Interview with

Khaled Elshami

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## March-April-May 2011

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VENEZUELA

Opponents of Venezuela’s leftist president, Hugo Chavez, accused him of launching a coup against other branches of government, after the outgoing national assembly approved measures to allow him to rule by decree for 18 months, to tighten government control over universities, NGOs and the media, and to appoint new supreme-court justices. The measures came days before a new legislature with a large opposition minority is due to be sworn in.

(01.01.2011)

RUSSIA

A suicide bombing at Moscow’s Domodedovo airport killed 35 people and injured more than 100. There were no claims of responsibility but suspicion inevitably fell on Islamists from Russia’s restive north Caucasus, who have been responsible for previous terrorist attacks. President Dmitry Medvedev sacked several police officials for failing to prevent the attack.

(29.01.2011)

TUNISIA

As protests persisted across Tunisia, its president for the past 23 years, Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, fled to Saudi Arabia, leaving his prime minister to try to cobble together a unity government including several former members of the opposition. It was unclear whether this would help restore calm. Several nominees refused to join the new government unless Mr Ben Ali’s party was completely swept from power. Officials said 78 people had been killed in street violence in the past few weeks; the opposition said the true figure was several times higher.

(01.01.2011)

THAILAND

Protesters in Thailand took turns swamping the streets of Bangkok, again. First came around 30000 anti-government redshirts to demand the release of their movement’s leaders, who were arrested amid last year’s paralysing demonstrations. A smaller number of yellow-shirts, who have supported the government of Abhisit Vejjajiva in the past, raised their own voices in protest two days later on the ground that it has not shown sufficient spine in a border dispute with Cambodia.

(25.01.2011)

HAITI

Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier, a former dictator, returned unexpectedly to Haiti, where he was questioned by prosecutors who charged him with embezzlement and corruption before releasing him. A judge will now consider whether there is enough evidence to warrant a trial. Mr Duvalier’s return coincides with a dispute over the result of a presidential election. Another exiled president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, promptly said he too wants to return.

(23.01.2011)
EGYPT

The 30-year-long reign of Egypt’s president, Hosni Mubarak, came to an end of his presidency, as hundreds of thousands of Egyptians filled the centre of Cairo, celebrating his stepping down. There were big demonstrations in Alexandria, Suez and other Egyptian cities. A loose opposition took shape, including secular liberals, students, trade unions and Islamists, with Mohamed El-Baradei, a former head of the UN’s nuclear watchdog, tentatively at its head. Before Hosni Mubarak resigned from his presidency, violent clashes broke out as government supporters tried to clear the protesters from the streets of Cairo.

(12.02.2011)

CUBA

Cuba charged Alan Gross, whom the United States describes as an aid worker, with plotting against the state, a crime that carries a 20-year prison sentence. Mr Gross was arrested in December 2009 while working for the Cuba Democracy Project, an American government programme aimed at promoting political change. Cuban officials said he was distributing satellite dishes, which are illegal on the island, to Jewish groups.

(12.02.2011)

FRANCE

France’s president, Nicolas Sarkozy, told his cabinet to take their holidays at home. This came after scandals revealed that the prime minister, Francois Fillon, accepted free boat and plane trips from Egypt’s president, and the foreign minister, Michele Alliot-Marie, had taken flights paid for by a friend of the former Tunisian president.

(10.02.2011)

AFGHANISTAN

The war in Afghanistan rumbled on. Coalition troops mounted their biggest offensive against the Taliban since 2001. The death of civilians in targeted missile attacks aimed at the Taliban and al-Qaeda caused rows. General Stanley McChrystal was sacked as commander of coalition forces after a magazine published an interview in which he disparaged the handling of the war by America’s civilian leadership. General David Petraeus took charge.

(16.12.2010)
People, Power and Protest: the Egyptian Revolution and the Arab World

By Dr. Ayla Göl*

‘The wheel of history turned at a blinding pace. … The people of Egypt have spoken, their voices have been heard, and Egypt will never be the same’ [1]

Barack Obama

People are making an alternative history while revolution is sweeping across the Arab world. Since the fall of Hosni Mubarak on 11 February 2011, the unfolding pre-democracy protests and uprisings shook the Middle East and North Africa. The shock waves of Arab uprisings are rocking authoritarian regimes from Bahrain to Libya. Although Colonel Muammar Gaddafi is fierce, he is not the last champion of dictatorships that have been ruling Muslim countries for the last four decades. A street-level Arab revolt is taking place, which is unique in the history of the region. However, it is difficult to predict how these uprisings will evolve in the short, medium and long term. Each protest movement is distinct in origin in Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Yemen and Libya yet they all share some common characteristics: the youth, unemployment of many participants, their internet savvy, and, more importantly, corrupt, rich authoritarian rulers who have been kept in power by the West. Furthermore, they have three unprecedented consequences and implications on how we see the Arab world and people: the importance of people power; the role of social media; and the evidence of the growth of assertive secularism in the Arab world.

Firstly, the voice in the Arab Street has been heard globally for the first time in history. Western news media describe this as the sound of people power in the Middle East and North Africa. According to social movement theory, these movements are usually organised, collective and sustained attempts operating outside conventional politics aimed at promoting social change. Historically, previous social movements have employed both violent and non-violent actions. Where they depend on methods of nonviolent action such as protest demonstrations, marches and political rallies they are classified as people power movements, which form a new political force to challenge the existing status quo peacefully. Since the late 1980s, people power movements have represented an alternative strategy for promoting socio-political change, grass-roots democracy and redistribution of wealth equally in many parts of the developing world [2]. Not before time, they are emerging in the Middle East and North Africa of the 21st Century.

People power movements and revolutions do not occur without a cause. In the case of Egypt, monocausal explanations obscure the complexity of these uprisings. There are a multiplicity of causes such as 30 years of one-man rule; Mubarak’s plans to pass presidency to his son; poverty; unequal distribution of wealth; unemployment; corruption; patronage; nepotism; a stagnant socio-economic and political system. Most importantly, when the Mubarak government refused to let international activists enter the Gaza Strip during the Gaza Freed March on 31 December 2009 many Egyptians did not support this decision. Egyptian people felt that pro-Western Mubarak was betraying the Palestinian cause [3].

In addition to these political causes, there is straw that broke the camel’s back: In June 2010 a young computer programmer in northern Egypt was arrested and then killed. Despite the allegations by the Egyptian police that he suffocated as a result of his drug use, many eyewitnesses testified that Saeed was beaten to death by the policemen. When his mother and sister went to collect the coffin they were told not to open it. His mother courageously decided to defy this instruction and opened the coffin to find out the truth about her son’s death. Saeed’s sister took pictures of his distorted body and distributed them on Facebook. Within hours, his family and friends started a new campaign for ‘We are all Khaled Saeed’ on the social media that brought attention, not only to his suspicious death, but crystallised the growing discontent about the undemocratic rule of the Mubarak regime that ultimately led to the ‘day of revolution’ on 25 January 2011 [4].

Meanwhile, in Tunisia, Saeed’s death was followed by the suicide protest of Muhammed Bouzani - a fruit-seller – who set himself alight because who could not find a job and he was despair at his poverty. In turn, his death in December 2010 set off violent protests that led to the so-called Jasmine Revolution in January 2011 [5].

Secondly, social media in the form of Facebook and Twitter have played a crucial role in spreading the news of Saeed’s and Bouzani’s death, making a wide range of mostly younger people aware of injustice and ill treatment of Egyptian and Tunisian governments and offering powerful tools for campaigning globally. However, the role of social media in Arab uprisings must be evaluated within a wider context of how technology, in general, and printing press, telegraph, radio, television and telephone, in particular, have all played decisive roles in the progress of history. The best example is the rise of print capitalism in the making of ‘imagined communities’, as argued by Benedict Anderson [6]. Social media itself cannot be effective unless it the message itself chimes with the wider public mood and unless it is used by people who are disseminating such messages. Once a society and people are ready for radical change and a movement emerges, various modes of communication are
used to spread the new ideas. However, the role of social media should not be exaggerated given the fact that the use of internet and mobile phones can be blocked easily by authoritarian regimes. Moreover, although the social media were important, it was a book which acted as the bible of protesters in Egypt: From Dictatorship to democracy: A conceptual framework for Liberation by Gene Sharp [7].

Towards the end of his book, Sharp comes to three major conclusions:

“Liberation from dictatorships is possible. Very careful thought and strategic planning will be required to achieve it and Vigilance, hard work, and disciplined struggle often at great cost will be needed.” [8]

However, Sharp also cautions:

“The often quoted phrase ‘Freedom is not free’ is true. No outside force is coming to give oppressed people the freedom they so much want. People will have to learn how to take that freedom themselves. Easy it cannot be.” [9]

It seems these ideas are exactly what young Egyptians acted on during the three weeks of protest that sent shockwaves around the Arab world. Their belief that liberation from dictatorship is possible was buoyed up by the successful revolution of their brothers and sisters in Tunisia.

Thirdly, in addition to above-mentioned two characteristics - rise of people power and the role of social media, these are secular uprisings. People from different religious (Muslim, Christian, Jew), ethnic and cultural backgrounds came together in Tunisia and Egypt. However, there have been distorted emphases on the threat of Islamist groups by Mubarak, Ben Ali and Gaddafi.

The West has been too slow to recognise the simmering secular unrests in the Middle East and North Africa. Since 9/11 events, the orientalist and essentialist discourses of the Western leaders and the western media have created the fear of the so-called ‘Islamic threat’. As a result, Islam and Muslims have become the focus of the politics of fear in the West. Historically, authoritarian rulers in the Muslim world have not hesitated to use the ‘Islamic’ card in order to oppress oppositions and to gain support from the West. For instance, Mubarak claimed that Islamists and particularly the Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamist group banned by his regime but still considered the largest opposition group, were behind the protests in Egypt. In fact, the Muslim Brotherhood did not support protesters initially. However, it was very quick to join the January 25 Revolution in order to have a voice in the transformation of Egypt [10].

Similarly, Ben Ali claimed that the Islamists were behind the uprisings in Tunisia. King Abdullah of Jordan stated ‘the dark hand of al-Qaeda’ behind uprisings. In Bahrain, the ruling elite claimed that Hezbollah’s bloody hand was behind the Shi’a uprisings. More recently in Libya, Muammar Gaddafi has joined the chorus by claiming that ‘al-Qaeda is responsible for the uprising against him’ [11]. It is nothing new. The authoritarian regimes and their leaders have always used the ‘Islamic’ card when they want to discredit any opposition to them emerging from the Arab world. Faced with choices between dictators and those tarred with the Al Qaeda brush, the West adopts the ‘better the devil you know’ position and thus helped to keep authoritarian leaders and dictators in power rather than dealing with Islamists.

By way of concluding, I would like to emphasise that the Arab uprisings are not only a profound challenge to their authoritarian regimes but also a wake up call to the Western - and particularly American - policy makers. The Arab uprisings show that people in the Middle East and North Africa want freedom, democracy and human dignity like people anywhere else in the world. The Arab world is not the exception when it comes to democratisation. It is nei-
ther Islam as a religion, nor is it Arab culture that prevents democratisation. Rather, it is authoritarianism that is the real obstacle to democratisation. Western - and particularly American - policies towards the Arab world urgently need to be reviewed. So far, successive Washington governments have prioritised stability and thus their own easy to access to oil over democratisation. These policies are no longer sustainable. As the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan stated with reference to Western interests in oil-rich Libya, people in the region “are fed up with being used as pawn in oil wars.” [12] He also added that “the pride of peoples in the Middle East and Africa has been hurt enough by double-standard attitudes going on for decades,’ and he continued that ‘we call on the international community to approach Libya not with concerns about oil but with conscience, justice and universal human values”. [13]

Furthermore, even for those who would see the West primarily as a democratising influence, ‘democratisation by force’ is discredited since the US-led invasion of Iraq. The recent developments in the Arab world has crystallised another potential people power and revolution in world affairs. The politics of democratisation must be re-evaluated in the West in general and by the current American government in particular. This is a unique historical moment to restore the trust of regional people that Washington (and the West) is genuinely interested in ‘democratising’ the Arab world. If the West wants to have real democracies in the Muslim world they have to stop supporting authoritarian regimes. The rest will be decided by history and the people themselves. As Sharp highlights:

“If people can grasp what is required for their own liberation, they can chart courses of action which, through much travail, can eventually bring them their freedom. Then, with diligence they can construct a new democratic order and prepare for its defence. Freedom won by struggle of this type can be durable. It can be maintained by a tenacious people committed to its preservation and enrichment.” [14]

For now, people in the Middle East and North Africa face the challenge of constructing ‘a new democratic order’. Meanwhile, it is clear that authoritarian leaders and dictators in the Arab world are on the losing side of the history. Now, the West has to show whose side they are on.

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1) http://www.rawstory.com/rs/2011/02/11/obama-the-people-egypt-spoken/#


4) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Khaled_Mohamed_Saeed_holding_up_a_tiny_flailing_stone-faced_Hosni_Mubarak.png

5) http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12120228


8) Sharp, pp.77

9) Sharp, p. 78


14) Sharp, p. 78
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he recent uprising in several Middle Eastern countries has caught the West by surprise and has left it unsure about which course of action to take. For too long, the West insisted that it (reluctantly) supported authoritarian regimes in the Middle East because it was the lesser of two evils. If democracy was allowed to flourish, Islamic fundamentalists would take power, and the whole of the region would begin to resemble Iran. With only these two options available, the West argued that, unfortunately, the divorce of interest and values was the only possible course of action.

