation, partly because of internal conflict, but in the end introduced a quite permissive regulation in 1990. Since then, Labour governments have introduced several further steps in a more permissive direction and the UK is the most permissive of all countries on ART and stem cell regulation due to a lack of party conflict and a focus on the economic growth potential of these new technologies (Larsen et al. 2012). The issue of same-sex marriage and further rights for homosexual couples was not raised until under the Labour government in the 2000s, which introduced same-sex unions, adoption rights, and ART for homosexuals. These questions were more actively promoted as partisan questions by Labour, although no real partisan conflict emerged, as the Conservatives had no clear party position on the question and allowed free votes (Larsen et al. 2012). Like in Denmark, replacing same-sex union with same-sex marriage is currently still on the table. Finally, euthanasia remains firmly outside party competition and there is no sign that the UK is moving away from a restrictive regulation.

**Conclusion**

In this short article, we present the argument that dividing countries into a religious and a secular world depending on whether or not they have a conflict between confessional and secular parties in their party system provides the key to understanding differences in the politics and policy on morality issues. In the religious world, this brings these issues into ‘macro-politics’ in the form of party competition and makes the color of government a key determinant of policy development. In the secular world, these issues are far from macro-politics and are driven by issue-specific dynamics. We do not find that policies in general are more permissive in countries belonging to one of the worlds, but the policy processes are clearly different. The presence of Christian Democratic/confessional parties in government in the religious world clearly matters. In a broader perspective the projects represents an attempt to develop the policy agenda-setting approach into a framework for comparing politics and policy choices on problems that involve more or less controversy between political parties and other actors.

**References**


Comparing Policy Agendas in Europe and North America


In the summer of 2011 a Pre-dissertation Fellowship from the Council for European Studies (CES) allowed me to perform important research in preparation for writing my dissertation, entitled “Inimical Languages: Conflicts of Translation in British Modernist Literature.” As the title suggests, my dissertation explores the use of translated and untranslated foreign languages as a mode of forming and explaining affiliation in the context of the political conflicts that defined the modernist era.

In exploring this dissertation topic through research in Europe, my work focused on several different topics at archives and libraries in Great Britain and Germany. Due to the limitations of space, I will discuss a sampling of these here. My work on the manuscripts of E.M. Forster at Cambridge gave rise to some of the most rewarding findings of my archival endeavors. In preparation for what will now become the introduction of my dissertation, I focused on exploring Forster’s history of learning German and his travels in Germany as these related to his work on the novels A Room with a View (1908) and, particularly, Howards End (1910). The starting point for my research on Forster was a signal passage in Howards End, which to my mind best illustrates the multilingual underpinnings of Forster’s famous epigraph and injunction, ‘Only Connect’, and places these in a specifically political – rather than merely philosophical – context. In this passage, the modern-minded protagonist Margaret Schlegel reflects on the marriage proposal she has just received from the widower of her close friend, the wealthy, conservative businessman Henry Wilcox:

It had been a strange love-scene – the central radiance unacknowledged from first to last. She, in his place, would have said 'Ich liebe dich', but perhaps it was not his habit to open the heart. He might have done it if she had pressed him – as a matter of duty, perhaps; England expects every man to open his heart once; but the effort would
have jarred him, and never, if she could avoid it, should he lose those defences that he had chosen to raise against the world.¹

The imagined – and aborted – multilingualism and gender-crossing of this passage signals a major tension in Forster’s work, as well as in the literature of other pre-war and war-era authors, as it weighs the ability of language and language-exchange to ameliorate economic, ideological, and geopolitical separation. Margaret, whose father emigrated to England from Germany after the Franco-Prussian War, considers the possibility of expressing her and Henry’s ‘strange’, unexpected love in terms of a congress of English and German, languages which, by 1910, had already become representatives of the Anglo-German political enmity that would explode in 1914 with the First World War.

While Forster’s Howards End manuscripts do not show much variation on this particular passage (a notable fact in itself), they do expose the palimpsestic origins of another passage which provides a gloss and parallel to this one, bolstering my understanding of Forster’s use of German-in-English as a central challenge – one ultimately shirked by Henry – to align political with personal connection at the nexus of language. In this second passage, a lower-middle-class character, Leonard Bast, converses for the first time with Margaret, whose ill-advised philanthropy and promotion of his upwardly mobile aspirations will occasion his ultimate downfall. Leonard, in striving to converse on a level with Margaret’s cultural interests and knowledge, takes on the subject of opera. Here is the first version of the passage in which Leonard responds to Margaret’s question as to what he has seen this season:

‘Faust, Aïda, and Tann – ’ He looked at her nervously not sure whether it was ‘Is it ’Tannhouser’ or ’Tannhoyser’?’

‘Tannhoyser.’

‘Thank you.’

‘Did you enjoy it?’

‘Oh, I know the music very well. I have the Piano-forte score. One can get a very good play out of Tannhoyser.’ [...]²

As this passage illustrates, Leonard’s open, if nervous, equivocation as to the pronunciation of the Wagner opera Tannhäuser succeeds in opening up the conversation, eliciting Margaret’s further inquiry and Leonard’s demonstration of his investment in musical knowledge. Although Leonard lacks Margaret’s upper-class, cosmopolitan comfort with German pronunciation, the tricky pronunciation itself eases the path toward their conversation on more even and less formal grounds.

Yet this amiable tone changes drastically in the following version of the passage, which is notably shorter:

‘This year I have been three times – to Faust and to Tosca and – ’ Was it ’Tannhouser’ or ’Tannhoyser’? Better not risk the word it. How difficult life was! How full of traps!’³

And it is shortened even further in the published version:

‘This year I have been three times – to “Faust,” “Tosca,” and – ’ Was it ’Tannhouser’ or ’Tannhoyser’? Better not risk the word.’⁴

Both of these versions of the passage are truncated by their lack of Margaret’s polite response to Leonard’s German equivocation, a response that fails to materialize for the simple reason that Leonard never explicitly asks for aid. In the earlier version of the passage, Leonard provides two possible pronunciations of the opera’s title in a show of humility that elicits Margaret’s easy sympathy. Their conversation continues because she has offered him linguistic charity and congress, much as she imagines Henry offering her linguistic and personal communion by pledging, “Ich liebe dich” (“I love you”). In the later versions, though,}

---

¹ Howards End (1910; New York: Knopf, 1921), 190.
² Howards End MS Drafts, Volume 1, EMF FF/6 vol. 8/2 (Kings College Archives, University of Cambridge), 48v.
³ Ibid., 42.
⁴ Howards End, 45.
Leonard only considers the pronunciations of Wagner’s title in his own mind – he is too embarrassed by his ignorance to ask for help – and as the published text explains, this reticence results in the almost immediate failure of his and Margaret’s conversation and potential communion: they walk on ‘in silence’.

The published version of this passage is the most damning of the three. In the second manuscript version, Leonard’s cancelled reflection on his linguistic ignorance, “How difficult life was! How full of traps!” affirms his (and the reader’s) awareness that such linguistic, cultural, and social disparities and the resulting ‘traps’ are lamentable, yet not inevitable. As with Margaret’s imagination of Henry’s profession of Germanic love, Forster incites us to consider how these characters might ‘Only Connect’ if only they would attempt such verbal communion, even in the recognition that a perfect translation between “Ich liebe dich” and English love or between a poor-man’s ‘Tannhoyser’ and a wealthy woman’s casual interest may remain eternally separate. At the very least, Forster suggests, such an effort toward communion might allow these disparate figures to move closer to each other and attempt mutual comprehension with greater charity, forestalling the sort of tragic misunderstanding that results in war. As Forster would reflect later on the relation of literature to geopolitics and international enmity:

Literature knows nothing of a Chosen Race – that disastrous fallacy which has produced so much self-righteousness & crueltymisery. The individual writer may believe that his Race is the chosen but Literature – the voice into which the thousand voices bleed – this voice I am asking you to listen for now – declares that beauty and truth and goodness exist apart from the Tribe, and this only Earthly dwelling is the Soul of Man.

Such seem her functions in War time. She helps us to abstain from fear and hatred. As far as our small minds will persist, let us do this.5

The elimination of Leonard’s lament on ‘difficulties’ and ‘traps’ in the final version of Forster’s passage cuts out the suggestion that even if Leonard shies away from linguistic congress in this instance, he is aware that the impulsion and challenge toward it persists. In the published version of the novel, no such fight exists – Leonard’s unvoiced ignorance of German results in a communicational aporia, and Margaret and he ultimately fail to ‘connect’. Read against the earlier versions of the novel, this published emendation appears to stand as Forster’s implicit lamentation of the sort of willful misunderstanding and refusal of tentative translation and connection which were already brewing in Europe in 1910, and would come to a head in 1914.

My research also led me to the British National Archives (at Kew) and the Imperial War Museum Archives in London. I don’t have room here to describe these in detail, yet a representative and interesting report is one from 1 April 1915, held in the National Archives, which describes the British subject Henry Hadley. Hadley, a teacher of languages, aroused suspicion on a civilian train by claiming not to speak German yet having been witnessed to speak it (the report does not explain by whom). Upon becoming belligerent – in both English and German – he was shot, presumably by some form of authority.6 As this short report demonstrates, language-knowledge – and particularly knowledge of the German language – was understood as a distinct threat and evidence of espionage activity/potential in wartime Britain. The fact that Hadley might meet such an end merely for telling a (patently unconvincing) white lie regarding his linguistic knowledge is potent evidence of the reign of language-based hysteria in England – precisely the sort of linguistic xenophobia which Forster himself had wished to allay and prevent.

Further findings in the National Archives demonstrate the particularly gendered nature of such connections between language and allegations of espionage, as in the case of the convicted spies Leopold Vieyra and Franz Theodore Greite, who were supposed to have used female friends

---

5 "Literature and the War,” EMF FF/21 vol. 8/21.

6 “Nationality of Children of Mr. V.E. Saville,” FO/383/48 (National Archives, Kew).
or mistresses as points of connection in their locations of espionage. As the Ministry of Information report elaborates, their fellow spy Adolpho Guerrero made such “barely credible” claims that he had fooled the Germans “by pretending he knew English” that he himself was discounted as a real spy. Instead, his companion, an (unnamed) female dancer, was thought to have served as the actual spy, maintaining connections with “educated persons who knew foreign languages.” Such tales (or rather, inferences) of women acting as linguistic and sexual conduits for male-controlled intelligence networks demonstrate the undercurrent of misogyny inherent in much early British investigation of espionage, as well as the importance of women in facilitating linguistic exchange. Such implications are evident in the Ministry’s files on the Dutch-born spy ‘Mataharí’ (Margaretha Geertruida Zelle), which alternate between comments on her supposed sexual allure and exploits, and allegations of her facility as a multilingual spy. The description of her in an internal 1915 brief is representative, portraying Zelle as fluent in “French English Italian Dutch; & probably German. Handsome. Bold type of woman.”

This report succinctly echoes the more explicit judgment by the New Scotland Yard head Basil Thomson, who, in recounting his meeting with Zelle in his memoir, intertwines linguistic proficiency with libidinal description: “tall and sinuous, with glowing black eyes and a dusky complexion, vivacious in manner, intelligent and quick in repartee. She was, besides, a linguist.” Archival findings such as these substantiate my dissertation’s claims that language-knowledge and (as I discuss in my second chapter) allegations of espionage are strongly linked with descriptions of women or homosexual men as sexual transgressors and loci of interlinguistic cross-over or leakage. Although I do not have space to detail more of my findings here, the notes on Zelle may be taken to represent only the most famous case of such misogynistic undercurrents within this large body of archival material.

---

7 “Investigation of Espionage (G-Branch Report), 1916,” KV 1/43 (National Archives), 184–5.
8 “Mata Hari,” KV2/1 (National Archives).
9 Thomson, Queer People (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1922), 181.
Taking a Closer Look at Organized Interests in the European Union

Alexandra Cirone, Columbia University

The European Union (EU) is an especially fruitful, albeit complex, context in which to study interest groups. Throughout the past 50 years, European integration and the strengthening of EU institutions have led to a large expansion in both the number and types of interest organizations. Thousands of groups attempt to influence the EU in every single of its policy areas, ranging from fisheries to broadband, from education to pharmaceuticals, and from human rights to trade.

Furthermore, the hybrid political system of the EU has created a unique system of lobbying at the supranational level. The European Commission is the legislative arena, but is comparatively a small bureaucracy — as a result, policymakers both rely very heavily on and actually fund interest groups to provide policy-specific information.¹ There is no campaign finance (as in the case of the United

States), so information is currency, and overall lobbying success is dependent upon the types of policy relevant information that groups can provide. Groups can target multiple institutional access points, both nationally and supranationally, and the EU is also constantly creating new institutional channels of participation to gather the necessary policy information from organized interests.

How do the unique institutions of the EU change what political science understands about lobbying? In such a complex environment, how do interest groups determine their lobbying strategies? The study and regulation of lobby groups is a salient issue for the EU. While efforts have been made to make the lobbying system more transparent by creating a publicly accessible online registry, lobbying activities aren’t tracked or recorded in any meaningful way. The only way to truly understand the strategies and choices faced by lobby groups in their attempts to shift policy is to ask them.

As part of a Council for European Studies fellowship, I traveled to Brussels during the summer of 2011 to conduct a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a sample of interest groups who had recently participated in a series of public consultations run by the European Commission. The purpose of these interviews was depth, not breadth – the sample size was small, only 25 groups, and the interviews were quite long. In the majority of cases, I spoke with either the leader of the group or a high-level staff member responsible for strategic planning. There was variation in the types and organization of groups – 7 were non-governmental organizations or think tanks; 10 were industry, trade or business groups; and 8 were citizen groups. The purpose of the research was to gain a firsthand perspective on how interest groups strategize and conduct their day-to-day lobbying activities, and also to focus on the key issues facing lobby groups. Here I will discuss two of those issues: the funding of groups by the European Commission, and the efficacy of participation in public consultations.

The role of Commission funding

A key novelty of the European case lies in its practice of actively pursuing and funding interest groups. Non-profit and civil society organizations can receive financial support, either administrative or project-based funding, from the European Commission. The motivations for such funding are that it enables a wider range of organizations to have their voice heard in the policy process, and gives an understaffed Commission access to important information necessary for policy. Unlike the tension surrounding the direct funding of civil society groups in the United States, the EU has made this an integral part of its policymaking process.

Yet a study by Beckstrand and Mahoney (2011) showed that funding is narrowly targeted – interest groups that promote a European identity, democracy and civic engagement receive more funding from the Commission, along with groups that are organized at the EU level or originate from Western European states. Also, it is unclear how this funding might change the motivations and strategies of interest groups. Could it incentivize interest-group behavior in different ways than anticipated – by creating a new insider/outsider division, affecting a group’s legitimacy or advocacy position, or encouraging groups to pander?

Of the groups I interviewed, 8 received funding to supplement the operation of their organization, another 4 received project-based funds, and the remaining 13 were unfunded (and maintained their organization via donors or membership dues). In general, the interviewees were divided over whether Commission funding was a positive or negative experience. Of the respondents who were funded, most welcomed the additional income and said it didn’t affect their lobbying activities. One environmental group said it was almost impossible to determine who had funding or not, and therefore it mattered very little.

In terms of access, responses were mixed. A variety of groups who were funded claim that access doesn’t increase as a result of funding, mainly

---

2 I would like to thank all participants of the study for their time and thoughtful participation.

because often the funding originates from a different source than the specific policymakers in the Commission that they lobby. A large humanitarian aid association argued that once a group receives financial support, the Commission then relies on reports from the grant instead of consistently consulting the group for its position. But on the other hand, an industry association disagreed and stated that the funding meant the European Commission had to both acknowledge and consult the organization. This is an important channel of future inquiry, as experiences seemed to vary widely.

