

ETHNIC CLEANSING, PALESTINIAN INSURGENCY AND THE STRUCTURATION OF RECOGNITION IN
JORDAN AND LEBANON

Frequently, scholars approach the question of reconstructing failed states by advocating systems that recognize sub-state identity groups and provide them with direct assurances of security *as* groups. Among the most celebrated of these theorists is Arend Lijphart, the framer of the political science's consociational accommodation thesis. Lijphart holds that peace in multi-ethnic society rests on (1) creating means of elections that invariably produce grand coalitions, (2) guaranteeing each identity group the right of a veto, (3) creating a strict proportionality between groups in the expenditure and distribution of all state resources, including government jobs, and (4) granting each group autonomy in internal affairs. Once done, group leaders should feel secure and peace and prosperity should ensue.¹ Listing success stories that support his thesis, Lijphart claims that

Indian democracy has clearly exhibited all four of the defining characteristics of power sharing also found in the other prominent examples of consociational systems: Canada from 1840 to 1867 (strictly speaking, a consociational predemocracy), the Netherlands from 1917 to 1967, Lebanon from 1943 to 1975 and again after the 1989 Taif Accord...²

At this point, a Middle East specialist must take pause. Lebanon was indeed a consociational democracy from 1943-1975. This did not prevent the outbreak of a modest civil war in 1958. Lebanon experienced no institutional changes between 1943 and 1975. Nonetheless, between 1975 and 1990, Lebanon fought a longer, more bloody civil war that claimed the lives of roughly 150,000 people. A prominent feature of this civil war was ethnic cleansing, including the massacres of Sabra and Shatila that were declared acts of genocide by the UN General Assembly in 1982. In contrast, Lebanon's neighbor Jordan does not employ consociational guarantees to protect the rights of its Palestinian and Trans-Jordanian communities. Indeed, it does not publicly acknowledge these groups as separate communities. While Jordan had a short civil war in 1970, it did not experience ethnic cleansing.

The goal of the research outlined in this proposal is to show that, counter to intuition, consociational recognition of groups often *exacerbates* violent conflict. In contrast to approaches that seek to accommodate the "rights of groups," I argue that state institutions are more likely to be effective providers and guarantors of peace if they recognize individuals *as* individuals and without reference to sub-state identity groupings. This is especially true when considering new, post-conflict states, which are quite likely to be weak. The central irony implied by my thesis is that the liberalism of international peace, Wilsonian liberalism, which views "peoples" as corporate entities requiring both liberty and

¹ Lijphart, Arend. *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 1977. pp. 25.

² Lijphart, Arend. "The Puzzle of Indian Democracy: A Consociational Interpretation." *American Political Science Review*. Vol. 90. No. 2. June 1996. p. 259.

guarantees of security,³ provides the worst possible institutional framework for creating actual peace. In contrast, I argue that those strands of liberalism that recognize individuals as the fundamental sub-unit of social order provides the best hope of domestic peace.

I. Causal Argument

I will set out this argument in several steps. First, I will first lay out the psycho-social foundations of how specific identities become privileged in the reproduction of political order. In contrast to approaches such as the realist paradigm of international relations or rational choice theory, I argue that comparable interests and logics do not lead to essentially similar political responses. Identities are narratives that give rules for recognition and, like all narratives, identities have differences in genre. My argument rests on the assumption that social action always occurs in a narrative context and, as a result, that context plays as important a role in understanding and predicting social actions, as do interests and instrumental rationality. *Differences in context change the meaning of essentially similar strategic acts.* While the structuration of political identity can often be the result of accidental factors, it is never without costs and consequences for the individuals organized under the identity. We will discover that the types of identity that correspond to consociational institutions alter the values employed in civil society with respect to ingroup and outgroup recognition during periods of civility in ways that *heighten awareness of intrastate divisions at the expense of any concept of universal human identity.* As a result, I argue that the psychological impact of the ingroup/outgroup distinction in violent social action such as civil war is far greater in a consociational state, because consociational states reinforce ingroup/outgroup distinctions in society, enhancing the ease of objectification needed to carry out violent acts. As a result, we should expect ethnic cleansing to be more common during civil war in consociational states.

