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RESEARCH NOTE

What Ukraine Teaches Us About International Relations and Vice Versa

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Abstract

The Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 is seen by many as a catastrophe of global proportions and a critical juncture for International Relations, both as an academic discipline and as a political practice. In this review essay, I offer a stock-taking exercise that puts Ukraine-specific debates into the broader context of the International Relations (IR) discipline. My aim is twofold: to show how debates about Ukraine go right to the heart of major meta-theories in IR and to use Ukrainian specificity and complexity to problematize compartmentalized approaches to "area studies" and to some strands of "postcolonialism". I conclude by showcasing recent publications of scholars *of* and *from* Ukraine to provide a glimpse into this relatively small but vibrant academic community. I further argue that Ukraine's predicament helps highlight the persistence of Cold War binaries, with their strong colonial baggage, including within the so-called critical IR.

Keywords: International Relations; Global IR; Ukraine; postcolonial critique; decolonisation

Introduction

Scholars *of* and *from* Ukraine[1] have been deeply affected by the Russian invasion of Ukraine - fearing for their lives and wellbeing or for that of their families and friends, seeing their hometowns or sites of fieldwork indiscriminately bombed, coping with trauma as well as with a sense of guilt and of responsibility, frustrated by ignorance, superficiality, and often outright political manipulation of the public debate. It is no surprise then that this relatively small transnational community has been arguing for a paradigm shift. For them the world will never be the same. This is indeed a unique standpoint, from which new ideas and approaches can emerge, but how far can these ideas travel?

In this review essay, I offer a stock-taking exercise that puts Ukraine-specific debates into the broader context of the International Relations (IR) discipline. My aim is twofold: to show how debates about Ukraine go right to the heart of major meta-theories in IR and to use Ukrainian specificity and complexity in order to problematize compartmentalized approaches to "area studies" and to some strands of "postcolonialism". I conclude by showcasing recent publications of scholars *of* and *from* Ukraine to provide a glimpse into this relatively small but vibrant academic community.

[1] I owe this term – "scholars *of* and *from* Ukraine" – to Tsymbalyuk, D. (2023). What my body taught me about being a scholar of Ukraine and from Ukraine in times of Russia's war of aggression. *Journal of International Relations and Development*. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41268-023-00298-y (2023), who, in her important recent article, offers invaluable insights into the meaning of "knowledge" about a country ravaged by war.

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What Place for Ukraine in the "Big" International Relations Debates

Since 24 February 2022, Ukraine came centerstage in several debates in International Relations. It was not just the far-reaching impact of this war, such as on energy and food security or on climate and nuclear proliferation, it was also about the ongoing meta discussions about the future world order. Shifting multipolar geometries, globalization and simultaneous rise of nationalism/sovereigntism, neocolonialism and incomplete decolonization as well as a persistent sense of ontological insecurity in the collective west – the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine added a new (and many say unprecedented)[2] sense of urgency to dealing, practically and intellectually, with these structural issues. A set of very different responses came from within major debates or schools of thought in IR.

Many realists felt revendicated. While the neoclassical realists (Freyberg-Inan et al., 2009; Hooft & Freiberg-Inan, 2019) bemoaned not having been listened to enough, structural realists basked in what they saw as their "I told you so" moment, as evident, in particular, from several interviews with John Mearsheimer.[3] From the perspective of the future world order, this realist version of multipolarity is essentially about a return of the "great power politics" (Donnelly, 2019; Kazharski, 2022; Walt, 2022) that, as some argue, never really went away but was temporarily eclipsed by the post-Cold War liberal hubris.[4] This realist version of the world order was also at the heart of Russia's neo-imperial revisionism that led to this war. The irony, of course, is that, if simplified for popular use, this reasoning makes Vladimir Putin look like the only sober and "realistic" person in the room, rather than a megalomanic dictator who ruined his own country before going out to wreak havoc on its neighbours.[5]

The realist vision of coming multipolarity is a strongly securitized one in that the rise of the "rest" versus the collective "west" is seen not only in terms of competition but also in terms of reciprocal security threats. Politically, the preoccupation is with the rise of a possible "axis of evil", be that between Russia and Iran or as a bigger China-led coalition of non-Western non-democratic states. States like Ukraine are seen as "buffer" zones to regional powers (Menon & Snyder, 2017) whose agency, domestically or internationally, does not matter for the bigger political picture and is irrelevant as an object of scholarly analysis.

The liberal view of the world, on the other hand, has traditionally put much greater emphasis on cooperation and interdependence, embedded in open markets and multilateral institutions, as the driving (and desirable) force for international relations. Indeed, the end of the Cold War with its "end of history" moment created the conditions for further consolidation of the Liberal World Order. This order was meant to be based on liberal norms and democratic institutions that would gradually absorb an increasing number of states around the world via socialization and soft power (Deudney & Ikenberry, 1999; Deudney & Ikenberry, 2018; Dunne et al., 2013). This vision of the world order was inclusive but also hierarchical with core western liberal democracies at its center. Relations

[2] As embodied in the oft-quoted *Zeitenwende* speech by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz.
[3] It was probably the first time since Francis Fukuyama and his famous "end of history" argument that an IR scholar became a trope for whatever was made of his argument – *the* Mearsheimer. For a brilliant and accessible rebuttal of John Mearsheimer's arguments see: Johnson, M. (2023, 15 February 2023). Mearsheimer: Rigor or Reaction? *Quillette*. https://quillette.com/2023/02/15/mearsheimer-rigor-or-reaction/
[4] For a fascinating debate on structural realism versus liberalism between their key proponents see the Munk School Debate on 12 May 2022 available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivcSVG5eCeQ.
[5] It comes as no surprise that Mearsheimer's 2014 article was cited by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a tweet in 2022. Mearsheimer, J. J. (2014). Why the Ukraine crisis is the West's fault: the liberal delusions that provoked Putin. *Foreign Aff.*, *93*, 77.

with non-western non-democratic countries around the world were inspired by the so-called "transitions paradigm" – a linear vision of gradual democratization and economic liberalization to be implemented as a one-size-fits-all template around the world (Carothers, 2002; McFaul & Stoner-Weiss, 2005; Mohamedou & Sisk, 2017).

The liberal approach has been dominant within the EU studies as well, driven by the idea of "Normative Power" that would gradually spread throughout the concentric circles surrounding the EU (Manners, 2002). Postcommunist states in the neighbourhood were therefore expected to catch up with this model, even if in a differentiated manner. Some, like the 2004 enlargement countries, would qualify for the EU membership, while others, like Ukraine, were expected to emulate the EU model without any prospect of becoming part of the club, as laid out in the famous Romano Prodi's speech about "sharing everything but institutions" (Prodi, 2002).

This liberal moment did not last. Practical and political shortcomings of replicating the liberal model around the world came under harsh criticism as early as mid-2000s, as for example in critiques of liberal internationalism and peacebuilding (Richmond & MacGinty, 2015), of democracy promotion (Bridoux & Kurki, 2014; Hobson & Kurki, 2012) and of the EU enlargement (Kuus, 2004, 2007). At the same time, the rise of non-Western powers, be those BRICS collectively or China as a "great power" inspired much soul-searching about the decline of wWesternhegemony on the world stage (Ikenberry, 2008, 2009; Lake et al., 2021). Indeed, debates about the end of the Liberal World Order have been raging for over a decade now (Alcaro, 2018; Börzel & Zürn, 2021; Flockhart, 2020; Lucarelli, 2018, 2020; Parsi 2022). Although exploring the details of this debate is beyond the scope of this article, what is striking is the growing convergence between the realist and the liberal vision of the future world order as based on separate blocks, either due to self-interest or due to the growing gap between democracies and autocracies,[6] as well as the "causal primacy" attributed to Western (colonial) powers by both schools of thought (Fisher-Onar & Kavalski, 2023).

In the liberal script, Ukraine, and other countries in Russia's neighbourhood, are seen as "the frontline of democracy"[7] and the war in Ukraine as a struggle for the Liberal World Order itself. Indeed, it was the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine that pushed the collective west into this more combative version of liberalism. While it provided a welcome sense of political unity and purpose, at least initially, conceptually it helped consolidate a more "securitized" and more realist "strategic" approach to global politics (Youngs, 2021). Ironically, this approach is also more in line with many Russian claims about a civilizational struggle between the west and the rest.

One big IR community that has been surprisingly less vocal since February 2022 is the community of IR scholars that came together under the broad umbrella of the Global IR. Building on critical explorations of race, gender, and empire in world history, the Global IR aims at exposing the epistemological dominance of US- and Euro-centric perspectives on world politics (Acharya & Buzan, 2007; Bilgin, 2008; Kavalski, 2018; Neumann & Wigen, 2018; Tickner, 2003; Tickner & Wæver, 2009; Tickner, 2014; Zarakol, 2022). As summarized by Amitav Acharya in his 2014 inaugural address at the International Studies Association Convention, "the discipline of International Relations (IR) does not reflect the voices, experiences, knowledge claims, and contributions of the vast majority of the societies and states in the

[6] In terms of policy initiatives, see for example, the "Summit for Democracy" initiative promoted by the Biden administration, described here: https://www.state.gov/summit-for-democracy/. For analysis read: Traub, J. (2021, 12 August 2021). Inside Joe Biden's 2-Day Zoom Plan to Rescue Democracy. Politico. , Youngs, R., Ichihara, M., Lee, S.-J., Akum, F., Xavier, C., & Navia, P. (2021). From Democracy Summit to Global Democratic Agenda? Forum 2000 Policy Paper.

[7] European Commission, Press statement by President von der Leyen with Ukrainian President Zelenskyy, Kyiv, 9 May 2023, STATEMENT 23/2661.

world, and often marginalizes those outside the core countries of the West" (Acharya, 2014). In addition to calls for decolonising knowledge about world politics, this diverse and burgeoning field has produced a number of theoretical innovations. As summarized by Fisher-Onar, "global IR incorporates constructivist claims regarding historical and social forces in world politics, but also decenters Eurocentric notions of history and society. [...] Such approaches tend to share: (i) a pluralistic approach to ontology/epistemology, with respect for multiple histories and agencies as constitutive of global patterns; (ii) an openness to methodological pluralism; and (iii) an approach to outstanding substantive questions which foregrounds the perspectives of states and non-state actors that are often ignored in mainstream/Eurocentric analysis." (Fisher-Onar, 2023).

It is quite surprising then that the study of Ukraine as well as of its whole region has only had a marginal presence in this debate. A special issue in the Journal of International Relations and Development from 2021 tried to explore the reasons behind this absence.[8] As summarized in its concluding article, in addition to local factors, such as late institutionalization and low internationalization of IR across the vast postcommunist area, there are bigger political and epistemic issues at stake. With the exception of Russia, almost two dozen countries in the region, regardless of their size or other characteristics, have been traditionally seen as "small states" or, as Alejandro puts it, as "unimportant others". They used to be seen as one uniform block during the Cold War and became insignificant after it came to an end. With respect to the Global IR debate more specifically, it also became a liminal space because it fell outside of set dichotomies such as 'West/non-West', 'North/South', 'core/periphery' that structure many Global IR conversations (Alejandro, 2021). Much of the rejection of eastern European voices has taken place from the perspective of "Eurocentric postcolonialism", whereby the primacy of the "west" or "north" is maintained but criticized and the victimhood of the "south" is essentialized (Alejandro, 2019).

This is problematic because the whole point of the Global IR normative and theoretical agenda is to go beyond binary thinking about world politics, yet scholarship that works on transcending these binaries remains a notable exception (Fisher-Onar, 2023; Fisher-Onar & Kavalski, 2023; Kavalski, 2020; Kurki, 2022). It could be argued that Ukraine and its region suffered from double marginalization – neither sufficiently "western" or relevant for the mainstream IR nor sufficiently "southern" for critical postcolonial approaches. At the same time, scholars *of* and *from* Ukraine have been increasingly vocal about the need to recognize Ukraine's postcolonial condition and its anticolonial and anti-imperialist struggle. In the next section, I briefly review the background of this debate.

Is post-Soviet postcolonial?

"Postcolonial" is not a temporal marker, it does not refer to whatever comes after the official moment of decolonization. Rather it describes a cultural, political and epistemological condition.

> Perhaps most famously espoused by scholars such as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Edward Said, postcolonialism interrogates the lingering effects of colonialism after the formal dismantlement of empire and the return of self-governance to former colonies. It scrutinises those supposedly universal colonial epistemologies that

[8] See also an earlier special issue in the same journal with contributions by Eiki Berg, Pinar Bilgin, Matthieu Chillaud, Petr Drulák, Nik Hynek, Vendulka Kubálková, Viatcheslav Morozov, Petra Roter, Oktay F. Tanrisever. For an overview see the introduction: Drulák, P. (2009). Introduction to the International Relations (IR) in Central and Eastern Europe Forum. *Journal of International Relations and Development*, *12*, 168-173.

> continue to structure the way we know the world and also works to recover those native or Indigenous knowledges that have been suppressed, obscured, or rendered illegible by colonial discourse, as in the work of the Subaltern Studies collective (Carey & Silverstein, 2020, p.3).

The encounter between "postcolonial" and "postsocialist" dates back several decades, yet it is hardly known outside of area studies. With the end of the Cold War, a number of scholarly symposia and publications interrogated the applicability of "postcolonial" concepts and frameworks to post-Soviet area studies.[9] Several symposia were published in order to interrogate the applicability of the "postcolonial" label and critique to the realities of post-Soviet or "postsocialist" states (Spivak et al., 2006).

One strand of this debate in particular focused on clarifying whether and to what extent the USSR (created on the remnants of the Russian empire) could be seen as a colonial empire. The assumption was that if the Soviet experience could qualify as "colonial", then the post-Soviet states were postcolonial by definition. By bringing in the Soviet case, it pushed the boundaries of mainstream ideas on colonization, decolonisation, and state-formation.