Bias is one issue surrounding Commission funding. The unfunded interest groups I interviewed stated that they didn’t want to be funded because it would restrict their activities and potentially skew their legitimacy. As funding is determined via the EU’s agenda setting, by not ‘following the funding’, groups could more freely work on issues of importance to their organization instead of modifying their platform or information in order to successfully receive support. Other groups are wary of the practice, and don’t want to take any chances – one think tank asserted that it didn’t want Commission funding because “it potentially compromises you ... or maybe not, but we don’t want to go there.”

In fact, the biggest downside to EU funding reported during interviews is the bureaucracy. Nearly every group interviewed, whether they were funded or not, cited the difficulties of applying for (and reporting for) the various grants and projects. Especially for smaller groups, the resources (mainly manpower) and time required is very significant. Interviewees also complained that funding was geared toward representative projects at the expense of well-designed projects.

Then what should we conclude regarding the effects of Commission funding for interest groups? The picture painted, while unclear, shows that there is variation in both how the funding is viewed and utilized. This policy needs to be explored further, ideally in the context of a large-N study. While the commitment of the EU to fund interest groups may dissipate with austerity measures from the economic crisis, the use of supranational funds to support organized interests is an important avenue for future research.

**Public consultations**

Another topic I explored in my interviews was the role of interest-group participation in public consultations. Public consultations are an institutional innovation used by the EU to collect issue positions from business or industry groups, civil society, NGOs, think tanks, and individuals. After posting a briefing paper on an issue, the Commission will accept policy position submissions for a fixed time period using its online system. The format of the consultation varies, sometimes the Commission will present a detailed questionnaire for groups to answer, and other times the questions are far more open-ended. Groups can choose to follow the online format, or just submit a formal position paper of their own.⁴

More importantly, the purpose of the online consultations is to better involve stakeholders into the policymaking process. The EU is often criticized for its ‘democratic deficit’, so the public consultation is supposed to be an instrument to improve governance and the quality of EU policy.⁵ The majority of consultation documents are made public, which also provides a rich resource for researchers (and potentially groups themselves).⁶ It is also been praised for being low-cost and accessible to groups, regardless of resources or connections. However, the consultation regime is viewed with mixed feelings – critics view it either as another outlet for business or well-resourced groups, or a symbolic activity that has no influence on the policy process.⁷

---

⁴ To browse current and past consultations, see http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/consultations/index_en.htm.
But what do groups who utilize this venue actually think? Surprisingly, I found the driving rationale for participation in consultations was not policy influence – instead, an overwhelming majority of the groups interviewed noted the benefits of the public consultation to spur work internally on a topic or an issue. An environmental group said: “We are a young organization, it gives us a chance to develop a position paper and work out/develop the group’s viewpoint on a topic.” Furthermore, many groups use the consultations as a way to show their members that they are being active on their behalf, or even avoid potential negative publicity associated with not participating. In this, the public consultation is a useful internal tool for the group to maintain its membership and spur activity – two outcomes not often considered.

In terms of influence, though, the majority of interest groups I spoke with had pessimistic or apathetic views (NGOs and business groups alike). Many organizations echoed the sentiment of one business group: “It’s not directly influential. It’s also not particularly useful.” One humanitarian organization explained: “We believe that it is a way for the EC to prove that it consults civil society, but that the contributions are not really taken into account when drafting communications or directives.” Few groups that I interviewed actually read other consultations submitted, and only two groups thought that the Commission gained new insight or information as a result of the process (instead, the consultation just reinforces the view the Commission had to start with). The overall impression is that while public consultations serve some purpose, groups don’t view consultations as a new and improved venue in which to access policymakers.

Yet groups I interviewed had concrete opinions regarding the format of the consultation and how to improve the process. Often consultations are very broad in scope, and a number of groups mentioned that the more focused the questions, the better information elicited. Many groups said it was difficult to keep track of the many consultations – though it was possible to sign up for email updates, an environmental group explained that “another issue is that organizations aren’t always aware about when a consultation will be.” Finally, about half of the groups mentioned they wished that the EU would move to more working groups with regular meetings to develop policy proposals, for this was a more productive use of time and resources.

Interestingly enough, the evidence I collected in my interviews demonstrates that groups are pessimistic about the actual influence they can achieve using the public consultation process, but have enough of a normative sense of duty to the democratic ideal or gain enough utility from the process to participate. In the meantime, groups are instead using this external channel of participation to help motivate internal organization and policy development. Overall, there is room for improvement in the process itself. Given the time and resources spent by the EU in this specific mode of engagement, future research should explore ways to improve information transmission.
The Cost of Conflict: Children's Reasoning about Ethno-religious Identity in Northern Ireland

Jocelyn B. Dautel, University of Chicago

With the help of the Andrew W. Mellon Pre-dissertation Research Fellowship provided by the Council for European Studies, I was able to conduct an exploratory study investigating children’s early reasoning about ethno-religious identity in Northern Ireland during the spring of 2010. In Northern Ireland, there are two ethno-religious groups, Catholics and Protestants. To an outsider, these groups may seem very similar – Catholics and Protestants have few perceptual differences between them, while having in common European descent and a Christian background. Yet, in Northern Ireland, Catholics and Protestants make up two distinct national, ethnic, religious, and cultural groups with a long history of Sectarian conflict. My research explored the development of young children’s social reasoning about these two ostensibly similar, yet culturally distinct, ethno-religious groups in Northern Ireland. During a three-month trip to Northern Ireland, I was able to administer an exploratory survey to children attending Catholic, Protestant, and Integrated schools, questioning identity, national-
ity, beliefs about conflict, and reasoning about the stability of group membership. The goals of this research were twofold. First, research on the developmental origins of social categorization can inform our understanding of the nature of social bias and violence in a society with a long history of conflict. Second, this research offers theoretical insight into the nature of children’s social group formation and early in-group preferences more generally.

Since the late 1990s, Sectarian violence in Northern Ireland has largely subsided. The diminished levels of violence result in most children having little to no direct experience with conflict. However, 20 years after the beginning of the peace process, the majority of Northern Irish children still attend segregated schools, live in segregated neighborhoods, and observe evidence of Sectarianism at the borders of their respective communities. According to the 2001 UK Census, 83 percent of all wards in Northern Ireland have a population that is at least three quarters Catholic or Protestant. In their respective communities, children are regularly confronted with symbols representing Catholic or Protestant identity, such as political murals on the sides of housing estates, national flags, and painted sidewalks denoting community boundaries. In addition to housing segregation, Catholic and Protestant children have different hobbies, access different media, and are likely to visit different places on vacations.

Northern Ireland also maintains a vastly segregated educational system in which about 95 percent of pupils attend either Catholic schools or Protestant schools. In fact, many adults on both sides of the divide blame the segregated school system as being “one of the many causes of division in the community” (McEwan and Salters 1993, 164). Stemming from this line of thinking, there has been an emergent interest in integrated education, for which schools must keep an enrollment of at least 40 percent of children from the Catholic tradition and 40 percent of children from the Protestant tradition. The introduction of integrated schools offers an interesting case study of the impact of increased contact between Catholic and Protestant children on social reasoning about ethno-religious identity in contrast to children attending segregated schools. Thus, the current context in Northern Ireland presents a unique opportunity to study children’s developing ethno-religious awareness and its effects on reasoning about group membership as the society is transitioning toward more peaceful times, but the possibility for the transmission of social bias still persists.

From a theoretical perspective in psychology, researchers in the United States studying race, gender, and age have historically argued that children’s differentiation of in-group and out-group members is based on basic visual perception of surface features, such as skin color or gender cues (e.g., Aboud 1988). Yet, in Northern Ireland, Catholic and Protestant group members generally look very similar as they descend from a common ancestry on the British Isles. In fact, an empirical study testing Northern Irish adults’ ability to categorize faces found that they were unable to reliably label ethno-religious group membership based on the visual face stimuli alone (Stringer and Cairns 1983). However, this visual similarity across groups does not prevent the deep societal divide that has persisted for hundreds of years. Recent psychological findings indicate that children in fact hold deeper beliefs about social categories, beyond what is provided by visual cues alone. For instance, children reason about national and linguistic group membership as particularly important social markers, even when not visually available (Carrington and Short 1995; Kinzler and Dautel 2012). Children also rely more on conceptual information (i.e., being labeled as a boy or a girl) than perceptual information (i.e., looking like a boy or a girl) when making gender-based inferences about properties that an individual might have (Gelman, Collman, and MacCoby 1986). Thus, this exploratory study sought to investigate whether children make deeper inferences about ethno-religious identity, beyond what is perceived.

I chose to conduct this study with children from the city of Belfast, in Northern Ireland, for two reasons. First, the population of Belfast is made up of roughly equal numbers of people from Catholic and Protestant backgrounds. Second, Bel-
fast offers three types of primary schools in which children’s exposure to diversity differs dramatically: State Controlled schools (majority Protestant background), Maintained schools (majority Catholic background), and Integrated schools (both Catholic and Protestant backgrounds, as well as other ethnicities). Five schools participated in this study: two Protestant schools, two Catholic schools, and one integrated school. Sampling children in Catholic, Protestant, and Integrated schools provided an opportunity to study the effect of exposure to diversity through early school environment on children’s reasoning about ethno-religious identity.

Across the five schools, 150 children – ranging in age from 5 to 11 years – who returned parental permission forms were asked to respond to a series of eight questions in a structured interview. I surveyed each child individually in a quiet classroom. The questions were asked as follows (with the labels ‘Catholic’ and ‘Protestant’ presented in counter-balanced order between children): 1) Are you Catholic, Protestant, or something else? 2) What does it mean to be Catholic? 3) What does it mean to be Protestant? 4) What country do you live in? 5) What is the capital city of your country? 6) Do Catholics and Protestants generally get along, or not so much? 7) Are you born to be a Catholic or Protestant, or do you become Catholic or Protestant as you grow up? 8) If you are a Catholic or a Protestant as a child, can you change to be a Protestant or a Catholic as a grown up? Children’s answers were recorded, and then children were thanked and sent back to class with a small prize.

Initial evidence from children’s responses suggests two interesting patterns of results. First, children’s knowledge and the complexity of their responses increased with age. Second, children in different school environments had vastly different beliefs about identity, nationality, conflict, and the heritability and stability of ethno-religious group membership.

First, children’s identification of their own ethno-religious identity was compared with parents’ reports of their children’s ethno-religious identity. Only about one fifth of children 5 to 7 years old attending segregated schools were able to accurately report their ethno-religious background. This contrasted significantly to children 8 to 11 years old attending segregated schools, of which almost every child was able to accurately report being of a Catholic, Protestant, or other ethno-religious background. Interestingly, there was also a difference by school type, such that across both age groups, segregated school children were more accurate in their ethno-religious self-identification than integrated school children. While with age, children begin to have increased awareness of their own ethno-religious background, most children, irrespective of age and school type, struggled to verbally define what it means to be Catholic or Protestant. Of those children who attempted a definition, the majority of definitions were about differing beliefs. The most common responses from both Catholic and Protestant children involved the presence or absence of a belief in God, Jesus, or the Virgin Mary. For instance, one child said, “We believe in God, and they don’t,” while another responded, “Protestants believe in God, but not as well as the Catholics do.” While it seems that children gain awareness of their own ethno-religious identity with age, explicitly defining what this means remains difficult.

In terms of nationality, children were asked what country they lived in, and what the capital of their country was. Children attending Catholic schools were most likely to report that the name of their country was Ireland and the capital of their country was Dublin. On the other hand, Protestant and Integrated school children were more likely to report their country to be Northern Ireland, and the capital of their country to be Belfast. Again, there was an increased tendency to give a response with age. Here, we see that beliefs about nationality pattern quite closely with ethno-religious background.

Also, integrated school children’s beliefs seem to differ from segregated school children’s beliefs about the severity of conflict and the origins of ethno-religious identity. Overall, about 50 percent of children reported that Catholics and Protestants get along, while the other 50 percent reported that they do not generally get along. Children attending integrated schools were significantly more likely to
report that Catholics and Protestants generally get along, compared with children attending Catholic schools or Protestant schools. Children’s beliefs about whether Catholics and Protestants generally get along were generally tied to a specific event. For instance, one 10-year-old Catholic child responded, “No, [they don’t get along], because when Rangers play a match, there is always murder.” Alternatively, another 10-year-old Catholic child responded, “Some do and some don’t [get along]. I know someone who lives near Protestants, and they get along.”

Lastly, children attending segregated schools were more likely to report that an individual is born with a religious identity rather than acquiring a religious identity as he or she grows up. For example, one 10-year-old Protestant child said, “If you are born a Protestant, you stay a Protestant, unless you get sent to the Catholics,” while an 11-year-old integrated school child responded, “You are born that way, but if you were born without a religion, you could grow up to be either.” Both children state that there is a likelihood one will be born with a religion, but the nuanced responses hint at the possibility for environmental influences in certain cases. Overall, the majority of integrated school children stated that religion is acquired, rather than inherited. Interestingly, across all ages and school types, children who reported that Catholics and Protestants were more likely to get along were also more likely to report that you could change from one group to another. This provides early evidence that perhaps perceptions of group conflict are related to children’s reasoning about the rigidity of group boundaries. These divergent beliefs across children in different schooling environments may have important consequences for cross-community friendships and intergroup interactions, and thus, deserve further exploration.

These exploratory data I collected during my time in Northern Ireland laid the groundwork for future research using experimental methods in developmental psychology. These findings show that children do, in fact, make deep inferences about identity, nationality, intergroup relations, and the stability of group boundaries. Research in psychology and philosophy proposes a mechanism by which children may reason beyond visual cues to make deeper inferences about category members: psychological essentialism. Essentialist reasoning is defined as reasoning that construes some categories as ‘real’ or ‘natural,’ and a basis for rich inferences about non-obvious properties (Gelman 2004). Often, essentialist reasoning is observed in human’s reasoning about natural kinds, such as ‘tigers’ or ‘diamonds’. For example, adults state that these are ‘natural’ categories that will maintain a constant identity over time. Knowing something’s category identity (e.g., being a tiger or being a diamond) will identify it as having tiger or diamond properties or features (e.g., ferocious or hard). In some cases, research suggests that children extend essentialist reasoning to social categories, such as gender, race, ethnicity, and language (Diesendruck and Ha-Levi 2006; Hirschfeld 1996; Hirschfeld and Gelman 1997; Kinzler and Dautel, 2012; Taylor 1996). Might children’s reasoning about ethno-religious identity also fall prey to an essentialist mode of construal? Preliminary data collected during my CES fellowship provide initial evidence that children may reason about religion as an inherited, stable, and immutable category. Future research will seek to investigate to what degree children growing up in a context of conflict believe that one’s ethno-religious identity is an essential and representative part of a person, and how resistant these views are to change based on one’s exposure to diversity through the school environment.
References


The Empire on Display: Exhibitions of Germanic Art and Design in America, 1890–1914

Megan McCarthy, Columbia University

Thanks to the generosity of the Council for European Studies (CES) and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, I spent two months in Germany in the fall of 2011 performing preliminary dissertation research. My project, entitled ‘The Empire on Display: Exhibitions of Germanic Art and Design in America, 1890–1914’, offers the first comprehensive and critical analysis of the American reception of artistic production from artists and designers working in Germany during the late Wilhelmine period. More specifically, it investigates how four arts institutions in the US practiced novel methods of cultural diplomacy at a time when the Kaiserreich came under increasing criticism by the American press. Centering on large-scale exhibitions at the Harvard Germanic Museum (1903), Metropolitan Museum of Art (1909), Newark Museum (1912–1913), and Berlin Photographic Company (1912–1913), I explore how audiences encountered and responded to diverse selections of objects that surpassed mere propagandistic and commercial aims. Focusing on German-American artistic exchange at the heart of fin-de-siècle transatlantic crosscurrents, my dissertation argues that Germanic art
objects played a formative role in the production of modern museum practice in the US, as well as German-American relations more broadly, upon the outbreak of World War I.