A. Narrative, Meaning and Bias in Social Action

Social action has its basis in narrative. In order for any sort of social action to occur, at least two people must share a common narrative that facilitates their mutual recognition. Without a common story that allows one individual to recognize and know how to behave toward another, simply put, no social interaction is possible. Recognition is a prerequisite of social action. Narratives are always the product of individual or collaborative authorship, although this process is shaped by power differentials between individuals and common genealogical influences imported from other contexts. Power over human beings *always* relates to the ability to author a narrative, an identity, for some other and impose it on him or her. Moreover, the reproduction of social action always requires new learning, as new individuals are inducted into the behavior by internalizing its narrative. Social action, then, is always preceded and shaped by learning.

³ Wilson, Woodrow. *Woodrow Wilson's Case for the League of Nations* Compiled by Hamilton Foley. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 1924.

The conditions of this learning are of paramount importance for understanding reproduction of social action. Following Erving Goffman, I believe that persons who have recently been initiated into a discrete environment in which social action is already taking place learn the narrative that governs that action by taking cues about appropriate behavior in that given setting from the structured, disciplined behavior they observe there.⁴ This learning process was central to our acculturation to our own society as children and strongly predisposes us to accept pre-existing patterns of social behavior. I refer to this phenomenon as *sensory bias*, which I define as “The human tendency to overvalue his or her own experience of everyday life in (1) interpreting the meaning of social action and (2) determining the appropriate conceptual framework for making moral or ethical decisions.” Individuals, then, are morally attuned to their conception of the normal—normal behavior is typically deemed as at least “appropriate,” if not “moral” in an outright sense. The narrative we develop by observing normal behavior in a discrete setting will typically take practical precedence over any rival narrative espousing values that are not observed as routine practice in that setting. As a consequence, those already organized in a given setting to create its range of normal behavior effectively shape the sensibility of newcomers, who confront an existing normal condition and must adapt to the existing pattern of behavior.

The need for new learning is also central to the transformation of social action. The act of teaching the narrative affords the teacher the opportunity to “edit” its text. This allows for at least local transformation in the identity that is limited only by the fact that too radical a change will interfere with coordination of individuals who had different teachers. Moreover, students are notorious for (1) bringing both their own critical faculties to bear on a narrative and for (2) sloppy learning, which can also transform a narrative. Again, the primary corrective for “narrative drift” in these cases is that local changes in the narrative can lead to non-coordination of individuals in a larger context, hinting at the need for review in the learning process or the radical redesign of the narrative.

B. The Recognition Narrative of the State

Human interaction is obviously complex. A competent adult knows innumerable narratives that guide his or her social interactions. Of central concern to this project is the state’s *recognition narrative*, the narrative that governs how state officials recognize ordinary persons in the course of everyday business. In civil society, the modern state shapes the limits of the normal more effectively than any other actor. By virtue of its all-pervasive discipline, the state is, practically speaking, the moral leader of the individuals living within its imposed order. When deriving their own rules for recognizing other persons in civil society, individuals attune themselves to recognition narrative of the state, which provides the political context for all social action under the aegis of the state.

⁴ Goffman, Erving. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group. 1959.

But while we may group narratives like the state's recognition narrative by their instrumental function, typically there will also be variation within an instrumental type of narrative, i.e. genres. The essential differences in meaning that emerge from a specific genre's assumptions can radically change the outcomes of social action even or perhaps especially when these assumptions are incorporated in an uncritical fashion. While there are several different types of recognition narrative, in this project we are concerned with two—the universal and consociational narratives. Under the universal narrative, the state formally recognizes each individual as an equal citizen and does not formally recognize sub-state groups. Under the consociational narrative, the state recognizes individuals as members of equal but distinct communities.