With the collapse of the governments of Tunisia and Egypt and protests in other “friendly” countries such as Jordan, Bahrain and Yemen, it became necessary to look for alternative possibilities, beyond the dichotomy “authoritarian-but-pro-Western” and “democratically-elected-but-fundamentalist”. Turkey then began to be heralded as having the perfect template to be emulated by other Muslim countries. After all, the conventional discourse goes, Turkey is a Muslim country which has traditionally been an ally of the West and a vibrant (albeit imperfect) democracy. It has managed to incorporate Islamists in the political process and prevent their radicalization. But does Turkey really constitute a model for other countries in the region?

First, let’s examine Turkey’s record of support for democratic values abroad. Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan is increasingly popular among the population in the Middle East due to his frequent outbursts against Israel and his relentless defense of the Palestinians. However, Turkey has avoided a direct pro-democratization approach towards the Middle East, favoring instead the forging of closer ties with countries in the region, irrespective of their level of authoritarianism. The policy pursued by the Justice and Development Party (AKP), in power since 2002, has been one of “zero-problems” with neighboring countries, which means improving dialogue, commercial ties, and acting as a mediator in the case of regional disputes.
In other words, Turkey’s main aim has been to improve relations with countries in the Middle East and to gain regional prestige. Support for human rights and democracy has not been at the top of Turkey’s foreign policy agenda. This preference is most visible in the case of Turkey’s support for the regimes in Sudan and Iran. Turkey has lent unconditional support for Omar Al-Bashir, Sudan’s President wanted by the International Criminal Court for trial on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity in the region of Darfur. Prime Minister Erdogan even questioned the charges against al-Bashir and said that “no Muslim could perpetrate genocide” [1]. In addition, Turkey was one of the first countries to congratulate President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad for his victory in the contested 2009 elections, and it did not voice criticisms against the regime’s violent response to the protests in the aftermath of the elections.

When the recent uprisings in the Middle East began, the Turkish government initially adopted a cautious approach. The Prime Minister’s pronouncements exhorting President Mubarak to listen to the will of the Egyptian people came rather late, and only after a telephone call from President Obama. In the case of Libya, the Prime Minister warned that “turning a blind eye to the people’s demands for democracy and freedoms” [2] would be a mistake. However, it is important to remember that these words were uttered by the 2010 winner of the Moammar Gaddafi Human Rights Prize.

Therefore, Turkey’s record of support for democratic values in the Middle East is rather poor. Turkish foreign policy prioritized the rapprochement with countries in the region and the pursuit of regional leadership through mediation of regional conflicts.

One might argue that, irrespective of the country’s record of support for democracy abroad, Turkey constitutes a model due to its own democratic record and level of economic success. In fact, the representation of Turkey as a model of how to reconcile democracy and Islam is not new. The Bush administration already presented Turkey as a model within the framework of the Greater Middle East initiative and the AKP itself is pretty much willing to portray Turkey as a model. In a speech delivered at Harvard University in 2003, Prime Minister Erdogan said “I do not subscribe to the view that Islamic culture and democracy cannot be reconciled. As a politician who cherishes religious conviction in his personal sphere, but regards politics as a domain outside religion, I believe this view [i.e. of irreconcilability] is seriously flawed” [3].

This idea of Turkey as a model has been heard more frequently since the uprisings in the Middle East. Islamic movements in the region, such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, could learn a great deal about how to be a legitimate player in the democratic process from the AKP’s history. The AKP was founded in 2001 by the reform-oriented younger generation of Islamists, who, unlike their predecessors, refrained from employing a religious discourse and espoused a pro-European Union membership stance [4]. The AKP argued that it was not an Islamic Party, but rather a conservative-democratic party, which means to be politically and economically liberal, whilst being sensitive to certain societal values and traditions [5]. During its first term in office, the AKP seemed to live up to its promises, openly embracing the goal of EU membership and embarking in an unprecedented program of reforms, which, among other things, curtailed the power of the military.

The opposition in Turkey disputes this rosy picture of the AKP. They accuse the government of trying to silence its opponents, in the media, the judiciary and in the military. With regards to the press, some high-profile examples are the astronomical fines received by the Dogan media conglomerate for alleged tax fraud and most recently, detention of Soner Yalcin, the founder of the news portal Oda TV, for alleged links with Ergenekon, a group of people accused of plotting to overthrow the government (more on this specific issue below). Furthermore, the prime minister seems to be unable to adapt the AKP’s record of actions abroad.
tolerate criticisms, having taken caricaturists and writers to court [6].

The manner in which the Ergenekon investigation is being conducted has also been questionable. Suspects are detained for a considerable amount of time without being charged, some of the evidence against suspects seems flimsy, and ‘the indictments are so full of contradictions, rumors, speculation, misinformation, illogicalities, absurdities and untruths that they are not even internally consistent or coherent’ [7].

These recent trends in Turkey’s political landscape have led some commentators to argue that “Turkey has been exchanging a military form of authoritarianism for civilian authoritarianism” [8]. The Economist warns that, even though elections in Turkey are free and fair and that the press is largely free and unrestrained “there is also no question that Mr Erdogan is getting bossier and less tolerant by the day” [9]. Thus, the worst case scenario is that “…far from being a model, Turkey has been becoming more like Egypt” [10].

In conclusion, although it is true that Turkey has been one of the most successful countries in the region, both in terms of its economy and its democratic standards, there are some worrying developments being witnessed in Turkey, which can severely undermine its credentials as a model for the Middle East. 

Notes:

* Paula Sandrin is Doctoral Researcher at the University of Westminster.


CPRS Turkey

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- CPRS Turkey’nin faaliyetlerini paylaşmak için yılda iki kere olmak üzere bir elektronik dergi yayımlanmak şeklinde.
CPRS Turkey

Turkey occupies a critical geopolitical position between Europe, the Middle East and the Caucasus. It has a burgeoning economy and strong private sector; a rapidly strengthening democracy and vibrant civil society; and membership of a wide range of organisations from NATO and the OECD to the Islamic Conference, G20 and candidacy to the EU. Turkey is a pivotal player not only in regional but global affairs. It is an important peace broker in regional conflicts, a leading country for peacekeeping operations and has been a generous donor for disaster response around the world. However, Turkey is also a country trying to merge its Islamic heritage into broader structures and models of western liberal democratic governance. To deal with the legacy of its Ottoman heritage and nation-state building policies of the Republic, Turkey needs to address a number of fundamental socio-cultural and development challenges. Furthermore, Turkey’s internal stability is affected by a protracted armed conflict based on Kurdish separatism.

With these issues in mind, the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies (CPRS) at Coventry University is home to an innovative research group that seeks to explore a wide range of conflict and peace related matters with specific reference to Turkey.

The CPRS Turkey aims to:

- Create an enabling environment for research on peace and conflict related issues in the context of Turkey and on the role of Turkey at regional and international levels.
- Seek funding opportunities for scholars to undertake comparative research and encourage staff/student exchange between Coventry and Turkish universities.
- Provide scholarships to students from Turkey to undertake the CPRS flagship MA in Peace and Reconciliation Studies, online MA in Peacebuilding and Postgraduate Certificate in Conflict Resolution Skills.
- Run a book series on issues related to Turkey, peace and conflict.
- Organise a seminar series in Coventry that would host leading scholars researching on Turkey.
- Organise an annual conference on peace, conflict and human security issues in Turkey.
- Publish a ‘Peace in Turkey’ issue annually as part of the online Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security.
- Publish a biannual electronic newsletter to disseminate CPRS Turkey activities.
Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies (CPRS)

The Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies (CPRS) promotes research and learning which contribute to a deeper understanding of peace and reconciliation. Founded in 1999, CPRS is a dynamic, secular, cosmopolitan centre reflecting contemporary international scholarship on the theories and practices of conflict transformation, peace-building, nonviolent politics, human security, faith-based and humanitarian aid, post-conflict reconstruction and related areas.

CPRS aims to address challenges and questions posed by violent conflict through our teaching, research and consultancy work, running residential and distance learning Masters courses in peace and reconciliation, and a postgraduate certificate in conflict resolution skills. Our PhD programme attracts students from around the world who study a range of issues related to peace, conflict, reconciliation, and reconstruction.

CPRS has a vibrant research environment drawing on academic and practical expertise. It conducts cutting-edge interdisciplinary research using culturally sensitive and gender aware participatory methodologies. The Centre adopts a global perspective to the challenges posed by conflict but, at the same time, recognizes local priorities and efforts to achieve peace. Its staff come from different academic disciplines and have research and consultancy experience in a wide range of conflict-affected territories including Afghanistan, Bosnia, Cambodia, China, DR Congo, El Salvador, Iraq, Israel, Kosovo, Lebanon, Liberia, Nepal, Palestine, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Turkey and Uganda.

Research interests at CPRS focus on the following areas:

- Peace and Conflict
- Cultures of peace and Reconciliation
- Human Security and Development
- Fragile States and Governance
- Security Sector Reform
- Sport and Peace

CPRS is a centre of excellence for consultancy, bringing academic rigor and analysis to the practical challenges faced by a range of actors such as the United Nations, international NGOs, national governments, military and donor community. CPRS’ network of associates, in addition to our in-house expertise, and our broad understanding of global political, peacebuilding and security dynamics, enables the Centre to adopt a holistic approach to its applied research and consultancies.
Coventry University

Coventry is an evolving and innovative university with a growing reputation for excellence in education.

Independent surveys show that we provide a caring and supportive environment, enriched by a unique blend of academic expertise and practical experience.

Three words set us apart - employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship. Coventry University was ‘Highly Commended’ in the Entrepreneurial University of the Year category at the Times Higher Awards 2008.

The students benefit from state-of-the-art equipment and facilities in all academic disciplines including health, design and engineering laboratories, performing arts studios and computing centres. We have been chosen to host three national Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning which has enabled us to invest substantial sums of money in health, design and mathematics.

Our city-centre campus is continually developing and evolving, and we have plans for further investment in it over the next few years. We are a major presence in Coventry, which contributes to the city’s friendly and vibrant atmosphere and also enables us to foster successful business partnerships.

Through our links with leading edge businesses and organisations in the public and voluntary sectors, our students are able to access project and placement opportunities that enhance their employability on graduation.
On 22 February 2011, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, the long standing dictator of Libya appeared on TV to declare that he was going nowhere, did not care what the people of Libya wanted for their future and that he was planning to become a martyr in his own country. The defiance of Gaddafi was probably not surprising, despite the fact that thousands of Libyans had already been butchered by his sub-Saharan mercenaries. What was really surprising though, was that the need for such a speech from Gaddafi would have been quite unthinkable even only a couple of months earlier. In his speech, he referred to Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak, the former dictators of Tunisia and Egypt, respectively, claiming that he is a different kind of ‘leader’ and would not leave his country as they did in the face of mass demonstrations and public dissent. At the time of writing, Gaddafi was still clinging to power, but probably not for very long before that he is consigned to the bloody pages of history as the third dictator in North Africa, who was removed from power in February 2011.

Whether this storm of political transformation in the region will come to an end with the Libyan chapter is yet to be seen, but Bahrain, at the Gulf end of the Middle East is already struggling with its own political violence as the result of an uprising of the Shiite majority against the Sunni royal family rule. The demonstrations in Yemen against another long-ruling Arab dictator has been waging over the last few weeks. From Morocco and Algeria to Jordan, Syria and Saudi Arabia, a wide range of other countries are likely to be affected by this wave of popular uprising, which seems to be led primarily by youth with the use of new media for mobilisation and resistance. In short, the power of the Kings, rulers, and leaders of single-party ‘democracies’ in the Middle East has never been so threatened like this since their creations in the post-WW I context by Britain and France.