My first stop in Germany was Hagen, located in North Rhine-Westphalia, where I spent several weeks investigating important holdings that pertain to the Newark Museum’s exhibition, ‘German Applied Arts’ of 1912–1913. Newark Librarian John Cotton Dana, founder of the Newark Museum Association in 1909, conceived of his institution first and foremost as a didactic tool for the New Jersey city’s working population. He tailored the exhibition calendar to reflect this progressive agenda, and radically redefined the scope of museum practice in early twentieth-century America. An avid supporter of the Deutsche Werkbund – whose designs he admired from the pages of Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration – Dana invited Karl Ernst Osthaus, a Werkbund member and fellow museum founder, to curate the show. Osthaus culled more than 1,000 examples of graphic design, textiles, glassware, ceramics, metalwork, and other assorted applied arts and handicrafts from his museum in Hagen, most of which were available for purchase by the American public. In March 1912, ‘German Applied Arts’ opened in Newark and traveled to six other American cities. As the first exhibition of Deutsche Werkbund designs as well as German Expressionist prints on US soil, the show served as America’s first encounter with ‘modern’ German art.

Hagen’s Karl Ernst Osthaus-Museum holds its namesake’s papers, and from the records available I was able to expand upon my knowledge gleaned from original sources in Newark. Letters between Osthaus and the German cultural ministry offer unparalleled insight to the German organizer’s aims and intentions for the American exhibition. What is more, they reveal a more complex agenda for the display. Osthaus and state officials did not, in fact, expect any major sales to extend from the exhibition directly; they articulate their goal as distinctly pedagogical (pädagogisch). Thus, counter to the show’s reception among members American press, the German intentions ran in tandem with John Cotton Dana’s educational and instructive aim. The intended outcome of this method, however, did diverge. While Osthaus and his compatriots hoped the show would increase the demand for German exports more broadly—they even corresponded about a follow-up display for sales purposes—Dana hoped the show would put a productive pressure on American designers to improve their work in accordance with the advancements made in Germany. The fact that Osthaus too believed the show would achieve more of a cultural rather than commercial shift may explain why the purchase requests that did arise were handled so poorly. Indeed, orders came from every city on the itinerary; however, shipments from Germany were consistently delayed and disorganized.

I also uncovered requests for purchases that did not leave a paper trail in the States. Since my project also traces German art’s impact on American collecting practices, what the public wished to acquire, even unsuccessfully, is important
to consider. Documents in Hagen reveal that an overwhelming number of requests came for the advertising posters on view, which were not, in fact, for sale. This is interesting to note since most of the objects that were actually purchased were examples of ceramics and pottery, causing current scholars to conclude that American tastes for things German tended toward the traditionally völkisch. Since there was as much interest in the radically modern poster designs, despite the fact that these requests could not be met, my project will amend our current understanding of what German items were most attractive to US audiences in the early twentieth century.

Finally, I learned that Osthaus engaged in an extensive marketing campaign to promote his exhibition to various local newspapers in Germany. Letters were mailed to editors across the Kaiserreich, garnering dozens of press releases about the exhibition despite the fact that the show was held across the Atlantic. I was able to collect many of these clippings – not digitized or available in the US – while based at the Karl Ernst Osthaus-Museum. Thanks to this sustained period in Hagen, I have completed a draft of the Newark museum section of my dissertation much earlier than anticipated.

The second month of my fellowship was spent in Berlin, where I performed provisional explorations of various collections related to my three other case studies. One of the greatest challenges of these exhibitions has been locating the relevant records – the majority of which, I’ve discovered, are scattered across various archival and special collections. Spending a month in Berlin tracking down the leads I uncovered during my US-based research has been central to the progress of my project.

I conducted important conversations with archivists at the Museum der Dinge and Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin; they pointed me in new directions that reoriented my research strategy. For example, although the Deutsches Historisches Museum’s imperial collections were not as promising as expected, the archivist helped me to identify other collections that hold relevant materials – and these I may not have uncovered on my own. I have since learned that the Gipsformerei in Berlin produced the casts that Wilhelm II bestowed upon Harvard’s newly established Germanic Museum (now the Busch-Reisinger) in 1903. The display of these objects – full-scale replicas of German Renaissance statues, medieval cathedral portals, and choir screens – serves as my first case study. I have also met with scholars who specialize in German cast collections and pursued additional research that has shed new light on the Germanic Museum’s founding display.

Papers held in the Zentralarchiv der Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and the Berlin Bundesarchiv have become crucial resources for my second case study, the Metropolitan Museum’s ‘Contemporary German Art’, which was mounted with great fanfare in 1909. The show consisted of more than 200 paintings by approximately 80 of the most prominent German Realists, Impressionists, Secessionists, and Symbolists, including Adolf von Menzel, Wilhelm Leibl, Franz von Lenbach, Max Liebermann, and Arnold Böcklin. Edward Robinson, then Assistant Director and later Director of the Museum, worked with a curatorial committee of high-profile German specialists in the art world – the most significant of who were Dr. Wilhelm von Bode, Dr. Theodor Lewald, Dr. Friedrich Schmidt-Ott, and Professors Arthur Kampf and Carl von Marr. The exhibition was heralded as “the first truly representative exhibit of modern German art that America has seen” – surpassing the fine arts displays at the 1893 and 1904 World’s Fairs – to become “nothing less than a revelation.”

Collections at the Zentralarchiv hold correspondence and clippings related to Bode’s contact with various Metropolitan Museum staff members before, during, and after the exhibition. Moreover, I learned that he was involved in the extensive debates surrounding American collectors of European Art in the interwar period. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Bode defended the purchase of European treasures by Americans – despite the fact that the objects would leave their...
homeland and thus become less available to European audiences.

The materials I uncovered at the Bundesarchiv allow me place each of my exhibitions in dialogue with contemporaneous international German art exhibitions produced under the auspices of the German state. The copious reports held in the files of the Auswartiges Amt shed light on the exceptional breadth and variety of exhibitions Germany exported beyond its boarders, which is crucial in order for me to situate my four case studies. One of the most interesting exhibition reports I uncovered, in fact, was a small show at Columbia University on Frederick the Great. This is interesting to note in comparison with the Harvard Germanic Museum, as an alternative method of presenting ‘German-ness’ within an American university community.

Dozens of works from the Metropolitan show – including the pictures that Americans responded to most fervently – are now held in Berlin’s Alte Nationalgalerie. Treating the artworks themselves as primary sources, my sustained study of the pictures’ formal and material properties enabled a greater understanding of, for example, Menzel’s “exquisite passages of color” and Böcklin’s “moving conception of joyous health contrasted with grim charnel mysteries.” This kind of access was central to my understanding of why they were chosen for exhibition and how they came to be received.

The CES Pre-dissertation Research Fellowship enabled me to make substantial headway into the research and overall design of my doctoral thesis. Not only did my experience shed light on the exhibitions themselves, but the materials I uncovered offer further insight into the political, cultural, and financial motivations that were at play in late Wilhelmine Germany. These primary materials are central resources for the success of my project, and I am truly grateful for the opportunity to explore them at such an early stage.

---

2 Regarding Menzel’s “Dinner at the Ball” as stated in “German Art Shown at the Metropolitan,” New York Times (4 January 1909): 8.
How can we explain the emergence of cooperation, both at the micro-individual and the macro-institutional level? And how can we conceptualize the interaction between the two? More importantly, through which mechanisms does institutional change affect cooperation at both levels? For European Coordinated Market Economies (CME), these questions are relevant indeed. The end of the ‘Golden Era’ of post-World War II growth has created considerable pressure for institutional adjustments, while globalization and Europeanization processes have created additional tensions. And while these pressures have not led to a wholesale convergence toward a liberal, Anglo-Saxon model of capitalism, national economic structures have nevertheless changed in fundamental ways. In particular, many CMEs now display a growing dualism and segmentation in production systems and associational membership. Dualism in turn has ruptured traditional coalitions, providing new avenues for both conflict and cooperation (Hall and Thelen 2009; Streeck 2009; Thelen 2012). The long-term effects of segmentation, however, have remained under-explored and it is particularly uncertain how segmentation affects the capacity for the kind of non-market coordination that is foundational for many European economies. Exploring segmentation thus combines two seemingly
unrelated puzzles: First, how can we explain the emergence of coordination? Second, how and why do institutions, especially different forms of ‘capitalism’, change in response to liberalization pressures?

With the support of the Council of European Studies Pre-dissertation Fellowship, I spent four months in Germany exploring one aspect of segmentation that has been frequently highlighted in CME literature; namely, the increasing use of Leiharbeit (temporary work). During my fieldwork, I tried to answer the question: How has the increasing use of Leiharbeit changed the relationship between workers and employers, as well as between unions and employer associations? More specifically, I explored how the spread of Leiharbeit has affected group identities and thus altered trust and cooperation between labor and management.

Leiharbeit is interesting both empirically and theoretically. Apart from it being a prime example of segmentation, there are several other theoretical aspects that link it to my larger project, which deals with the importance of trust for coordination, the role that shared group identity plays in creating and maintaining trust, and the often hidden and gradual nature of institutional change in European economies.

In my dissertation, I argue that cooperation and coordination frequently require trust, which, in turn, is contingent on shared group identity. The question, however, is why trust would be required to cooperate on coordination? After all, if coordination serves a functional benefit for all actors involved, everyone should ‘automatically’ choose the coordinated outcome. However, even if we maintain material (self-)interest as the primary motivation, trust still plays a crucial role in securing coordinated outcomes, especially in situations of uncertainty and non-trivial transaction costs (Farrell 2009; Ostrom 2003). Assuming a standard prisoner’s dilemma situation, mutual cooperation is clearly the most materially beneficial strategy. The extent to which cooperation is the dominant strategy, however, depends also on the extent to which actors trust one another sufficiently to choose cooperation when defection and redistribution are possible. This question is particularly pertinent in times of transition, which create even greater strategic uncertainty about how to best achieve one’s material interest. Trust is therefore vital for coordination and cooperation, especially when formal institutional rules are changing.

The question thus becomes: Under which conditions is trust more likely to emerge? It is a robust finding in social psychology that shared group identity facilitates cooperation and strengthens trust between individuals (Tajfel 1982). Similarly, competition is both fiercer and more likely between in-group and out-group members. Group membership thus has a direct effect on the likelihood that either cooperative or competitive strategies are chosen. Within-group bargaining thus directly affects cooperation and trust. More importantly, expanding on Tajfel’s social identity theory, Turner (1987) argues that group identity, much like trust more generally, is primarily a tool for uncertainty reduction. In other words, self-categorization theory suggests that shared group identity is used to reduce uncertainty, which in turn improves the likelihood of cooperative outcomes. However, while the link between group identity and uncertainty is relatively straightforward, self-categorization also provides a framework that clarifies the mechanisms through which group identity reduces uncertainty. Understanding these mechanisms in turn is crucial for specifying the potential effects of segmentation on coordination behavior. Drawing on self-categorization theory, I hypothesize that segmentation and the increasing use of Leiharbeit hinders coordination between employers and employees. I argue that Leiharbeit increases both group heterogeneity and creates increasingly divergent material interests, thus undermining the basis of coordination.

To explore these questions empirically, I used my fellowship to spend three months at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies (MPIfG) in Cologne, Germany. The majority of my actual fieldwork consisted of interviews with industry stakeholders. In particular, I interviewed union officials and work councilors, as well
as representatives of employer associations. Unfortunately, gaining direct access to management representatives proved more difficult. Throughout my interviews, I followed a semi-structured interview design that asked interviewees to share their thoughts on various issues surrounding the use of Leiharbeit. Given my theoretical focus on the importance of trust and group identity, I paid special attention to the tensions that the use of Leiharbeit has had on workplace relations. To tailor my questions to the particular firm context, and to gain an appreciation of developments over time, I also supplemented my interviews with an analysis of primary texts, such as workplace newspapers and union publications. Finally, I benefited greatly from my conversations with scholars and peers, both at the MPIfG and in other settings. The institutes’ focus on gradual institutional change and industrial relations meant that I had plenty of opportunities to discuss my findings, which in turn did much to help me make sense of the findings.

And indeed, there was much to make sense of. In many ways, most of my theoretical predictions were supported. Leiharbeit is both a response to increasing competitive pressure and a mechanism through which German labor relations are being slowly, and quite often stealthily, changed. More importantly, the failure to integrate temporary workers into the industrial system made collective action against the spread of Leiharbeit more difficult. Both worker and union representatives frequently expressed unhappiness with the increasing use of Leiharbeit. They noted not only the difficulty of integrating it into workplace democracy and social structures, but also emphasized that employers have often overstated the necessity of its use. However, while worker representatives and union officials were frequently opposed to the use of Leiharbeit, coordinated action that limited its use was complicated by three factors: the need to differentiate between the practice itself and the workers engaged in it, organizational coordination problems, and the recognition that Leiharbeit does provide some benefit to core worker and union interests.

While Leiharbeit was generally unpopular, most interviewees recognized that it had become a reality. More importantly, interviewees generally acknowledged that workers who were hired as loan workers were frequently disadvantaged vis-à-vis core workers. Fighting for their rights, however, was sometimes seen as an acknowledgment that the practice in general is acceptable. Moreover, given the limited resources of many work councils, prioritizing the interests of loan workers had the potential to alienate the rest of the employees, especially since most temporary workers were not socially integrated into the firm, yet posed a significantly increased workload for the firm.¹

A similar tension at the union level has further complicated collective action against Leiharbeit. Fundamental opposition to its use at the union level has meant that unions did not actively recognize its spread, and refused to engage with it on principle. This failure to engage created two problems. First, it further amplified the difficulties for work councilors, since many of them depend on union support for expertise and resources. Second, failure to engage with the practice head-on also conceded agenda-setting power to employer interests and their allies among the Christian unions. Sectoral agreements between the more employer-friendly Christian unions and firms employing loan workers have locked in wages and structures that undercut, often considerably, the bargaining agreements for core workers.

Failure to establish a shared group identity between core and temporary workers further hindered union attempts to stem the spread of Leiharbeit. In my interviews, union representatives noted that it was very hard to recruit temporary workers into unions. This not only further complicated the process of representing their interests, but it also raised some consternation that temporary workers did not adequately reciprocate the amount of resources unions and work councils had invested in improving their conditions. Such tensions will likely increase further, as both IG Metall and Ver.di have attempted

¹ For a more comprehensive overview of these dynamics see Promberger (2006).
to regain some ground in the fight over Leiharbeit. During the most recent bargaining round in the metal industry, for example, employers agreed to top up wages for loan workers, thus reducing the wage differential between them and core workers. While such agreements are clearly beneficial for temporary workers, lacking integration may further alienate core and peripheral workers.