When asked if he considered the Soviet Union an empire, Edward Said famously answered that the contiguous nature of the vast Russo-Soviet state disqualified it, attributing "an odd primacy to water" and as if "brutality by adjacence" could somehow be excused (Moore, 2001). As a counterclaim, Moore develops three most common types of colonization: 1) "classic" overseas domination via strong political, economic, military, and cultural control of "inferior" people (e.g. British in Kenya and India, French in Senegal and Vietnam); 2) settler colonialism as in the US, Australia and South Africa; 3) dynastic colonialism via conquering neighbouring peoples (e.g. Ottoman and Hapsburg empires, but also "internal colonization" by France and the Great Britain). Indeed, he recognizes that once the "dynastic" colonialism via conquest of adjacent territories is brought within the framework, there is little on the world map that was not at some point colonized land.

According to this typology, the Soviet Union was a hybrid case as it combined all three types of colonialism at different times and with respect to different colonized territories. Arguably, the Soviet project itself changed as it passed from Leninist through Stalinist and into the Brezhnevite eras. An additional level of complexity was added by a peculiar Soviet ideology that was declared to be "nationalist in form, socialist in content" (Hirsch, 2005; Martin, 2001). On the one hand, some ethnic groups were recognized and instrumentalized within the framework of the imperial rule at the expense of many others. On the other hand, violence was often perpetrated along class rather than ethnic lines, driven by what Chari and Verdery call "class racism" (Chari & Verdery, 2009).

An additional question is related to the Soviet territorial reach. At its peak, the "Soviet empire" spanned twelve time zones and covered more than one-sixth of all land mass on earth. Can we describe all twenty-seven states that ended up under the Soviet control during the Cold War as colonized? Poland or Hungary or the Baltic Republics thought of themselves as being "occupied", which is historically correct. However, analytically, the question remains – what turns an occupation into colonization? (as asked for example by

[9] Krapfl reminds us that long before the end of the Cold War, following Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, the Canadian Slavonic Papers journal hosted a discussion on "decolonization". See Krapfl, J. (2023). Decolonizing minds in the "Slavic area," "Slavic area studies," and beyond. *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, *65*(2), 141-145. https://doi.org/10.1080/00085006.2023.2211460

Nancy Condee in Spivak et al., 2006, p. 830).[10] Not all twenty-seven states were decolonized in the same manner either. While in places like Poland anti-colonial or anti-occupation popular movement was behind the transformation, the Belovezha Accords that put an end to the Soviet Union was an elite pact. Moreover, some parts of the Soviet empire were never decolonized, suffice it to think about the brutal Russian wars against Chechnya in the 1990ies.

Things get even more complicated if one adds to the list of Soviet colonies other states around the world that were in a relationship of dependence with the Soviet Union during the Cold War. As Chari and Verdery note:

> Not only were Eastern Europe and much of the Soviet Union under a form of colonial domination, but numerous other "Third World" countries - Cuba, Mozambique, Ethiopia, South Yemen, Laos, and so on – had entered the Soviet orbit as part of establishing their independence from one or another western imperial power (Chari & Verdery, 2009, p.12).

The Soviet anti-imperialist rhetoric in the Third World not only obscured these relationships of dependence but also rendered many countries across the Global South blind to the colonial and imperialist nature of the Soviet Union at home.

As Moore rightly underscored, despite its *sui generis* character, the Soviet Union could be described as "extraordinarily colonial." Even if we face a hybrid type of coloniality, rejecting it altogether precludes seeing structural issues of power and domination and exploring comparative relations with the spatial-imperial dynamics elsewhere. In addition, as Moore rightly points out, seeing Russo-Soviet colonialism simply as a deviation would also reinforce the Franco-British type of colonialism as if it were a universal standard, which is of course in itself a form of epistemic coloniality and Eurocentrism (Alejandro's criticism of "Eurocentric postcolonialism" cited above echoes this point).

How Ukraine contributes to decolonizing the IR

Turning to the voices of scholars *of* and *from* Ukraine, there are several lessons to be learnt. The first issue pertains to the broader discussion in social sciences about researcher positionality and hierarchies of knowledge. Building on feminist and postcolonial literature, scholars from Ukraine talk about "knowledge that comes from suffering" gained through collective and individual experiences of pain and trauma. It is a form of knowledge that is born out of mundane bodily responses to shock or intense grief, responses that are all very personal. Yet, they also add up in a collective emotional state that facilitates a unique standpoint. Just as feminist writers lamented being dismissed because they made knowledge claims that seemed too personal and too emotional to be "credible" and "authoritative", scholars *of* and *from* Ukraine make a plea for acceptance of their particular state of trauma, grief, and rage as a legitimate position for knowledge production (Dovzhyk, 2023; Kurylo, 2023; Tsymbalyuk, 2022, 2023).

Related to this discussion, there is a question of "epistemic justice" that resonates strongly with most postcolonial literature cited above. As summarized in the seminal article by von Hagen back in 1995 "Does Ukraine Have a History", Ukraine used to share the predicament of other Central and East European countries of being seen as "ahistorical people" stuck in-between major European empires in a peripheral "borderland" status. Ukraine, von Hagen

[10] In the field of settler colonialism studies, Patrick Wolfe famously responded to a similar concern that "an invasion was a structure, not an event". Wolfe, P. (2006). Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native. *Journal of Genocide Research*, *8*(4), 387-409. https://doi.org/10.1080/14623520601056240

concluded, had long been denied "full historiographic legitimacy" (von Hagen, 1995). Within area studies as well, Ukraine was predominantly studied from Moscow-centric perspectives and through the "Russian gaze" (Zayarnyuk, 2022). As underlined by Dudko, "the entire region between Europe and Russia remains widely understudied and objectified" (Dudko, 2023) and subjected to "epistemic imperialism" (Sonevytsky, 2022).

Ukraine's calls for being given a voice (quite literally) and a recognition on its own terms have become more vocal since the Russian full-scale invasion in February 2022 (Burlyuk, 2022; Khromeychuk, 2022; Pigul et al. 2022; Pishchikova, 2023; Zayarnyuk, 2022). This plea is now supported by a growing community of Russia scholars as well. Writing in April 2022, Professor Susan Smith-Peter, a historian, concludes

> I call on other scholars in our field to [...] join me in recovery from our addiction to the Russian state. Let's stand with Ukrainians, their democracy, and their strong civic identity — not just on social media, but also in our work. Let us continue to create meaning in a manner inclusive of Ukrainian identity.[11]

While organizers of The Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES) 2023 annual convention state that "Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has led to widespread calls for the reassessment and transformation of Russo-centric relationships of power and hierarchy both in the region and in how we study it".[12]

From the perspective of Political Science, recognition is intrinsically linked to the question of "stateness", which reflects discipline's west-centric Westphalian bias. Debates about Ukraine, or other Central and East European states, are often derailed towards a contest of "independent state" credentials and a search for some kind of foundational ethos that would provide the necessary pedigree of statehood. The war itself was preceded by the well-known Putin's essay written to discredit Ukrainian claims to independent statehood.

Yet, there is no reason why scholars *of* and *from* Ukraine need to take up the gauntlet and fight the Kremlin's fight. Ukraine's complex history need not be squeezed into the procrustean bed of essentialist mythology and methodological nationalism. Rather it could aspire to be an innovative space for the study of "subnational, transnational, and international processes" (von Hagen, 1995) or, as suggested by Dudko, "such reframing can help scholars to reimagine narratives of Europe as a 'pluriversal' space, where the complex and fluid histories of imperial, transnational, and cross-national networks manifest themselves and influence each other" (Dudko, 2023).

From the perspective of the Global IR, integrating Ukrainian studies into its decentered "worlding" research agenda is not just a matter of doing what one preaches by adding more peripheral voices. Ukraine's predicament helped highlight the persistence of Cold War binaries, with their strong colonial baggage, including within the so-called critical IR.

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[11] See the full commentary here: https://jordanrussiacenter.org/news/what-do-scholars-of-russia-owe-ukraine-today/
[12] See the full statement here: https://www.aseees.org/convention/2023-aseees-convention-theme.

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REVIEW ESSAY

Identity Politics in Contemporary Southeast Asia

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Abstract

Identity politics emerged as a central phenomenon in contemporary Southeast Asia, which is in keeping with the region's diversity and heterogeneity. The various ethnic and religious communities in the region have different historical experiences and cultural traditions that shape their identities and political aspirations. Identity politics has also provided empowerment and social justice for marginalised communities, such as indigenous and ethnic minorities. However, it has also resulted in conflict and violence as competing groups vie for political power and resources. This study finds that religion has played a significant role in identity politics in Southeast Asia. The region has various religions, including Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and animism. Religious identity has often been mobilised for political purposes, either as a means of asserting power or as a source of resistance against dominant groups. The article highlights the different strategies that different countries in the region have adopted to address identity politics. Some have attempted to promote national unity and inclusiveness, while others have taken a more authoritarian approach, suppressed dissent, and imposed strict controls on civil society and media. The article concludes by suggesting that a more nuanced and context-specific approach is needed to address identity politics in Southeast Asia. A complex interplay of variables will determine Southeast Asia's future course of identity politics. As the region continues to expand and transform, it is necessary to balance the interests of various groups and the broader objective of regional cohesion and stability.

Keywords: Politics; Southeast Asia; Political Identity; Religion; Ethnic

Introduction

Identity politics is a vital topic in Southeast Asia. The region is home to hundreds of different ethnic and religious groups, each with its unique cultural traditions and beliefs (Azuma, 2021; Bautista, 2010; Fleschenberg & Baumann, 2020; Heryanto, 2013; Jereza, 2016; Kingston, 2019; Tagliacozzo, 2009; Wolters, 1994). Often, these groups have been marginalised by the dominant political and social institutions. As a result, many Southeast Asian people have turned to identity politics to express their dissatisfaction and rights. It has led to conflicts within and between communities and new demands for political representation and cultural recognition. This article explores the role of identity politics in Southeast Asia, examining its origins, impact, and prospects. Southeast Asia's identity politics may be traceable back to the colonial period, when European forces partitioned the region into numerous governments, frequently ignoring ethnic and cultural boundaries (Boudreau, 2002; Philpott, 2013). The forced assimilation of different groups into the dominant culture created tensions, leading to longstanding grievances that continue to this day.

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In recent years, identity politics has emerged as a powerful force in many Southeast Asian countries, including Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam (Beeson & Jayasuriya, 2009; Byun, 2021; Chang, 2005; Liu & Selway, 2021; Niezen, 2004). Ethnic and religious tensions have been highlighted through language policy, religious freedom, and claims to ancestral lands. In addition, identity politics has also influenced political developments in the region. In Indonesia, for example, the fall of the authoritarian regime led to the rise of regional governments that represented the interests of particular ethnic and religious groups. Malaysia's dominant Malay Muslim community has insisted on affirmative action policies preserving cultural and economic advantages.

The impact of identity politics has been both positive and negative. On the one hand, it has given voice to marginalised groups and enabled them to assert their rights. On the other hand, it has also pitted different communities against each other and contributed to sectarian violence. Despite its challenges, identity politics in Southeast Asia is unlikely to disappear anytime soon. The region's ethnic and cultural diversity remains a potent force, and the desire for recognition and representation will continue to shape political and social developments in the future (Beeson & Jayasuriya, 2009; Boudreau, 2002; Chang, 2005; Kong, 2007; Philpott, 2013; Prasad, 2000; Stubbs, 2002). Finding ways to accommodate these differences while promoting unity and a common purpose will continue to be a critical challenge for regional policymakers.

Political Identity: Revisited

Identity politics is the political movement that focuses on the interests and perspectives of groups with shared characteristics or experiences, such as race, gender, sexuality, religion, and culture (Agius & Keen, 2018; Béland, 2017; Bird, 2004; Burke & Stets, 2009; Evans et al., 2022; Gellner, 1995; Parekh, 2008; Rapoport & Yemini, 2020; Shoemaker, 2006). Rather than viewing individuals as autonomous beings, identity politics highlights how broader social structures and power dynamics shape individual experiences and identities.

Identity politics has its roots in the civil rights and feminist movements of the 1960s (Al Tamimi, 2018; Kolig et al., 2009; Schnabel & Hjerm, 2014). These movements emphasised how systemic racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination were deeply ingrained in American society and culture. From there, identity politics has evolved into a broader movement that seeks to empower marginalised groups, challenge oppressive social structures, and promote social justice. The 1960s civil rights movements in the United States, which aimed to end racial segregation and discrimination against African Americans, played a significant role in the emergence of identity politics. These movements, led by figures such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, advocated for greater recognition, rights, and representation for disenfranchised Black communities (Fukuyama, 2004, 2006, 2014; Tebble, 2006).

This understanding of intersectionality and the need to address multiple forms of marginalisation gave rise to the identity politics movement. It recognises that social identities such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and religion impact a person's experiences and opportunities in life. Furthermore, identity politics can often be a divisive issue, with some people seeing it as a way to promote inclusivity and diversity and others viewing it as a way to further divide society based on differences. However, those who support identity politics argue that it is necessary to recognise the experiences and perspectives of marginalised groups in order to address systemic inequalities and create a more just society (Fish et al., 2021; Ineese-Nash, 2020; Li, 2000).

Ultimately, understanding identity politics requires recognising the complex ways in which individual identity intersects with more extensive social structures and power dynamics. It

also involves difficult questions about group identity, political representation, and social inequality.

Historical Context of Identity Politics in Southeast Asia

Identity politics is the tendency of individuals or groups to organise politically around their shared identity traits, such as race, ethnicity, gender, and religion (Beeson & Jayasuriya, 2009; Moran, 2018). In Southeast Asia, identity politics has a long history that stretches back to the colonial period when European powers introduced new ideas about race and ethnicity to the region (Byun, 2021; Chang, 2005; Kong, 2007; Liu & Selway, 2021; Philpott, 2013). These ideas were used to justify colonial rule and create hierarchies of power, with Europeans at the top and the various indigenous groups at the bottom (Prianti, 2019; Ysk et al., 2002). During the post-World War II period, many countries in the region won their independence from colonial powers, and with it came a new era of nation-building. These newly formed nations often comprised diverse populations with ethnic, linguistic, and religious backgrounds. Governments in these countries struggled to create a unifying national identity that could bind these diverse groups together.