While either narrative can lead to civil interaction under normal circumstances, the consociational recognition narrative creates a civil society in which the regular, repeated recognition of sub-state identity groupings is the *condition* of civility. As a result, group distinctions are clearly and routinely made between groups as entities in civil society because daily business requires regular distinction between ingroups and outgroups. In contrast, in states with universal recognition narratives, sub-state group identities are not publicly acknowledged in the polite discourse of civil society. Sub-state identities are still acknowledged *informally* in more private spaces and less polite discourse. Sadly, veiled prejudice can thrive under a universal recognition narrative in times of civility. However, participating in civil society requires individuals publicly and routinely to be seen to suppress such prejudice in favor of the state's imposed requirement of civility—that all individuals be acknowledged as part of the same political ingroup. This creates at least some space in which individuals in society are forced to acknowledge one another as individuals and makes possible the acculturation to norms of universal acceptance of individuals *as* individual members of a universal human ingroup and not as members of outgroups.

C. The Institutional Structure of Civil War

We are, of course, concerned with how recognition under the previous order affects political action during a civil war. It is tempting to believe that during civil war, the previous recognition narrative of the state has little impact on political action. Hobbes, for example, views anarchy after the collapse of a modern state as a “war of all against all” in which no rational person would expect to adhere to the values of any sort of civility. In the absence of political order, Hobbes argues, one has no compelling reason to believe that other people would behave in a civil fashion, even if one adamantly preferred to do so himself or herself.⁵ In the words of the redoubtable Margaret Levi, “No one prefers to be a ‘sucker.’”⁶ Following Hobbes' logic, Carl Schmitt quite darkly tells us, “To create tranquility, security, and order and thereby establish the normal situation is the prerequisite for legal norms to be valid. Every norm

⁵ Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*. 1668. Chapter XIII.

⁶ Levi, Margaret. *Of Rule and Revenue*. Los Angeles: University of California Press. 1988. p. 53.

presupposes a normal situation, and no norm could be valid in an entirely abnormal situation.”⁷ Even theorists with a much more optimistic mindset give us reasons to expect that the customary norms under political order are put aside during a crisis of civil war. Jürgen Habermas, for example, reminds us that the social-scientific use of the term crisis has its origins in medicine, where the term denotes an experience in which the body *cannot survive without external intervention*.⁸ I must concede that the experience of political disorder during a civil war does indeed lead individuals to suspend the customary norms associated with the order in favor of “external interventions” that violate the ordinary rules. This is true even of those who are fighting to preserve the order.

Nonetheless, I believe that the Hobbesian view of civil war is too reductionist. Values, rhetoric and legitimacy claims still shape the actions of politicians even during the comparatively less structured conditions of civil war. Hobbes makes two errors in his model. The first is that he reduces values essentially to interests and reduces morality to an expression of self-interest. While I hold that a political analysis that fails to make a healthy and vigorous analysis of interests is useless, one that is limited *solely* to the analysis of interests is also of no practical use. Under certain circumstances, individuals do what they think is moral, just or right. At other times, morality, justice and rectitude are not an issue and individuals behave strategically and economically. It is true that the structure of society, institutions such as markets or bureaucracies, create incentive structures that are so compelling as to produce largely uniform behavior among such a large proportion of individuals. Under such circumstances, individuals who defy the intended pattern of behavior prescribed by the institution and cling to an entirely moral view that is senseless to the incentives that pattern the behavior may be insignificant number. In such cases we may well overlook such persons as outliers in modeling political action. However, a commonly held moral sanction may be widespread enough that powerful actors find that it is in their interest to accommodate it in order to maintain support. Politicians always make rhetorical appeals to morality. It takes a canny interpreter of their rhetoric to determine what portions of this rhetoric reflect sincere conviction and which reflect self-interested manipulation. It is also true that when individual agents are very powerful, their personal sense of morality may need to be added to a model of a specific political situation in order to interpret and predict action. Such individuals face less constraint and are free to behave as their conscience or interest dictates. We cannot know how they are likely to behave without knowing something more about their internal makeup.