It is clear that the political map of these countries is being re-written and in the context of international relations, this new era will mean a major change in the way some of the key international powers such as the United States (US), European Union (EU), China and Russia approach their foreign policies for the Middle East. There have already been unusual alliances and responses in the face of this sudden political change in the region. For example, Mubarak received direct and indirect political support from Israel and the Palestinian Authority when thousands of Egyptians filled Tahrir Square in Cairo, demanding his removal from power. To a large extent the US and EU response was muted and talked a lot about the need to listen to the demands of people, without taking a clear stance on Mubarak’s initial claim that should remain in power. Another interesting phenomenon in terms of international responses to this political transformation has been the role of Turkey.
Until the wave of revolutions started to hit the region, Turkey’s popularity in most Middle Eastern countries was at a peak, largely because of Turkey’s confrontation with Israel under the Premiership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan over the protracted Palestinian issue. It all started with the Israel’s military campaign of ‘Operation Cast Lead’ against Gaza in 2008. Before that Turkey was the strongest ally of Israel in the region with strong economic, military and political ties, and even acting as a mediator between Israel and Syria over the Golan Heights. Then over the Israeli offensive against Gaza, the famous ‘one-minute’ crisis between Erdoğan and Israeli President Shimon Peres took place in Davos on 29 January 2009. Erdoğan’s walkout not only created a public frenzy in Turkey but he has suddenly become one of the most popular politicians in many Middle Eastern countries. There were many tit for tat tactics between the two countries’ foreign ministries before the next crisis took place with the Israel’s military inception against the Blue Marmara ship on 31 May 2010. The ship was part of ‘the Gaza flotilla’, trying to break the Israeli blockade of Gaza by taking humanitarian aid and carrying hundreds of activists. The military attack which was carried out in international waters and resulted in the death of nine Turkish activists faced widespread international condemnation and strained the relationship between the two countries further. With this incident, Turkey’s popularity among the Arab population increased tremendously, largely because Erdoğan seemed to be doing what their leaders had always failed to do – to confront Israel by means of effective diplomacy and be a strong voice for the Palestinian cause. Moreover, in line with the new foreign policy of ‘zero-problem with neighbours’ by Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Turkey has been deepening its relationships with most Middle Eastern countries. For example, with Syria, Lebanon and Jordan there is now a visa-free movement of people and their cabinets hold joint meetings. Turkey was one of the most influential mediators in the latest Lebanese crisis, as it can talk to all sides in the country, including Hezbollah, or in cooperation with Brazil, Turkey managed to score a deal with Iran over its nuclear capabilities. Overall, Turkey was using the soft power of political tools such as diplomacy, trade and cultural ties to become a regional power centre, which has also been perceived as an attempt of neo-Ottomanism by some, but doing this the main objective was to maintain the stability in the region. In other words, its foreign policy was to protect the existing status quo in order to increase its influence through the means of soft power.

The recent Middle Eastern revolutions have already demanded that Turkey re-adjust its foreign policy as the protection of the status quo would also mean continuing to work with leaders like Mubarak, Ben Ali and Gaddafi. Turkey has chosen to support uprisings and for example, it was probably the only regional country with a clear stance on the political crisis in Egypt. One week after the mass demonstrations started in Egypt and while all major international powers were rather timid and quite about the departure of Mubarak, Erdoğan’s speech at the Turkish Parliament, which was a clear message to Mubarak to go, was broadcast live to thousands in Tahrir Square. It is interesting that Turkey, which was always criticised for its poor human rights record and shaky democracy until very recent times, has now become the beacon of moral guidance for such matters in the Middle East. With the comfort of having improved its own democracy, rule of law and human rights problems domestically, though there is still a big need for further change, Turkey seems to be wanting to side with the people of the Middle East rather than their tyrannical regimes. Obviously, such an issue is likely to face a further credibility test if popular uprisings start to emerge in places such as Saudi Arabia, Iran and Syria where Turkey has much more significant economic and geopolitical interests. Nevertheless, it is clear that the new political landscape in the Middle East will bring new dynamics which will demand increasingly different responses from regional actors, and Turkey seems to be intending to increase its soft power engagement further.

It is probably not surprising to see that Turkey has increased its regional engagement because it occupies a critical geopolitical position between Europe,
the Middle East and the Caucasus. It has a burgeoning economy and strong private sector and membership of a wide range of organisations from NATO, G20 and the OECD to the Islamic Conference and candidacy to the EU. Turkey is a pivotal player in global affairs too, as it is an important peace broker in regional conflicts, a leading country for peacekeeping operations and has been a generous donor for disaster response around the world. However, Turkey is also a country trying to merge its Islamic heritage into broader structures and models of western liberal democratic governance. It still needs to address a number of fundamental socio-cultural and development challenges in order to deal with the legacy of its Ottoman heritage and nation-state building policies of the Republic. Furthermore, Turkey’s internal stability is badly affected by a protracted armed conflict based on Kurdish separatism. Therefore, peace and conflict issues are critical for Turkey not only for regional and global stability, but also its own domestic security, stability and prosperity.

With these issues in mind, the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies (CPRS) at Coventry University is home to an innovative research group since January 2011 that seeks to explore a wide range of conflict and peace related matters with a specific reference to Turkey. The CPRS Turkey aims to:

- Create an enabling environment for research on peace and conflict related issues in the context of Turkey and on the role of Turkey at regional and international levels;
- Seek funding opportunities for scholars to undertake comparative research and encourage staff/student exchange between Coventry and Turkish universities;
- Provide scholarships to students from Turkey to undertake the CPRS flagship MA in Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Postgraduate Certificate in Conflict Resolution Skills and online MA in Peacebuilding;
- Run a book series with an academic publisher;
- Organise a seminar series in Coventry to host leading scholars researching on Turkey;
- Organise an annual conference on peace and conflict issues in Turkey and an annual public lecture in Coventry;
- Publish an annual ‘Peace in Turkey’ issue as part of the online Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security;
- Publish a biannual electronic newsletter to disseminate the activities of the research group.

A series of exciting CPRS Turkey events are already in pipeline, for example, Mr Filippo Grandi, Commissioner-General of UNRWA (UN Agency for Palestinian refugees,) will launch the CPRS Turkey annual public lecture series with a talk at Coventry University on 4th May 2011. An international conference on human security will be jointly organised by CPRS and three Turkish Universities (Kadir Has, Akdeniz and Trakya) in Istanbul on 27-28 October 2011. A number of Turkish academics will be visiting CPRS this summer. Moreover, with an exciting portfolio of activities, the CPRS Turkey aims to expand its network of organisations and individuals. If you are interested in peace, conflict and security related issues in the context of Turkey or Turkey’s regional and international role in such matters, we would like to hear from you. As an academician, researcher, civil society activist, diplomat, aid sector practitioner and representative of national authorities, you could involve in the CPRS Turkey initiative in a number of ways by:

- becoming an ‘Associate of CPRS Turkey’ in order to take part in our research and consultancy programmes;
- participating in our workshops and conferences that are held in Coventry and in different parts of Turkey;
- bringing your research ideas for joint funding applications;
- organising staff and student exchange programmes;
- publishing in our online Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security.

Note:
* Alpaslan Özerdem is Professor of Peacebuilding at Coventry University.
The Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security (JCTS) provides a platform to analyse conflict transformation as the processes for managing change in a non-violent way to produce equitable outcomes for all parties that are sustainable. Security is understood as encapsulating a wide range of human security concerns that can be tackled by both ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ measures. Therefore, the Journal’s scope not only covers such security sector reform issues as restructuring security apparatus, reintegration of ex-combatants, clearance of explosive remnants of war and cross-border management, but also the protection of human rights, justice, rule of law and governance.
Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security (JCTS) is for academics, policy makers and practitioners to engage in discussions on a wide range of peace, conflict and human security related issues in a multidisciplinary forum with contributions from political science, security studies, international relations, development studies, post-conflict reconstruction studies, economics, sociology, international law, political history, and human geography.

As an international refereed e-journal, edited by a group of acclaimed scholars indicated in the Editorial Board, the Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security is published at its own website http://www.cesran.org/jcts. It welcomes submissions of articles from related persons involved in the scope of the journal as well as summary reports of conferences and lecture series held in the social sciences. Submissions in comparative analysis, with case studies and empirical research are particularly encouraged.

Prospective authors should submit 5.000-10.000 word articles for consideration in Microsoft Word-compatible format. For more complete descriptions and submission instructions, please access the Editorial Guidelines and Style Guidelines pages at the CESRAN website: http://www.cesran.org/jcts. Contributors are urged to read CESRAN’s author guidelines and style guidelines carefully before submitting articles. Articles submissions should be sent in electronic format to:

Prof. Alpaslan ÖZERDEM - Editor-in-Chief - alpozerdem@cesran.org

Publication date:
- Spring issue — April
- Autumn issue — October
During the January Revolution in Egypt many Middle Eastern experts had two major questions in their mind. The first question was that what Mubarak’s decision would be against the demonstrations. Would he give up or continue despite the wide opposition against his authority? The answer came on 11th February and Mubarak resigned by leaving the country to the Egyptian army. The second major question during this revolution was that what the behavior of the Muslim Brotherhood which is the largest opposition group in the country would be. This question is important because even though the Muslim Brotherhood has always been the leading opposition movement against oppressive Egyptian governments, there have been suspicious views about their intentions because of their Islamic character. Would they consider this revolution as a way to create an Islamic regime? Would they just support the democratic reforms in the country and accept to live under a secular democracy? In this text the history and goals of the Muslim Brotherhood will be explained briefly.

**History**

The Muslim Brotherhood (MB-Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn) was established by Hasan Al-Banna in Egypt in 1928. Initially, the community was assumed as a social organization whose main concern was an apolitical religious reform in the society. Even though the community put its efforts on expanding Islamic values throughout the society, the effect of Palestinian events in 1930s and opposition against British colonial hegemony forced the MB to develop a political disclosure. Because of their political views and opposed stance, their activities were banned by the government but in the
chaotic atmosphere of the World War II they accelerated their efforts and reached thousands of people. Indeed, during that time a branch of the movement got armed to protect their leaders from state oppression. After the war, the movement was dissolved by the government because of their violent policy [1].

When Nasser took over the country, he assumed the MB as a major threat against his authority and put a tremendous pressure over the members of the community. For that reason, during Nasser’s period, the community continued its activities secretly. The MB began to gain power in Egypt after the death of Nasser. During 1970s with the reentrance to political arena the organization began to transform its political attitudes. They left the violent policies and began to follow a more moderate policy which aimed to participate to the political system and expand their influence within the system. This policy showed itself in 1984 elections in which the MB joined in a coalition with Wafd party. In this election the MB got only 8 seats. In 1987 they made another alliance with Labor party and gained 36 seats. By joining to the independent candidates, the MB won 1 seat in 1995 elections, 17 seats in 2000 elections and 88 seats in 2005 elections.

**Long Term-Short Term Strategies**

Leaving the violent politics is the turning point for the organization. The moderation of political ideas differed them from other radical Islamic movements within the society. But leaving the violent politics did not change their aim to create an Islamic government and Islamic society. For that reason, their strategic goals can be evaluated under two main topics: the short term goals and the long term goals.

The MB’s short term goal basically is to gain the people’s support and take the control of the government. In this short term plan the democracy has a crucial role. Being under an authoritarian system, the only way for the MB to reach the political power is to use democratic elections. For that reason rather than opposing the entire system, they try to integrate to it. From this perspective they prefer to leave the radical ideas of Sayyid Qutb, who was an influential extremist, and began to follow the moderate thinkers.

Under the light of moderate Islamic thinkers they developed a combination of Islam and democracy. In other words they interpret the democracy in an Islamic view. Within this concept they define democracy;

“...as (1) broad, equal citizenship with (2) binding consultation of citizens with respect to governmental personnel and policies, and (3) protection of citizens from arbitrary state action” [2]

As seen in the definition they have a democracy concept which pivots around the citizenship. Their main concern is to expand equal rights within the society and end the arbitrary behavior of the authoritarian state.

**MB’s democratic demands can be seen more detailed in their 15 principles which were declared in 1990s. With these principles they declared that the only acceptable power source is the consent of the people. Any other sources cannot be considered legitimate. In addition the principles include a broad freedom demand which consists religion, speech, demonstration, political participation and representation. Moreover they demand a separation between prosecution and investigation powers. By regarding that the MB is a banned organization, it can obviously be seen that these demands are targeted to ensure MB’s right to participate in the political arena. Another main demand in these principles is a free and fair election. Besides ensuring their position in political arena, they want to access the political authority by a free and
fair election because they always have had problems with government before previous elections [3][4].

These demands mostly are characteristics of a Western type democracy. From this perspective it can be easily said that the MB wants to promote democracy against an authoritarian government. On the other hand the MB accepts these demands because for them they are compatible with Islamic values. Moreover they see democracy as a part of Islam. In other words by supporting democratic values they do not move away from Islam [5].

By looking at their 15 principles, the MB can be assessed as an organization which desires to promote democracy in an authoritarian state. But when the long term goals of the organization are considered, it is obviously seen that they want to create an Islamic state in which the sharia laws are implemented. This goal is announced clearly with a campaign slogan: Islam is the solution.

They perceive Islam as a way to end the authoritarian control of the government and give an opportunity to the people to govern themselves. For them, Islam is the only chance to create a reform process which has been desired by people for years. They claim that current system is corrupted and therefore a broad reform process has to start. The sharia laws can create suitable environment for such a reform. Moreover their definition of Islamic state is not an authoritarian one. They argue that such an Islamic state would be a civil state which includes democratic values like free and fair elections [6].

Today Egypt is on the edge of a great transformation after the end of the long standing authoritarian regime. The question is what the direction of this transformation will be. Will Egypt become a free country which is managed by its people or will its fate be determined by actors in the shadow? The Muslim Brotherhood is always the leading actor against oppression but in the long term their path leads to Islamic state which would bring the country into new conflicts with global actors. For that reason their intentions and role in the new regime have to be evaluated carefully.

Notes:

* Tamer Kasikci is a PhD student at Dokuz Eylul University.


2) Mona El-Ghobashy, “The Metamorphosis of The Egyptian Muslim Brothers”, p.2


4) For the whole list of principles please look http://www.ikhwanweb.com/Article.asp?ID=813&LevelID=2&SectionID=116

5) Linjakumpu, p.68

Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies (CPRS)

Postgraduate Programmes

CPRS courses are aimed at those who have an academic interest in issues related to peace, conflict, reconstruction, peacebuilding and reconciliation, and mid-career professionals who seek a meaningful addition to their qualifications and experience.