Crucially, identity politics remained a prevalent feature of the region's politics. Religious identity has often been a focus of political conflict in places like Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, where large Muslim populations coexist with a predominantly Christian population (Anam, 2019; Beh, 1988; Berenschot, 2015; Houben, 2003; Jonsson, 2022; Jory, 2007; Kelly et al., 2007; Manguin, 2008; Niezen, 2004; Reid, 2009; Weatherbee, 2012). For example, ethnic groups such as the Acehnese in Indonesia or the Karen in Myanmar are fighting for more political autonomy and acknowledgement of their cultural difference, and they have been motivated in large part by their ethnic identities.

In recent years, identity politics has become more important since globalisation and cultural homogenisation have destroyed traditional identities and caused cultural displacement (Chong, 2007; Herzig, 2016; Hulsbosch et al., 2009). For instance, social media has promoted identity-based messaging and allowed marginalised communities to mobilise and speak out politically. Social media has also changed how individuals communicate and establish communities, enabling virtual spaces to share experiences, viewpoints, and ideas. It has created a more varied and inclusive public sphere where marginalised groups may discuss and shape policies that impact them. Many "identity politics" movements emphasise the political and social significance of personal identification qualities like race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and more. As globalisation and cultural homogenisation increase, people feel displaced, making identity politics increasingly important. As people lose their conventional identity, they emphasise specific components of their identity to assert their distinctiveness. Social media has helped marginalised communities mobilise and express their political voice by spreading identity-based messages.

Importantly, globalisation and cultural homogenisation have made identity politics increasingly prominent in recent years. Social media has given underprivileged communities a political voice and a sense of community. Southeast Asian identity politics is complicated and multifaceted. The region's contentious political landscape stems from colonialism, nation-building, and globalisation (Anderson, 1991; Knapman, 2006; Maleševic, 2006; Nesadurai, 2017; Prasad, 2000; Vecchi et al., 2021; Ysk et al., 2002).

The historical context of identity politics in Southeast Asia can be traced back to the colonial period when European powers divided the region into various territories and imposed their own cultural and political systems. These divisions created artificial national borders, which resulted in the fragmentation and marginalisation of local ethnic groups (Jory, 2007; Maleševic, 2006; Tagliacozzo, 2009).

After achieving independence, many Southeast Asian nations faced the challenge of constructing their own national identities, which often involved the suppression of minority cultures and religions. The drive towards homogenisation and assimilation led to the rise of ethnic and religious nationalism, as different groups sought to preserve their identities and resist assimilation. Subsequently, as the region became increasingly connected and integrated with the global economy, the pressures of globalisation also influenced identity politics. Globalisation has spread cultural and political ideas, challenging and reinforcing local identities. The rise of neoliberal economic policies has also generated new forms of social inequality and marginalisation, further fuelling identity-based movements. Thus, the historical context of identity politics in Southeast Asia is complex and multifaceted, involving a range of factors such as colonialism, nation-building, and globalisation. These factors have contributed to the region's diverse and often contentious political landscape and continue to shape identity politics today.

Ethnic and Religious Identities in Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia is a diverse region comprised of various ethnic and religious communities. The region boasts a myriad of cultures, traditions, and religions, which are unique and distinct. Ethnic and religious identities have significantly shaped Southeast Asia's history, politics, and society (Fish et al., 2021; Jory, 2007; Knapman, 2006; Maleševic, 2006; Prasad K., 2016; Tagliacozzo, 2009).

Ethnic identities in Southeast Asia vary greatly, with hundreds of different groups scattered across the region. Even though there is much variety, some countries have one or two dominating ethnic groups. For instance, the Malays are the largest ethnic group in Malaysia, whereas the Javanese are the largest ethnic group in Indonesia. Other notable ethnic groups in the region include the Chinese, Indians, and Filipinos. The ethnic identities of these communities have been influenced by their cultural practices, history, and geographic location.

Moreover, Southeast Asia is home to various ethnic groups with different cultural practices, languages, and histories. The diversity of ethnic identities in this region results from centuries of migration, trade, colonisation, and intermarriage. These ethnic identities are recognised and celebrated in Southeast Asia through festivals, traditions, and cultural arts. For example, the Malays make up more than half of the country's population. They are primarily Muslim and speak Malay, the country's official language. The Javanese have the largest population of any Southeast Asian country. They speak Javanese, one of the nation's prominent languages (Prasad K., 2016; Spiegel, 2010).

The ethnic identities of these communities have been influenced by various factors, including the country's history, geography, and cultural practices (Jory, 2007; Maleševic, 2006; Prasad K., 2016). For example, the Malays have a strong sense of cultural identity due to their long history in Malaysia. In contrast, the Chinese have maintained their cultural traditions through their diaspora across Southeast Asia. The Indian community, meanwhile, has been influenced by Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam while also being shaped by the colonial legacy of British rule. Therefore, the ethnic identities of Southeast Asia are diverse and complex, with hundreds of different groups scattered throughout the region. While there are some dominant ethnic groups in certain countries, such as the Malays and Javanese, the region is also home to significant Chinese, Indian, Filipino, and other minority groups. These different ethnic identities have been shaped by various factors, including history, geography, and cultural practices, and are celebrated and recognised throughout the region.

Similarly, religion has been an important influence in the development of the history and culture of this region. Brunei, Malaysia, and Indonesia adhere primarily to Islam, while

Thailand, Myanmar, and Cambodia follow primarily to Buddhism. Islam is the predominant religion of Brunei, Malaysia, and Indonesia (Mukrimin, 2012). Even in Bali, Indonesia, and the Philippines, where the Christian population is very small, Hinduism is the dominant religion. Religion has affected many facets of life in Southeast Asia, including the region's social, political, and economic institutions. Traditions and customs have been particularly susceptible to this religious sway.

Indeed, religion has profoundly impacted the development of Southeast Asian culture and history. The region has many religious beliefs, such as Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, and many local religions. Islam is the predominant religion in Brunei, Malaysia, and Indonesia, which Arab traders and Muslim preachers introduced in the 13th century (Salim & Azra, 2003). The spread of Islam in Southeast Asia was gradual and peaceful, with the local people embracing the faith over time (Hefner, 1997). Furthermore, Buddhism is the main religion in Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia. Its influence can be seen in the magnificent temples, shrines, and stupas that dot the landscape in these countries. The Buddhist faith also influences the way people live and interact with each other, with values such as compassion, kindness, and tolerance being highly regarded.

Furthermore, Hinduism, on the other hand, has had a lasting impact on the culture and art of Bali, Indonesia, where it was introduced in the 1st century AD through Indian traders. Bali is known for its stunning Hindu temples, colourful festivals, and unique performing arts. On the other hand, the Philippines was colonised by the Spanish in the 16th century, and Christianity became the predominant religion. Today, the country's Catholic population remains the largest in Southeast Asia (Herzig, 2016; Lombard, 1995; Tagliacozzo, 2009). As a result, religion has influenced various aspects of Southeast Asian life, from traditions and customs to political and economic structures. Religious festivals and rituals are essential to national culture and identity in many countries. For example, the Lunar New Year celebrated by Chinese communities, the Songkran Festival in Thailand, and the Diwali Festival in India are all religious festivals celebrated across the region.

Religion has also contributed to the political and economic structures of the region. In some countries, religious leaders have been prominent figures in society, and their influence has extended beyond spiritual matters to politics and governance. For example, the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), a conservative Islamic organisation, has influenced public policy in Indonesia (Arifianto, 2017; Niam, 2017). Thus, religion has profoundly impacted Southeast Asia, shaping its culture, traditions, and political structures. The region's diverse religious beliefs add to its richness and complexity and provide a unique insight into the history and development of Southeast Asian societies.

The interaction between ethnicity and religion in Southeast Asia has been complex. In some cases, religious differences have led to conflicts between ethnic groups, as seen in the ongoing conflicts in southern Thailand between the Buddhist Thai state and Muslim ethnic Malays. However, religion has been a unifying force in other cases, bringing together different ethnic groups (Mukherjee, 2013; Southgate, 2021; Valjakka, 2021). For example, Islam has been crucial in establishing a shared identity among various ethnic groups in Malaysia and Indonesia. Therefore, ethnic and religious identities have significantly shaped Southeast Asia's history, culture, and society. The region's diversity has allowed for a rich and unique blend of various cultural practices, traditions, and religions, making it one of the most fascinating regions in the world.

Political Implications of Identity Politics in Southeast Asia

Identity politics is a political matter that emphasises the interests of a certain group based on their shared identity, such as ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. In Southeast Asia, identity politics has substantially influenced the political evolution of

numerous nations (Boudreau, 2002; Fukuyama, 2006; Lefaan, 2021; Tebble, 2006). Identity politics in Southeast Asia has various and complex political repercussions, ranging from democratisation to political polarisation.

Democratisation

Identity politics has been vital in advancing democracy in Southeast Asia (Berenschot et al., 2017; Freedman, 2007; Grzywacz, 2020; Knapman, 2006; Vatikiotis, 1996; Weatherbee, 2012). Movements that emerged from identity politics have mobilised people to protest against authoritarian regimes and demand democratic reforms. For example, in the Philippines, the People Power Revolution of 1986, which ousted dictator Ferdinand Marcos, was fuelled by popular discontent over his discriminatory policies against ethnic minorities and Muslim communities. Similarly, the democratisation process in Indonesia was driven by the movements of ethnic and religious minorities. Today, identity-based parties and movements continue to promote democratic values, human rights, and justice actively.

Furthermore, democratisation deals with how a society becomes more democratic. In other words, it is the transition from an authoritarian or undemocratic system to a more participatory, representative, and accountable political system. Democratisation is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon that involves both institutional changes, such as the introduction of free and fair elections, the rule of law, and constitutional protections for individual rights and freedoms, as well as cultural and social changes, such as the emergence of civic culture, civil society organisations, and democratic values and norms.

On the other hand, identity politics refers to how social groups define their identities and interests concerning race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexuality, or other forms of difference. Identity politics can be divisive and empowering, depending on how it is practiced and mobilised. On the one hand, identity politics can lead to hostility and conflicts between different groups, as each group seeks to defend its interests and assert its cultural and political identity. On the other hand, identity politics can also be a tool for mobilising marginalised and oppressed groups to demand their rights and recognition and to challenge the dominant narratives of power and privilege.

I argue that in Southeast Asia, identity politics has been crucial in advancing democracy, particularly in authoritarian regimes that often use ethnic or religious cleavages to divide and rule. Identity-based movements and parties have challenged these practices and demanded greater inclusion, representation, and participation in the political system. The People Power Revolution in the Philippines and the democratisation process in Indonesia are two examples of the power of identity politics to mobilise people and bring about democratic reforms. For example, in the Philippines, for instance, the People Power Revolution of 1986 was fuelled by widespread discontent over the discriminatory policies of the Marcos dictatorship against ethnic minorities and Muslim communities. The protesters who gathered in the streets of Manila to demand Marcos' ouster were united by a shared vision of a more just and inclusive society that respected the rights and dignity of all citizens, regardless of their cultural or religious backgrounds. The legacy of the People Power Revolution continues to inspire and inform democratic movements and struggles in the Philippines and beyond (Boudreau, 2002; Lefaan, 2021; Nesadurai, 2017; Rum, 2020; Tebble, 2006).

Similarly, in Indonesia, the democratisation process was driven by the movements of ethnic and religious minorities who had long been excluded from the political and social mainstream. The fall of the Suharto regime in 1998 paved the way for a more open and participatory political system in which identity-based parties and movements could compete for power and influence. Today, Indonesia has a vibrant civil society sector, with

numerous NGOs, grassroots organisations, and activist groups working to promote democratic values, human rights, and justice.

Therefore, identity politics has played a crucial role in advancing democracy in Southeast Asia by mobilising marginalised and oppressed groups to demand their rights and recognition and challenging the hegemony of authoritarian regimes that seek to divide and rule through ethnic or religious cleavages. However, identity politics can also be a double-edged sword, sometimes leading to group divisions and conflicts. Therefore, the challenge for democratic activists and movements is to harness the power of identity politics while promoting solidarity, inclusiveness, and mutual respect.

Political Polarisation

Identity politics has also contributed to political polarisation in some Southeast Asian countries. Political polarisation occurs when a society is divided into ideological or identity-based camps that compete for power and resources (Iyengar et al., 2012; Vecchi et al., 2021). In countries where identity politics has become entrenched, political debates revolve around ethnic, religious, or gender issues, often at the expense of other political agendas, such as economic development or social welfare. Such polarisation can lead to political instability, social tension, and conflict (Nuraniyah, 2020). For example, in Thailand, the political divide between the traditional elites and the populist movements of the poor and rural regions has led to frequent protests and violence.

Political polarisation can lead to the increasing divide between different political factions within a society, where individuals and groups diverge on political ideologies, values, and beliefs (Müller-Crepon, 2022; Vecchi et al., 2021). In the case of Southeast Asia, identity politics has played a significant role in exacerbating political polarisation. Frequently, identity politics is used to mobilise political support based on ethnicity, religion, gender, or other identity markers. In Southeast Asian countries, identity politics has been used by political leaders and activists to attract support and gain power. However, this has also led to the creation of identity-based factions and the dissolution of shared national identity. For example, in Malaysia, politicians have used Islam as a political tool to gain support, leading to the marginalisation of other religious and ethnic groups.

Moreover, political polarisation has caused societal conflict, violence, and tension (Iyengar et al., 2012; Müller-Crepon, 2022; Somer & McCoy, 2018; Vecchi et al., 2021). The political split between Thailand's conventional elites and populist movements of the poor and rural has led to numerous uprisings, coups, and violence. The growing divergence between orthodox and liberal Muslims in Indonesia has caused religious intolerance and tension. Polarisation can also hamper democratic processes like compromise and cooperation and damage faith in institutions and leaders. It can cause political instability and social and economic stagnation. Therefore, political polarisation in Southeast Asian countries must be addressed to deepen democracy, reduce social tensions, and promote socio-economic success. Political leaders must transition from identity-based politics to policies that benefit all citizens, unite the nation, and build democratic trust. Southeast Asian political polarisation hinders democratic development and consolidation. It splits society into political factions with distinct values and views.