Finally, it is important to note that the use of Leiharbeit also benefits core workers and union interests. Most importantly, the availability of peripheral workers with limited employment protection also insulates core workers against market fluctuations. In times of crisis, loan workers will be the first to go, thus protecting established employees against job loss. While the insulating function has been highlighted previously, my interviews revealed that limiting Leiharbeit is equally difficult during boom times. With the rise of ‘just-in-time’ production, the labor force in many firms is already working at capacity. Demand spikes may thus result in excessive amounts of overtime and additional shifts, which workers may be unwilling or unable to fulfill. One work councilor I interviewed, for example, noted that many workers were willing to relinquish the hard-fought quotas on loan workers, when great demand had led to persistent double shifts and overtime. He also told me that such situations make it difficult to persuade workers that limiting Leiharbeit is a necessary and serious concern, and that balancing union strategy and worker interests was not always easy. In short, while Leiharbeit threatens worker and union power vis-à-vis management, it also corresponds to some of their own interests, and the tension between threat and benefit further complicates collective action against it.

In conclusion, my exploratory fieldwork supported many of my initial theoretical expectations. Leiharbeit is both a response to changing economic conditions and a driver of further institutional change. Furthermore, group identity and trust clearly affected coordination surrounding its use. Finally, Leiharbeit is a symptom of an increasingly segmented labor and industrial system, and the debates surrounding its use highlight the tensions of coordinated capitalism. However, my fieldwork also showed me that studying Leiharbeit alone is insufficient. Growing academic and media attention notwithstanding, Leiharbeit remains relatively rare, and increased public scrutiny has done much to bring conditions more in line with ‘regular’ forms of employment. More importantly, my fieldwork suggests that Leiharbeit must be placed in the context of institutional re-negotiation and reinterpretation.

In particular, I hope to focus my future research on ‘pacts for employment and investment’, voluntary agreements between worker representatives and management at the firm or company level, which either supplement or even supersede sectoral bargaining agreements. During my interviews, it was clear that these pacts are not only the main tool that work councils and unions had used to regulate the use of Leiharbeit, they were also the main instrument for firm restructuring more generally. Pacts for employment are thus the focal point for many of the conflicts that changes in German industrial relations have engendered. Additionally, focusing on company pacts emphasizes potential lines of conflict more explicitly, overcoming the overly simplistic divide between worker and employer interests. Placing both pacts and ‘work councils as border institutions’ at the center of analysis highlights potential zones of conflict not just between work councils and management, but also between work councils and unions as well as workers respectively. With the help of a fellowship from the Hans Boeckler Stiftung, I will return to Germany to explore this problem empirically.
References


The Consolidation of Ottoman Power in Bosnia, 1463-1580

Ayelet Rosen, New York University

My PhD dissertation is aimed at explaining the long and complex process of the incorporation of the Bosnian territories into the Ottoman Empire, after their conquest in the second half of the fifteenth century. This process can be understood as two sub-processes: first, in the greater scheme of the empire, this was the time of the gradual creation of the Ottoman imperial system; second, in the locality of Bosnia, this larger process was complemented by a local process of integration of the province into the Ottoman system. The two processes are inter-related and influenced each other continuously.

My approach to these processes, focusing on both changes in the Empire and changes in the province, looks at both sides of the story: the imperial capital in Istanbul and the provincial capital in Sarajevo. The Council for European
Studies (CES) Pre-dissertation Fellowship, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, enabled me to spend two months in my primary research venues: Istanbul and Sarajevo. My initial research, supported by CES, helped me to better define the differences between the kinds of material available for me in both locations and their contribution to my research.

In the following pages, I will provide two examples to show the benefit of using both ‘imperial’ and ‘local’ sources in analyzing the processes that took place in Bosnia in the first century of Ottoman rule (1463–1580).

My first example deals with urban development. Sarajevo was built and developed as the provincial capital for the Ottoman administration, a new regime whose imperial capital was located far away, in Istanbul. Prior to its conquest by the Ottomans, Sarajevo was not an important or a large city, which makes its development into a large urban center a unique and interesting example in Ottoman history. I will follow the growth of Sarajevo using several sources.

The Prime Ministry’s Archive (Başbakanlık Arşivi) in Istanbul holds a large collection of Tapu-Tahrir Defterleri—land surveys prepared in changing intervals, which describe the population of the region and the expected taxes to be collected from it. With regard to cities, the surveys include information such as the number of neighborhoods in the city and their names, the number of households in each neighborhood, and the religion of the head of each household. Analyzing the available surveys from 1489 to 1604 gives a lucid picture of the growth of Sarajevo and the changes in the city’s demographic characteristics.

The data that appear in the Tapu-Tahrir Defterleri were collected mainly for taxation purposes. Thus, it supplies us with the naked numbers about the city, but does not contain almost any information about the pattern of the growth and the factors that influenced it. For this purpose, another set of documents, endowment deeds (waqfiyyas), available in the Ghazi Husrev Bey Library (Gazi Husrev-begova Biblioteka) in Sarajevo, provide a valuable source of information. A waqfiyya is a legal document, in which the endower is describing, in detail, the instructions and conditions regarding his (or her) waqf (charitable endowment). In the Ottoman Empire, waqf was an important instrument for the Islamization of newly conquered territories and frontier areas.

In Sarajevo, the institution of the waqf was the main tool for enlarging the city and creating a provincial center. In the absence of city councils or mayors, the waqf served as the most important means by which Ottoman sultans and local state officials provided their subjects with basic public services. Thus, the waqf contributed to the founding of mosques, schools, dervish lodges, hospitals and soup kitchens, as well as to the building of roads, bridges, water supply systems, lighthouses, water fountains, clock towers, markets, and caravanserais (inns). In the Ottoman Empire (like in other Muslim societies), the waqf became the means by which private material resources came to serve cultural, spiritual, and economic interests of the entire community. The waqf projects can explain some of the trends that are visible in the Tapu-Tahrir Defterleri.

My project considers 18 waqfiyyas, the earliest of which dates back to 1462. These waqfiyyas describe the endowments of some of Bosnia’s earliest governors. In addition, information about large number of smaller waqfs from the same time can be extracted from the court records of later years, also located in the Ghazi Husrev Bey Library, where issues pertaining to the management of these waqfs were discussed and conflicts were solved. A close reading of the waqfiyyas reveal what the endowers thought about the city and how they planned to use the waqf to benefit the interests of the city and the welfare of its inhabitants. At the same time, the waqfiyyas show how the waqf supported the interests of the Ottoman dynasty and how it helped to improve the endowers’ own

---


status or reputation. The waqfiyyas also reveal how the endowers, sometimes unwittingly, contributed to the multifaceted process of making Sarajevo part of the larger Ottoman system.

My second example has to do with the creation of the Bosnian-Ottoman elite. In the overwhelmingly Christian Balkans, Muslim communities emerged around the nuclei of Ottoman office-holders. These were soldiers who were stationed in the fortresses in the region and along the borders, officers who were sent to command them, timar holders, and other appointments from the capital: governors, treasurers, judges, etc.

Documents from the archive in Istanbul can help in exploring this group of people. For example, the Istanbul collection holds many berats, that is, sultanic orders that stipulate that certain people will be awarded a timar for their performances in the battlefield. In Istanbul one can also find the mühimme defterleri ( Registers of Important Affairs). These volumes contain the correspondences of the office of the Grand Vizier and the Imperial Divan located in Istanbul, as well as answers to petitions sent from around the Empire, and drafts of orders that were sent to the provinces, including Bosnia. A close read of the entries pertaining to Bosnia enables us to trace the careers of soldiers and bureaucrats who were stationed in Bosnia.

In addition to military and administrative officials, the urban elite also included members of the religious hierarchy, such as imams, muftis, and teachers: the literate people who received religious education and occupied posts in the Ottoman religious hierarchy. During the early years of Ottoman rule in Bosnia, people were sent to Bosnia from other Ottoman provinces in order to serve in such offices. During the sixteenth century, several schools (medreses) were founded in the larger cities of Bosnia (with the support of the waqf) and the province began to produce its own teachers, imams, and sheikhs, who started their career in Sarajevo and sometimes moved to other parts of the Empire. This marked the evolution of Sarajevo into an important center in its own right, one that eventually attracted scholars from outside Bosnia.

The Ghazi Husrev Bey Library in Sarajevo holds numerous biographical dictionaries that focus on Ottoman religious and political figures. Most of them were originally written outside of Bosnia. One of the most prominent examples is Ahmad b. Mustafa Taşköprüzade’s sixteenth-century book, al-Shaqā’iq al-Nu‘maniyyah fi ‘Ulama’ al-Dawla al-‘Uthmaniyyah. Biographical dictionaries vary in their form and style. They can be everything from lists of names or genealogies to detailed entries that include information about people’s education, travels, professional accomplishments, and even anecdotes of the biographee’s life. But the importance of biographical dictionaries for the historian lies less in the details they provide about individuals, and more in the general picture that they reflect. They teach us about the collective entity to which the people described belong. An entry from a biographical dictionary helps the historian to place the person (or people) under investigation in society, and to establish the individual’s doctrinal or political affiliations.

The dictionaries in Ghazi Husrev Bey Library provide valuable information, which can be used to determine when and how Bosnian jurists became important enough to be included in works of this

---


5 Lit. “Anemones of the Jurists of the Ottoman State” – also a pun, since the first name of Abu-Hanifa, the founder of the Hanafi school of law, was Nu‘man.


7 Ibid., 3.
kind, and whether ethnic origin played a part in the description of scholars. Comparison of copies of the same book from different times helps to determine whether the local Bosnian copiers who reproduced these books inserted additional details about local scholars that were not mentioned in the original works, and also to see how Bosnians have described themselves in this context.

The library also holds a large number of Bosnian-Turkish, Bosnian-Arabic and Bosnian-Persian dictionaries. Understanding when and where these dictionaries were written and copied is crucial in order to trace the process of the creation and expansion of the community of Bosnian Muslim scholars and students who, naturally, were the primary users of these dictionaries.

Conclusion

Maria Todorova argued that “Balkan historiographical tradition [...] insists on the existence of distinct and incompatible local/indigenous and foreign/Ottoman spheres.” This tradition is “separating artificially “indigenous” from “Ottoman” institutions and influences.”8 Ottoman history was often considered to be external to the history of European societies living under Ottoman rule. My research shows that the process of the consolidation of Ottoman power in Bosnia was a reciprocal one, throughout which both sides were significantly affected.

As is well known today, the class of landowners in Bosnia became gradually Muslim, even though the conquering Ottomans allowed the local nobility to stay on their ancestral lands, and did not force them to adopt Islam as a condition for holding on to their property.9 The new local elites who emerged in Bosnia, both rural and urban, were both Bosnian and Ottoman. They remained loyal to the sultan for hundreds of years and their members shared Istanbul’s concerns about Bosnia’s external threats.10

In order to explain how these relations between center and province were constituted in the case of Ottoman Bosnia, one has to take into consideration sources from the center as well as the province, especially in such a formative time as the sixteenth century. The Ottoman conquest had a significant effect on the Bosnian lands, but it cannot be traced by looking solely at Ottoman decisions and policies, especially because Ottoman governmental decisions and policies were sometimes a reaction to events in Bosnia rather than what caused them. Moreover, often the Ottoman policy was to create the conditions to enable the change they wanted, rather than to order them directly. This allowed for the organic Ottomanization of concurred territories.

This paper was dedicated to the methodological implications of this approach to Bosnian and Ottoman history. It suggests that by analyzing the records from both the imperial center and the frontier province, a more accurate picture of the realities and mechanisms that enabled the Ottomans to rule Bosnia for such a long period can be portrayed. Such an account can contribute both to our understanding of the Ottoman methods of governance as well as to our understanding of the history of Bosnia and other Ottoman provinces in Europe. Moreover, a better grasp on this long Ottoman period of Eastern European history might prove crucial for our understanding of general European history.

---

Jewish Ethnography in Interwar Poland: The Construction of a Polish Jewish Identity
Sarah Zarrow, New York University

Jewish ethnography reached its apex as a popular and institutional movement in interwar Poland. My dissertation project asks why this was so: What were the social functions of Jewish ethnography, a knowledge-creating project, in interwar Poland? Why did institutions devoted to Jewish ethnographic research form at that time and place, and why did so many individual Jews mobilize to document local customs? In exploring this nexus of scholarship and society, the links between politics, institutions, and lay people, I hypothesize that interwar Jewish ethnography in Poland was not merely a natural outgrowth
of earlier projects documenting Jewish life, but rather responded to a new set of circumstances stemming from the state of Jews in newly independent Poland and an anxiety about the Jewish place in the Second Polish Republic, and from a concomitant need to demonstrate Jewish belonging on Polish soil and thus ensure continued Jewish presence there.

After the creation of an independent Polish state after the First World War, Jews from the three partitions of Poland – Prussian, Russian, and Austro-Hungarian – now found themselves citizens of the same country. Along with development of Jewish politics and social institutions, the 1920s saw an enormous upswing in Jewish ethnographic activity. The interwar constituted the flowering of Jewish ethnography. A number of organizations, particularly YIVO (yidisher visenshaftlikher institut, Jewish Research Institute) and the Instytut Nauk Judaistycznych (Institute of Jewish Studies, formed in 1927) published materials on Jewish history in Poland, hosted lectures, and trained teachers. Jewish scholars researching these areas felt the need to rescue the shtetl (market town) and the Jewish folk from their negative image, even as they themselves had left the shtetl for what they saw as the greener pastures of the city. YIVO’s ethnographic section mobilized individuals not previously involved in scholarship to research their towns’ customs and folkways. Questionnaires were sent out that asked about holiday practices, folk sayings, and the like; small handbooks were published that instructed amateur zamlers (collectors) in conducting interviews and using material culture. Informants wrote to YIVO, founded in 1925 and headquartered in Wilno, which in turn instructed them to copy their work and send it in to the institution’s collection. The Landkentnish movement exemplified this goal as well, sponsoring excursions and publishing reports on local Jewish history and natural features in its journal. Photographers such as Menachem Kipnis, Roman Vishniac, and Alter Kacyzne toured around Poland, providing a rich visual source of ethnographic accounts. Art collectors and ethnographers in Warsaw and Lwów dedicated themselves to the collection and preservation of Jewish artistic creations, both artisan and popular.

However, from my work in archives in Vienna, L’viv, and Warsaw, funded by the Council for European Studies, I have noticed a difference between the 1920s and 1930s collection and documentation efforts. While ethnographers in the 1920s hew closely to their pre-WWI influences from the three partitioning powers, documenting regional diversity and local lore through surveys and observations, in the 1930s, ethnographers begin to see themselves as participating in a Poland-wide collective project of protection and invigoration. Projects in the 1930s emphasized Jewish high art, rather than folk crafts, and Jewish contributions to the greater society. Ethnographers began to see a Poland-wide Jewry, not a regionally specific Jewry, and began to view each other as involved in the same project. I posit that this unified vision is at least partly due to a collecting impulse that was rooted in anxiety over the future. Jewish scholars and laypeople attempted to include themselves in an increasingly jingoistic and mononational rhetoric and Polish ethnographic scholarship that took the new polities and their borders as the units of analysis.

My findings from Lviv, formerly Polish Lwów, provide an example of this phenomenon. In May of 1934, two leaders of the Wilno-based Yidisher visenshaftlikher institut, the Jewish Research Institute or YIVO, wrote to congratulate the founders and patrons of the Jewish Museum in Lwów, Poland, which had just opened. “Let us hope,” Zemach Shabad and Zalman Reisen wrote, “that the establishment of a museum to protect the traces of the Jewish past will also be dedicated to the further development of Jewish creativity.” The Lwów Jewish Museum was not the first of its kind to open in Polish territory.