Online MA in Peacebuilding
MA in Peace and Reconciliation Studies (PRS)
MA in PRS as Distance Learning Programme
Postgraduate Certificate in Conflict Resolution Skills

Our programmes aim to:

- Develop the knowledge and skill base necessary to understand the causes of destructive conflict around the world.
- Understand the theory and practice of conflict transformation, peacemaking and peacebuilding at the various levels.
- Evaluate alternative modes of action and intervention in the attempt to transform violent and destructive conflict along non-violent and constructive channels.
- Draw the attention to the issues of human security and the dilemmas of humanitarian intervention in conflict zones.

www.coventry.ac.uk/peacestudy
Interview With

Khaled Elshami*

Post Mubarak Egypt: Historic Changes and Challenges

By Salwa Al Khatib**

On 25 January 2011—Thousands of Egyptians took to the streets to demand an end to President Hosni Mubarak’s rule. In a country where emergency law has been in place for 30 years along with the President such scenes were unprecedented.

In what is now a historic moment in history, Egypt’s youth used the New Media to form a “Day of Wrath” of anti-government demonstrations inspired by the downfall of Tunisia’s President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali only a day earlier on January 14.

For the next three weeks Tahrir Square in Egypt’s Capital Cairo became the focal point of the world’s attention, as the people of Egypt rose to a unanimous revolt against a regime that had for too long stripped them of democracy, human rights and freedom of speech.

For millions of Egyptians what took place on the streets of Cairo, Alexandria and all over the streets of their country was an unimaginable dream; a peo-
ple defying their (US backed and supported) dictator with nothing but their bodies, willing to die for a freedom that most of the youth had never even known.

For as long as Mubarak was in power many in Egypt were secretly angered by his corrupt rule but remained silent out of the fear that his dictatorship had instilled in them. Their silence combined with Mubarak's corruption, theft of billions of dollars from the country's wealth, unquestionable support for Israel and the closing of the Rafah border humiliated the Egyptian people in the region, and at the time many renowned political analysts proclaimed that Egyptians were 'too accustomed and afraid to defy their government'.

Few Egyptian voices in defiance of Mubarak were heard during his rule. Those who refused to be silenced did so at the determent of their own safety.

Opposition groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood and Kiefya (Arabic for Enough!) spent more time being tortured in jails than campaigning for freedom. But though their voices were few and far between, it now appears that they had reached the hearts and minds of many Egyptians, who had listened to their cry for freedom but were too afraid to join in.

It was particularly difficult for journalists in Egypt whose job description commands that they report to their readers what is taking place in their country. Journalism in Egypt under the former dictatorship became nothing more than a sound bite, an extension of government propaganda.

One of the Egyptian voices that had long called for democratic change in his country is Khaled Elshami. In fact in an ironic turn of events, Elshami had a Television programme only two days prior to the uprising in Egypt titled, Suicide or Revolt? In which he described the Egyptian people as being on the verge of a revolt.

Here he talks to me about the great changes that are facing the Egyptian people Post Revolution and how they can make the transitional process from emergency law and corruption to a long awaited and much deserved democracy.

CESRAN: As the political editor of an Arabic Newspaper (Al Quds Al Arabi) you have been reporting the historic events taking place in Egypt and the whole of the Middle East region, what can your ongoing close observation of Egyptian affairs tell us about the current movements we are seeing in the new Egypt?

Khaled Elshami: Egypt is witnessing some major political, social and economic changes following its historic revolution last month.

The power of the people, particularly the new youth movements armed with new media, is setting the agenda and actively playing a significant role in shaping the new political regime following decades of stagnation.

There are tens of new political parties expected to form in the next few months, transforming the political scene and giving voices to the vast
majority of the people who have been muzzled since the end of the Monarchy rule in 1952.

CESRAN: Is it viable to expect old and newly formed political parties such as the Muslim Brotherhood who have been hunted and oppressed by the previous regime to suddenly rise up to the challenges Egypt now faces?

Khaled Elshami: The strong and well organised Muslim Brotherhood group is set to form a political party called ‘freedom and justice’ probably inspired by the, justice and development party in Turkey. This was unimaginable only two months ago, as Mubarak regime made it unconstitutional to form a political party on religious ground.

Fears of an “extreme Islamic regime” to be established in Egypt are baseless.

For some reason, some western governments and news outlets find it of relevance to compare the Iranian revolution when assessing the situation in Egypt.

Looking at photos of millions of Egyptians in the streets during the revolution, no political party or ideological group could be identified, as the awakening of Egyptian national spirit has occupied the centre and marginalised all political entities.

Unlike most of the Arab world, Egypt is enjoying a vibrant civil society and a strong independent media that played a major role in bringing down Mubarak regime, one of the oldest and most stubborn dictatorships in the world.

CESRAN: What is the daily situation now in Egypt?

Khaled Elshami: The continuing absence of the regular police force has created a security vacuum in which sectarian violence, robbery and sexual harassment are on the increase.

The Egyptian state seems to face a serious challenge of keeping its integrity, with its inability to force law and order, as many police officers are either unable or unwilling to go back to work, fearing being subjected to humiliation or assault by the public in revenge for almost four hundred youth and six thousands injured during the revolution by the security central forces.

The Armed forces Security Council that is ruling the country seems to be overwhelmed by the wide spread unrest, demonstrations that are continuing even after allowing the revolution youth to appoint their favourite choice as a prime minster.

The unusual weakness of the Post Mubarak state is inviting more protests, of which, some are thought to be orchestrated to break the spirit of the revolution, and force the people to accept that some of its demands may not be achievable.
Nevertheless the battle of democratisation in Egypt is far too important to be compared with other regional struggle for change. Egypt is the heart of the Arab world and a historic source of inspiration to the region.

A sustainable democratic regime in Egypt is likely to lead eventually to a long awaited for new Middle- East that is more democratic and respectful of human rights, a development would dramatically impact some international conflicts and global powers interests.

CESRAN: What parties or individuals do you believe to currently be most resistant to the revolt and the current transitional process?

Khaled Elshami: Many people in Egypt fear that there are counter-revolution dark forces in operation to undermine the credibility of the Post Mubarak regime. Knowing that they have no place in the NEW EGYPT, wealthy businessmen that worked closely with Gamal Mubarak, the son of the ex president in the ruling NDP party, and senior officers in the much feared and empowered state security police who lost a lot by the fall of Mubarak are believed to be behind the counter revolution.

CESRAN: Are Egyptians hopeful of the future?

Khaled Elshami: Mubarak regime was a perfect example of how slow and painful democratisation could be. With its fall Egypt has taken a major step toward democracy, but the path is surely long and costly.

After thirty years of implementing emergency law by Mubarak, in which fear, corruption, mistrust of the state and disrespect of human rights have become a culture, a massive amount of work is needed to rebuild the people and the state.

As elsewhere, after celebrations of the newly born democracy ends, the real questions will soon begin whether a democratic regime can deliver in very difficult circumstances as the economy is shaking and social insecurity is increasing.

Education and health services have collapsed under Mubarak and in need of huge investments for the people to taste the fruit of change. Alongside with unemployment that has gone out of control forcing thousands of new graduates to migrate every year, restoring the Economy is an uphill task to the emerging regime in Egypt.

Notes:

* Khaled Elshami is an Egyptian independent researcher and journalist. He is currently the political editor of Alquds Alarabi, pan Arab newspaper in London and presenter of (Awraq Misrya) (Egyptian papers) program on Al Hiwar TV based in UK. He was born in Egypt and educated both in Egypt and UK. He was granted MSc in international conflicts by Kingston University in UK.

** Salwa Al Khatib is a Freelance Journalist.
The Light at the End of the Tunnel:

The South-South Locomotive

By Dr. Can Erbil*

South-South Trade

In the aftermath of the global financial crisis, trade between developing countries (South-South trade [1]) has become more vital and more vibrant than ever.

"Just as developing countries are becoming increasingly important markets for high-income exporters, so too are other developing countries becoming more important destinations for the exports of developing countries.[2]"

"Between 1990 and 2008 world trade expanded almost four-fold, but South-South trade multiplied more than ten times.[3]"

"Since 1990, South-South trade has risen from 7 percent of total world trade to 18 percent [4], while North-North trade has fallen from 65 percent to 50 percent [5]."

According to ITC’s latest figures, almost 45% of world trade is conducted by developing countries with nearly half of this trade categorized as South-South trade [6].

Switch over

In addition to these increases in volume and share of trade, there have also been significant changes in the composition and destination of exports from the South (developing countries). Previously, South was mainly engaged in trade with North, selling them manufactured goods and commodities. More recently, especially after the crisis, South surprised the trade pessimists by not only being able to produce competitive, higher value-added products; but also increasing its own consumption of such products. The developing world can no longer simply be labeled as “poor” [7].

Scholars and practitioners believe that this new dynamic can go beyond helping the South. Developing economies now have the potential to “switch over” to become locomotives in the global economy. Similar arguments create new terminology like “reverse de-coupling” and “re-coupling” describing the increasing South-South synergy.

Beyond Gains from Trade

When we take a closer look at the accelerating momentum of South-South trade, we find out that it offers much more than the standard efficiency and specialization gains of trade:

♦ It relies less on developed country markets, hence it is subject to less volatility coming from the developed country demand [8].
♦ Unlike the North-South trade, there is no donor-recipient relation between the trading partners and trade is not driven or shaped by international official development assistance.
(ODA) commitments.

- It is market-driven, transmitted by the international supply chains of the South.
- Higher existing trade barriers [9] between developing countries point to more potential welfare gains from lowering those barriers.
- Similarly, there is also more potential and a higher rate of return to proactive trade facilitation and aid for trade [10]:
  - Investments in trade-related infrastructure
  - Investments in trade information and trade promotion facilities
  - Institutional capacity building, trade support institutions
  - Research, awareness, technical assistance, information platforms, clusters, business networks, trade and business facilitation
  - Lowering technical barriers to trade
  - Learning process for exports and international procurement
  - Expanding trade in services

- South-South trade can better utilize the demand at the “bottom of the pyramid”.
- It has more potential to cut distance related trade costs.
- South-South trade can have a greater impact on poverty reduction.
- It builds further backward-forward linkages between industries providing an opportunity of sustainable industrialization for the South.
- It provides the opportunity to reduce the dependence on commodity exports for many developing countries.
- It promotes more trade in services among developing countries, which has positive spillover effects on merchandise trade, skill and capability gaps and beyond.
- More cooperation among developing countries results in significant active participation in multi-lateral trade talks.
- Expanded South-South trade can help reduce policy barriers among developing countries and have a stabilizing affect in high-tension regions.
- Promoting South-South trade will also help reduce “global imbalances” – North reducing their net imports from South after the crisis and South discovering itself as a new source of demand.

**South-South Trade Development Strategy**

To take full advantage of these existing and potential gains, an effective, pro-poor South-South trade development strategy is critical.

In many aspects, this strategy is similar to a North-South trade expansion strategy. It emphasizes less barriers to trade, taking more advantage of the already existing openness by utilizing trade facilitation and aid for trade tools, and more competition and trade in services.

However, there are also more South-specific elements to the South-South trade development strategy:

- The bottom-up, demand driven South-South trade needs to be aligned with macro, top-down, national and cross-border initiatives.
- Multi-stake ownership, public-private partnerships, interactions of the private sector, governments and international organizations are particularly important for the South.
- Cross-border regional integration via preferential trade agreements (PTAs [11]), bilateral, sub-regional and regional approaches will help South to take advantage of economies of scale and identify comparative advantages resulting from low factor costs and trade linkages.
- Promoting export diversification is particularly important for the South. It dampens the affects of external shocks and decreases volatility and vulnerability.
- South needs to prioritize liberalizing nontariff barriers, which are the biggest obstacle in expanding trade.
- Finding the cohesion between UNCTAD’s Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries (GSTP) and the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) and concluding the Doha process would generate additional benefits for the South and promote the South-South trade expansion.
- Simplifying “rules of origin” and making it more transparent would also benefit South in general and the least developed countries.
(LDC) in particular.

- Paying special attention to LDC within the South through pro-development policies like unilateral tariff preference schemes, technical assistance and technology transfer, would strengthen the South-South cooperation and its potential.

Of course, this strategy should not undermine the importance of the existing North-South trade relationship and Dynamics [12].

Caution and End Goal

While promoting South-South trade and cooperation, it is imperative that policy makers, businessmen, practitioners and governments should keep in mind that there is not a country called “South” and that a “one size fits all” solution will not work. All of the recommendations and policies listed above need to be evaluated at the country level and adjusted to their domestic needs and goals. Flexible steps and country-specific solutions fitted to each nation’s institutions will assure ownership. Each country needs to own its version of the South-South trade expansion strategy [13].

There is now no doubt that new export- and domestic demand-led growth will pay greater attention to South-South trade and that it is here to stay.

While discussing how to harness the potential of expanded South-South trade and cooperation, one should not forget that the end goal is poverty reduction and development, and not more trade.

Lastly, in light of the current events in Tunisia and Egypt, it is necessary to ask whether this South-South locomotive has been an engine or a drag to recent social movements and increasing demand for freedom and democracy in the South.