Identity politics, which appeals to ethnic, religious, and cultural identities to obtain support, is historically a major cause of political polarisation in Southeast Asia. Identity politics can foster group rivalry and promote inequality and injustice. Thus, political leaders must prioritise policies that benefit all citizens, promote national unity, and build trust in democratic institutions to reduce political polarisation. Identity-based politics must give way to social cohesiveness, equitable chances, and inclusive development.

Southeast Asian socio-economic success requires democratic strengthening. Democracy empowers citizens to participate in decision-making, making governance more responsive and responsible. It can boost economic growth, social welfare, and human development. Social tensions must be reduced for regional stability and security. Political division can cause violence and jeopardise regional stability. Political leaders can lessen social unrest and improve regional stability by encouraging national unity and social cohesiveness. Political polarisation must be addressed to strengthen democratic processes, reduce social tensions, and promote socio-economic progress in Southeast Asia. Political leaders must transition from identity-based politics to policies that benefit all citizens, unite the nation, and build democratic trust.

Ethnic and Religious Tensions

Identity politics can exacerbate ethnic and religious tensions in countries with diverse populations, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, or the Philippines (Knapman, 2006; Lluch, 2019; Maleševic, 2006; Tagliacozzo, 2009). Without a solid national identity or inclusive political frameworks, identity-based groups may seek to protect their interests and demand autonomy or separation. It can lead to conflict between different groups, especially if they have competing claims over resources or cultural heritage. For instance, in Malaysia, the Malay-Muslim majority has often clashed with the ethnic Chinese and Indian minorities over issues such as affirmative action, language policy, or religious rights. Similarly, in the Philippines, historical tensions between the predominantly Catholic majority and Muslim minority in the southern part of the country have fueled conflict and separatist movements.

Religion plays a significant role in identity politics, as particular religious beliefs can shape cultural and political identities. In countries like Indonesia, where Islam is the dominant religion, religious tensions can arise between different sects of Islam and between Muslims and minority religious groups such as Christians or Hindus (Mukrimin, 2023). In India, tensions between Hindus and Muslims have led to violence and discrimination despite the country's secular constitution. Furthermore, religion plays a significant role in identity politics because it offers followers a sense of identity, community, and belongingness. Religion shapes our beliefs, values, and principles, impacting our cultural and political identities. Religious groups compete for recognition and resources in countries where religious diversity exists, leading to identity-based conflicts.

Religious tensions can arise for several reasons, such as differences in interpretation, ideological disputes, or historical grievances (Reid, 2015). These tensions can lead to conflicts between different sects of the same religion or between different religions. Such conflicts often result in violence, discrimination, and human rights violations, destabilising political and social structures. In Indonesia and elsewhere in the Southeast Asian region, religious tensions are prevalent due to their diverse religious landscapes. Despite being an Islamic country in Indonesia, different sects of Islam, such as Sunni and Shia, and minority religious groups, like Christians, Hindus, and Buddhists, coexist. However, conflicts arise due to political representation, social justice, and religious freedom issues.

Economic disparities and political inequalities can also exacerbate ethnic and religious tensions (Fox et al., 2009; Westra, 2020). For example, the Malay-Muslim majority holds disproportionate political and economic power in Malaysia, leading to tensions with other ethnic groups who feel marginalised. Similarly, in the Philippines, the Muslim minority in the south has long felt neglected by the central government, leading to demands for greater autonomy and even independence. Ethnic and religious tensions refer to the differences in beliefs, culture, race, and religion among various groups within a society. Various factors, including economic disparities and political inequalities, can trigger such tensions. One example is Malaysia, a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country that has experienced

various tensions over the years. Malaysia has a Malay-Muslim majority, who hold disproportionate political and economic power. The political and economic power leads to other ethnic groups, such as Chinese and Indian communities, feeling marginalised and excluded from the country's mainstream socio-economic and political spheres. For instance, despite being the largest ethnic group in Malaysia, Chinese Malaysians are underrepresented in the government and public service sectors. It has led to feelings of exclusion and disenfranchisement among non-Malay groups in Malaysia, resulting in tension and conflicts within the society.

Another example is the Philippines, which has a large Muslim minority in the Southern region of Mindanao. The Muslim minority in the Philippines has long been neglected by the Central government, leading to demands for greater autonomy and even independence. The traditional political power structure in the Philippines is dominated by a Christian majority who hold political power in most regions, side-lining the Muslim minority. The issue has resulted in tensions and conflicts between the Muslim and Christian communities, with violent groups such as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Abu Sayyaf seeking to gain independence for the Muslim-dominated regions (Borchers, 2014; Mukherjee, 2013; Rüland, 2014; Southgate, 2021; Weatherbee, 2012).

Hence, socio-economic and political disparities have the potential to exacerbate racial and religious tensions within countries. Governments and policymakers are responsible for enacting policies that remove discrimination, promote inclusiveness, and increase political and economic representation. If this is not done, it may result in tensions and conflicts that have the potential to have long-lasting impacts on the society's peace and stability.

Overall, ethnic and religious tensions show how important it is to promote inclusive national identities and political frameworks that respect the rights of minorities and create channels for constructive discourse and the resolution of conflicts. If this is not done, it can lead to bloodshed and instability, as seen in numerous nations across Southeast Asia and beyond.

International Relations

Identity politics in Southeast Asia can have implications for international relations as well. Ethnic, religious, or linguistic similarities between countries or regions may strengthen cooperation and regional integration. For example, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a regional organisation that aims to promote cooperation and economic development among its member states, some of which share similar cultural or religious backgrounds (Borchers, 2014; Indraswari, 2022; Rüland, 2009, 2014; Rum, 2020).

International relations is a field of study that encompasses a wide range of disciplines, including politics, economics, history, sociology, and law. It concerns the interactions between nations, states, and other international actors, including non-state actors such as multinational corporations, international organisations, and civil society organisations. At this point, the study of how individuals and communities make claims about who they are about important social categories such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and sexual orientation is known as "identity politics." Relational dynamics in Southeast Asian states' political, social, and economic spheres have been heavily impacted by identity politics. Conversely, identity-based conflicts between countries or regions may lead to tensions and diplomatic disputes. For example, the maritime disputes in the South China Sea, which involve several Southeast Asian countries and China, are partly driven by identity-based narratives, such as historical claims or ethnic or linguistic affinity.

The implications of identity politics for international relations in Southeast Asia are manifold. On the one hand, shared identities and cultural affinities between countries can facilitate cooperation and reduce tensions. For example, ASEAN was founded partly on

regional solidarity and mutual support among Southeast Asian nations despite their many differences (Elliott, 2003; Mukherjee, 2013; Rüland, 2014; Southgate, 2021; Stubbs, 2002; Weatherbee, 2012). On the other hand, identity-based conflicts can undermine cooperation and fuel tensions between countries. For example, the disputes over territorial claims in the South China Sea involve a complex mix of historical, cultural, and identity-based factors. Based on ancient maps and historical records, China has long claimed sovereignty over much of the sea. Some Southeast Asian countries, such as the Philippines and Vietnam, have challenged these claims, arguing that they violate their rights to the waters and to the natural resources they contain. These disputes have, at times, escalated into military confrontations or diplomatic standoffs, highlighting the potential for identity-based narratives to fuel conflict in the region.

Subsequently, identity politics can have significant implications for international relations in Southeast Asia due to the diversity of cultures, languages, and religions (Agius & Keen, 2018; Ruckelshaus, 2022). Differences in ethnic and cultural identities can lead to conflicts, which, in turn, can hamper regional cooperation and development. At the same time, shared identities, such as linguistic or religious affiliations, can enhance regional solidarity and help forge bonds between nations (Pepinsky, 2013b, 2013a). A very recent example of implication is in the case of the South China Sea dispute, where China's claim to sovereignty over the sea is based on historical and cultural factors contested by Southeast Asian countries (Allan et al., 2018; Emmerson, 2017; Yennie Lindgren & Lindgren, 2017). The disputes over territorial claims exemplify how identity politics can fuel conflict in the region. The overlapping claims reflect different interpretations of history and identity and highlight the difficulty of reconciling national interests with regional cooperation.

Importantly, identity politics has positive and negative implications for international relations in Southeast Asia. Shared identities foster regional cooperation and solidarity, while identity-based conflicts undermine cooperation and fuel tensions. To promote regional stability and development, policymakers must acknowledge and address the underlying causes of identity-based conflicts and promote inclusiveness and respect for diversity. In this case, identity politics pertains to mobilising social and political movements based on shared characteristics, such as ethnicity, religion, language, and race. Southeast Asia's complex history and diverse cultures have resulted in numerous identity-based conflicts, ranging from secessionist movements in Mindanao and Aceh to tensions between ethnic groups in Myanmar and religious divides in Indonesia.

On the positive side, identity politics can enhance regional cooperation and solidarity. Countries that share similar identities can establish stronger bonds and resolve common issues. For instance, ASEAN has anchored its integration efforts on the region's shared identity as a Southeast Asian community with a shared cultural heritage, buoys the ASEAN member states' efforts to work together towards their common aspirations (Borchers, 2014; Indraswari, 2022; Mukherjee, 2013; Rüland, 2009, 2014; Rum, 2020; Southgate, 2021; Stubbs, 2002; Weatherbee, 2012).

However, identity-based conflicts can undermine regional stability and fuel tensions, posing many challenges to regional cooperation. Conflicts arising from identity politics can increase political instability, violent unrest, and economic underdevelopment. For instance, the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar has been a humanitarian disaster and a destabilising factor in the region due to its spillover effects in neighbouring countries.

At this point, the role of identity politics in Southeast Asia suggests that carefully navigating cultural and historical factors is vital to building solid and lasting relationships between countries in the region (Beh, 1988; Berenschot et al., 2017; Fleschenberg & Baumann, 2020; Moran, 2018; Reid, 2015; Schlehe, 2011; Vatikiotis, 1996; Weatherbee, 2012). At the same time, it underscores the importance of recognising and addressing persistent

inequalities and power imbalances often tied to social identities. By acknowledging how identity politics shape regional international relations, policymakers can work towards greater cooperation and understanding among nations while ensuring that diverse perspectives and voices are heard and respected.

Therefore, identity politics significantly impacts Southeast Asian politics and society. While it can promote democracy, social justice, and regional cooperation, it can also exacerbate tensions, fuel polarisation, and weaken national cohesion (Iyengar et al., 2012; Vecchi et al., 2021). To manage the challenges posed by identity politics, Southeast Asian countries need to adopt inclusive and participatory political systems that accommodate the diversity of their populations and foster common interests and values. It is mainly because identity politics closely deals with the political and social movements formed around a particular social or cultural identity, such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and sexuality. These movements seek to promote the interests, rights, and recognition of the group they represent, often at the expense of other groups or the broader societal and national interest. While identity politics has been present in Southeast Asia for many years, its impact has recently become more pronounced due to various factors such as globalisation, economic change, demographic shifts, and political mobilisation.

Identity politics can significantly impact Southeast Asian politics and society in several ways. On the one hand, it can promote democracy, social justice, and regional cooperation by empowering marginalised and underrepresented groups, increasing their political participation, and promoting their rights and interests (Bennett, 2012; Ray, 2003). For example, the indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities in the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand have organised themselves into political and social movements to demand their recognition, rights, and autonomy. Similarly, the women's movement in Southeast Asia has made significant strides in promoting gender equality, political representation, and legal reform.

On the other hand, identity politics can also exacerbate tensions, fuel polarisation, and weaken national cohesion. It is particularly true when political actors politicise, communalise, or instrumentalise identity-based conflicts to gain power or resources. Such conflicts can become violent and destabilising, leading to social fragmentation, internal displacement, and human rights violations. The Rohingya crisis in Myanmar, the violence in southern Thailand, and communal tensions in Indonesia and the Philippines, for example, are all examples of identity-based conflicts that have damaged Southeast Asia's peace and stability.

To manage the challenges posed by identity politics, Southeast Asian nations must build open and participatory political systems that accommodate diversity and promote shared values to address identity politics. Promote inclusive citizenship, develop democratic institutions, defend human rights, and provide equitable access to resources and opportunities. Recognising and respecting the region's diverse identities and cultures while fostering a sense of shared identity and belonging that transcends local affinities. Dialogue, education, cultural exchange, and other social and political involvement that foster understanding and collaboration can achieve it. Managing identity politics requires recognising diversity, encouraging unity, and peacefully and democratically resolving identity-based claims and complaints.

To address identity politics, Southeast Asian nations must build inclusive and participatory political systems. These systems should accommodate diverse populations while promoting shared values. It promotes inclusive citizenship, democratic institutions, human rights, and equal access to resources and opportunities. In addition, it is crucial to acknowledge and respect the region's diverse identities and cultures while simultaneously fostering a sense of shared identity and belonging beyond specific relationships. It can be achieved through

discourse, education, cultural exchange, and other social and political activities that promote mutual understanding and collaboration. The key to managing identity politics is balancing variety and commonality while addressing identity-based claims and grievances democratically and non-violently.

Therefore, to promote regional stability and development, Southeast Asian nations must recognise the underlying causes of identity-based conflicts and focus on promoting inclusiveness and respect for diversity. Policymakers must solve religious and ethnic problems through dialogue, negotiation, and building trust between conflicting parties. Thus, identity politics can help and hurt Southeast Asian international relations. Thus, policymakers must navigate through the challenges of identity-based conflicts by promoting understanding, inclusiveness, and respect for diversity.