However, in contrast to other institutions formed around the same time to protect and collect Jewish material heritage, Lwów-based organizations use the word zabyt (monuments or antiquities) to refer to Jewish artistic output, suggesting, first of all, an emphasis on the built environment that had all but disappeared in other areas of Poland following the First World War (I am thinking particularly of the almost wholesale destruction of wooden syna-
gogues), and, secondly, an emphasis on the grand, the durable, and the spectacular as opposed to the ephemeral and the oral. To my knowledge, Lwów’s Jewish museum never considered, despite its relationship with other Jewish museums, particularly YIVO’s, using lay ethnographer/zamlers nor collecting folklore and folk art. The museum’s collections were a mix of the private collection of Dr. Marek Reichenstein, who died in 1932, and various ceremonial objects entrusted to the museum from local synagogues. Though folk art – especially textiles – played a small role in the collection, the main thrust was artisan-made ritual art or decorations from synagogues – Torah covers and crowns, lighting fixtures, and fine silver.

The differences between Lwów and other cities were surprising, and I will continue to investigate them. I believe that the case of Lwów, however, tests this idea that Jewish collection activity was part of a larger Jewish nationalist orientation. For Jews in Lwów, the creation of a Jewish museum was a demonstration not of national consciousness or political self-separatism, but rather of belonging to the realm of high cultures that are both worthy of care, preservation, and exhibition, and which provided a base from which Jewish artists could draw. If it was part of a nation-building and defining activity, then that nation was the Polish nation, or the Polish polity, built from and deriving strength from its national diversity.

The question of the social role of ethnography for Jews, then – that is, what Jewish ethnographers imagined themselves to be doing and what meaning ethnography held for – is critical for a fuller understanding of Jewish life in Poland in the interwar period. As ethnography involved both professionals and laypeople, as well as students, and understanding of how ethnographic projects functioned allows us a glimpse into interactions between different strata of society. Juxtaposing the cities of Lwów, Warsaw, and Wilno, the major centers of interwar Polish Jewish ethnography (and majors centers in the pre-WWI partitions), additionally raises questions about the extent to which separate Jewish cultures developed under the partitions, and the tenacity of those cultures in a unified Poland. Whether Jewish culture and social life followed political trends is a question that historians have not yet considered.

The Jewish experience in interwar Poland has been the subject of numerous articles and monographs. Nevertheless, there has been no study that explicitly posits continued regional variation, nor considers differences between the 1920s and 1930s aside from the political realm. An examination of the social role of Jewish ethnography – what the practice meant to professional and amateur ethnographers and collectors – intervenes in the historical narrative by demonstrating changing mentalities about Jews’ place within Poland, as Poles.

The use of previously unexamined archival material and the focus on the social impact of changing geopolitical circumstances on Jewish life and self-perception further intervenes in the historiography on Eastern Europe. I demonstrate that the ethnographers and institutions in my study draw inspiration and ideology from non-Jewish as well as Jewish precursors. As a history of ideas as well as of practices within lay and elite circles, my dissertation also makes a methodological intervention into East European history.
On August 12, 1927, the exhibition Young Germany (Das junge Deutschland) opened its doors in Berlin’s Bellevue Palace. The exhibition surveyed the social, professional, and cultural situation of German youths and promoted labor rights and leisure.1 “Who has the youth, has the Future! This is the talk of the town,” read the exhibition catalog. It continued: “But this is only half the truth. To have youths on our side, we must give them Lebensraum, so they can develop their strengths unconcerned and without restraints.”2 Who were German youths? What did they represent? And why was there such a great concern with their well-being during the Weimar Republic? With the generous support of a Pre-dissertation Fellowship from the Council for European Studies (CES), I was able to explore these questions in German archives and libraries during the summer of 2012. Before this research stay, I had never heard of this exhibition; now Das junge Deutschland frames my project. Over the summer, I was able to change the scope of my dissertation and concretize my preliminary hypotheses. My dissertation combines institutional and

1 “Austellung ‘Das junge Deutschland’,” Jugendwohl 16, no. 3 (Mai-Juni 1927), 126.
nongovernmental responses to the questions of youth, gender, and sexuality during the Weimar Republic. By examining this, I hope to better understand the normalizing forces of modernity.

The Weimar Republic set its sights on youths and their future, despite the challenges of an economic and politically unstable present. Their future implied the possibility of fulfilling Germany’s truncated dream of leading the new century. After a long war of attrition that took many young lives and a revolution that shattered the remains of the Wilhelminian empire, Germany welcomed a democratic republic in 1919. Nevertheless, economic crisis and political instability haunted the Republic. In my dissertation I argue that the state used youths as a justification for illiberal measures aimed to ensure demographic reproduction and the orderly future of the nation. During the years 1926 to 1933, a period characterized by the economic and social transition from stability to crisis, youth became a metonym for an uncertain future. An orderly future, however, implied the enforcing of normative heterosexuality and a return to the moral and religious values advocated by the right.

Youths became the locus where anxieties about modernity, tradition, class, gender, and sexuality were played out. The Weimar Republic represented a final break with German traditions and was perceived to give free range to moral depravity: war, revolution, inflation, politics, modern culture, and new displays of gender and sex gave the impression of an ‘inverted world’. During my summer research, I discovered that discussions about youths’ moral depravity and sexual affliction had been debated regularly in scientific and Confession-based journals. Psychologists, social workers, and pastors agreed that youths represented the contamination, decay, and crisis as well as the possibilities of a reinvigorated, healthy, and productive future. However, for ‘youth’ to accumulate such discursive force its definition had to be reworked. Examining the work of psychologists and pedagogues, I argue that ‘youth’ was constructed as the most important phase in life. Moreover, ‘youth’ was understood as a classed and gendered group: working class and male. In particular, I study the work of Eduard Spranger, a philosopher and psychologist who never believed in the Republic and its future. His book, Adolescence Psychology (Psychologie des Jugendalters) (1924), helped to construct Weimar ideas of youth, and influenced experts and policymakers. It was in part through this work and its reception that youth gained incredible relevance in academic and governmental debates.

The real conditions of the youths, however, were not as important as the possibilities of their imagination. Commentators suggested that youths lacked the ability to distinguish between reality and fantasy and that consumption blurred this distinction even further. Historians have paid little attention to popular literature during the Weimar Republic besides its role as an indicator of modernity. Detective, adventure, and romance dime novels entertained youths as much as they kept cultural conservatives busy, who claimed that this literature brought youths into a general state of moral and sexual depravation. What can popular literature tell us about the antagonisms inherent to the Weimar Republic? Trash and filth literature (Schmutz- und Schundliteratur), as it was labeled at the time, opens not only a new perspective into Weimar’s antidemocratic and reactionary core, but also illuminates the continuities of German cultural conservatism from Wilhelminian Germany to the Third Reich and beyond. Trash and filth literature was in part a consequence of the changes in reading culture of the late nineteenth century, a crisis in Germany’s educated class, and a reaction against the rising capitalist market force that youths represented. Thus, this was in essence an anti-modern reaction. I show how the ‘battle’ against trash and filth literature had started at the end of the nineteenth century, gained relevance during the First World War, and became more intense during the Weimar Republic, since democracy

---


seemed to have opened the ‘floodgates’ to morally questionable cultural mores and to inevitable class warfare.

The battle against trash and filth literature took place in the German parliament. On December 3, 1926, the Reichstag approved the Law for the Protection of Youth against Trash and Filth Literature. The same men and women who had made possible the liberal ideals of the Weimar Republic decided to pass a law that contradicted them. In fact, the Constitution of the Weimar Republic clearly ensured freedom of expression in Article 118 and stressed that censorship should not occur. Yet Article 122 stated that “the youth has to be protected from exploitation as well as from moral, spiritual and corporal depravity.” The constitution, therefore, limited freedom if it involved protecting youths. Yet in Leipzig I learned that the fight had started earlier at the grassroots level. ‘Self-help groups’, which included religious, women’s, teacher’s, and youth associations that advocated morality (Sittlichkeitsvereine) had been up in arms about the rise of popular literature since the turn of the century. They had organized a crusade against trash and filth by publishing lists of forbidden works, by recommending appropriate ones, by boycotting bookstores, by denouncing sellers, and even by organizing large-scale book burnings. As a consequence, German youths were brought up in a climate of surveillance and denunciation – practices that inevitably evoke times to come.

Youths were central to Germany’s reconstruction project after World War I. But non-normative gender and sexuality endangered this project. How could the nation’s fundamental values – the family – be reinforced if youths had access to magazines and books informing them about communism, naturism, and, worst of all, homosexuality? Doctors and commentators feared that youths could in fact be ‘infected’ by reading homosexual magazines. The more liberal climate of the Weimar Republic had indeed encouraged homosexual activism. Many homosexual rights associations emerged and Berlin became the center of homosexual life in Europe. These organizations published several magazines that were regular targets of the trash and filth law. Sold publicly, these magazines offered readers the possibility to explore non-normative sexuality. Doctors and psychologists stressed the danger that homosexual literature represented for youths; homosexual magazines and photographs could inevitably lead youths into homosexuality. Youths, in turn, were central to the reproduction of the nation’s citizenry as well as its racial, cultural, social, and economic values. Their heterosexuality, therefore, had to be ensured.

Repression and Kulturkampf, however, left ample room for agency and identity formation. The homosexual movement found ways to create a new identity – one that was based on respectable tropes. Distancing the movement from youths became a strategic tool to gain legitimacy in the legal battle against Paragraph 175, the law that criminalized male, same-sex acts. Out of these debates came the proposal for a new law, paragraph 297, which would penalize “flagrant sodomy between men.” Behind these ominous words was an emphasis on the age of consent. The law would punish male same-sex intercourse, employee abuse, reciprocal onanism, or even kissing with a prison sentence of at least six months, if a partner was younger than 21 years of age. Furthermore, I focus on how the homosexual movement attempted to maneuver the ebb and flow of repression to advance its political agenda. This was achieved, I suggest, through debates on male prostitution and youth. The League for Human Rights, a homosexual organization led by Friedrich Radszuweit, started its own crusade against vice and male prostitution. The organization considered itself respectable, even though its publications were often included in the lists of trash and filth literature. In his writings, however, Radszuweit made sure that the movement stood on the side of youth and that the reproductive capacity of the nation was not threatened by homosexuality.

Respectability became a goal and defending youth a maneuver to ensure the organization’s existence in such contradictory times. Homosexuality could be decriminalized, but only if youths could be protected from it. Looking
at the debates surrounding these laws, I show, however, that a respectable homosexual could not exist in the eyes of the state. Thus, the Weimar Constitution guaranteed freedom and equality contingent on normative sexuality. Likewise, the leading homosexual language and identity forged during the Weimar Republic was at the expense of repressing other possible identities. In the end, like the Republic, the homosexual movement was a normalizing project, too.

My dissertation problematizes the continuities and ruptures assigned to the Weimar Republic. The organizational, surveillance, and censoring practices of the Sittlichkeitsvereine insinuate totalitarianism and the Third Reich; normalization and the proliferation of identities are intrinsic to modernity. And the relationship of youths with the future and survival is an obvious one, but one that needs to be problematized. This, I argue, can be explained neither according to a clichéd analysis of modernity nor according to a right/left divide. It demands deeper theoretical and historical insight.

My research in Germany during the summer of 2012 addressed these issues. The holdings of the German National Library in Leipzig and the Federal Archive (Bundesarchiv) in Berlin helped me to refine my dissertation project. In the German National Library I was able to locate the vast archives that youth, gender, and sexuality produced during the Weimar Republic: specialized journals, theses and dissertations, monographs, leaflets, and novels represent the cultural sources that will support my hypotheses. In the Federal Archive I looked into Reinhard Mumm’s bequest (BArch N/2203). Reinhard Mumm was a protestant pastor and member of the conservative German National People’s Party who actively advocated the trash and filth and youth protection laws in the parliament. His legacy sheds light on the conservative, anti-republican mindset of the time. Additionally, I located other files about youth protection and culture, as well as invaluable files filled with news clips. In the State Archive in Berlin (Landesarchiv) I found files that deal with trash and filth literature (Landesarchiv A Pr. Br. 030 16894 - 17274) and the criminal records of several dozen youths. I plan to explore whether the police department and the courts were tracing a relationship between filth and trash literature and criminality, as commentators claimed. Since my dissertation combines cultural, social, and gender history, being acquainted with different archives and libraries is essential for my project. The CES Pre-dissertation Fellowship has helped me to outline my dissertation as well as plan my future research and grant proposals more concretely. Whereas I identified many sources in Leipzig, I could not possibly peruse them during this brief stay. I realized, however, that the majority of my future research will be based in Leipzig and Berlin. This opportunity will undoubtedly contribute to the successful and timely completion of my dissertation.
From Progress to Pictures and the Texts in Between
Melissa Lo, Harvard University

In Spring 2010, when I began to put my preliminary dissertation thoughts into focus, I was under the spell of the watchwords of Enlightenment historiography: progress, dialectic, historical consciousness and scientific discourse. When I sent my proposal to the Council for European Studies, I believed I had found in Bernard le Bovier Fontenelle a figure whose life, letters, friends and enemies could ground these stubborn abstractions. An emphatic, enthusiastic Cartesian, Fontenelle was secretary of the Académie royale des sciences from 1697 to 1740, a post that required him to carry out the important duty of writing the éloges for deceased members or affiliates of the Académie. These appraisals of lives well lived were always held together by a crucial tension: that any picture of progress and innovation necessitated the writing of the past. Because other historians of science had probed Fontenelle’s éloges alone,\(^1\) I thought that by going

---

to Paris and examining Fontenelle’s manuscripts at the Académie des sciences, the Bibliothèque nationale and the Académie française, I would reveal the gossamer threads of progress, which, of course, would eventually lead to larger revelations about what bound the concept together in the early decades of the eighteenth century.

But because Fontenelle’s nachlass at the Académie des sciences offered only a letter in which this preeminent man of letters requested the description of a curiosity cabinet in Russia, and the Bibliothèque nationale’s holdings for him were slim, a feeling of dread began to sink in – a feeling that deepened with subsequent trips to the other archives across the city.2 It was not so much that the description of a Russian curiosity cabinet could not yield a fascinating, descriptive account of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism or cross-cultural exchange. Rather, in terms of the larger tale of progress I wanted to trace, the interstices between Fontenelle’s archival fragments were too wide and too deep, and I would never be able to make the fragments themselves compensate for such absence. The idea had run its course.

A few days later, I began to revel in the possibilities. I returned to the Histoire de l’Académie royale des sciences, the annual summary of the academy’s activities to which Fontenelle had contributed so many éloges, and attempted to get a better sense of the early Académie’s major players and natural philosophical concerns.3 This led me to still more biographical files, such as those of early anti-Cartesian physicien-mathématicien Gilles Personne de Roberval and hearing aid innovator, glazed tile aficionado and méchanicien Simon Truchet.4 Trawling through the manuscript catalogs for the Bibliothèque nationale offered still more wonders, including a beautifully hand-illustrated physics textbook in manuscript form, which was written by Joseph Saveur, then tutor to the Ducs de Bourgogne d’Anjou and Berry.5 Sifting through this material was invaluable, for, aimless as it may first appear, something of a theme to my archive fever emerged: Fontenelle’s writing of progress had hinged on his Cartesianism, a commitment that so few of these early academicians shared. I began to wonder why and how Descartes’ natural philosophy, sketched in full in Principia philosophiae (1644), proved so difficult to assimilate into the Académie’s culture. These queries soon led to a rather elusive Jesuit named Gabriel Daniel, whose anti-Cartesianism was just as furious as Fontenelle’s pro-Cartesianism. Although he would later become a historiographer to Louis XIV, Daniel had made his initial mark in Parisian letters with a book – Voyage du monde de Descartes (1690) – which lampooned every last one of Descartes’ physical theories. Soon, I discovered that although invective ran through all of the book’s pages, it was nowhere more biting than in the illustrations that Daniel had lifted from Descartes’ posthumously published Le Monde (1664). Here, at last, was material that so gripped me, and questions that so astounded me, that I felt ready to open an investigation of Fontenelle’s admiration of Descartes – and the progress that the triumph of Cartesian natural philosophy had signaled for him – for the wider reception of Descartes’ physics, especially on visual terms.