Notes:

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1) There are also many differences within South itself, with major countries like China, India and Brazil driving these trends. Aggregating all of these countries under the title of “South” may be a simplification, but the author believes it is also useful to give a snapshot of the greater picture and a continuum of the literature which often refers to developing and developed countries as two well-defined separate groups. An extended version of this note investigates South in more detail, dividing it up into sub-groups like “BRIC”, “MIST”, transitioning South, etc...

2) Development in Trade 2010, The World Bank

3) OECD

4) Part of this growth comes from intermediate goods as a result of increased outsourcing and off-shoring activities initiated in the North

5) IMF DOTS


7) The expansion of the middle class in the South has contributed to this process.

8) But more subject to developing country demand volatility.

9) Especially non-tariff barriers

10) This points to endogenous trade barriers: more trade causes lower trade costs. Many of the barriers South is facing are indeed not traditional policy barriers. Moreover, based on Anderson and Yotov (2010) the faster growing sectors gain “reduced sellers' incidence” even if trade costs are constant, which points to additional gains.

11) PTAs, which can enhance South-South trade, can slow down regional integration if they act as substitutes to regional trade agreements. A careful study is needed to fully assess the dynamic and static effects of a PTA.

12) There are additional benefits of North-South trade, such as technology transfer.

13) The quality of institutions in each country becomes crucial to implement this step successfully.
The EU’s Quest in South Caucasus: 

Energy Security & 
Pro-Active Engagement 

By Zaur Shiriyev*

The EU is implementing all the possible projects in order to lessen Russian gas dominance in the European market and in this regard one of those big projects is the “Southern Corridor”, which includes Nabucco as priority project as well as ITGI, TAP and White Stream. None of these projects has been materialized as of yet and all of them heavily depends on Azerbaijani gas for their take off stage. When the EU high ranking bureaucrats visited to Azerbaijan on 13 January, 2011, President of European Commission José Manuel Barroso and the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev signed a joint declaration on gas delivery for Europe in Baku. With this declaration, Azerbaijan for the first time committed itself -to supplying substantial volumes of gas to the European Union in the long run, which has led Europe to access to Azeri markets. In the wake of this visit, the European Parliament (EP) adopted “An EU Strategy for Black Sea region” on 20 January, 2011. This strategy, among others, called in the EU as "more direct engagement" and "EU’s leading role in the negotiations and peace-making processes". On energy security issues, the resolution stresses on the importance of the Southern Corridor and “the significance” of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) transportation to Europe in the form of the AGRI project. Although the document refers “energy security” issues, there is no link to Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which is the challenge area for EU and its energy security in the future. Similar document (on the need for a European Union strategy for the South Caucasus) concerning South Caucasus was approved by the EP on May 20, 2010. Unless Azerbaijani territories are liberated from the Armenian occupation and EU formulate a strategy to show its stance in the regional problems, peace and stability in the region will be unattainable. Accordingly, it some question arises such as is the EU “soft” or “smart” power in South Caucasus and why EU is not going to implement strong political will towards this region?

EU policy towards the South Caucasus has become an idiom only recently in political literature within last two decades. In 2003, the region, at a conceptual level, was recognized as an area where the European Security Strategy would typically apply. Until this period, the EU-South Caucasus policy was based upon energy issues; its policies towards the region did not meet aspirations of South Caucasus states since the member states of the European
Union reward their own national interests which contradicted with the overall policies of the European Union. During this time, the EU prioritized economic concerns over political and strategic ones. The lack of any sound political initiative toward the powerful policy was linked to the weaknesses concerning the EU’s objectives and its strategic instruments.

The political transformation of the EU made its strategic instruments stronger as well as reciprocally and positively affected its policies towards region. The increasing interest of the EU in the region and in its neighbour countries to the EU’s “soft power” initiatives include: Neighbourhood Policy and Eastern Partnership Programmes (EaP). In this regard, the EU’s approach to the South Caucasus is identifiable as “soft power” which is the most sophisticated and advantageous way to exercise power. The American theorist Joseph S Nye, who coined the term, defines such in the following manner: ‘soft power rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others... with intangible assets such as an attractive personality, culture, political values and institutions, and policies that are seen as legitimate or having moral authority [1]. The EU’s soft power comes from its common values, or norms, namely the principles of democracy; the rule of law; social justice; human rights; the commitment to a market economy; social solidarity; sustainable development and the fight against discrimination.

This “soft power” query has been more acceptable for Georgia as the EU’s instruments for its transformation were used. For Georgia, a strong European orientation is a main priority for the country’s foreign policy; after the “Rose Revolution,” the Georgian authority declared EU membership to be one of the country’s chief foreign policy objectives. But, the August 2008 war abolished Georgians aspirations and trust to the EU. The war showed that for maintaining the sustainability of reform process in the Southern Caucasus countries channels for dialogue must be open. On the EU side, eliminating EU accession prospect, increasing weight of prominent members of the EU to pursue intergovernmental or unilateral policies, differences and lack of solidarity in the EU due to diversified political orientation among the member states would have destructive effects on the dynamics of socio-economic and reform process in the Southern Caucasus.

Otherwise, regional challenges comprise of: extremism, separatism and terrorism as well as territorial disputes, a regional arms race, environmental concerns and the rise of transnational organized crime threatening the EU’s security. Subsequently, the appointment of European Union Special Representative for the South Caucasus was the sign of the EU’s “smart power” initiatives. The virtually isolated conflict zones such as Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, where there is no official international presence, have been directly implicated in the overall regional powers’ policy as well as EU. It is a matter of great importance that the EU must contribute to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and disputes between warring parties in the region. The EU policies are ineffective as long as status quo of frozen conflicts remain unchanged. In addition to the dramatic effects of frozen conflicts' on political and economical stability, the conflicts led to the strengthening of the hard politics tendencies of the governments, thus resulted in failure and ineffectiveness of reform and democracy movements. The EU will have a clear position on the settlement of all the conflicts in the EaP area based on the norms and principles of the international law and relevant international documents adopted. A differentiated approach on these conflicts does not serve the image of the EU as a credible and reliable partner, thus damaging the very idea of partnership.

Arguably, the August 2008 war between Russia and Georgia demonstrated the EU’s “soft power” quest. It is hard to realize that any political, economical aims in this region exist, as regional politicians believed that without having “hard power” or a politically strong position they could still maintain cohesive relations with the region. This argument stands more discussable between the regions’ politicians and academics that the South Caucasus must not
be reduced to a zero-sum game between regional players, and that none of the conflicts have a religious or tribal basis. Essentially, after signing of Lisbon Treaty in 2009, the EU started to combine its soft and hard power better in the external relations by using the whole spectrum of policy instruments and economic resources. Theoretically, this should be done in a forward-looking, consistent and unified way. However, the abolishment of the EU Special Representative in February 2011 does not answer whether the EU's role is increasing as a "smart power" in this region or not. As stated above, the establishment of the EU’s smart power in the South Caucasus for formulating future strategy should be to provide European values and interests in this region more effectively in order to extend the European zone of peace and prosperity, liberty and democracy.

Regrettably, soft power alone is no longer enough; merely being attractive is no longer adequate, either in South Caucasus, or in other regions. But going down the path of hard power is also not the answer as a big energy interest of the EU provides to protect energy lines as well as to become a stronger player in the security of region. The idea that some have already termed ‘smart power’ is an answer to EU’s security policy regarding to South Caucasus. As the EU continues to develop its role in the world, the challenge is two-fold: to ensure coherence between the civilian and military sides; and to use soft, attractive power more strategically.

Finally, without giving prospects of enlargement to Southern Caucasus states and promoting their efforts to adopt Acquis Communitaire and Copenhagen Criteria, the EU policies will not be very efficient in the region. For this reason, clear (material) incentives, prospect of full membership and recognition of the European identity are the elements that the EU can stimulate for political and economic reform process in its European partners on a reference basis perceived as "legitimate". The EU’s promotion of its values, norms and the demand for their adoption within their political and economical system are justified through a consistent proposal for full membership, European identity and sharing the political and economic power of the EU. Therefore, the EU integration does not merely address material benefits. Equally important problems are evident in the post-Cold War era of belonging and identity, which justifies EU’s stances and principles in the perspectives of EU partner states. Not only Southern Caucasus states need to deal with their internal and external problems efficiently, but the EU also must prepare herself for the role in which she would play and arrange necessary measures to deal with the Southern Caucasus states and immediate neighbours.

After all, the big historical lesson the EU has learnt is the lesson of integration. The integration is the only weapon with which can be achieved a lasting conciliation with the past and an investment in a better future. It should not be forgotten that without solution of existing conflicts, it is impossible to apply an integration model for all regional countries. However, experts argue that [2] the current political instability in one important region for the European energy supplies gives a new strong argument to Azerbaijan in order to underline the importance of southern-

Caucasian stability in the European energy security and ask for a more active EU implication with regional security issues.

Notes:

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Ideas expressed here reflect the personal views of the author and do not represent the views of any institution.

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Listing the members of the British royal family and aristocracy is a good way to discover England’s regions. The likes of Wessex, Cornwall and York, Kent, Gloucester and Norfolk all sport their own Duke; and Durham is known as the Land of the Prince Bishops. From history, we know that relations between these areas were not always friendly, with stories of wars and battles littering England’s ancient fields.

Yet as the governance of England developed over the centuries, its sub-national characteristics changed, and changed significantly. Today in 2011, we find ourselves at another watershed as the waves of regionalisation ebb and flow with one government’s policy diluting that of its predecessor, or sweeping structures aside in a flood of fresh thought.

For the time being, England has eight official regions, plus London. The eight regions are North West, North East, Yorkshire and The Humber, West Midlands, East Midlands, East of England, South West and South East.

Does size matter?

Luxembourg and Malta are small countries. Despite various vote weighting measures in the European Union, they still have an influence disproportionate to their size. But that is alright for countries, and no-one suggests that the smaller EU Member States should link up with other small countries to form groupings of an equal size. While that might please statisticians, particularly neat and tidy ones, it is not going to happen.

Yet at the sub-national level it is a different story. With perhaps the statisticians’ hands deftly at work, EU Member States have been carved up into ‘Euro’ regions – ostensibly for funding purposes ironically termed NUTS. In their defence, existing sub-national structures were a primary consideration in drawing the lines on the map; but the urge to make
them all the same size was clearly irresistible. Many smaller entities – like the English counties of Northumberland and Lancashire that had an ‘identity’ – found themselves lumped together with scant attention paid to cultural, geographic or even economic considerations.

**Artificial regions**

It was, of course, easier to administer a group of similarly-sized regions. It made comparisons easier and possibly contributed to a fairer distribution of EU regional development funding. But in public relations terms, it did nothing for local identity and even enhanced people’s feelings of disenfranchisement: For someone in Middlesbrough, a policy decision taken in Newcastle is in local terms as far removed as a decision taken in London.

Artificial regions are easy to spot across Europe. Look for names such as North, South West or Central. Anything that has to rely solely on its compass points for its identity scarcely has one. Many EU countries have succumbed, though Germany is an honourable exception, having a well-established political and constitutional structure in its Länder (plural of Land) and city states. Statisticians will observe with discomfort that some of them are very big and others very small.

So could the German system have provided a model for England’s counties and cities? The question was not one that sat at the forefront of political thinking in the latter part of the twentieth century. Devolution was a more pressing issue, and in the end, the UK government recognised the advantages of according certain parts of the United Kingdom political and economic autonomy. Since then, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales have all established – or re-established – an assembly or government, and taken far more control of their domestic affairs. This has left England out on a limb somewhat. It was never politically acceptable that English regions could receive more – or even as much – autonomy as the ‘home countries’, so they didn’t.

**Tinkering with the system**

Ignoring the point that the English regions, as they were defined, were artificial in the first place, it was not surprising that successive British governments failed to implement any credible policies on regional governance. The successive Labour Party-led governments from 1997 to 2010 pursued a policy of positive empowerment, seeking to delegate a limited range of decisions, policy development and economic responsibilities. Ministers were tacitly aware that such delegation would not necessarily invoke the ‘divide and rule’ principle, but would at least keep the regions busy arguing internally about what to do rather than challenge the centre. To some extent this worked.

A key Labour government policy was to be seen to regionalise by supporting regional assemblies and regional development agencies. These would allow for regional decision-making and a regional allocation of development funding. The regional assemblies also assumed responsibility for spatial planning, which allowed them to think big when it came to large infrastructure projects and business developments. Counties and conurbations therefore worked together for their mutual benefit – or that was the theory: It took no account of local rivalries (e.g. Liverpool v. Manchester) or where areas within a region had little in common (e.g. Kent and Oxfordshire). Separate arrangements were put in place for London, where control was vested in an elected mayor and assembly.

**Rise of the city regions**

During the 2000s, England saw a change in the regional landscape as larger cities moved to define and embed their positions as economic drivers. These focused on economic development, bringing together diverse and sometimes conflicting political
structures. As a result, some rural areas felt excluded from the additional funding and benefits that city regions were beginning to attract.