Responses to Identity Politics in Southeast Asia

Identity politics has been a significant aspect of Southeast Asian societies. Southeast Asian countries have responded differently to identity politics, and identity-based conflicts have plagued some, while others have been more successful in managing diversity and promoting pluralism. One strategy implemented in Southeast Asia as a reaction to identity politics is the adoption of an assimilationist or homogenous nationalist policy. The most important consideration is given to the main cultural or ethnic group in the country, while members of other groups are expected to assimilate into the dominant culture (Fish et al., 2021; Kolig et al., 2009; Lluch, 2019; Maleševic, 2006; Prasad K., 2016). For example, in Myanmar, the military junta has pursued a policy of Burmanisation, suppressing the languages, culture, and political aspirations of ethnic minorities. However, this approach has often led to the marginalisation and exclusion of minority groups, fuelling resentment and conflict. Adopting a policy of assimilation or homogeneous nationalism in the region is a response to the issue of identity politics within the region (Kolig et al., 2009; Maleševic, 2006). Identity politics refers to the political and social movements that focus on the concerns and interests of specific identity groups, such as ethnic or cultural groups, gender, or sexual orientation.

In Southeast Asia, the presence of multiple ethnic and cultural groups within a country's borders has created challenges in defining national identity and resolving conflicts that arise from these differences. Policies such as assimilation or homogeneous nationalism address these challenges by prioritising the dominant ethnic or cultural group and suppressing minority groups' language, culture, and political aspirations (Maleševic, 2006; Reid, 2009). The justification for these policies is often based on the belief that a cohesive and homogeneous society is necessary for the country's stability and progress. However, this approach often leads to the marginalisation and exclusion of minority groups and fuels resentment and conflict. In Myanmar, for instance, the military junta's Burmanisation policy has resulted in ongoing conflicts between the Burman-dominated government and ethnic minority groups seeking greater autonomy and recognition. Therefore, while assimilation or homogeneous nationalism may temporarily solve the challenges of identity politics in Southeast Asia, they are likely to have negative long-term consequences, including suppressing minority groups' identities and exacerbating conflicts within the country.

Another response has been to embrace multiculturalism, recognising that diversity is a crucial aspect of national identity and promoting policies that accommodate various groups' cultural and linguistic differences. Malaysia is an excellent example of this approach, where ethnic and religious diversity is celebrated. Policies such as affirmative action for Malay Muslims and indigenous groups have been implemented to address historical discrimination. However, this approach can also lead to challenges, such as accusations of reverse discrimination and inequality based on group identity. Embracing

multiculturalism refers to accepting and celebrating diversity within a society (Kong, 2007; Moran, 2018; Vecchi et al., 2021). A multicultural approach recognises that every individual brings a unique set of values, beliefs, customs, and languages that contribute to the overall identity of the nation. This approach acknowledges that multicultural societies are formed due to historical, social, and economic factors that have attracted people from different parts of the world to form a new community. For example, the multicultural approach has been adopted in Malaysia to promote social harmony and address the challenges associated with a diverse society. The country comprises various ethnic and religious groups, including Malay Muslims, Chinese, Indians, and indigenous groups. Policies such as affirmative action for Malays and indigenous groups have addressed historical discrimination and narrowed the socio-economic gap between ethnic communities. While the multicultural approach has successfully promoted social integration and harmony, it has challenges. Some critics argue that affirmative action policies can reverse discrimination and create inequality based on group identity. For example, non-Malay Malaysians may feel they must be included in opportunities reserved for their Malay counterparts. It can cause resentment and division within society, affecting the overall goal of fostering social harmony. Thus, embracing multiculturalism is a positive approach to acknowledging and celebrating diversity. It provides a framework to address the challenges arising from social, economic, and historical factors contributing to a diverse population. However, it is essential to implement policies that ensure equal opportunities for all members of society and to avoid policies that may create resentment and division based on group identity.

Southeast Asian states have also attempted to manage identity politics through constitutional provisions and legal frameworks. For example, Indonesia and the Philippines have recognised minority rights and protected them through legal frameworks. However, the effectiveness of such approaches depends on the legal system's strength and the political will to implement the provisions. Southeast Asian countries have long faced challenges related to identity politics, where the interests of different ethnic, linguistic, religious, or regional communities often clash, leading to social, political, and sometimes violent conflicts. To address these issues, many regional states have tried to create constitutional provisions and legal frameworks that aim to recognise and protect minority rights and promote multiculturalism and tolerance. For example, Indonesia's constitution guarantees equal rights and complete protection to all citizens, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or gender. The country also has laws that forbid discrimination and hate speech and promote diversity and pluralism. In a similar vein, the constitution of the Philippines recognises and guarantees the rights of ethnic and cultural groups to maintain and advance their distinctive customs, languages, and historical practices.

Nevertheless, while such legal protections may seem promising, their effectiveness depends on various factors, such as the strength and independence of the judiciary, the commitment of government officials to enforce the laws, and the level of civil society engagement and empowerment. These factors have often been weak or lacking in Southeast Asian countries. For instance, despite the legal protections in Indonesia, ethnic and religious tensions have remained high in some regions, such as Aceh, Papua, and West Kalimantan, where the non-Muslim population feels marginalised and discriminated against by the majority Islamic community. Moreover, some laws that purportedly protect religious freedom, such as the blasphemy law, have been used to persecute minorities and restrict free speech. Similarly, in the Philippines, the implementation of minority rights has been hampered by corruption, political violence, and a lack of resources and infrastructure. Some groups, such as the Moro people in Mindanao, have demanded greater autonomy and self-determination despite constitutional guarantees, citing historical injustices and ongoing discrimination.

Therefore, while constitutional provisions and legal frameworks can provide a basis for promoting pluralism and tolerance, they must be complemented by other measures, such as educational programs, cultural exchanges, and inclusive political participation. Only with a comprehensive and sustained effort can Southeast Asian countries fully address their identity politics and ensure a fair and peaceful society for all. Crucially, civil society organisations have also played a significant role in promoting pluralism and combating identity-based conflicts. Groups such as human rights organisations, religious groups, and cultural associations have worked towards promoting inter-ethnic and religious harmony and advocating for the rights of marginalised groups.

Thus, identity politics has played an important part in the formation of Southeast Asian societies, and the countries that make up this region have adopted various approaches to dealing with the difficulties of diversity. While some have pursued assimilationist policies, others have embraced multiculturalism, recognised minority rights, and worked towards promoting pluralism. Managing diversity in Southeast Asia requires a combination of legal frameworks, political will, and civil society engagement to ensure diverse groups' peaceful and productive coexistence.

Conclusion

Identity politics in Southeast Asia is a multifaceted and ever-evolving phenomenon deeply rooted in the region's history, culture, and political systems. The concept of identity encompasses many factors, such as ethnicity, religion, language, gender, and sexuality, which shape how people perceive themselves and interact with others. In this study, identity politics in Southeast Asia has positive and negative implications. On the one hand, it provides a means for marginalised groups to assert their rights and demand more excellent representation in political, economic, and social systems. On the other hand, it can lead to conflict and division if not appropriately managed.

Future directions of identity politics in Southeast Asia will depend on various factors, such as changing demographics, global trends, and domestic political developments. There is a need to balance promoting identity-based interests with maintaining national cohesion and stability.

As elaborated above, identity politics is mainly seen as political movements based on individuals' or groups' shared characteristics or identities. These identities can be based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, language, culture, or sexual orientation. In Southeast Asia, identity politics has been a prominent feature of the political landscape for several decades. Identity politics has become more prominent in Southeast Asia due to the region's changing demographics. The rise of migration and mobility has resulted in increased diversity and the emergence of new identities. As a result, there has been a growing demand for recognition of these identities by governments and society.

The influence of global trends has also affected the path that identity politics would take in Southeast Asia in the years to come. The global rise of populism and nationalism has resulted in the politicisation of identities, which has led to many groups demanding greater representation and rights. New political parties and movements founded on identity-based interests have emerged as a direct result of the issues that resulted from their emergence.

Domestic political developments in Southeast Asia have also contributed to the rise of identity politics. In many countries, ethnic and religious tensions have resulted in the growth of identity-based movements, often focused on securing more significant rights and autonomy for marginalised communities. This matter has led to conflicts, tensions, and sometimes even violence. At the same time, there is a need to balance promoting identity-based interests with maintaining national cohesion and stability. Southeast Asian governments need to address the demands of identity-based movements to uphold the

larger goal of national unity. It requires dialogue, transparency, and compromise on all sides.

Then, the path that identity politics in Southeast Asia will take in the future will be determined by a convoluted confluence of circumstances. As the state of the region continues to evolve and change, it will be necessary to strike a balance between the interests of various groups and the overarching goal of maintaining national unity and stability. The area will only be able to negotiate this complicated terrain and discover a way toward a more inclusive and equitable society if they engage in open and honest talks. Moving forward, Southeast Asian authorities need to embrace an approach that is more inclusive, one that acknowledges and respects the varied identities of the region's peoples without compromising the integrity of the nation as a whole. They also have a responsibility to address the fundamental issues that underlie marginalisation and discrimination, which are frequently the motivating factors for identity-based movements. It requires tackling issues such as poverty, inequality, and social exclusion to succeed. In addition, there is an imperative to encourage conversation and participation among people of varying identities to cultivate a deeper level of mutual understanding and cooperation. Governments, organisations in civil society, and the commercial sector have a significant part to play in this issue. They can do this by establishing forums for discussion, supporting community initiatives, and promoting education and awareness-raising efforts.

Finally, while identity politics in Southeast Asia poses challenges and risks, it also offers opportunities for the region to build a more inclusive and equitable society. By adopting a balanced and proactive approach, governments, policymakers, the ASEAN body, civil society organisations, and all people can harness the potential of identity politics to strengthen national cohesion and promote sustainable development.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Republicans vs Democrats

A Comparative Look at Congress Foreign Policy in the MENA Region

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Abstract

This paper compares US foreign policies of Republican and Democratic members of Congress in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) through 126 laws from 1973 to 2017 and in the light of the concepts of 'soft,' 'hard', and 'smart' powers. The analyses of the laws led to the following findings. Initially, regardless of their party affiliations, all members of Congress agreed on protecting and strengthening Israel through using means of soft and hard powers. Additionally, Republicans are more likely to use means of hard power than Democrats, especially military force. Democrats rely, in fact, more on diplomatic and strategic cooperation. They are also more likely to apply the concept of 'smart power', well balancing hard and soft power means. By contrast, Republicans' resort to hard power is widely unbalanced with that of soft power. Furthermore, they tend to be keener on looking for economic opportunities in the region than Democrats do. Finally, the paper finds out that Democrats are more open and lenient than Republicans in terms of their immigration policies toward the MENA region's citizens. These findings are generally in line with the available literature. However, the paper's originality lies in the methodology used to attain them.

Keywords: USA; foreign policy; Congress; MENA region

Introduction

The Founding Fathers of the US, who were also the drafters of the US Constitution, did not envisage a role for political parties nor did they aim at establishing a partisan political system in the country. This explains the fact that there is no mention of political parties and their role in the Constitution of the United States of America. George Washington, the first president of the US, was not affiliated with any political party. In fact, in his Farewell Address, George Washington (1796) warned against the establishment of political parties stating: "I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the state, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party". Similarly, Alexander Hamilton and James Madison (1787) clearly expressed their concern about the menaces of national domestic factions in the Federalist Papers No. 9 and No.10, respectively. However, the very same leaders, Hamilton and Madison, were behind the development of one of the first party systems in the world in order to shift the executive power from one bloc to another through elections. These include the Federalist faction led by Hamilton and the Democratic-Republican faction with Madison and Thomas Jefferson at the head (Hofstadter, 1970). This nascent party system was further developed thanks to the expansion of voting rights which were restricted to male property

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owners before it was broadened in the 19th and 20th century to include all races and sexes. The expansion of the electorate allowed political parties to mobilize an increasing number of voters to attain political control (Dangerfield, 1989).

Nowadays, the Republican and Democratic parties control the executive and legislative powers in the US. For instance, there has never been a president-elect from outside of the two parties since 1852 and the two parties' part of the popular vote for the president has always been close to 95 percent since the Second World War. Similarly, the number of state and federal legislatures who are not affiliated with either party has always been very low (Ornstein et al., 2014).

Although the functions of US political parties are not mentioned in the constitution, they do perform major roles in the American political system. The Merriam's (1923) classification can be considered a typical representative of the literature on the functions of political parties in the US. According to Merriam (1923), there are five key functions of political parties in the American political system. First, political parties select candidates for political office both for the executive and legislative branches of the government. In so doing, the voters' task becomes easier because political parties narrow the voters' choice. Second, political parties formulate public policies through their elected representatives who should establish policies that reflect the party's principles and convictions. Third, a political party monitors the opposing party in office through controlling its policies and informing the public of any misconduct or slipup. Furthermore, political parties play an important role in the political education of Americans, which include informing and mobilizing voters as well as nationalizing the public opinion. Last but not least, political parties serve as mediators between citizens and the government because it is through political parties that Americans can hold both the President and Congress accountable. This accountability is achieved through voting in the elections because voters may vote for candidates to support a particular party or penalize another one (American Political Science Association, 1950; Bums, 1963; Schattschneider, 1942; Sundquist, 1992).

These functions show that the importance of political parties in the US lies in the fact that they nominate candidates who establish domestic and foreign policies once they are elected as presidents or members of Congress.

The US Constitution divides the powers of initiating and changing foreign policies among the President and Congress. The two branches share the decision making powers pertaining to designing US foreign policies. Yet, they both have different roles to play through which they create foreign policies or respond to each other's foreign policy decisions. Article 1 of the Constitution mentions many foreign policy powers of Congress such as to "regulate commerce with foreign nations," "declare war," "raise and support armies," "provide and maintain a navy," and "make rules for the government and regulation of the land and knaval forces." (U.S. Constitution. Art. I.)

Another very important power of Congress is "the power of the purse" or the ability to tax and spend public money for the national government. This power is exclusively vested in Congress, especially the House of Representatives: "No money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in consequence of Appropriations made by Law." (U.S. Const. art. 1, sec.9, cl. 7). However, Carroll's timely study (1966) of the "power of the purse" showed that this role is not very important in initiating and shaping US foreign policy despite the fact that it is the House's major role. Westphal (1942) had come to the same conclusion in his comprehensive work on the House Committee on foreign affairs.