During the past two years, I have seen the seeds from that initial trip to Paris turn into a rich field of material – and two chapter drafts. I have expanded the parameters of the project: Père Daniel has now become a final case study in a story that begins with the production of the images for the Essais that accompanied the Discours sur la méthode (1637) and Principia philosophiae (1644). The chapters in between track the movement of these images in both Paris and the Leiden until 1690, in loose-leaf prints, lecture notes, student notebooks, and illustrated books. Along the way, I analyze how self-proclaimed Cartesians in Paris, 

University of California Press, 1980).


3 I was especially attentive to the earliest research carried out by the Académie, which can be found in: Memoires de l’Académie royale des sciences, 11 vols. (Paris and Amsterdam, 1729–33).


5 Bibliothèque nationale: fds fr. 14 752.
Sponsored Research

As Jacques Rohault, oscillated between spectacular salon demonstrations of Cartesian natural philosophy and bare-bone diagrams in his textbook; and how quasi-Cartesians such as Leiden-based philosophy professor Wolfert Senguerdius attempted to immerse Cartesianism into visible, tangible scenography, to show that the new philosophy could be found in the world, rather than simply relying on the mind alone.

Throughout my dissertation, I aim to contextualize more fully the issues that surrounded the coupling of words with images from the 1630s onward. Reading Descartes’ illustrations alongside Descartes’ earlier, unpublished work, such as his early journal, Cogitationes privatae, or Regularum ad directiones ingenii (composed between 1619 and 1628) has helped scholars describe Descartes’ skepticism of mimetic forms. As Brian Baigrie has persuasively argued, the figures that Descartes produced for the Essais with mathematician Frans van Schooten Jr. gave form to the imperceptible mechanisms of universal, geometric laws. Christoph Lüthy has added that with respect to the illustrations in Principia, unintuitive as Descartes’ explanatory diagrams may seem, they reified the philosopher’s intangible “clear and distinct ideas.” Both interpretations, concentrating most heavily on close readings of Descartes’ texts, emphasize the invisibility of the physics Descartes described; and, Lüthy goes on to suggest that Descartes’ total overhaul of the world picture required images that had never before been introduced into the standard, illustration-free textbooks of Aristotelian natural philosophy. The philosopher’s images were certainly full of novelty, whether they came in the form of analogical figures that compare the bounce of a tennis ball to the refraction of light or little, shaded beads that stand in for swirling, submicroscopic particles. However, very little of Descartes’ correspondence addressed the audacity of conjoining mimesis and geometry. Informed by this dearth of evidence, the aim of the first chapter of my dissertation is to investigate the pictorial cultures—especially those of mixed mathematics—that surrounded Descartes and his readers. That is to say, I am tracking visual languages that rendered the images of the Essais and the Principia legible for early moderns in the 1630s.

A genealogy of mechanical pictures might initially begin with canonical exemplars, such as Leonardo’s flying machine or Ramelli’s exposed water pump. But attending to the more immediate conditions that shaped the images for Dioptrique, Météors and Géométrie directs us to a culture rife with pictures animated by mechanism, geometry and similitude: military engineering. When Descartes called on van Schooten to illustrate the Essais, the Leiden native was serving as the geometry instructor at the city’s Duytsche Mathematique, also known as the Leiden Engineering School. Housed in, but still separate from the Universiteit Leiden, the school had been founded by Prince Maurits of Orange in 1600 and its curriculum, which boasted rigorous training in geometry, arithmetic, surveying, mapping, fortification-building and the construction of dykes, was one of the legacies of the decidedly unscholastic mathematician-engineer Simon Stevin. Maurice offered this education to the sons of both burghers and artisans in the hopes that it would build a reserve of sharp en-


7 When Descartes was on the brink of publishing Discours and the Essais, he and Constantijn Huygens had a short, but pointed correspondence about potential publishers and engravers: René Descartes, Oeuvres complètes, ed. Charles Adam and Paul Tannery, vol. 1 (Paris: Vrin, 1996), 325–46 (hereafter AT). In subsequent years, there were two illustrations that gave rise to consternation, but the critique did not question the logic of making figurative illustrations mathematical. Rather, the disputes were raised about misplaced lines and angles, and no less than Hobbes voiced confusion regarding the tennis player volleying across a stretch of canvas in Dioptrique: Thomas Hobbes to Mersenne, 30 March 1641, AT, vol. 3, 341–48. Through Mersenne, Descartes decried such criticism, blaming the printer for such careless mistakes: Descartes to Mersenne, 21 April 1641, AT, vol. 3, 353–57.
engineers poised to win military glory for Holland and Zeeland.\(^8\) During their time at the Mathematique, pupils mastered a critical but under-examined art: the imposing of geometric diagrams onto mimetic pictures. In the most extreme cases, this form of mixed representations – refined for pedagogical purposes by Schooten’s father, who had occupied the same post a few decades before Frans\(^9\) – could mean the difference between a steadfast configuration of turrets or a pile of bombed-out rubble.

I argue that a further consequence of such pictures went beyond their immediate utility, pressing into the realm of argumentative strategy. By the 1630s, their vitality signaled that the grafting of abstract diagrams onto pictures of people, places and natural as well as man-made things had become a legible, convincing, practical and epistemological claim. Indeed, so legible and so convincing were these mixed representations that the Essais’ images depended on the same visual logic in order to make viable a natural philosophy that was borne of Descartes’ mind.

---


\(^9\) Such skills could also be cultivated in Maurice’s army, a point borne out by Descartes’ own biography. After earning his law degree from Poitiers, Descartes volunteered for Maurice’s army in 1618. Because the Dutch had managed to keep the Spanish at bay, he spent most of his tenure in Breda learning Flemish, painting and devising fortifications on paper. Descartes to Beeckman, 24 January 1619, René Descartes, Oeuvres complètes, ed. Charles Adam and Paul Tannery (Paris: Vrin, 1996), vol. X, 151–53.

---

Geneva is an incredibly complicated and alluring city for an anthropologist interested in migration, gender, and health. It is a thriving International hub, housing the United Nations, CERN, and many international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and is the home of more than 100 multinational corporations. More than half of the city’s population do not hold Swiss nationality and are contingently settled (Marcus 1995, 104). Walking down the street in Geneva, one hears an array of languages being spoken, but the two that dominate are French and English. The expatriate community in Geneva is incredibly diverse, with people from more than 180 countries living in the city. In addition, due in part to the rotational and short-term nature of many jobs in Geneva, the population is extremely transient, and the most common answer when you ask someone how long they plan to stay in the city is a shrug, perhaps accompanied with a “we are not really sure.” My research examines how women navigate becoming mothers in what are often extremely uncertain situations in the city. How do you make a family and find support and communities when you never know how long you will stay in one place? I began my research in Geneva during eight weeks in 2009 with support from the Council of European Studies’ Pre-dissertation
Fellowship. I also returned to Geneva in September 2011 and have been living in the city and conducting dissertation research since then.

My dissertation research uses the anthropological concept of “rites of passage” (Turner 1967) to understand how international women living in Geneva navigate the social and medical processes of pregnancy and childbirth to craft identities as mothers and networks of social support and community in the city. Pregnancy and birth are moments in women’s lives when they navigate profound changes in their social identities and subjectivities, and simultaneously also must navigate physical changes and interact with often unfamiliar medical practices and technologies. These are also moments where women must confront both symbolic and physical danger as they undergo the physical rigors of pregnancy and birth to become mothers and seek information and care to ensure healthy children. In my dissertation, I ask broadly how international women living in Geneva navigate this moment of transition and danger in the context of extreme instability and mobility that characterizes the lives of many of the hyper-mobile elite foreign women in Geneva. The overarching focus of my project is on how women navigate “unequal geographies of mobility, belonging, exclusion and displacement” (Silvey 2006, 65) that shape their migration trajectories, access to information, and resources for reproductive health care. To approach this overarching question, I focus on the ways women engage with different kinds of communities and local institutions to find information and make medical decisions during pregnancy and birth, including how they interact with medical providers such as physicians and midwives, and how they make sense of and narrate their birth experiences in the context of their lives in Geneva.

In 2009, when I first traveled to Geneva, my proposal had been to study why care during pregnancy and childbirth was provided to undocumented migrant women, and how undocumented children were counted and categorized in Swiss demographic practice. I was interested in birth as a moment where women living in Geneva (regardless of legal status) had to interact with both the health-care system and the bureaucratic arm of the state and its documentation practices. I thought pregnancy and birth presented a moment of opportunity when women found a sense of belonging in Geneva and were counted by the Swiss state. I was also interested in the moral logics through which pregnancy care and delivery were provided to women regardless of legal status in Switzerland.

During my initial research in 2009, I interviewed many doctors and other health-care providers who worked with refugee and undocumented migrant women, and learned about the web of NGOs providing social services targeting them in the city (there are more than 250). I also began to understand the complexities of Swiss health insurance and the roles of midwives in providing care during pregnancy and childbirth. In Switzerland, prenatal care, abortions in the first trimester, and childbirth are all covered under compulsory basic insurance, and were all services available to undocumented women on a sliding scale through a mobile outreach clinic run by the university hospital. Interestingly, contraception pills and technologies are not covered and must be paid for out of pocket. There are three tiers of insurance coverage in Geneva: basic insurance is compulsory, heavily regulated and available to anyone regardless of pre-existing conditions, and covers care provided at the cantonal hospital as well as doctor’s visits, while semi-private and private insurance are supplementary and allow patients to choose their doctor and receive care at one of the private hospitals in Geneva, or have a private room at the cantonal hospital.

My initial research gave valuable connections with people and organizations that have been turning points in my dissertation research.
Through my connection with the midwives’ union in Geneva, I was able to arrange participant observation in prenatal classes both for migrant women speaking a range of languages with interpreters, and for Anglophone women. Participant observation with groups like this has allowed me to meet and talk with women having children in Geneva, meet midwives who work with non-Swiss women, learn about the midwives’ culture in the country, and also understand one avenue through which women obtain valuable information about local practices during pregnancy and childbirth. Since I was only in the city for 8 weeks in 2009, I was not able to undertake formal interviews with non-Swiss women about their experiences at that time. While my initial research conversations were all with people working on the ‘problem’ of non-Swiss women, I have focused my dissertation research on talking with women about their experiences finding care during pregnancy and giving birth in Geneva.

Since Switzerland gives citizenship through descent, during my initial research, most of the people I interviewed explained to me that birth was not really a moment of ambiguity about belonging and citizenship. Non-Swiss babies born to non-Swiss parents can only become Swiss after living in the city for a number of years. In addition, I learned from interviewing city officials and migrant advocates that in reality, the children of undocumented migrants have basically no possibility of becoming Swiss and often have to leave the country when they turn 18 because although all children regardless of legal status have the right to go to school, the right to work and attend university requires legal residence. However, further research has revealed the ways in which birth is a moment of interaction with the Swiss state beyond citizenship. For example, most nations require a Swiss birth certificate before parents can apply for identity documents and proof of citizenship for their children. However, Swiss regulations for issuing birth certificates are stringent and they require both parents to present copious proof of their identities, such as their original birth certificates and marriage license (if applicable) in order to obtain a birth certificate for their child born in Switzerland. These requirements can be insurmountable for people from conflict situations or who otherwise lack identity documents, and children may remain not only stateless but also officially invisible for periods of time due to these rules. Registering their children’s births is a moment where families must conform to Swiss rules or seek ways to navigate them.

During my pre-dissertation research I spent a lot of time speaking informally with women in what is often referred to as the ‘international’ or ‘expatriate’ community of Geneva; that is, the population of highly educated, ‘elite’ foreign women in the city pursuing professional opportunities within the United Nations or multinational corporations. These women often also expressed hesitance to go to the doctor in Geneva and described practices such as returning to their home country for medical care such as annual exams and to obtain contraceptives. Women I spoke to about their experiences starting families in the city often said that becoming pregnant was what motivated them to find a doctor in Geneva. Mostly, my research about women’s birth stories has come to focus on the invisible and unproblematic ‘expatriate/international’ foreign populations whose experiences remain opaque in the public health and policy literature about migration and reproduction in Geneva, but both ‘migrant’ and ‘international’ are designations with blurry borders and fluid membership.

Through my interviews, it became clear that the term ‘migrant’ referred to women seen to be of low socio-economic status and in precarious situations, and excluded women of high socio-economic status and Anglophone women.

Migrant women’s reproductive experiences were visible to and analyzed by officials, scholars, and providers through the city’s infrastructure of outreach through local NGOs, mobile clinics, and hospital programs to provide care to undocumented and refugee women, as well as foreign women in ‘situation precaire’. While there is a robust scholarship focusing on ‘migrant’ women in Geneva (defined loosely as women who are often non-francophone, low skilled, and in situations of legal and economic precarity), ‘international’ women (loosely conceptualized as highly educated, affluent and
English-speaking) have so far been nearly invisible to researchers of migration and health. Although socio-economic status shapes women’s health care access in important ways, both ‘international’ and ‘migrant’ women often live in Geneva in often unstable and precarious ways that circumscribe their options for finding communities in the city. Rather than restricting this study to the already visible, stigmatized group of women in Geneva, I am interested in how the categories of migrant and international women become constructed and reinforced through the ways people move through the city and their daily practices, and the terms themselves have become part of my research focus as I seek to understand how factors such as age, class, language, and geographic origin contribute to shaping women’s stories.

By focusing on the elite international population, my project seeks to break from what Silverstein referred to as the “narrowing” of migration studies in anthropology that focus on one “problematic” migrant group in a European context such as Muslims in France, Turks in Germany, or Caribbean immigrants in London (Silverstein 2005, 368). Focusing on the migrant women while ignoring international ones lets us (and policymakers) assume that there is some sort of normal and smoothly functioning international lifestyle against which their experiences can be compared (always unfavorably) or into which their experiences can be transformed with the right policy interventions. By allowing international women’s experiences to be black-boxed – to borrow a term from the social studies of science – we are in a position where we really have no idea what it means to go through the dangerous, traumatic, and transformative experience of childbirth in a strange place – or what it could mean. We cannot give women the support they need and we cannot identify positive outcomes effectively. My project constitutes an effort to shed light on this situation by attempting to understand the challenges women face when navigating the often difficult and sometimes traumatic process of pregnancy and birth while contingently settled in a strange city.

Examining how women navigate the complex social, legal, economic, and medical relationships and categories at play in Geneva will contribute to understanding the nation-state as it is unevenly embodied in women’s reproductive lives. I will explore how women’s different possibilities for and experiences of mobility shape their decisions and narratives about pregnancy and birth. Through understanding how expatriate women navigate pregnancy and birth as a meaningful rite of passage in Geneva, my research seeks to broaden anthropological understandings of kinship, health, and subject formation. Through understanding how mobility and instability create new opportunities for building different kinds of belonging and communities while creating multiple challenges for women, my research also aims to reveal the reality and dangers faced by international women undergoing rites of passage unmoored from their home country and families. My interest in the limits of the imagined community (Anderson 1991) encompasses the physical border that rings the city of Geneva and the borders of citizenship as lived and negotiated by differently positioned contingently settled women and families. Increasing numbers of people permanently live excluded from citizenship through open-ended moves for work, family, and educational goals. This liminal space offers possibilities for understanding the concept of belonging without citizenship, and citizenship without belonging.
References


From the beginning of February 2009 to the end of March, the Council for European Studies (CES) Pre-dissertation Fellowship, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, financed my stay in London. I spent the vast majority of my time at the British Library and also had the chance to take part in the city’s vibrant intellectual environment. The project that evolved out of this trip helped me to obtain another fellowship at the History of Science Collections at the University of Oklahoma, which was also funded by the Mellon Foundation, and finally, a write-up fellowship at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin. I defended my dissertation on June 12, 2012, and have happily moved on to the next stage in my academic career.