By the end of its tenure in office in 2010, the Labour government had already begun to dismantle the regional assemblies. Pushed hard in 2003-04 by the then Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott, the idea of elected regional assemblies gained little public support, as they were seen as an unnecessary tier of government. It culminated in a disastrous referendum in North East England in 2004, with plans for referenda in other regions already abandoned as unlikely to succeed. Amongst all the navel-gazing that followed, few asked if it was the regions themselves that were wrongly defined, rather than just the government’s policy.

A new structure was established called The Northern Way. This brought together the three northern English regional development agencies to achieve economic growth and rebalance the economy. It proved to be a fruitful means of expression for the developing city regions like Merseyside, Greater Manchester, Leeds and Tyne & Wear.

The Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government formed in 2010 brought an uneasy marriage of policies on regions. The Conservative view was to accelerate the dismantling of regional structures with the abolition of the regional development agencies and the winding down of the government offices for the regions. It was made clear that power would go instead to local authorities, or be returned to the centre. The Liberal Democrats had been seen as champions of local and regional power, and the coalition realised some of those aims too.

The local authorities outside London suddenly found themselves the unexpected recipients of extra responsibilities, albeit with little, if any, extra cash. However, there was a cautious welcome for the new arrangements that gave local councils more control over how money was spent locally. The catch was that they were not able to act alone; they had to form themselves into groupings or consortia known as Local Enterprise Partnerships. Several of these are now established, and others are in the pipeline; but some areas remain uncovered, and their future and direction unclear.

New wave

So, to all intents and purposes, what remains of English regions exists primarily for NUTS purposes. Will the regions be missed? Will the statisticians have to swallow hard and find new ways of comparing city regions with undefined boundaries? Perhaps the latest wave of regionalism will bring about a renaissance of some of the ancient dukedoms and kingdoms of England’s past, like Wessex and Mercia. It is more likely that the current focus on getting the country out of recession will be much more on everyone’s mind than the governance structures in place at sub-national level. Yet it is perhaps those structures that in the longer term will have a tangible effect on the success or otherwise of economic development they will engender across England’s green and pleasant land. PR

Note:

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Azerbaijan’s pledge to supply gas will give a boost to the EU’s Southern Corridor project. This, in turn, calls the economics of Russia’s South Stream project into question. Russia could still benefit, though, if it connected the North-South Trunk Pipeline to the SCP.

Under the Joint Declaration on the Southern Gas Corridor signed in Baku last week, Azerbaijan has committed to supplying substantial volumes of natural gas (about 10 billion cubic metres per year) over the long term to the European Union. The document also calls for Azerbaijan to play the role of transit country for Central Asian gas and outlines the EU’s commitment to providing access to its markets for these gas flows.

The Joint Declaration was signed on January 13 by José Manuel Barroso, the president of the European Commission, and Ilham Aliyev, the President of Azerbaijan. The next day, Barroso held talks with Turkmenistani President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov in Ashgabat. During that meeting, he urged the Turkmenistani side to accelerate the implementation of plans for launching deliveries of gas to Europe.

The accord, together with Barroso’s trip to Ashgabat, will bolster energy ties between the EU and the

Successful Visit of the EC High Level Officials to Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan

By Dr. Zura Garakanidze*
Caspian region. Moreover, it has also raised the possibility of a merger between two rival gas transport projects, Russia’s South Stream and the EU-backed Southern Gas Corridor.

**Southern Corridor**

The Southern Corridor would include several gas pipelines, including Nabucco, Interconnector Turkey-Greece-Italy (ITGI), White Stream and the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline (TAP), all of which aim to bring gas from the Caspian region to Europe.

Nabucco would pump gas into Austria, an EU member, via a brand-new pipeline, while TAP and ITGI would involve the strengthening of existing infrastructure facilities in EU and non-EU countries in South-Eastern Europe. White Stream, meanwhile, would transit gas through Georgia and across the bed of the Black Sea to Ukraine and Romania; this project has not moved past the design stage.

Azerbaijan is currently carrying out negotiations with potential buyers of gas from Stage 2 of the Shah Deniz (SD2) offshore gas field and is slated to select a client or clients to access the 10 bcm per year that will be available in April. The Nabucco consortium is one of the bidders, alongside other groups such as ITGI and TAP.

**“Major breakthrough”**

The Joint Declaration is an important step towards the realisation of the EU’s Southern Corridor project and the diversification of European energy supplies. For one thing, it is the first written commitment made by Azerbaijan to export gas to Europe. It calls for Azerbaijan to be the first Caspian country to supply Europe with gas and aims to open up the supply route that the EU calls the Southern Gas Corridor.

“This is a major breakthrough,” said Barroso. “This agreement confirms Europe’s direct access to gas from the Caspian basin, thus enabling the realisation of the Southern Corridor. This new supply route will enhance the energy security of European consumers and businesses.”

Barroso’s trip to Ashgabat on January 14 was also designed to promote the Southern Corridor project. While in the Turkmenistani capital, the EC president and European Energy Commissioner Guenther Oettinger expressed support for the proposed Tran-Caspian Gas Pipeline (TCGP), saying that the countries that would be involved in such a project had the right to build the conduit and that construction could be completed relatively quickly. Barroso also stressed that the TCGP had the support of the EU on a political level.

**“No new ideas”**

Ashgabat appears to have some reservations, however. According to a Turkmenistani media source, President Berdymukhammedov indicated that he was unsure why the EU sent Barroso and Oettinger to discuss the Southern Corridor at a time when it has “no new offer” and “no new ideas” on how to help Turkmenistan join the flagship Nabucco pipeline project.

Some experts have speculated, though, that the EU is eager to push forward on this front because of the signing of an agreement on the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline project. The TAPI deal, they say, has raised questions about Turkmenistan’s reserves and about whether the gas will actually flow to Europe.

In the end, Barroso’s visit to Ashgabat appears to have been mostly political. That is, it gave the EU an opportunity to weigh in on the issue in the hope of convincing Turkmenistan to go ahead with the TCGP project and yielded little in the way of conc-
concrete results. However, it may also have aimed at serving other purposes.

Merger possibilities

One of the reasons for quick negotiations, according to some specialists, was the idea of a merger of pipelines. David Thorne, the US ambassador to Italy, raised this point on January 10, three days before the signing of the Joint Declaration. In an interview with the Italian Daily La Stampa, he said that two major pipeline projects that have so far been considered rivals, the EU-favoured Nabucco and Gazprom’s South Stream, might merge.

The Nabucco gas pipeline has been under discussion since 2002, when Austria’s OMV began talks with the Turkish pipeline operator Botas. It was originally proposed to reduce Europe’s dependence on Russian gas and is widely viewed as a mostly political project.

Russia’s South Stream is also a political project, designed to bypass Ukraine via a pipeline under the Black Sea to the Bulgarian coast. From Bulgaria, it will split into a southern branch going to Greece and Italy and a northern branch supplying Romania, Serbia, Hungary, Slovenia and Austria. According to the project’s website, South Stream is designed to strengthen European energy security by minimising transit risk and will help Gazprom execute its strategy of diversifying Russian natural gas supply routes.

When asked by reporters to comment on Thorne’s remarks, Marlene Holzner, a spokesperson for Oettinger, said Nabucco and other Southern Corridor projects remained a priority for the EU. These projects will help the bloc diversify its sources of gas supplies, she explained.

Holzner then said, when asked whether Brussels was familiar with the idea of uniting Nabucco and South Stream, that there were many options on the table, including proposals for merging different projects. However, she said, the EC is not discussing the possibility of merging Nabucco and South Stream at the moment. For his part, Paolo Scaroni, the CEO of Eni, was quoted by La Stampa as saying it was currently impossible to have the two pipelines converge, since neither of them existed at this point.

Barriers

Scaroni’s comment is reasonable. The differences in the construction schedules of Nabucco and South Stream, along with many other economic and political factors, would serve as barriers to the merger of these two rival projects. However, this is hardly the first time that the idea of merging of Caspian and Russian gas flows has appeared.

If Turkmenistan agrees to provide gas for Nabucco, EU initiatives on energy security would work against a merger with Nabucco. The high cost of the South Stream project could also serve as a deterrent. With European demand for gas uncertain and liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports rising, Gazprom is under pressure to show more flexibility. To this end, rather than push ahead with the South Stream project, it should go ahead with a lower-cost option – namely, expanding its transit network through Ukraine. It could also start looking into merging its network with EU-backed pipelines, but where?

The Georgian connection

At present, the only place where Caspian and Russian gas transport network intersect is in Georgia. In that country, the North-South Trunk Pipeline, which runs from Russia to Armenia via Georgia, crosses the South Caucasus Pipeline (SCP), which is currently pumping gas from the first stage of Shah Deniz (SD1) and which will direct gas into Nabucco.
The point of intersection is near the village of Sagu-ramo.

The North-South Trunk Pipeline begins in the southern Russian city of Mozdok in Russia and terminates at the Armenian-Georgian border. The 235-km conduit includes two pipes – one with a diameter of 1,200 mm and a second or spare tube with a diameter of 700 mm. Most of the gas transited through these pipes is now delivered to Armenia, because Georgia has been receiving SD1 gas since 2007.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the pipeline has been operating far below capacity. While the design capacity of both pipes comes to 18 bcm per year, the network pumped only 1.7-1.9 bcm per year in 2007-2010. (Even in Soviet times, the maximum annual transit volume was 9.5 bcm per year.) If it were connected to SCP, this pipeline could be used to channel some of the gas that Russia might have exported via South Stream into the Nabucco pipeline.

Increasing gas transits would also be profitable for Georgia. The country already receives 10% of the gas pumped through the North-South Trunk Pipeline as a transit fee. In recent years, gas consumption in Georgia has averaged about 1.73 bcm per year, while Armenia has used about 1.93 bcm per year. This implies that the state-owned Georgia Oil and Gas Corporation (GOGC) receives approximately 190-193 million cubic metres per year of free gas, equivalent to about 11.0-11.2% of the country's gas consumption, which it then monetises through sales to the local population.

The volume of gas transited through Georgian territory is slated to rise in 2017, when SD2 begins production. At that time, the SCP link, which has only been pumping 6-7 bcm per year, will see its capacity increase dramatically to 20 bcm per year. An agreement signed between Turkey and Azerbaijan on the transit and volume of SD2 gas in June 2010 provides for the pipeline to operate at full capacity.

Linking the SCP to the North-South Trunk Pipeline would improve the latter’s prospects while also giving Russia access to a new high-capacity export route and improving Nabucco’s access to gas supplies. Making the connection would be easy and would not restrict supplies to Armenia, especially since that country is now able to receive gas from another supplier – namely, Iran.

If this can be done, the competition between Nabucco and South Stream would subside, and the two projects would instead complement each other. That is, rather than working against Nabucco, Gazprom would be able to make use of the pipeline to gain a new export route to Europe.

Moreover, connecting SCP with the North-South Trunk Pipeline would allow the creation of a wider network in which Iran could serve as a supplier. Iranian gas pumped through the Tabriz-Meghri line to Armenia could then be pumped to Saguramo and redirected into SCP by the Armenian gas network. Similarly, gas From Russia, can be pumped in one of the parallel tubes of North-South Trunk gas pipeline, which could be used as supplier of the SCP for loading into the Nabucco line. This would be cost-effective, as it would make use of existing pipes rather than require the construction of new lines.

Note:

* Dr. Zura Garakanidze is an author in News Base E-magazine.
very interesting city, Bangkok, which was the capital city of Thailand, has been examined in this volume. Thailand is located at the heart of Southeast Asia. The country has a 68.2 million population and 6 millions of this population is living in Bangkok. This city has started to experience a different globalisation process after 1997.

There have been 3 important breakpoints in the near history of Thailand. First breakpoint was the local financial crisis which occurred in 1997. After this local crisis, Thai Government has liberalized the country’s financial markets; as a result, foreign investors started to be very effective in Thai stock market after this date. Second breakpoint was the tsunami disaster which hit all the coastal settlements of Southeast Asia in 2004; about 180,000 people died as a result of this disaster in the region. Third breakpoint was the military coup which happened in 2006 in Thailand; this military intervention has divided the country as the defenders of the King (i.e.Bhumibol Adulyadej) and the defenders of the prime minister (i.e.Thaksin Shinawatra). A political instability process has started after this military coup in the country.

Global investors have been interested in 3 different type of investments after the beginning of financial liberalizations in Thailand. Firstly, some global investors were invested in financial sectors such as banking, insurance and asset management. Secondly, some other global investors, especially from Japan, were invested in manufacturing sectors; these investors established many industrial manufacturing complex in the country, especially in Bangkok city (e.g. metal, machinery and transportation equipments, electronics and electrical appliance, paper, plastic, etc.). Thirdly, some international hypermarket chains (i.e. carrefour and big c.) were invested in the country’s retail sector; the sectorial decisions of these two international hypermarket chains changed the structure of the retail market from oligopoly to duopoly.

I could say that Bangkok was not subject to a strong FDI flow at the moment, despite the realisation of several financial liberalizations in the country. However, this city was going to be subject to a powerful global concern as soon as the political instability has finalized in Thailand. This was the main reason which motivated me to examine Bangkok as a global city in this volume. Developments
which the city experienced in the last 5 years was giving strong signals about the future developments in the city.