An attempt to relate Congress foreign policy functions to US foreign policy in the Middle East reveals few interesting remarks. First of all, it is well-known that a significant part of US foreign policy in the region involves foreign aid to several countries in the area, especially the regional US strategic allies (Barber, 2002; Berger, 2012; Carothers, 2009;

Corneille & Shiffman, 2004 ; Ingram, 2018; Tarnoff, 2015). This directly relates to the Power of the Purse function. Additionally, there is an increasing number of Free Trade Agreements which the US signed with many countries in the region (Hassanien, 2010). This relates to the Congress function of regulating international commerce. Furthermore, many of Congress foreign policy functions relate to declaring war and raising or maintaining military forces (Sobhy, 2005; Yoo, 2008; Hallett, 2012). In fact, the strategic interest of the US in the region necessitates maintaining US military presence there either through permanent military bases or via military interventions, which also requires the use of the power of the purse.

This paper examines and compares foreign policies of Republicans and Democrats in the Middle East and North Africa within the legislative branch of US government. The paper adopts Joseph Nye's concepts of 'soft', 'hard' and 'smart' powers as frameworks of analysis and comparison. I believe that this comparison is both important and relevant because of the strategic importance of the region to the US, Therefore, understanding the difference in policies between the two parties is useful to account for the periodic changes that might occur in US foreign policy towards the region in general or vis-a-vis particular countries that are part of the same region. Furthermore, the chosen timeframe for analysis (1973-2017) is also significant because it starts and ends with important and controversial events and during which other critical events took place. That is, the oil crisis of 1973 and the election of Donald Trump as well as most of US interventions in the region. While the findings of this paper might seem to be a conventional wisdom, the originality of the paper is found is the methodology I adopted as I shall explain.

The paper proceeds as follows. I will start with presenting Nye's conceptual understanding of power along with other relevant literature. Afterwards, I will describe the process of collecting data and methods of analysis before proceeding with the analysis and highlighting the major findings. The paper ends with some important conclusions.

Nye's conceptual understandings of power

To begin with, it is important to point out that power is a highly debatable concept in political theory and it is not easy to define. I mainly relied on Nye's conceptual understanding of power because of two major factors: First, it is the most comprehensive as it differentiates between hard, soft and smart powers. Second, it has a clear relevance to US foreign policy in general with some significant references to the MENA area. Nye (2002) defines power as "the ability to effect the outcomes you want and, if necessary, to change the behavior of others to make this happen." (p.4). Barnett and Duvall (2005) define power as "the production, in and through social relations, of effects that shape the capacities of actors to determine their circumstances and fate." Nye, along with other contemporary scholars, argued that the classical academic understating of power has begun to change with the evolvement of IR as an academic discipline (Gray & U.S. Strategic Studies Institute Army War College, 2011; Nye, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2015). Nye (1990) pointed out to the constant change in international order which necessitates using impalpable means of power including culture and ideology as well as institutions. Similarly, Baldwin (2013) minimizes the significance of military power and argued that nonmilitary means have been undervalued.

Political scientists and scholars of international relations have made use of various understandings of political power. For example, proponents of the realist school in IR, especially the classical among them, think of power as the states' inherent and ultimate aim (Morgenthau & Thompson, 2006). Economic and military growth as well as cultural hegemony are all means to achieve one end. That is, to be able to influence and dominate actors in addition to having control over resources. To illustrate, the strategic importance of the Middle East for the US prompts this latter to strive to influence and dominate the

region's actors through various means. These include but not limited to the threat of using or the actual use of force, establishing economic partnership or imposing economic sanctions, maintaining or stopping diplomatic relations as well as initiating cultural exchanges. For instance, the US has militarily intervened in Iraq claiming that the country possessed WMDs. It has also imposed economic sanctions on Iran to prevent it from acquiring nuclear arms and established several FTAs with some Arab states to realise more economic growth. Moreover, the US has launched many cultural and educational exchange programs to polish the image of the US among Arabs and spread the American culture. Finally, it goes without saying that the region's oil resources remain one of the major reasons behind the US keenness on influencing and dominating the area.

Joseph Nye differentiated between two types of power: 'Soft' and 'hard'. Hard power is considered the classical type of power and relates to the understanding of international system as anarchic. It is carried out through using or threatening to use military force and coercive diplomacy as well as applying or threatening to apply economic sanctions. Hard power is usually measured by military power, the size of population, the country's territory and geography, natural resources and strength of the economy. Realists and neorealists advocate for using this kind of power in order to maintain a balance in the international system.

On the other hand, 'soft' power refers to a nation's use of non-coercive, non-forceful and non-violent means such as cultural, educational and cooperative programs as well as financial aid to convince other nations to ascribe to its policies (Nye, 2008, 2009; Parmar & Cox, 2010). The origins of the concept of soft power are often traced to Carr's (1946) classification of power in three categories: Military, economic and the power over opinion. While military and economic powers are examples of hard power, the power over opinion can be considered an attribute of soft power. Unlike Carr's realist thought, which generally believe in the utility of hard power, the liberal school in international relations is more likely to prioritize the use of means of soft power. The liberalists consider war a major problem in international relations. Therefore, they prefer three solutions to solve it. Namely, democracy, economic interdependence and international institutions, which are all means of soft power (Gallarotti, 2010; Lawson, 2015; Viotti & Kauppi, 2012; Ohnesorge, 2019)

Unlike hard power, which is often measured by relatively straightforward and simple resources, the intangibility of soft power makes it hard to measure. Nye (2008) develops three resources through which soft power can be measured. First, the nation's culture and its attractiveness to other nations. In fact, the American culture has become increasingly attractive among Arab and Muslim youth (Richards & Omidvar, 2014). Second, the country's political values and whether it respects them at home and internationally. While the US is generally considered a democratic country at home, it is often criticized for not adopting similar practices internationally, especially in the MENA region. The long US support for Arab non-democratic regimes in the region is a case in point (McMillan, 2016). Third, the government's foreign policies and how legitimate and moral they are. It goes without saying that US foreign policy in the Middle East has often been controversial, especially with the support to Israel and engaging in some illegitimate wars such as the war in Iraq.

Jonathan McClory (2011) elaborated on Nye's categorisation and developed five categories of soft power: The government which epitomises the political values of a nation; culture or the specific practices that define a particular society. Diplomacy, Education as well as Business and innovation. I can also include other soft power resources such as tourism, sports achievements, arts and history. These spheres of soft power can be implemented by various agents and actors such as the government, NGOs, Multinational companies, civil society, networks or even individuals. Soft power can be instrumentalised through laws and

policies, bilateral, regional or international agreements, educational and cultural exchange programs, sports events and academic conferences, to name a few.

Taking into consideration that soft power cannot always be effective in dealing with all types of issues, it is very important to adopt a balanced approach to coping with foreign policy issues. An approach based on a skillful combination of hard and soft powers or what Nye and Armitage (2007) referred to as 'smart' power. In other words, smart power is an effective and efficient combination of soft and hard power to realize the actor's goals (Wilson, 2008: 115)

To illustrate, Nye (2012) uses the example of terrorism. He believes that the use of a combination of soft and hard power means is the most effective strategy to fight this phenomenon. He argues that utilizing resources of soft power only with a group like Taliban might not be useful to win their hearts and minds. Therefore, the use of a means of hard power is required. Nevertheless, to develop and strengthen relations with Arab and Muslim countries, the US use of hard power would have negative effects. Consequently, the use of soft power resources is necessary. Crocker et al. (2007) sum up the smart power strategy stating that smart power "involves the strategic use of diplomacy, persuasion, capacity building, and the projection of power and influence in ways that are cost-effective and have political and social legitimacy" (p. 13). To begin with, it is important to point out that power is a highly debatable concept in political theory and it is not easy to define. In fact, Nye's conceptualisation of power remains interesting due to its comprehensiveness as it deals with different aspects of power in addition to its relevance to US foreign policy with considerable references to the MENA region.

US foreign policy: Republicans vs Democrats

Taking into consideration that the literature on the difference between US foreign policies of Republicans and Democrats in the MENA region is very scarce, this section briefly and broadly presents some of these differences based on a recent research conducted by the Lester Crown Center on US Foreign Policy in 2020 (Smeltz et al., 2020).

According to the research, Democrats are more likely to favor international coordination either through bilateral partnerships or global institutions. In contrast, Republicans believe less in international coordination and more in being self-sufficient. In other words, Democrats tend to in favor of using means of soft power which is implemented through bilateral or multilateral cooperation. On the other hand, the fact that Republicans believe more in self-sufficiency and self-reliance may prompt them to take unilateral actions and forceful actions to attain this goal. As a result, they are likely to adopt and make use of means of soft power. To put it differently, I can say that while Republicans adopt a nationalist approach to US foreign policy, Democrats adopt an internationalist approach. The nationalist approach puts US interests first and foremost, which necessitates advancing policies that foster economic independence and preferring unilateral policies pertaining to diplomacy and global engagement. On the contrary, the international approach focuses on cooperating and coordinating with other nations and within international organisations as well as offering aid to poor or developing countries.

Comparing foreign policies of Republicans and Democrats within the legislative branch of the US government necessitates comparing Congress laws' sponsored by members of Congress about various issues in the region for which I chose the period between 1973 and 2017. This timeframe coincides with critical events that start with the oil crisis of 1973, proceed with many US interventions in the region and end with the election of Donald Trump.

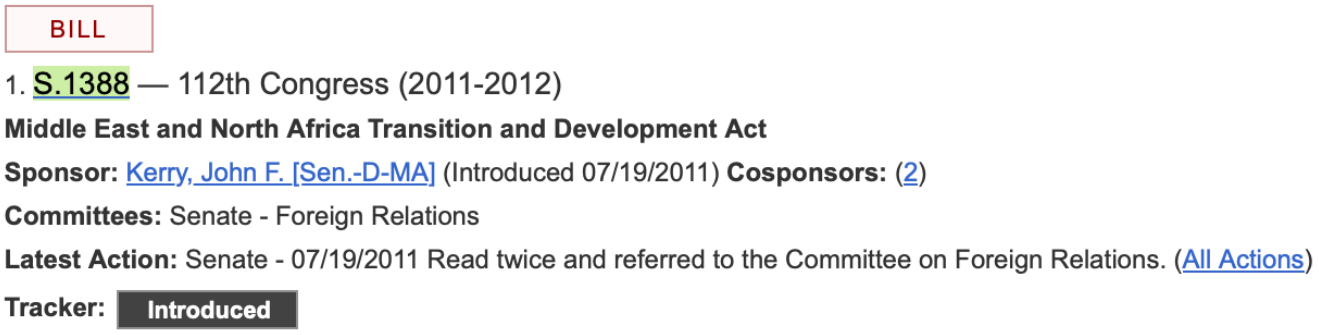
Data collection

To collect data pertaining to Congress laws, I will use the official website of Congress (www.congress.gov) which remains a very comprehensive and trustworthy source as it is managed by the US government. The website's menu constitutes of ten sections. Each section includes different data from 1973 to the present. These sections are 'current legislation', 'all legislation', 'all sources', 'members', 'congressional record', 'committee reports', 'nominations', 'treaty documents', 'house communications' and 'senate communications'.

In addition to searching using one of these sections, the website allows users to add key words in an internal search engine to make the search more specific. Because this paper is interested in comparing foreign policies of Republicans and Democrats in the MENA area within Congress, I chose the 'all legislation' section as it allows us to collect the largest data possible in addition to the keyword 'middle east' to limit the search to our geographical context.

Running a search across the 'all legislation' section on December 21, 2017 at 11:35 AM GMT resulted in 5866 legislations which include bills, joint resolutions, concurrent resolutions, and simple resolutions. However, I am interested in the types of legislation that have the force of law because they require the approval of both the House of Representatives and the Senate as well as the signature of the President to become laws. This means that these laws deal with important matters for the U.S. because both chambers of the legislative power, along with the executive one, agree on. In so saying, I used a second criterion to limit my search within the 'all legislation' section. In addition to 'middle east', I added 'law' as another keyword in the search engine. Running the search again across the 'all legislation' section on December 21, 2017 at 11:40 AM GMT generated 3679 legislations. The following is a screenshot of how each legislation is presented.

Figure 1. A screenshot of how each legislation is presented.



Source: www.congress.gov

Skimming through the first entries reveals that not all of them serve both the paper's aforementioned purposes; that is to say, relevance to the Middle East region and being a law. This can be easily found from the way resolutions appear in the search results as it is illustrated by the example above. The bill's designation 'Middle East and North Africa Transition and Development Act' shows that it is relevant to the first purpose of this paper as it relates to the MENA area. However, it does not serve the paper's second purpose because it did not become a law as the tracker shows. It was just introduced in the Senate. In contrast, the example below shows a resolution which became a law, but it has nothing to do with the MENA region as its title indicates: 'Kentucky National Forest Land Transfer Act of 2000.

Figure 2. A screenshot of how a different piece of legislation is presented.

Source: www.congress.gov

Therefore, I had to skim through all 3679 resolutions to find those that became laws and, at the same time, relate to the Middle East region. This was time-consuming, but there was no other way to do that. In fact, the resolution's title and the tracker part of each entry made the skimming process quicker and resulted in finding 126 laws. These laws were organized in a table of 7 columns (see Appendix.). The first indicates the order in which the legislation appears in the search results. The other columns, from left to right, show the law's title, a short summary of its goals and motivation, the assigned number, the date when it was enacted, its sponsor, and the sponsor's party affiliation. This information allows us to draw very important conclusions about the difference between the foreign policies of Republican and Democratic members of Congress in the Middle East and North Africa.

Analyses and Findings

It is worth reminding that our comparison is based on 126 laws adopted between 1973 and 2017, all dealing with various issues related to the MENA area. About 68 percent (86 laws) were sponsored by Republican members of Congress and Democrats sponsored 32 percent (40 laws). This means that Republicans are more involved in the region than Democrats. It is also worth noting that the comparison was conducted in the light of Joseph Nye's concepts of 'soft', 'hard' and smart powers in foreign policies as I explained in the introduction.