In my dissertation, entitled ‘Early Enlightenment in Istanbul’, I investigated naturalism and sociability in the early eighteenth-century Ottoman court. The research that I conducted, which focused mostly on manuscript sources, shows that during the reign of Ahmed III (1703–1730) Ottoman naturalists joined the Sultan in forging a new religious, political,
and philosophical order that was in line with early Enlightenment ideas and ideals. I have also argued that the court was an indispensable element in both the Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment and the autochthonous Islamic enlightenment of the eighteenth century.

As part of this early enlightenment movement, I investigated how the University of Padua’s naturalistic interpretation of Aristotle came to replace Islamic Avicennism; how Ottoman physicians reacted against Galenic medical orthodoxy and the strictures Islam placed on their discipline, and how some of them went so far in their reactions as to deny the immortality of the soul; how sociability helped Ottoman thinkers valorize experimentation as a reliable method for creating new knowledge; how philosophy became an indispensable part of the statesman’s education; how the first Ottoman printing press, founded in 1729, represented the ideal that learning should be universally accessible and promoted the idea that the dissemination of knowledge was integral to a sound social order; and finally, how Parisian Cartesianism threatened to supplant Ottoman scholasticism – all within the space of some thirty years.

My visit to London played a very important role in the way I designed my subsequent research. The British Library has one of the largest collections of early modern printed materials. While the collections at many of the major libraries in Europe have a regional focus, I found that the British Library was able to give me a broader perspective on eighteenth-century Europe. Indeed, most of what I read at the British Library had originated in other countries such as France, Italy, and Germany. Seeing such a diverse body of material helped me to establish connections that I would not have seen otherwise. One of the highlights of my research at the British Library was learning about Johann Friedrich Bachstrom, a German pietist who had visited Istanbul between 1728 and 1731. Neither his arrival nor his departure were fortuitous events. He claimed that his mother was the daughter of an important Ottoman Grand Vizier, Kara Mustafa Pasha, and had fallen captive during the siege of Vienna in 1683. As an orphan, Bachstrom had studied at the Collegium Orientale in Halle. His scholarly peregrinations took him to Jena and then to Leiden, until he finally took up a teaching post at the Polish town of Torun. He left the town soon after the Polish War of Succession and returned to Halle. Since he knew Turkish and because the Pietists, much like any other European confession, had an interest in establishing good relations with the Orthodox Church, he was encouraged to go to Istanbul and pick up the missionary work that had come to a halt at the turn of the century.

While Bachstrom’s travel journals are now lost, his published works, many of which are available at the British Library, helped me piece together his surprising journey. Once in Istanbul, he first managed to get introduced to Nicholas Mavrocordato, who was then the Voivode of Wallachia. As Mavrocordato was already close to the Ottoman court, it was not long before he managed to get an audience with the Grand Vizier Damad Ibrahim Pasha. Bachstrom used an instrument that was invented by Christoph Eberhard, a fellow pietist, in order to receive support from the court. This instrument, called the inclinatory compass, was intended to solve the famous longitude problem, but came to have a rather different meaning in Istanbul. This instrument helped Ottoman scholars to articulate the difference between regular experience and scientific experiment on the example of terrestrial magnetism. Bachstrom later sought to get even closer to the court by establishing what he called a “Medico-Physical” academy in Istanbul. The only surviving record of this project is in Johann Christian Kundmann’s Rariora naturae et artis item in re medica, which I had a chance to read at the British Library. In 1730, group of conservatives dethroned Ahmed III, who had transformed the city into a cosmopolitan haven. Bachstrom had to flee the city in 1731, when he lost his connections to the city’s patronage networks. His utopian novel, Land der Inqviraner offers a unique perspective on religious life in Ahmedian Istanbul and reveals the circumstances of his stay and of his departure under a thin veneer of fiction.
When Bachstrom came to visit, Muslim scholars living in Ahmedian Istanbul had recently had their first taste of Paduan Aristotelianism. The Paduan interpretation of Aristotle is quite different from the scholastic one, primarily because it is humanistic and focuses on the original writings of Aristotle rather than on late antique commentaries, and secondly because it has the potential to be materialistic and deterministic. This new, humanistic reading of Aristotle became increasingly popular among Ottoman Greeks, and also appealed to Muslim readers. My stay at the British Library helped me understand the intricate relations between eighteenth-century Greek Orthodox and Muslim scholars, but also the connections between Aristotelianism and materialism in Ahmedian Istanbul. I had the chance to read Alexander Helladius’s *Status Praesens Ecclesiae Graecae* and Johann Albert Fabricius’s *Bibliothecae Graecae*, both of which serve as ‘Who’s Who’ lists of prominent early modern Greek intellectuals. I also discovered the breadth of the patronage activities of Chrisanthos Notaras, the Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem and a prominent intellectual, who had a flourishing publishing business in Venice and lent support to Muslim clients in different corners of the Ottoman Empire.

The British Library also holds an unusual amount of twentieth-century Romanian and East German scholarship. These materials hardly make it to mainstream Anglophone scholarship on the Enlightenment. Such books are often hard to find in American libraries and I have drawn immense benefit from literally going through every single issue of *Revue des études sud-est européennes*, which is a treasure trove of research on Eastern European intellectual life in the eighteenth century. Since a large swathe of former Ottoman territory later became part of the Eastern Bloc, being exposed to these books and journals helped me piece together a large amount of information that I would not have otherwise noticed, much less know.

I conducted the remainder of my research at the manuscript archives in Istanbul, and was able to gather collaborating evidence that eventually helped me formulate how the intellectual atmosphere of Ahmedian Istanbul was deeply cosmopolitan and was equally receptive to European intellectual currents as it was to domestic ones. Finally, I was able to show that the Ottoman Empire had its own early Enlightenment movement. Currently, I am teaching in Istanbul and preparing several articles for publication. I have also begun work on my first book, tentatively titled *Enlightenment and Imperial Decline: Cultures of Naturalism in the Ottoman Empire, 1650-1750*. I remain grateful to CES and the Mellon Foundation, which supported my research during its formative stage and ultimately helped me build my case for Ottoman Enlightenment.
Colonial Governance in the Mediterranean: French Administration of the Protectorates and Mandate, 1919-1939
Lisa Maguire, American University

My dissertation research uses a comparative approach toward French administrative practices in the protectorates of Morocco and Tunisia and the mandate of Syria/Lebanon during the 1920s and 1930s. Although often characterized as a period of imperial decline, the interwar years are more usefully viewed as a time of transition for French imperialism. The mandatory system, created in the wake of World War I, served as a bridge between colonialism and independence, thus challenging traditional views of empire. The Wilsonian doctrine of self-determination played a fundamental role in shaping challenges to imperialism. Invoked by the Syrian and Lebanese populations, among others, this principle undercut the legitimacy of imperial regimes. As nationalists throughout the Middle East and North Africa called more and more frequently for sovereignty and independence in the name of the same ‘universal’ rights France itself had proclaimed, colonial administrators were forced to confront new questions. Nationalist movements, including the 1925 armed insurrections in the Moroccan Rif and Syria/Lebanon, forced French administrators to find ways to reconcile the republican tradition (which affirmed a national right to self-determina-
tion) with the continual deferral of rights and independence that had been built into the structure of the mandatory system as well as the protectorate administrations.

With the help of funding from a Council for European Studies Pre-dissertation Fellowship, I spent six weeks in the fall of 2011 visiting the Centre des Archives Diplomatiques à La Courneuve (CADC) and the Service Historique de l’Armée de la Terre (SHAT) located in Paris. My findings in many ways complement research completed earlier at the Centre des Archives Diplomatiques à Nantes (CADN) in Nantes.1 Taken together, documents from these archives provide a more complete picture of bureaucratic practices in the French-governed territories in the Mediterranean, how these administrations interacted with each other, and how each navigated the challenges of administration.

France faced a variety of ideological and political challenges to its position in the Mediterranean region during the interwar period. I contend that looking at how the protectorate and mandate administrations responded to and dealt with those challenges engages with a broader scholarship on French imperialism during a critical period. My initial research suggests no administration operated in isolation, but rather drew from the experiences and knowledge of the others. I believe that further research will support that similar assumptions regarding local populations across the region shaped how administrators understood the various challenges they encountered. The perceived threat of pan-Arabism, alongside fascism and communism, clearly speaks to this point. The records at the CADC and the CADN demonstrate how French administrators viewed the ideological challenge of pan-Arabism and its relationship to their territorial concerns in the Mediterranean region.

France faced a concrete manifestation of pan-Arabism in Faisal bin Hussein’s short-lived Kingdom of Greater Syria, established in March 1920. The first modern Arab state, the kingdom fell following the Syrian loss to French troops at the Battle of Maysalun on 23 July 1920. Before and after Faisal’s government, the specter of pan-Arabism haunted French officials. From roughly 1917 to 1923, France struggled to first ensure that it received the Syria/Lebanon mandate and second to establish its administration. Anti-French sentiment was rife. The French government worried not only about resistance in the Levant, but also how that resistance could impact Morocco and Tunisia. Coming out of the First World War, Morocco and Tunisia were relatively calm. Protectorates since 1912 and 1881, respectively, these administrations had had time to establish themselves and were mostly in control of their territories. (It should be noted that the further one moved away from coastal areas, the more tenuous a hold the French had.)

Despite the relative calm in North Africa, a 1918 letter from the Consulate General in Tangier to Stephen Pichon, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, reflects existing fears about the spread of pan-Arabism. The letter asserted that the movement was a development of the Hedjaz Revolt in 1916; one that could only harm French interests and territories in North Africa. It argued that French interests would be best served by maintaining political divisions within the Muslim world.2 Officials from Marshal Hubert Lyautey, Resident-General of Morocco from 1912 to 1925, to Henri Gouraud, the first High Commissioner of the mandate,3 sought to implement a policy of division. This policy sought to ally local elites to the administration through a combination of military pressure and civilian initiatives. The ultimate goal was to magnify perceived societal divisions (social, religious, ethnic), thereby undercutting attempts to unify against French rule.

I have found reports dealing with press coverage of French activity in the Levant a fruitful resource. Pan-Arab rhetoric, spread primarily through periodicals and publications, simultane-
ously promoted Arab unity and decried the French presence in Syria and Lebanon. In a letter from 14 December 1920, Marshal Lyautey wrote to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the creation of a journal de tendances françaises in Syria. He wrote that such a publication would also be useful in Morocco. It would serve as a counterbalance to the numerous publications coming out of Tunisia, Egypt, and Asia Minor that maintained a staunch anti-French position. It would also provide a more discreet form of propaganda. The protectorate administration would be more than happy to help support the journal financially through subscriptions so that, in turn, issues could be sent to select leaders in various Moroccan tribes.4 Lyautey’s letter is significant for several reasons. It illustrates the administration’s multi-prong approach to handling the local population, with a recognition that tribal leaders were necessary to facilitate and disseminate the French position among the local population. Furthermore, by noting the use of the journal as a counterbalance to non-French publications outside Morocco, Lyautey recognizes the movement and influence of anti-French ideas and rhetoric between groups within the Mediterranean region. Lyautey’s letter also illustrates the network of communication between administrations and with Paris.

In the early 1920s, Robert de Caix, who served as Secretary-General to the French High Commission in Syria and later as the French Delegate to the Permanent Mandates Commission, argued that the mandate system was unique; it could not, and should not, be compared with Morocco and Tunisia. According to de Caix, the uniqueness of Syria and Lebanon was due to its establishment in “difficult conditions” that included the British occupation in 1918 and Faisal’s kingdom in 1920.5 My research in the archives would seem to dispute de Caix’s assertion. The amount of paperwork generated by officials in the protectorates and mandate, which dealt with the ‘threat’ of pan-Arabism, suggests that fears of anti-French rhetoric and active resistance were felt across the region. Further it reflects how Paris and colonial administrations communicated, discussed and debated issues of concern. The emphasis given pan-Arabism in French reports and communications speaks to an instability underlying the legitimacy of French rule in both protectorate and mandate.

The majority of works on the French empire in the Mediterranean focuses on either the maghreb or the mashriq, and so has failed to examine French imperialism within a broader regional frame. By bringing together the two ends, my study seeks to fill this historiographical gap. The comparative approach will allow me to contribute to discussions on how French imperial administrators found ways to navigate empire at a moment of crisis. Morocco and Syria/Lebanon were not only geographic endpoints for the French Mediterranean. They also shared an ambiguous role within the empire as areas never strictly defined as colonies, in keeping with the republican ideas then dominant in the metropole; nevertheless, they were both administered as such. Looking at them together, with Tunisia, will thus provide a unique point of entry for analyzing the shifting nature of French colonialism during the early twentieth century. Indeed, it is the very ambiguity of their existence under French dominance that will highlight the paradoxical relationship between French republicanism and colonialism.

---


5 Summary of de Caix’s response to an article on Syria in Cendrillon, 21 September 1920. MAE – Nantes, Syrie/Liban, 17/1561.
In the summer of 2011, the Council of European Studies (CES) awarded me the Mellon Pre-dissertation Fellowship, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, for research at several archives in Spain. My project focuses on Spanish forest conservation during the latter half of the sixteenth century, and specifically on the intersection of local and state-level forest needs. By examining the various local and state conservation regimes that sprang up, the project illuminates early modern conflicts regarding resources and how these conflicts shed light on the anxieties involved in the emergence of early modern state forms. Competing claims of forest resources complicated hierarchical power structures in early modern Spain. Forest management as a centralized, or state-led, effort was in direct contradiction with the political organization of the Spanish empire in which accommodation among various authorities – royal and noble, municipal and regional – made any such coordination difficult. This research report will outline the scholarly contributions of my project, the findings of my research and the difficulties I encountered as a first-time visitor to Spain and its archives.

My research is important in that it brings the burgeoning field of environmental history and early modern Spanish history into dialogue with one another. Early modern Spanish history is largely virgin soil for
environmental historians, but the early modern period in European history is not. A great example of the possibilities inherent in the meshing of environmental and early modern European history is A Forest on the Sea: Environmental Expertise in Renaissance Venice (2009) by Karl Appuhn. Just as Appuhn reinvigorated the scholarship of the Venetian maritime empire by examining the empire’s attempts to control forest resources, I seek to analyze the early modern Spanish state in a similar fashion. Scholars of Spanish naval history, such as Carla Rahn Phillips, paved the way by describing the bureaucratic machinery behind the Spanish forest conservation effort. My project builds on that scholarship by placing the bureaucratic language itself under the microscope. By examining the language of conservation, the project attempts to unearth the basic assumptions that early modern Spaniards held about the environment. Via Philip II’s (r. 1554–1598) communications with forest agents such as Cristóbal de Barros, it can be discerned that Philip and his advisers viewed Spain’s forests as limited, fragile resources that needed the steady hand of the state if they were to remain a viable source of naval timber. However, as many local court cases demonstrate, municipalities did not always approve of the presence of the Crown in their forests. Thus, the story of forest conservation in early modern Spain was simultaneously local and ‘national’.