The first signal was about the touristic potential of Bangkok. The city had a long-established history and had a mystical culture. Again, the city was providing an entertaining life to its visitors. These specific characteristics started to attract many tourists into the city from all over the world, especially in the last 10 years. The second signal was about the medical potential of the city. Medical and health services were of well-quality and cheap in comparison with many other cities in the world. For example, a person could undergo a heart surgery paying just $25,000 in a hospital of Bangkok; this person had to pay at least $200,000 for the same surgery in US. Therefore, many people have started to visit this city to benefit from its quality medical services recently. The third signal was about the agricultural potential of the city. Some global investors who were displaying activity in energy sectors have started to be interested in rural areas of Bangkok because these rural areas were carrying a high potential to grow non-food crops, which could be used for the production of second-generation bio-fuel energy. Bangkok was a successful city with respect to grow and export agricultural food products to other countries and so this city could also reap a great success with respect to grow and export agricultural non-food energy crops in the near future.

The impact of global concern for Bangkok: Analysis

Before all else, I would like to talk about the possible positive contributions of global concerns towards Bangkok in the near future.

Bangkok is the member of many international city organizations (e.g. The international Network for Urban Development Association - INTA, Asian Pacific City Summit - APCS, The Asian Network of Major Cities 21 - ANMC 21, etc.). The city has an outward-looking character which is suitable for the regional vision of Thailand. Thailand is a country which shows huge efforts for the integration of countries in the Southeast Asia Region (i.e. Cambodia, Laos, Burma, Vietnam, Brunei, East Malaysia, East Timor, Indonesia, the Philippines and Singapore). Therefore, the circuits of capital and the circuits of human for touristic and commercial purposes may gain speed among the cities of this region, if the regional integration become stronger in the next years. This speed-up will mean the continuation of existing social and commercial vitality in Bangkok. Again, the regional integration can open a new gate for youngs of Bangkok. On the one hand, investments in education sector is less than 2.8% of the country’s GDP. On the other hand, the demand of 15 years-old youngs for going to a university is more than 70% in the city. Therefore, Bangkok’s
youngs may find a chance to receive higher educations from the universities of Southeast Asia countries in the next years.

The number of people visiting this city for medical purposes is increasing every year. This number may increase much more in the next years if the Bangkok’s Metropolitan Administration can promote global investors to invest in health sector (e.g. hospitals, health care buildings, medical research schools, mental health units, etc.). The growth of health sector due to global concern is very important for Bangkokians because most of people, from low- or middle-income class, are working in informal sectors under bad conditions in the city, today. These people may employ in this formal sector under good conditions (nursing, midwifery, doctors, allied health professionalism, ambulance, healthcare science, health informatics and management, etc.).

Growing bio-fuel energy crops around Bangkok, processing them in the industrial areas of the city and exporting them to other countries can increase the employment opportunities and export rates dramatically in the city. By this way, Bangkokians can enjoy of economic prosperity. Besides, Bangkok can play a key role with regard to decrease the dependency of the world to patrol-based fuels in the future.

After looking at the possible positive contributions of global concerns towards Bangkok, now, it is time to talk about the possible negative contributions of the globalisation process to Bangkok. The city has slightly started to feel the negative impact of this process in the last years. These negative impacts may increase seriously in the next 10 years if the city’s governors can not manage this process very well because many global investors are waiting the end of the political instability in order to invest in various sectors in the country.

The biggest problem of Bangkok is traffic jam and air pollution, today. Driving from one destination to another in some districts (e.g. Kao San strip) is 5 times slower than getting this distance by walk. Many cars, which are waiting in the traffic because of jam, are letting carbon monoxide (CO) to the atmosphere continuously; and so a dirty smoke is frequently seen over the city. The main reason of traffic and pollution problems is actually new high-rise and high-density constructions near the city centre (e.g. luxury apartments, condominiums, office towers). These mass buildings are developed by mostly international property development and investment companies, being little dependent on a zoning law. The traffic jam problem will get worse in the next years because the development of new mass buildings is going on even in this political and economic crisis environment, especially in the inner city area. Again, the air pollution problem will develop into a bigger problem in the near future because these mass buildings, which were made by cement, are consumed high-level energy (i.e. natural gas and electricity); so, the city’s weather is warming every year. Hot weather will make everyday life in this city much more difficult than the past.

The development of A- and B-class condominiums and luxury apartments is really interesting in Bangkok. The inner city area is full with these type of buildings, now. This type of property developments is also seen throughout the ‘Sky train’ line. These buildings are developed for mostly individual ‘buy-to-let’ investors and they are mostly designed to appeal to expat users (people living outside Thailand). Bangkok probably will face with the over-supply problem of high-density apartments and condominiums a few years later. The demand for these properties can decrease in the next years due
The high demand of Bangkokians for the low-cost affordable housing project (i.e. Bann Eua Artorn) at the north of the city is an important signal for the city’s governors to notice the real need of this wonderful city (i.e. development supply in the pipeline was 81,485 and actual demand was 356,888 for the houses of this project in 2004). Bangkokians simply want to own a low-cost family-house in a liveable neighbourhood. The Bangkok’s Metropolitan Administration is aware of what Bangkokians want because it set a vision for Bangkok to increase property ownership and to build sustainable environments in the city. However, meeting affordable housing demands using only public resources is not a rational and smart urban practice in today’s world. Transferring prospective foreign direct investment flows into social housing and infrastructure projects in the property market via public-private partnerships, in stead of allowing FDIs to flow in condominium or high-rise apartment projects, will be more rational and smart practice for the administration. Achieving these transfers can only be possible through healthy negotiations and fair bargaining between the city’s governors and property market actors. The city’s sustainable development objective is dependent upon the realisation of the successful negotiations. More importantly, Bangkokians can pass their ‘hospitality character’ on to their next generations if only they live in neighbourhoods like Baan Eua Arthorn.

Bangkok is complaining of weak attraction of foreign direct investments into the city despite financial liberalizations. This question comes forward at this point: ‘Did global investments make Bangkok a more liveable city in the last 5 years?’ We can find the answer of this question from the international survey of Mercer Human Resource Consulting, which was conducted between 2006 and 2010 (i.e. all global cities are compared with each other according to liveable city criterions in this annual survey). According to this survey, Bangkok was ranked at the 121st in 2010 whilst it was ranked at the 107th in 2006 in terms of being a liveable city in the world. This result showed that the life got harder economically and socially for Bangkokians in the last 5 years and global investments had played some roles in this result.
Although there have been some limitations for foreigners to invest in Bangkok’s property market, international property investment companies passed over these limitations finding local institutional partners for themselves in this city. This was a reality not only for Bangkok but also for every global city in the world. The Bangkok’s experience showed once again that going a separation as ‘local investments’ or ‘global investments’ was not meaningful in today’s world. Going a separation as ‘useful investments’ and ‘useless investments’ for a city could be a better separation for a city’s governors. A useful investment contributes some social and economic benefits to people living in a city. For example, to increase property ownership, to educate local people on a profession, to transfer an industrial know-how to the city, to increase employment opportunities, to support social projects such as family saving centres/health units and to increase the quality of life in the city could be listed as the social and economic benefits for Bangkoks. In other words, the issue of whether an investment is local or global is not important. The main issue is whether an investment has a contribution to Bangkok or not, in order to develop it into a more liveable city.

In most cities, normally, local people work inside closed places (e.g. stores, offices, etc.) and they usually use streets for transportation purposes. Again, normally, when a tourist goes to a city, he/she usually goes outside from his/her hotel and tours on that city’s streets in order to see and feel that city better. Interestingly, Bangkok is experiencing a reverse situation. Most of local people are working on the streets at the outside and tourists are spending their times in closed luxury places (shopping centres, hotels, etc.).

The street vending activity is about to develop into a chronic problem in Bangkok. For now, many Bangkokians from low- or mid-income class are displaying street vending activity to increase their monthly income and to access a more comfortable life. Namely, this type of activity is seen as a good tool to fight with poverty in general in the city. This can be partly true in the short term but not for the long term. The cancer cases have started to increase among Bangkokians who are doing ‘vending’ on the city’s streets; because these people are breathing dirty air (CO) in the course of the day. Besides, street vending activity is causing several traffic accidents every day. Of course, Bangkokians deserve to work in comfortable places under healthy working conditions.

There are some signals that the street vending activity will be disappeared in the city in the near future because the city’s governors want to ban this informal activity, removing all stalls from the city’s streets. It is clear that the mentality of ‘prohibition’ does not bring social peace in Bangkok. The best policy is to support the entrepreneurial soul of Bangkokians providing them organized and infrastructure market places in the city. This provision should be done as earliest as possible before all open spaces have been filled with mass buildings in the inner city area.

In conclusion, Bangkok is at a very lucky stage in its internationalization process because it has a chance to stop the noticed negative impacts of this process at the moment. The political instability period of Thailand is bringing a good advantage for the city’s governors; they can decide which planned/prospective investments are useful and which are useless for Bangkok in this recession period. Everything is about the management this process. If Bangkok can able to develop global concerns towards itself into its advantage, this city will continue to be a wonderful city not only for tourists but also for 6 millions Bangkokians in the future.

Note:

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n late January this year, I was suffocated by the fact that China and Hong Kong were flooded by the news and images of the Sino-American meeting. I was fervently told in every detail that the Chinese President Hu Jintao (also the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party) has made a landmark journey since the visit of Deng Xiaopeng in 1979. A shopping list of China is confirmed and announced: China will buy 200 Boeing 737s and 777s that worth 19 billion USD and 100,000 jobs will be created. Other contracts include: a railway contract for General Electric, Cummins involving a project of hybrid bus, and Honeywell, joint ventured with a Chinese company. All of these deals guarantee 235,000 US domestic jobs, and a 45 billion USD bill in total will be signed by the Chinese. China is incredibly rich. It is an economic miracle with more than 8% GDP growth over the last 20 years. It has created over 14 million jobs worldwide, and now China is becoming the saviour of the US economy [1]. Both eastern and western observers argue that China is peacefully rising and is becoming indispensable to the world economy.

The media never exhausts to provide minor specifics of the historical meeting: I was informed that President Obama had dyed his hair a week ago—it was interpreted as a subtle expression to show his humblest and sincerest gratitude towards an authoritarian but rich leader. The media kept educating us that we are supposed to be happy, because Sasha Obama, the 9-year old daughter of the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, practiced Mandarin with Hu Jintao as a way to demonstrate the importance of Chinese language in the 21st Century. More than three hundreds of Confucius Institutes would definitely second such statement.

If Hu is a communist, why is he so rich?

When Money Speaks, Justice is Silent

By Antony Ou*
Hail Hu Jintao of the Middle Kingdom. Welcome to the Free World.

“The course of love never did run smooth.” Harry Reid, Democrat Senate majority leader, called Hu Jintao a “dictator” (He later backed off and shook hands with Hu). Ileana Ros-Lehtinen refused to go to the State Dinner, while Dana Rohrabacher condemned the Communist Party as a “gangster regime”. Tough human rights questions were vigorously posed by reporters, including forced abortion, “one-child policy”, Tibetan issues, and other human rights violations. Hu answered prudently, “a lot still needs to be done in China, in terms of human rights.” All of these might have created some embarrassment. As Washington Post sarcastically remarked, “Who had the worst week in Washington? Hu Jintao."

However, these political “hiccups” never spoiled the evening and the following meetings of Hu Jintao and his 500-people-trading team. The State Dinner was a lavish one, with a “star-studded” guest list, including Henry Kissinger and Jacky Chan. Former US presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton were also invited. They were arguably the icons of human rights in America: Jimmy Carter is a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and Bill Clinton was famous for his human rights talks with China during the nineties. Now, Jimmy and Bill were merely Democratic old chaps who had already lost their critical edges.

Moreover, just a month before the Sino-American meeting, Obama said, “Mr. Liu Xiaobo is far more deserving of this award than I was.” Honesty can sometimes mean hypocrisy. After a month, he and his family became the welcoming host of the mysterious robotic-bureaucratic technocrat, or more precisely, the Chinese Don. As the 2009 Nobel Prize winner, Obama may eventually receive the Confucius Peace Prize, since Confucius said, “He did not dislike to have his rice finely cleaned, nor to have his mince meat cut quite small.” By serving Maine Lobster and dry aged rib eye, Obama should be rewarded for his hospitality during Hu’s visit.

Everyone knows that there was a famous empty chair in Norway prepared by the Nobel Peace Prize Committee for Liu Xiaobo—a prominent human rights activist and the Charter 08 drafter. He was sentenced under the name of “inciting subversion of state power” and will not be released until 2020 [2]. Zhao Lianhai, a former Food Safety worker and was later converted into an influential campaigner of the 2008 Chinese milk scandal—when thousands of children were suffered from toxic milk—many of them had medical conditions such as kidney stones and kidney failure, while some of them died. Zhao was sentenced to jail for two and half years for “disturbing social order”. He was later granted a “compassionate release”.