Hobbes’ second error is that he believes that the collapse of the sovereign reduces society to an atomized state in which all individuals are at odds with all other individuals. In contrast, I argue that while

⁷ Schmitt, Carl. *The Concept of the Political*. Translated from German by George Schwab. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1996. p. 46.

⁸ Habermas, Jürgen. *Legitimation Crisis*. Translated from the German by Thomas McCarthy. Boston: Beacon Press. 1973. p. 1.

civil war is characterized by a breakdown of the modern state's *monopoly on violence*, most individuals still remain depoliticized during a civil war and political action is instead characterized by *multiple hierarchies* that are organized to use violence. Each hierarchy seeks to create a monopoly on violence in a given space that may or may not accord to the previous territorial borders of the collapsed state. This structure of civil war is deeply relevant to the analyst because the politicians who organize each hierarchy are typically economically dependent upon and seek to increase their support among depoliticized individuals. This means that leaders, while clearly not as constrained as they are in a condition of civility, nonetheless face the need to accentuate the legitimacy of their actions among supporters. Moreover, they also face the limits of their own conscience, a factor that can only be modeled at the individual level. Politicians may use their agency to create new narratives. However, narratives are only useful when enough people can recognize themselves in its ascriptions to allow them to internalize their roles. "Identity entrepreneurship" must inevitably begin with people's *previous* identity, if only to explain how they are to contextualize and learn the new role. Despite the fact that civil war causes people's sense of the time to change and, in a sense, frees them somewhat from their sensory bias, it is almost always more difficult to trust the product of someone else's imagination than your own experience. The most influential set of values in a civil war, despite the experience of crisis, then, remains that set that was employed by the collapsed order. If nothing else, that particular narrative has the advantage of having been internalized by most individuals participating in the civil war. To inculcate another person with a new narrative, one must "begin where the person is." Otherwise, contextualization proves impossible.

E. The Impact of Framing on the Psychology of Violence in Civil War

Values, then, play a role in the conduct of civil war. In no way does this imply that anarchy is John Locke's utopian "state of liberty, not license."⁹ Civil wars by definition involve violence. In contrast to Hobbes, however, I argue that civil war in no way removes us from the field of ethical discourse. Lethal violence almost invariably engages the human person's ethical sensibilities, if only at the level of the direct application of violence to other persons. For most individuals, the application of lethal violence against other persons requires at least some psychological objectification of the other. Acknowledgement of shared identity, even an identity is non-descript as common humanity, can often lead to empathy. For a normal person empathy often leads to sympathy. This is rarely conducive to carrying out violent acts, especially when the conditions of killing do not obscure the act from the killer's direct observation (i.e. choking someone to death as opposed to bombing them from an airplane).

While most people will encounter at least some difficulty in killing, in time of civil war, it is clear that organized hierarchies will seek to destroy their rivals to gain a monopoly on the use of violence in the given territory. Politicized, organized individuals will believe they must put aside the values of civility

⁹ Locke, John. *Second Treatise of Government*. 1689. Chapter 2 §6.

and act to defend their interests or their common identity. Many of their followers, whether politicized members of the hierarchy or depoliticized persons, will support them. In time of crisis, the ordinary rules regarding civility do not apply to combatants. Combatants are assumed by other combatants to have committed themselves to creating a repugnant moral order. By taking up arms, they are typically seen to have forfeited the right to civil treatment, at least while they still bear those arms.