Laws sponsored by Republican members of Congress

A thorough reading of the 86 laws sponsored by Republican members of Congress reveals that they can be classified in three major categories in addition to other miscellaneous issues.

The first major category illustrates the use of 'hard power' which constitutes about 51% of the total laws sponsored by Republicans. 63% of the laws that illustrate the use of hard power relate to imposing economic and financial sanctions on countries and organizations that are believed to endanger US interests in the region. Other laws illustrating the use of hard power pertain to authorizing the use of military force against regimes and groups that represent a danger for US interests in the area. These these laws constitute about 23% of the laws that exemplify the use of hard power. The rest of the laws dealing with hard power, which constitute 14%, are appropriations authorized to cover the expenses of military operations in the area.

The second major category of laws sponsored by Republican members of Congress illustrates the use of 'soft power', which constitutes about 12% of the total laws sponsored

by Republicans. 70% of these laws relate to bilateral cooperation and agreements with some countries in the region. These include Free Trade Agreements with Morocco, Bahrain, Oman and Jordan in addition to defense cooperation with Jordan. The rest of the laws illustrating the use of 'soft power' include establishing and appropriating funds for educational and cultural programs that aim at polishing the image of the US among Arab and Muslim youth as well as providing economic, technical and humanitarian aid to Iraq and Syria in addition to supporting peace in the Sudan.

The third major category is Israel. I included this as a major category because the laws that relate to this country constitute about 27% of the total laws sponsored by Republican members of Congress in the MENA area. 57% of the laws relating to Israel aim at protecting this country through imposing financial sanctions on and strengthening prohibitions against the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, commanding other countries to stop their support to these organizations as well as limiting or stopping financial and humanitarian assistance to Gaza and the West Bank. Protecting Israel is also accomplished through defending this country from within international organizations, especially the United Nations, through vetoing the resolutions that condemn Israel's settlements, combat anti-Semitic acts in the UN and counter anti-Israel boycott.

The laws relating to Israel also aim at strengthening this country economically, scientifically and politically. These laws constitute 30% of the total laws relating to Israel and include recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Israel and establishing bilateral economic and research agreements. Last but not least, 13% of the laws relating to Israel deal with some symbolic actions such as congratulating Egypt and Israel for the the tenth anniversary of their peace agreement and honoring Anwar Sadat and Shimon Perez for their peace efforts.

In addiction to these three major categories, the laws sponsored by Republicans deal with other issues that cannot be included in one of the three major categories. These laws constitute 10% of the total laws sponsored by Republicans and deal with various issues. First, there are few immigration laws that grant refugee status to Iraqis and people from the greater Middle East area during the first Gulf War, adjust the status of some Syrian Jewish nationals to permanent residents as well as grant special immigrant status to Iraqi and Afghan translators. Second, I found that there are some laws which I called 'symbolic' because they symbolically honor Americans who are stationed or held hostage in the Middle East through establishing a national day or approving the location of a memorial in their honor. Last but not least, there was a law called "Iraq Reconstruction Accountability Act of 2006" which requires the special Inspector General to provide a forensic audit report on the funds appropriated to reconstruct Iraq.

Table 1. MENA-related laws sponsored by Republican members of Congress.

Major category	(%) to total laws sponsored	Sub-category	(%) to total laws of the major category	Law numbers[a]
Hard power	51	Imposing economic and financial sanction	63	12, 19, 25, 29, 30, 32, 33, 36, 39, 40, 41, 54, 55, 57, 67, 68, 70, 74, 83, 88, 96, 105, 112,

				117, 119, 121, 122, 126
		Authorizing the use of force	23	24, 45, 49, 62, 63, 69, 75, 87, 100, 114
		Appropriating funds for military operations	14	14, 37, 38, 43, 84, 99
Soft power	12	Bilateral agreements including FTAs	70	21, 50, 53, 98, 108, 115, 116
		Other means including cultural and exchange programs, peacekeeping and humanitarian aid	30	28, 35, 94
Israel	27	Protecting Israel	57	6, 7, 8, 13, 16, 22, 58, 59, 61, 101,102, 103, 111
		Empowering Israel	30	20, 27, 48, 64, 93, 109, 124
		Others	13	2, 3, 17
Miscellaneous	10	These mainly include laws on immigration and some symbolic actions		1, 4, 42, 51, 66, 82, 92, 106, 113

[a] *The order number of laws as shown in the Appendix*

Laws sponsored by Democratic members of Congress.

Similar to what I found about the laws sponsored by Republican members of Congress, the laws sponsored by Democrats can be classified into three major categories in addition to few miscellaneous issues. The first major category, which constitutes 32.5% of the total laws sponsored by Democrats, illustrates the use of hard power. These laws include applying economic and financial sanctions on regimes and groups that endanger US interests in the region, which represent about 69% of the laws illustrating the use of hard power. 23% of the laws illustrating hard power are about appropriating funds to finance military operations in the region, and 8% only is about authorizing the use of military force.

The second major category illustrates the use of soft power, which constitutes 20% of the total laws sponsored by Democratic members of Congress. 37.5% of these are about establishing bilateral economic and defense partnerships and 62.5% deal with authorizing arms sales, repealing the use of force, condemning violent actions, taking security measures to combat terrorism, preventing a country from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and supporting ceasefire.

The third major category is Israel, which constitutes 32.5% of the total laws sponsored by Democratic members of Congress. 54% of these laws aim at strengthening this country through establishing strategic and defense bilateral partnerships and providing financial aid. 23% of Israel related laws aim at protecting Israel through sanctioning the Palestinian Liberation Organization, securing the return of Israeli soldiers, commanding another Arab country to stop its support to Palestinian groups that are believed to endanger Israel's security, and countering an international attempt to boycott Israel. The remaining laws deal with providing preferential visa treatment to Israelis to enter the US as well as other symbolic actions such as reaffirming the bonds with Israel in the 50th anniversary of its establishment and awarding Shimon Perez a Gold medal.

In addition to these three major categories, the laws sponsored by Democrats deal with other issues which constitute 15% of the total laws. The most important of these laws are about immigration including banning Trump's executive order, which aimed at banning citizens from seven Arab countries from entering the US. This is in addition to granting the Iraqis, employed by the US federal government during the Gulf War, a special immigrant status in the US. The remaining law deals with a symbolic action that awards gold medals to US soldiers who took part in military operations in the region.

Table 2. MENA-elated laws sponsored by Democratic members of Congress

Major category	(%) to total laws sponsored	Sub-category	(%) to total laws of the major category	Law numbers[a]
Hard power	32.5	Imposing economic and financial sanction	69	34, 44, 46, 65, 76, 78, 81, 91, 120
		Authorizing the use of force	8	56
		Appropriating funds for military operations	23	11, 31, 97
Soft power	20	Bilateral agreements including FTAs	37.5	72, 73, 85
		Other means including cultural and exchange programs, peacekeeping and humanitarian aid	62.5	18, 26, 47, 95, 104
Israel	32.5	Protecting Israel	23	23, 60, 118
		Empowering Israel	54	9, 10, 15, 71, 77, 86, 89
		Others	23	5, 90, 125

Miscellaneous	15	These mainly include laws on immigration and some symbolic actions	n/a	52, 79, 80, 107, 110, 123

[a] *The order number of laws as shown in the Appendix*

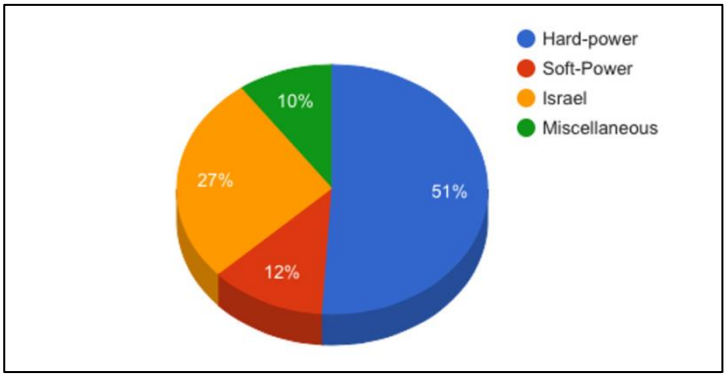
Analyses and Findings

The above analyses of the laws sponsored by Republican and Democratic members of Congress show that there are three major points of comparison pertaining to US foreign policies in the MENA area. That is to say, the use of hard power, the use of soft power, and Israel. Tables 1 and 2 show that both Republican and Democratic members of Congress use more means of hard power than soft power in their foreign policies in the MENA area. However, Republicans are generally more likely to use means of hard power than Democrats, especially the use of force. On the other hand, Democrats are generally more likely to use means of soft power than Republicans, except for establishing Free Trade Agreements with the countries of the region. To illustrate, all Free Trade Agreements which the US has established with Arab countries, including Bahrain, Jordan, Morocco, and Oman, were sponsored by Republicans. This indicates that Republicans are more keen on looking for external economic opportunities in the region than Democrats.

I also noticed that unlike Republicans, Democrats are more likely to use the so called 'smart power' which is an effective and a balanced combination of soft and hard powers in foreign policy. To illustrate, while the percent difference between the use of hard power and the use of soft power remains significant among Republicans (39%), that difference is comparatively insignificant among Democrats (12.5%).

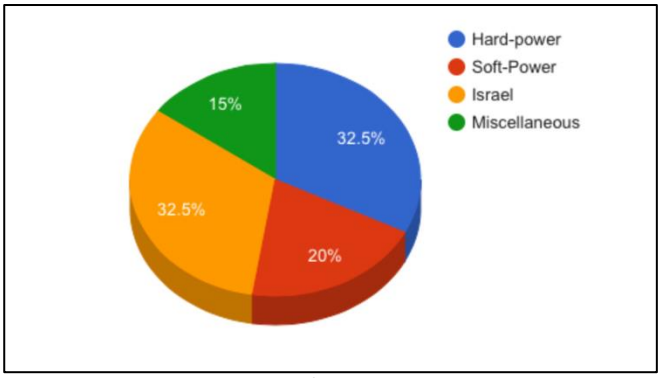
The third major point of comparison is Israel which occupies a very important place in US foreign policy for both Republican and Democratic members of Congress. 32.5% of the laws sponsored by democrats and 27% of the laws sponsored by Republicans aim at protecting and strengthening Israel through various means. To put it differently, none of the laws relating to Israel deal with an aspect of hard power unlike the other laws relating to other countries in the region, which deal with various aspects of both soft and hard powers. Clearly, while there is a significant difference between foreign policies of Republican and Democratic members of Congress in terms of the use of 'hard' and 'soft' powers, this difference is far less significant when it comes to laws dealing with Israel. Last but not least, from the few laws dealing with immigration, I noticed that Democrats tend to be more open to people from the region than Republicans. Figure 3 and Figure 4 sums up the findings of this paper.

Figure 3. Categories of laws sponsored by Republicans in the MENA region.



Source: Author's elaboration.

Figure 4. Categories of laws sponsored by Democrats in the MENA region.



Source: Author's elaboration.

Conclusion

Considering that US political parties do not have constitutionally recognized functions, their importance lies in the fact that they nominate candidates to take constitutionally established responsibilities as Presidents or members of Congress. This paper aimed to compare and contrasting the foreign policies of Republican and Democratic members of Congress from 1973 to 2017 in the MENA area in the light of the concepts of Nye's conceptualizations of hard, soft, and smart powers.

The analyses of the laws sponsored by Republican and Democratic members of Congress led to the following findings. It is essential to point out that while the general findings might not sound very original, the originality of the paper stems from how I explained what might be considered a spread knowledge or not original findings, especially about how I collected data, categorized them and analysed them.

To begin with, regardless of their party affiliations, all members of Congress agree on protecting and strengthening Israel through using means of soft and hard powers, which is not a surprising finding. In addition, I noted that Republican members of Congress are more likely to use means of hard power than Democrats, especially the use of force. In contrast, Democrats are more likely to use means of soft power, including diplomatic and strategic cooperation. Democrats are also more likely to apply the concept of 'smart power' because there is a good balance between their use of hard and soft powers unlike Republicans whose use of hard power is widely unbalanced with that of soft power. Indeed, this finding about the use of smart power is particularly interesting and novel in the literature. Furthermore, Republicans tend to be more keen on looking for economic opportunities in the region than Democrats, which can be illustrated by the fact that Republican members of Congress sponsored all Free Trade Agreements signed with countries in the region. Even though Republicans are more liberal economically speaking and, therefore, are more likely to seek economic opportunities through FTAs, it is interesting to find that all FTAs were initiated by Republicans. Last but not least, I noticed that Democrats tend to be more open and lenient than Republicans in terms of their immigration policies vis-à-vis the region's citizens.