Where exactly are they now? Geographically, Liu is jailed in Jinzhou Prison of Liaoning Province, North east of China, while Zhao is at an unknown hospital yet to be revealed. Metaphorically, other Chinese human rights activists, they are untouchables at no place of many heartless politicians of both East and West. When money speaks, justice is silent. China as a gross domestic human rights violator does not mean that the US should stop doing business with them. Similarly, the fact that the US is a gross overseas human rights violator does not mean that China should stop doing business with them. Business is business. The concept of Chinese “sovereign absolutism” works perfectly well when the world needs money.
Chen Guanzhong, a Hong Kong novelist who has lived in Beijing for ten years, has written a fiction named “Shengshi” (The Golden Age). The futuristic novel sketches a scene in the year 2013 in which every country except China suffers from a global financial crisis. China then becomes the only superpower—but a conspiracy is about to uncover. According to the story, the Golden Age of China can be summarized into ten principles. They have become the utmost important principles of the future China. The story makes me uncomfortable and apprehensive because it also partly reflects the reality of China of the 21st century. The ten principles are:

- One-party democratic despotism
- Social stability according to the law
- Rule for the people under an authoritarian regime
- State-run market economy
- Fair competition directed by the Central Government
- Scientific development with Chinese characteristics
- Harmonious diplomacy with first priority of state interests
- Han sovereign and celebration of multi-ethnicity
- Post-western universalism
- Uprising of Chinese nationalism

One should be noted that many of these phrases are oxymorons, and in many occasions, they are mutually exclusive. However, when the principles are put into various political contexts, the terms such as “central government”, “state”, “authoritarian” and “one-party” will always be the trump cards over the others. Authoritarian states always portray themselves as “parents” who would rule “for” ones’ own good. As Voltaire sarcastically remarked, “All is for the best in the best of all possible worlds.” The nature of any utopian vision is that members of that society uncritically accept certain beliefs such as progress and prosperity; and they would forgo some values which they used to fight for: justice, human dignity, basic liberties and democracy. As a result, what remain will be homogeneity, control, manipulation, distrust and hypocrisy.

Notes:

* Antony Ou is a PhD Researcher of University of Sheffield, the China Review editor of Political Reflection Magazine, and the China Representative of CESRAN. His monograph, Just War and the Confucian Classics: A Gongyangzhuang Analysis, has been published and is available at amazon.com.

** I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to Miss Eva Leung for her editing of my script. Usual disclaimer applies.

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1) For details, please consult the following CESRAN article: Gokay, B. and D. Whitman (2011). “Crouching Tigers, Hidden Dragons.” Retrieved 19 January 2011, from http://cesran.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1156:A c r o u c h i n g-t i g e r s-h i d d e n-d r a g o n s&catid=61%3A m a k a l e-v e-r a p o r l a r &Itemid=79&lang=en.

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At a time in history when war is all we seem to see on the news, from Palestine, to Iraq to Afghanistan to Sudan and beyond, it seems unlikely that there are any wars that ‘we do not see’ as award winning journalist John Pilger professes in his latest documentary film for the Cinema, “The War You Don’t See”.

A closer look at his new documentary reveals that there is a great war going on and has been going on since the first world war that we truly do not see.

Yet this war is not in one country or place, it is not about a particular conflict but rather about the image of “war” portrayed in the media, about the war that Rupert Murdoch, the BBC, CNN and co inflict on its viewers every day - the war against the truth.

Documentary films have done little to ‘change’ people’s views of war, not because they are not produced but rather because they are rarely if ever shown to the masses or broadcast by large TV networks, so Pilger’s latest film being broadcast on ITN, a mainstream Channel was a unique and rare occurrence.

When John Pilger makes a documentary it is hard to ignore. As much as many networks and broadcasters want to dismiss Pilger’s work, his ethics, minute details and ferocious research into his subject makes him too credible to shove in the pile of ‘crazy leftists’ that others with similar objectives but different presentation find themselves in.

Pilger’s latest offering is an in depth look at how war has been reported in British and American news networks and the effects the media has had in allowing these wars to continue unquestioned by the masses.
“See all those people down there, light them all up... come on fire”

As the film begins we see a clip from 2007 that was released by the infamous Wiki Leaks website in 2010 causing an uproar around the world: “See all those people down there, light them all up... come on fire” Says the soldier about the civilians in the streets of war torn Iraq just as the shooting begins, almost like a computer game not a real life event.

The fact that the clip was leaked by Julian Assange through Wiki Leaks and was previously hidden from the public by the large media conglomerates instantly puts the viewer in no doubt that major events relating to the war in Iraq were and are still hidden from their view by the mainstream. Pilger goes on to argue that that is precisely why whistle blowers such as Assange are indispensable in a time of war.

Pilger reveals that during the first world war (where 16 million people died and a further 21 million were wounded) British Prime Minister told the editor of the Guardian, “If people really knew the truth the war would be stopped tomorrow”. However, as the film maker points out today we now have 24 hour news networks, bringing us light years away from the first world war, where camera’s were so new that “soldier’s would say hello mum when being filmed in the trenches.” Yet truth today is as much a casualty of war as it was then.

The journalist suggests that this has been made possible by the networks who follow orders rather than report what they see on the ground, and by the embedding of soldiers that has become ‘respected form of’ journalism, but does nothing more than show one view of war, that of those who are the aggressors and does not allow the journalist to see or report the ‘other side’ of the war, the side of those who are bombed and terrorized in their own homes by a foreign army.

The most important part of the film comes from Pilger’s own analysis of the power of propaganda during war time and of the invisible and dangerous link between those that
are supposed to deliver the truth yet instead deliberately corrupt, conceal and manipulate the facts in order to suite the interests of those in power.

The most conclusive summary to Pilger’s film ironically comes from propaganda mogul Edward Bernays whose following words also appeared in the first half of the documentary, “…intelligent manipulation of the masses is an invisible government which is the true ruling power in our country…”

The greatest weapon in modern times

If Bernays is right, then the greatest weapon in modern times is not Nuclear but mind-clear; if you can control the minds of the masses then that will yield you greater power than the most advanced weaponry.

The justification of killing hundreds of thousands in Iraq was made possible by the help of the mainstream media, and in retrospect may have never happened at all if it were not for the help of the media:

“What the film demonstrates” says Pilger, “is that had the media, especially the US media, challenged and exposed the deceptions that led to the invasion of Iraq, the invasion might not have happened.”

Pilger reveals a daunting truth, a truth that has successfully been swept under the carpet of media lies, lies that go unquestioned by the masses and lies that result in the deaths of thousands and sometimes millions of lives.

The invaluable information delivered in this film should in no way take away from the fact that this is a beautiful piece of cinematic work. The simplicity in which Pilger delivers shocking and jaw dropping information on screen makes this film such an easy viewing. Unlike many other documentaries in this genre, Pilger manages to reveal interesting factual information in a warm, non patronizing manner.

It is difficult for other journalists to compete with Pilger’s artistic cinematic journalism nor should they try to. What makes this and the 57 other documentaries by Pilger classic is not simply his style on screen, or his well written script, or enigmatic character but his life long desire to bring the truth to the masses; a desire that you cannot produce in front of a camera for a 60 minute documentary, but as the depth of ‘The War You Don’t See’ reveals, is born from a mission to improve the world and not just report it. PR

Note:

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Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation
An Introduction to Theory and History: International Edition

Editors: Joseph Nye, David Welch

ISBN13: 9780205798551
ISBN10: 0205798551

Joseph Nye and David Welch renew their outstanding book, Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation with 8th edition of it. In this book they try to build a comprehensive theory which will allow understanding the causes of conflict and cooperation between international actors in the world politics. They evaluate three major trends –realism, liberalism and constructivism–, and compare their explanations over conflicts and cooperation. The book includes not only theoretical trends but also many historical evidences which prove the authors main points and offers a better understanding of international relations theories.

The Frugal Superpower

Author: Michael Mandelbaum

ISBN: 158648916X

One of the major lessons that the world history teaches us is that empires do not survive forever. After the end of the Cold War, many believed that the US became the most powerful actor of the human history. As years passed, the time proves its power once again and today the focus of international relations is not the strength of the ‘lonely hegemon’ but its decline. In the Frugal Superpower Michael Mandelbaum argues that the 2008 economic recession is a turning point in American foreign policy since it reveals the weakness of American economy. For Mandelbaum, this economic turmoil will increase the public resistance against abroad operations like Iraq and Afghanistan and undermine the global leadership position of the US.

What’s Right with Islam: A New Vision for the Muslims and the West

Author: Feisal Abdul Rauf

ISBN: 0060750626

With the declaration of war on terror doctrine many believe that Huntington was right about ‘the clash of civilization’. The 9/11 attacks put Islam into the core of this conflict and post 9/11 period became the era of clash between ‘Western democratic values’ and Islam. In his book, What’s Right with Islam: A New Vision for the Muslims and the West, Feisal Abdul Rauf tries to look from a reverse angle and demonstrate that how Islamic values can be compatible with democracy. He claims that Islamic values are much closer to the democracy than monarchic regimes which are common in the Middle East. He supports his thesis with democratic reform demands and resistance to the American unilateral actions in the Middle Eastern peoples.
Reset: Iran, Turkey, and America’s Future

Author: Stephen Kinzer

ISBN: 0805091270

One of the core issues that became popular with the 9/11 tragedy is the democratization of the Middle East that has been assumed as the major source of terrorism and conflict because of its undemocratic regimes. Many experts develop modernization and democratization recipes for the region in order to transform the current regimes to the ‘free societies’. Stephen Kinzer offers his own recipe in his new book, Reset: Iran, Turkey, and America’s Future. For him the US has to consider a strong alliance between Turkey and Iran which would open the way of a robust democracy model for the region. He picks these two countries because of their Islamic character, a worthwhile struggle for freedom and democracy and a reliable middle class. For him the US can restore relations with Iran by making them feel secure and create a strong alliance system that includes Iran and Turkey.

The Legacy of John Kenneth Galbraith

Editor Steven Pressman

ISBN: 978-0-415-61739-0

When John Kenneth Galbraith passed away on April 29, 2006, the economics profession lost one of its true giants. And this is not just because Galbraith was an imposing figure at 6 feet, 9 inches tall. Throughout his life, Galbraith advised Presidents, made important professional contributions to the discipline of economics, and also tried to explain economic ideas to the general public. This volume pays tribute to Galbraith’s life and career by explaining some of his major contributions to the canon of economic ideas. The papers describe the series of unique contributions that Galbraith made in many different areas. He was a founder of the Post Keynesian view of money, and a proponent of the Post Keynesian view that price controls were necessary to deal with the problem of inflation in a modern economy where large firms already control prices and prices are not determined by the market. He promulgated the view that firms manipulate individual preferences and tastes, through advertising and other means of persuasion, and he drew out the economic implications of this view. He was a student of financial frauds and euphoria, and a forerunner of the Post Keynesian/Minskyan view of finance and how financial markets really work. This book was published as a special issue of the Review of Political Economy.

Foreign Direct Investments in Asia

Editors: Chalongphob Sussangkarn, Yung Chul Park, Sung Jin Kang

ISBN: 978-0-415-61005-6

This book covers nine countries of ASEAN and the East Asian area, including major Asian countries, and compares their respective policies to attract Foreign Direct Investments (FDI). Through comparative study of FDI promotion policies, this book will give policy makers in the area of FDI promotion an overview and comparison of the FDI policies of other countries. In addition, researchers at graduate, post-graduate or professional level will gain from the econometric methodology and detailed definitions of various spillover
effects (horizontal and vertical), which will be beneficial to their research.

In addition to FDI policy comparison, this book focuses on the various spillover effects of FDI. It separates it into categories: own productivity effects; intra-industry spillover effects; and inter-industry spillover effects (forward and backward linkage effects). While most other studies have only taken econometric tests on own-productivity and intra-industry spillovers, a key advantage to this book is that it also covers the separate effects of inter-industry linkages.

Through policy comparison and econometric tests on various spillover effects on economic growth, employment and exports, this book will give policy makers and researchers an innovative and constructive guide to FDI.

The United States and Iran
Sanctions, Wars and the Policy of Dual Containment

Author: Sasan Fayazmanesh


When and why did the United States policy of containment of Iran come about? How did it evolve? Where is it going?

Much has been said about the US policy of dual containment, particularly as it pertains to Iraq. However, there has been little in-depth analysis of this policy when it comes to Iran.

Sasan Fayazmanesh explores this often neglected subject by analyzing the history of this policy. The analysis includes the role that the Carter and Reagan Administrations played in the Iran-Iraq war, the numerous sanctions imposed on Iran by the Clinton Administration and the aggressive and confrontational policy toward Iran adopted by the George W. Bush Administration after the events of September 11, 2001.

This topical read synthesises a range of primary sources, including firsthand reports, newspaper articles and electronic media, and presents a coherent analysis of the ebbs and flows in the US thinking on Iran and Iraq.

Paths to International Political Economy

Author: Susan Strange

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The problems of a troubled world economy and the essentially political issues of how it should be managed make up the stuff of international political economy. The overwhelming importance of these questions has drawn ever increasing numbers of students and teachers in universities, colleges and schools to study the subject. There are many paths into international political economy for them to follow and this volume, originally published in 1984, discusses most of them.

The collection as a whole demonstrates that the field should be seen as the exclusive preserve of neither the economists nor the political scientists. On the contrary, there is much to learn from specialists - and practical people in government and business - with a variety of backgrounds. A rich selection is therefore offered, including history, population studies, money, trade, technology and law, from which the reader can pick and choose at will. The contributions point to the landmarks of the subject and provide useful tips on the best books to read and the most interesting ideas to look out for.