However, most individuals under a modern political order are invariably depoliticized and, typically, for any hierarchy, killing the depoliticized is problematic. All modern political order requires the depoliticized to renounce the objectification of and violence against other persons within the order. This fosters an assumption that those who live under the law ought not be made the object of violence. With respect to the treatment of depoliticized persons, who by definition cannot pose a direct and immediate violent threat to the politicized hierarchies, the normal condition of civility under the previous political order exercises a shadow of sorts, even in the totally abnormal situation of civil war. Consociationalism, in particular, enhances the ease with which one can objectify the members of other groups. This is because individuals always encounter others in civil society with the assumption that they should routinely distinguish between individuals of their own sub-state identity group and other sub-state identity groups. Ingroup recognition complicates objectification, while outgroup recognition enhances the ease of objectification. As a result, I argue the consociationalism fosters the *ethnic cleansing* of depoliticized persons on the part of the combatant hierarchies. By ethnic cleansing, I mean attempts to permanently alter the demographics of the territory by partition of territory, expelling non-politicized persons, or simply killing them. Consociationalism creates a context in which ethnic cleansing results in less cognitive dissonance and is more easily accepted by supporters of combatant hierarchies.

The experience of crisis that accompanies civil war in a state that employs a universal recognition narrative still allows norms of civility to be put aside. However, the regular everyday experience of being forced to acknowledge others in civil society as part of the same universal ingroup has a mediating effect on the interpretation of violence toward non-combatants. Rather than engaging in ethnic cleansing, combatants in a state that employs the universal recognition narrative will more often engage in what I call *temporary surveillance and segregation*. This is a strategy by which the organized hierarchies subject depoliticized individuals to high levels of surveillance, frequent incarceration, segregation and transfer *within* the state's territory, i.e. transfer not intended to alter the demographics of the territory as a whole. In short, *context narrows the range of acceptable instrumental strategies, even in essentially comparable political action*, such as fighting a civil war. The causal argument is summarized in the table below:

		GENRE OF RECOGNITION NARRATIVE	
		Universal	Consociational
CONCEPT OF TIME	Non-threat Time	Civility	Civility
	Time of Civil War	Temporary surveillance and segregation	Ethnic cleansing

Table 1. Causal argument.

II. Cases and Method

The proposed hypotheses about the consociational and universal recognition narratives and their impact on the treatment of depoliticized persons during civil war rest on the assumption that *context and meaning shapes the actions of political actors as much as do interests*. This fact dictates the method and the source material of the project. Tracking the impact of changing context on decision makers is best achieved by a combination of narrative history and content analysis. Both should draw on newspapers in broad circulation in Jordan and Lebanon at the time period as a primary source.

The causal variable for this project is the state's recognition narrative. If the narrative actually shapes the behavior of politicians and how politicians and others in society interpret politician actions, we must reconstruct that context and explain how it shaped the politician behavior. Narrative history is a powerful method for reconstructing the interpretation of events in their own context. However narrative history has the disadvantage of concealing the qualities of the texts that informed the reporting scientist's judgment. Barring a second reading of the original sources, verification is difficult. Content analysis, the quantitative analysis of texts, can provide a constructive means of verifying the interpreter's objectivity while enhancing our ability to trace the process involved in the causal argument. Content analysis can verify that the recognition narrative's basic assumptions underlie the rhetoric of both the politicians and those who interpret their actions. Content analysis allows the research to verify that the recognition narrative is used as a common frame for discussing politics by counting incidences in which that frame is employed as opposed to other frames. Moreover, if the consociational narrative leads to increased objectification and more violence than the universal narrative, content analysis will show that the language of that objectification rising more dramatically in Lebanon as a precursor to the start of the civil war than in Jordan.

Because the project's causal mechanism clearly rests on the need for leaders to legitimate their actions to their followers, I will employ newspapers as its primary source material. Simply put, newspapers are the principal means of disseminating information to the broader public under the modern state. The changing discursive context during the course of the Jordanian and Lebanese civil wars is best tracked in this source material. Drawing on secondary sources is simply not adequate, as historians often

have a strong bias toward explaining final outcomes as if they had been inevitable. Whether or not the described outcomes were avoidable, the actors believe that many different outcomes were possible at the time of their decision-making. Moreover, actors are usually ignorant of future outcomes when making their decisions. In order to recover these actors' actual decision-making context, it is pivotal to return to primary sources and capture the actual interpretation of events in the moment. Daily newspapers offer the least gap between events and discourse.