I have chosen conservation as my topic, in part, because I believe it will provide an easy path toward dialogue with environmental historians. Specifically, I engage the works of environmental historians Donald Worster and J.R. McNeill. In Rivers of Empire, Worster examined the relationship between control over a resource – water in the American West in his case – and how that control shaped power in American Western society. McNeill argues that the mountains of the Mediterranean were ‘fragile ecosystems’ that were pressured by the ascension of market-oriented agriculture in the modern period. Forest management in early modern Spain, like water control in the American West, evolved out of societal responses to resource scarcity. And as McNeill’s work demonstrates, the semi-arid climate of the Mediterranean offered distinct environmental challenges to which Spain responded with a program of state intervention aimed at the forests. Worster’s and McNeill’s arguments focus on the modern period when technology and the bureaucratic machinery of government gave the state and economic interests more power than ever in manipulating landscapes. The early modern period, by contrast, was characterized by a different relationship with nature on the part of state and society. As my project in early modern Spain demonstrates, state-led forest management regimes were limited by the technology of the time and by the socio-political fragmentation that characterized the early modern Spanish state. This fostered more negotiation between the state and regional actors, a marked difference from the modern bureaucratic state’s management programs in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The state often could not just dictate terms to local actors. Thus, my project seeks simultaneously to problematize our modern understanding of resource conservation as a top-down endeavor and to contextualize conservation within an early modern Spanish context.

I arrived in Spain with two archives in mind for research: the Archivo Histórico Nacional (AHN) in Madrid and the Archivo General de Simancas (AGS) outside of Valladolid. At the AHN, I focused on the papers of the Consejo de Castilla, the chief administrative organ of the realm during the early modern period. Their documents, while often filled with the minutiae of day-to-day governance, helped to shed light on imperial concerns regarding naval supplies and how the state sought to requisition these supplies. Also at the AHN, I made great use of the Archivo de los Duques de Osuna, which offered more localized perspectives on forest management and what forests meant to regional actors. At the AGS, I worked with the papers of the Consejo de Guerra, which advised the king in military matters and carried out royal policy. In both archives I examined consultas (questions from the king to the council), memoriales (memoranda), and cartas (letters) on royal decrees concerning forest management and how those decrees were execut-
ed. The documents at the AGS proved more fruitful for the purposes of the project. Specifically, the Secretaría de Estado section of the AGS had some detailed records of timber acquisitions. Within the Guerra Antigua section of the AGS, I followed in the footsteps of Carla Rahn Philips and examined the reforestation efforts of Cristóbal de Barros, one of Philip II’s key agents on the northern coast of the Iberian Peninsula. Locating these documents was not particularly difficult – reading them and making sense of them, on the other hand, was challenging.

As this was a largely exploratory visit – my first – to the Spanish archives, I expected to find some adversity in the initial stages of my research. First, while I initially indicated that my research would focus on Andalucía in the south of Spain, I quickly learned that archives often are not organized along such tidy geographical lines. This was both a blessing and a curse. I did not find many documents on towns or activities in Andalucía, but I was able to find a smattering of documents on various Castilian and northern villages. This meant that I had a wider geographic distribution of documents, but it also meant that I spent more time than I wanted sorting through mundane day-to-day communications between various municipal officials that had nothing to do with the issues I was examining. Thus, I learned an important lesson in vetting documents and skimming through state documents without getting lost in the inconsequential. I also learned that it will take a longer and more intensive visit to the archives in order for me to devote the appropriate time to municipal and court documents. The sometimes overlapping Spanish national and regional holidays often led to the closing of archives for days at a time.

While I had previous experience with early modern Spanish paleography, I found that I was still unprepared to make sense out of many of the state documents I requested from the AHN and AGS. While there existed excellent printed collections in the archives, these were not helpful to my project. Every document I sought was hand-written and often indiscernible to the untrained eye. And as I wrote above, an hour of painstaking transcription could often lead to inconsequential results. Despite all of the difficulties I encountered at the archives, the funds provided by the CES still proved crucial to both my project and to my growth as a researcher and a scholar. I gained valuable insights into the organization of the Spanish archives, particularly their tendency to store portions of one collection in different archives. Before my trip to Spain, I had great difficulty in imagining archives and their contents spatially, and I did not have any understanding of proper etiquette or security within archives. After spending three weeks in the archives, I emerged with a much better picture of how to succeed. As this was my first visit to Spain, the funds of the CES also allowed me to experience living in Spain for a brief time. As I continue my career as a historian of Spain, I will look back to my Pre-dissertation Fellowship as the starting point of my scholarly endeavors.
Both leading French veterans’ associations claimed credit for the French National Assembly’s unanimous vote, on June 28, 1974, to open the carte du combattant to French veterans of the Algerian War of Independence (1954–1962). To the Union Nationale des Combattants, this “success” vindicated their “perseverance.” 2 However, the Fédération Nationale des Anciens Combattants en Algérie, Maroc et Tunisie, called the gain “incontestably” theirs. 3 A victory hard-earned in 1926 by veterans of the First World War, the carte du combattant (veterans’ card) guaranteed both material benefits and a weighty moral standing to veterans. But the generation of young Frenchmen who fought in the Algerian War – almost 5 percent of the total population at the time – only gained this recognition 12 years after their war ended, following years of militancy. 4

My dissertation, ‘Home from the Djebel: Veterans of the Algerian War in French Society, 1956–1974’, investigates the return experiences of these veterans, and their reasons for participation in a society eager to forget the turbulent Algerian years. The story of veterans’ postwar

1 L’Ancien d’Algérie no. 10 (March 1962): 2.
civic engagement could be traced in numerous ways – in labor actions or political parties, for instance – but the fight for the carte du combattant is a dramatic story of how the Algerian experience marked veterans and motivated them to political action. My Council for European Studies fellowship allowed me to research this struggle at the headquarters of the two largest French veterans’ associations. This history presents an ideal case study of the mechanisms of political change in the French Fifth Republic, the challenges facing veterans of nonconventional warfare in the twentieth century, and the value of political mobilization within and outside the state.

The French Fifth Republic had numerous reasons to avoid recognizing these veterans and their war. Having come to power following a right-wing military coup in Algiers in 1958, President Charles de Gaulle and his loyalists were strongly motivated to avoid acknowledging the ‘events’ of Algeria as a war; in effect, “the Fifth Republic was ashamed of its birth.” Moreover, since the Metropole had incorporated Algeria as an integral territory of France in 1848, the state could not acknowledge a war against the Algerian Front de Libération National, only a local rebellion requiring ‘pacification’. There was also a generational obstacle: to many World War II veterans in the government, the Algerian conflict, a counter-insurgency against a non-state adversary, might not have seemed a ‘real’ war. In addition to these symbolic concerns, recognizing the veterans of Algeria would require the state to pay a considerable sum in pensions and other benefits to the almost 1.2 million conscripts sent to fight the war, not to mention professional soldiers and the Foreign Legion. Returning to a society more interested in the growth of the economy and consumer culture than recalling the Algerian War, many veterans became politically active, to promote their views of the war, and to achieve official recognition alongside the previous two combatant generations.

From the time of the war, two radically different associations welcomed veterans of Algeria. The Union Nationale des Combattants (UNC) was founded by Georges Clemenceau and Father Daniel Brottier in 1918; in 1957, members Gérard le Marec, Henry Bohly, Michel Vézard, and Hervé Trnka created the filial Union Nationale des Combattants-Afrique française du Nord (UNC-AFN). The UNC’s and the UNC-AFN’s politics placed them on the nationalist right. The anti-colonialist Fédération Nationale des Anciens Combattants en Algérie, Maroc et Tunisie (FNACA) was formed in 1958 out of three small veterans’ associations, and was initially led by Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber. In view of the fact that both the UNC and the FNACA today claim predominant credit for winning the carte du combattant for veterans of Algeria, I pose the question: is either claim correct?

Expressing a fundamental cleavage in modern French politics, the nationalist right versus the antiwar left, the UNC/UNC-AFN and the FNACA defined themselves in opposition to each other from the beginning of their militancy. A 1958 UNC-AFN editorial warned against other associations emerging “at the instigation of extremist parties,” coded language for Communist maneuvering. An early FNACA editorial in turn accused the nationalist association of exploiting veterans, and of being “in tight relation with the activist elements of the

5 Stora, La gangrène et l’oubli, 221.
7 Stora, La gangrène et l’oubli, 7.
8 The FNACA was originally called the Fédération Nationale des Anciens d’Algérie (FNAA), but changed its name in early 1963, both to highlight its demand for recognition of veterans, and to avoid confusion with the repatriated French (often called ‘pieds noirs’), who also called themselves anciens d’Algérie. L’Ancien d’Algérie no. 17, April 1963, 8.
Army and the partisans of French Algeria.” This sniping came to a head in 1973, when the President of UNC-AFN and Vice President of the UNC, François Porteu de la Morandière, described the ostensible Communist backing of the FNACA, labeling two of its officials Maurice Sicart and Guy Ramis “notorious Communist militants.” Ignoring these accusations, the FNACA dismissed the UNC-AFN as jealous of its “fruitful action,” implying the nationalist group was self-congratulatory and unconcerned with veterans’ rights. Each association feared that the other would exploit the veterans of Algeria to nefarious ends, during and after the war.

This mutual hostility derived from diametrically opposed politics. The UNC/UNC-AFN was ardently pro-French Algeria, while the FNACA was opposed to the war. A 1956 UNC editorial proffered the colonialist justification that North Africa could exist only “if associated with a great power,” and that France has an “obligation to pursue her mission in this country [...].” The nationalist veterans looked on the 1962 cease-fire with sorrow and bitterness, lamenting the futility of France’s sacrifices in the war; as François Porteu de la Morandière wrote, “We were told that there would be neither victor, nor vanquished, but we had gone to defend a French province.” The FNACA, however, viewed the war as an immoral misadventure; its first program in 1958 called for “a negotiated solution,” in order to defend “the moral values, the honor of our Army, and the prestige of France.” Indeed, this group celebrated the cease-fire; a March 1962 editorial exclaimed, “Our immense hope has finally been transformed into an explosion of joy.”

The associations’ positions toward the government followed naturally from their stances on the war. The nationalist group considered itself a privileged partner of the state, invoking its patriotism, and especially its support of the Algerian War, to justify its political demands. In 1957, for instance, the UNC’s Committee of Veterans of Algeria visited the Under Secretary of State for Veterans and War Victims, demanding foremost the carte du combattant; the Under Secretary “promised to study these questions,” requesting a report from the Committee. The occasional use of sharp criticism, such as: “Our most elementary rights have been ignored by Governments [...]” only underscored the nationalist group’s expectation of a reciprocal relationship with the state. Assuming good faith on the part of the government, the UNC-AFN even insisted that “the Government and the Minister of Veterans have never contested the title and quality [...] of veterans of Algeria.” The FNACA, however, began from an outsider position, skeptical of the government. Although its delegations were received by the Minister of Veterans and War Victims early on, the association was disappointed by continued promises to study its concerns, writing in an open letter to Minister Raymond Triboulet, “[P]ublic power must recognize [our rights]. It is inadmissible that we have had satisfaction on none of these points.” The fact that Minister Triboulet was himself an “active member” of the UNC illustrates the political challenges facing the FNACA.

Despite fundamental enmity, these asso-

14 “Le problème algérien: ce dont il faut se souvenir,” La Voix du combattant no. 1205 (February 15, 1956): 3.
ciations shared one conviction: the young Frenchmen who fought in Algeria were veterans. The UNC held this view before the FNACA had even formed; in 1956, President and World War I veteran Alexis Thomas wrote to the Minister of Veterans and War Victims, “[O]ur young comrades [...] face the same risks [...] as if they were engaged in operations ‘of war’ [...] The UNC demands [...] that they not be victims of a fiction imposed by [...] considerations of political opportunity.”23 The FNACA, however, could not make such direct demands of the government; its appeals tended more toward pathos and irony, as seen in this 1966 editorial: “Since the end of the war, nothing has been done for us [...] while] Algerian soldiers are recognized [...] by their government [...]”24 Although both associations urged the recognition of veterans of Algeria, they invested their struggles for the carte du combattant with divergent meanings. For the UNC/UNC-AFN, the veterans’ card would confirm the dignity of soldiers sent to fight a morally correct war that had been lost on a political level; as François Porteu de la Morandière wrote in 1965, “The Army is beyond reproach. [...] We obtained our victory ‘on the ground.’”25 For the FNACA, the carte du combattant promised compensation for the state’s having “used us for many months,” and acknowledgement of “the damage caused” to veterans and their families.26

These different moral visions of the war led to divergent rhetoric over who deserved the carte du combattant, which helps explain the difference in these groups’ political approaches. The nationalist group lobbied for a card that was primarily symbolic. Early on, UNC-AFN leaders proposed a veterans’ card “without any particular claim,” to unite “those who have gloriously fought in Algeria with their elders.”27 Moreover, this group sought a card specific to the Algerian War, and only for those who “merit it.”28 De la Morandière asserted that awarding the carte to all veterans of Algeria “would devalue it.”29 This elitism expressed itself in the association’s top-down methods of political action. Benefitting from the prestige of its venerable parent, the UNC-AFN relied on its patriotic reputation to appeal to the government, mostly through delegations and public letters to politicians.30 The FNACA, however, viewing the Algerian generation as victims of the state, demanded the same card held by veterans of earlier wars, for all veterans of Algeria.31 It denounced the UNC-AFN’s separate and meritocratic carte, which “would only permit the recognition of ‘the true’ combatants.”32 The leftist group employed mass political mobilization, including petition and letter-writing campaigns, as well as coalition-building, to appeal to politicians and the Ministry of Veterans and War Victims, which consistently paid it much less heed than it did the UNC.

The National Assembly vote on June 28, 1974, opening the carte du combattant to veterans of Algeria, was one of the earliest laws passed under President Valéry Giscard d’Estaing. He had pronounced himself in favor of recognition of veterans of Algeria before the presidential election in May, and his Prime Minister, Jacques Chirac, was in fact a FNACA member.33 The UNC/UNC-AFN was satisfied with the law because it “maintained the essential [...] notions of intensity of combat and of combat unit,” criteria that appealed to leaders’ sense of

31 Maurice Sicart, “Pour les trois générations, la même carte!” L’Ancien d’Algérie no. 84 (June 1971): 1.
32 Ibid.
meritocracy and military tradition. However, for the FNACA, the fight was not yet over: even after the law passed, the goal remained to loosen numerous restrictions in order to “obtain the carte du combattant for the largest possible number among us.”

This case study illustrates the symbiotic relationship of civil society movements working from within and outside of the political system, as well as the constraints of party politics on civic activism. Only in the post-Gaullist era could the French Fifth Republic recognize veterans of Algeria. The year 1974 saw the ascendance of a center-right political coalition whose leader, President d’Estaing, sought both to distinguish himself from Gaullism as well as co-opt constituents of the new Socialist-Communist coalition which he had just defeated in an extremely close election. D’Estaing presented himself as a consensual leader desirous of social reform, perhaps in part because he had failed to attract widespread support from young, urban, and blue-collar voters. It was in this new political context that the FNACA and the UNC achieved their legislative victory: the political and tactical competition between these two groups, rather than the perseverance of either one alone, led to the success for which they both claim unique credit today. The UNC’s political access and moral standing eventually made it acceptable for the state to recognize veterans of Algeria, even though it envisioned a limited awarding only to the worthy, while the FNACA’s oppositional stance and mass political mobilization ensured that the path to the carte du combattant would be open, in theory, to all veterans of Algeria.

37 Ibid., 36.