The daily newspapers below have been selected on the basis of (1) their broad circulation in Jordan and Lebanon during each period to be evaluated and (2) their continuous publication throughout each period. All are available at the Press Archive of the Moshe Dayan Center at Tel Aviv University. This makes for exceptionally convenient "one stop shopping" research, as no other site in the United States or the Middle East can offer all of these collections under one roof.

Period	Case	Characteristics of time and space	Newspapers
State prior to civil war	Lebanon 1946-1973	Independence from France until the start of the 1973-1990 Civil War	<i>An-Nahar, Al-Hayat</i>
	Jordan and the West Bank 1948-1967	The start of the Hashemite Kingdom until the loss of the West Bank	<i>Filistin, Ad-Dastur, Ad-Difa`</i>
Comparative experience of civil war and Palestinian crisis	Lebanon 1973-1990	The 1973-1990 Lebanese Civil War	<i>An-Nahar, Al-Hayat, As-Safir</i>
	Jordan 1967-1990	The post-war domestic crisis, the 1970 Jordanian Civil War and the subsequent period of martial law until 1990.	<i>Ad-Dastur, Ad-Difa`</i>
State after de jure end of civil war	Lebanon 1990-2008	The post-Ta'if Republic and the imposition of <i>pax Hizballah</i>	<i>An-Nahar, Al-Hayat, As-Safir</i>
	Jordan 1990-2008	The return to civil order after the cession of the West Bank and recognition of the PLO	<i>Ad-Dastur, Ad-Difa`</i>

Table 2. Cases.

III. Research schedule

The proposed research will be carried out according to the following schedule:

Date	Location	Tasks	Justification
[PRIOR TO START OF GRANT] January – August 2009	Seattle, WA	(1) Write first draft of narrative history (2) Make travel arrangements including procuring microfilm scanner	Again, this work can easily be performed in Seattle. Until funding begins, it will be difficult to procure the necessary scanning equipment.
September 2009	Tel Aviv, Israel	(1) Scan newspapers (2) Begin coding	The newspapers are all available at the Moshe Dayan Center, reducing travel expenses and collection time dramatically.
October 2009 – June 2010	United States	(1) Scan newspapers (2) Complete coding (3) Complete writing	These tasks can be performed wherever I find adequate funding.

IV. Budget

Round trip ticket to Tel Aviv:	\$2,800
Room and board for one month:	\$3,000
<u>Microfilm scanner:</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>
	\$11,800

V. Theoretical and Practical Value of the Proposed Theory

The proposed research contributes to the literature of comparative politics, to the literature of Middle Eastern studies, and to policy-making for post-conflict states.

- 1. Comparative Politics.** In contrast to both Lijphart and, indeed, some of his critics who take the politicization of identity in discrete settings as an *a priori* fact, the proposed research theorizes the *reasons* for the politicization of conjugal identity. I argue that identity is politicized by (1) politician coalition building or identity “entrepreneurship” combined with (2) state reinforcement of the identity. The latter is by far the most important element. While in times of political disorder, any number of identities might be “sold” to a public, it is ultimately modern political discipline that accounts for the continuous politicization of an identity.
- 2. Middle Eastern Studies.** The two case studies provide a comparative history of the Palestinian experience of diaspora in the Levant and how varying institutional arrangements shaped Palestinian political identity and the identities of other groups in their host countries. I believe this task is particularly pressing since the various confessional groups of Lebanon, the Trans-Jordanian population of Jordan, and the Palestinians are virtually ethnically indistinct from one another. This highlights the power of institutions in politicizing identities and traces the roots of the prejudice and bloodshed between these groups to decisions made by the mandatory powers assigned control of the region at the San Remo Conference of 1920.
- 3. Policy-Making in Post-Conflict States.** The value of this research for policy-making in post-conflict states is of pressing practical importance. Recognition of sub-state identity, while always tempting given the immediate political pressures in post-conflict situations, ultimately opens the path to objectification and violence. The best guarantee of peace is the best guarantee of liberty—liberal democracy.

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