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APPENDIX. Congress Laws about the Middle East and North Africa (1973-2017)

N	**Laws' titles**	Goal & motivation as specified in the law	Ref.	Date	Sponsor	Party
1	To designate November 2, 1990, as a national day of prayer for members of American military forces and American citizens stationed or held hostage in the Middle East, and for their families.	Praying for US forces and citizens held hostage in the Middle East and urging the President and Iraqi authorities to find a just resolution for the crisis there.	H.J.Res.673	11-14-90	John Duncan	R
2	Anwar Sadat Centennial Celebration Act	Arrange for the posthumous award of a Congressional Gold Medal to Anwar Sadat in recognition of his achievements and heroic actions to attain comprehensive peace in the Middle East.	S.266	02-01-17	Orrin G. Hatch	R
3	Anwar Sadat Centennial Celebration Act	Arrange for the posthumous award of a Congressional Gold Medal to Anwar Sadat in recognition of his achievements and heroic actions to attain comprehensive peace in the Middle East.	H.R.754	01-31-17	Christ Stewart	R
4	Persian Gulf War POW/MIA Accountability Act of 2002	Grant Refugee status in the US to any alien from Iraq or the Greater Middle East Region.	S. 1339	10-29-02	Ben Nighthorse Campbell	R
5	Expressing the sense of Congress on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the modern State of Israel and reaffirming the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the United States and Israel.	Commend the Israelis for building a new state and a pluralistic society. Reaffirmed the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the US and Israel.	H.J.Res.102	05-11-98	Tom Lantos	D
6	Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003	Syria should stop its support for terrorism and close terrorist offices of Hamas, Hizbollah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine,	S.Con.Res.19	03-04-07	Lindsey Graham	R
7	Safeguard Israel Act of 2017	Prohibits the U.S. government from making any contributions to the UN	H.R.769	01-31-17	Kay Granger	R

		until the President certifies to Congress that Security Council Resolution 2334 has been repealed. This Resolution describes Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem as illegal and demands cessation of settlement activities.				
8	Safeguard Israel Act of 2017	Prohibits the U.S. government from making any contributions to the UN until the President certifies to Congress that Security Council Resolution 2334 has been repealed. This Resolution describes Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem as illegal and demands cessation of settlement activities.	S. 107	01-12-17	Ted Cruz	R
9	Emergency Security Assistance Act	Authorizes an appropriation to the President of $2,200,000,000 for emergency military assistance or foreign military Sales credits to Israel and an appropriation not to exceed $200,000,000 for Cambodia. Authorizes the release of Israel from its liability for articles and services supplied for the period between October 6, 1973 through June 30, 1974.	H.R.11088	12-26-73	Thomas E. Morgen	D
10	An act to authorize supplemental international security assistance for the fiscal year 1979 in support of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, and for other purposes.	Authorizes the President to construct air bases in Israel and furnish defense articles and services to Israel. Authorizes appropriations for such purposes. Authorizes additional appropriations for fiscal year 1979 under the Arms Export Control Act to be used for arms sales guaranties to Egypt and Israel. Authorizes additional appropriations for fiscal	S. 1007	07-20-79	Franck Church	D

		year 1979 for Egypt through the Economic Support Fund. Authorizes the President to transfer to Egypt the facilities and property of the U.S. Sinai Field Mission.				
11	Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1991	Authorizes additional funds for the Department of Defense and the Department of Transportation to cover the expenses of the operation.	H.R.1282	04-10-91	Jamie L. Whitten	D
12	Countering Iran's Destabilizing Activities Act of 2017	Directs the Departments of State, Defense, and Treasury and the Director of National Intelligence to submit a strategy every two years for deterring Iranian activities that threaten the US and key allies in the Middle East, North Africa, and beyond. The President shall impose asset blocking and U.S. exclusion sanctions against any person that contributes to these activities.	S. 722	06-29-17	Bob Corker	R
13	PLO Accountability Act of 2017	To strengthen prohibitions regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization, and for other purposes	S. 1060	05-04-17	Ted Cruz	R
14	Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2018	Authorizes appropriations for these governmental agencies to fund many organizations such as the Center for Middle Eastern-Western Dialogue Trust Fund and the Israeli AraScholarship	H.R3362	07-24-17	Harold Rogers	R
15	United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014	Transfer military items to Israel. Provide assistance in the fields of energy, water, agriculture, and alternative fuel technologies. Share and exchange information and scientific knowledge. Make sure that any US export or sale of military	S.2673	12-19-14	Barbara Boxer	D

		equipment will not affect Israel's military power.				
16	Countering Anti-Semitism and Anti-Israel Activities at the United Nations Act of 2017	Use financial U.S. influence at the U.N. to reduce anti-Semitism in the U.N., including among its employees and its specialized agencies, programs, and funds. This includes withholding funds for any organization or agency that supports Terrorist designated groups such as Hamas. For example, The United Nations Relief, and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)	S. 169	01-17-17	Marco Rubio	R
17	A joint resolution to commend the Governments of Israel and Egypt on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Treaty of Peace between Israel and Egypt.	Commends the two countries for signing the Treaty of Peace on March 26, 1979. Calls upon the Palestinians and other Arab states to join the peace process. Renounce war and enter peace negotiations with Israel.	S.J Res.87	03-29-89	Rudy Boschwitz	R
18	Combatting Terrorism in Tunisia Emergency Support Act of 2017	Help combat terrorism in Tunisia and Libya and prevent fighters in Syria from returning to Tunisia. Strengthen Tunisia's security sector and increase economic cooperation. Authorize the President to provide defense articles and training to Tunisia.	H.R.157	01-03-17	Alcee L. Hastings	D
19	Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012	Impose multilateral sanctions on Iran because of its nuclear program. Promote human rights in Syria.	H.R.1905	08-10-12	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen	R
20	United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012	Reaffirm the commitment to Israel's security as a Jewish state. Support Israel's right to self-defense and help Israel preserve its qualitative military edge. Assist in a negotiated settlement of the Israeli-	S.2165	07-27-12	Barbara Boxer	D

		Palestinian conflict that results in two states living side-by-side in peace and security. Veto any one-sided anti-Israel U.N. Security Council resolution.				
21	United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Extension Act	Negotiate a new Memorandum of Understanding through FY2022 to enhance Jordan's military capacity and local economy.	R.H.2646	06-29-17	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen	R
22	Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006	Support the two-state solution to the Palestinian Israeli Conflict. Oppose organizations, individuals and countries that support terrorism and violently reject the two-state solution. Urge members of the international community to avoid contact with and refrain from financially supporting the terrorist organization Hamas until it agrees to recognize Israel, renounce violence, disarm and accept prior agreements.	S.2370	12-21-06	Mitch McConnell	R
23	Israel Anti-Boycott Act	Opposes the United Nations Human Rights Council resolution of March 24, 2016, which urges countries to pressure companies to divest from, or break contracts with, Israel. Encourages full implementation of the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014 through enhanced, government wide, coordinated U.S.-Israel scientific and technological cooperation.	S.720	03-23-17	Benjamin Cardin	D
24	Authorization for Use of Military Force Against al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria	Authorizes the President to use force when necessary against these organizations.	H.J.Res.89	03-15-17	Jim Banks	R
25	A joint resolution finding the Government	Urges the President to take appropriate action under	S.J.Res.54	08-14-98	Trent Lott	R

	of Iraq in unacceptable and material breach of its international obligations.	U.S. law to bring Iraq into compliance with such obligations.				
26	Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007	Take various security measures to combat terrorism.	H.R.1	08-03-07	Bennie Thompson	D
27	Recognition of Jerusalem as the Capital of the State of Israel Act	Recognize Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel and Transfer US embassy there from Tel Aviv.	H.R.257	02-16-17	Trent Franks	R
28	Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USA PATRIOT ACT) Act of 2001	This was launched after 9/11 to enhance domestic security and surveillance procedures, counter money laundering, protect the borders, enhance immigration provisions, remove obstacles to investigating terrorism and strengthen intelligence.	H.R.3162	10-26-01	James F. Sensenbrenner	R
29	Iran Ballistic Missile Sanctions Act	Impose sanctions on Iran and related entities and persons for actions to acquire or develop ballistic missiles and launch technology.	S.15	01-03-17	Dean Heller	R
30	Iran and Hizballah Western Hemisphere Prevention Act of 2017	Put more Sanctions on Iran and Hizballah	H.R.3118	09-05-17	Jeff Duncan	R
31	Dire Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Consequences of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Food Stamps, Unemployment Compensation Administration, Veterans Compensation and Pensions, and Other Urgent Needs Act of 1991	Provide emergency supplemental appropriations for military operations during the Gulf War against Iraq and other issues.	H.R.1281	04-10-91	Jamie L. Whitten	D
32	Iran Freedom Support Act	Promote Democracy for Iran Amend the Sanctions Act of 1996 against Iran and facilitating its nuclear nonproliferation. Prevent money laundering for weapons of mass destruction.	H.R.9198	09-30-06	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen	R

33	Iran Nonnuclear Sanctions Act of 2017	Require sanctions on Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corp, related entities and the individuals who support terrorism, abuse human rights and promote ballistic missile program	H.R.808	02-06-17	Peter j. Roskam	R
34	Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010	Strong additional sanctions are imposed on Iran because of its nuclear program and supporting international terrorism as well as human rights abuses.	H.R.2194	07-01-10	Howard l. Berman	D
35	Iraq and Syria Genocide Emergency Relief and Accountability Act of 2017	Ensure that humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery assistance for nationals and residents of Iraq or Syria. Provide financial and technical assistance to support nongovernmental organizations with expertise to address crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes in Iraq since January 2014.	H.R.390	06-19-17	Christopher H. Smith	R
36	Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act.	Enforcing sanctions on Iran.	H.R.1698	03-29-17	Edward. R. Royce	R
37	Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense and for the Reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan, 2004	Makes emergency supplemental appropriations for FY 2004 for military and foreign affairs operations concerning Iraq and Afghanistan, including for Iraqi relief and reconstruction.	H.R.3289	11-06-03	Bill C.W. Young	R
38	Department of Defense and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Recovery from and Response to Terrorist Attacks on the United States Act, 2002	Appropriate funds for military personnel, operations and maintenance, procurement, R & D in response to 9/11.	H.R.3338	01-10-02	Jerry Lewis	R
39	Iran Sanctions Extension Act	It extends the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 through December 31, 2026.	H.R.6297	12-15-16	Edward Royce	R
40	Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act	This includes countering Iran's destabilizing activities act of 2017.	H.R.3364	08-02-17	Edward Royce	R

		Countering Russian influence in Europe and Eurasia Act of 2017, and the Korean interdiction and modernization sanctions act.				
41	Iranian Leadership Asset Transparency Act	The Department of Treasury should make a report of the Iranian officials assets held in the US and foreign financials institutions, and how such assets were acquired and used. Combat money laundering to stop Iran from developing its ballistic missile program.	H.R.1638	05-18-17	Bruce Poliquin	R
42	A joint resolution approving the location of a memorial to commemorate and honor the members of the Armed Forces who served on active duty in support of Operation Desert Storm or Operation Desert Shield.	Approves the location within Washington, DC and the surrounding area of the National Desert Storm and Desert Shield Memorial authorized to be established under the Carl Levin and Howard P. `Buck' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015.	S.J.RES.1	03-31-17	John Boozman	R
43	2002 Supplemental Appropriations Act for Further Recovery From and Response To Terrorist Attacks on the United States	Supplemental Appropriations which aim at establishing a set of measures in various departments to help recover from and respond to 9/11 attacks	H.R.4775	08-02-02	Bill C.W. Young	R
44	To amend the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996 to extend the authorities provided in such Act until September 29, 2006.	Extend the authorities provided in the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996 until September 29, 2006.	H.R.5877	08-04-06	Alcee L. Hastings	D
45	Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Islamist Extremism	To authorize the use of United States Armed Forces against organizations that support Islamist extremism, and for other purposes.	H.J.Res.112	07-10-17	Scott Perry	R
46	Libyan Claims Resolution Act	Congress supports the President's efforts to provide fair compensation to all U.S. nationals who have terrorism-related claims against Libya as part of the process of restoring normal U.S.-Libya relations.	S.3370	08-04-08	Joseph R. Biden Jr	D
47	To repeal the Authorization for Use of	Repeals the Authorization for Use of Military Force	H.R.1230	02-27-17	Barbara Lee	D

	Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002.	Against Iraq Resolution of 2002.				
48	Jerusalem Embassy and Recognition Act of 2017	To recognize Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel. The U.S. Embassy in Israel should be established in Jerusalem not later than January 1, 2019.	H.R.265	01-04-17	Leonard Lance	R
49	Iraq Liberation Act of 1998	Declares that it should be the policy of the United States to seek to remove the Saddam Hussein regime from power in Iraq and to replace it with a democratic government.	H.R.4655	10-31-98	Benjamin A. Gilman	R
50	United States-Morocco Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act	This includes general provisions, customs provision, relief from imports, Textile and apparel safeguard measures.	H.R.4842	08-17-04	Tom Delay	R
51	To provide for the adjustment of status of certain Syrian nationals.	Directs the Attorney General to adjust the alien status of certain Syrian (Jewish) nationals who arrived in the United States after December 31, 1991, to permanent resident status. Limits the total number of such adjustees to 2,000. Provides for similar adjustment of such alien's wife, child, or unmarried son or daughter.	H.R.4681	10-27-00	Rick Lazio	R
52	To extend the period during which Iraqis who were employed by the United States Government in Iraq may be granted special immigrant status and to temporarily increase the fee or surcharge for processing machine-readable nonimmigrant visas.	Directs the Secretary of State to increase the fee or surcharge authorized under the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 by $1 for processing machine-readable nonimmigrant visas and machine-readable combined border crossing identification cards and nonimmigrant visas. Requires amounts collected as a result of the fee increase to be deposited in the general fund of the Treasury.	H.R.3233	10-04-13	Earl Blumenauer	D

53	United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015	Support Jordan in its response to the Syrian refugee crisis. Provide necessary assistance to support the basic needs of the assimilated Syrian refugees. Cooperate with Jordan to combat the terrorist threat from ISIL or other terrorist organizations. Help secure the border between Jordan and Syria and Iraq. The Arms Export Control Act is amended to include Jordan among the countries eligible for certain streamlined defense sales for three years.	H.R.907	02-18-16	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen	R
54	Countering Iran in the Western Hemisphere Act of 2012	Use a comprehensive strategy to counter Iran's growing hostile presence in the Western Hemisphere by working together with U.S. allies and partners in the region to deter threats to U.S. interests by Iran, the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the IRGC's Qods Force, and Hezbollah.	H.R.3783	12-28-12	Jeff Duncan	R
55	IRGC Terrorist Sanctions Act of 2017	Designate Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist entity, Impose sanctions against the IRGC.	H.R.478	01-13-17	Ted Poe	R
56	Consolidated Authorization for Use of Military Force Resolution of 2017	This joint resolution authorizes the President, for three years, to use all necessary and appropriate force to protect U.S. national security against Al Qaeda, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Afghan Taliban, and any associated organized and armed group that is a co-belligerent against the United States.	H.J.Res.100	04-27-17	Adam B. Schiff	D

57	Iran Nonproliferation Amendments Act of 2005	Amends the Iran Nonproliferation Act of 2000	S.1713	11-22-05	Richard g. lULugar	R
58	A bill to extend authorities under the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act of 1994 until August 15, 1995.	Amends the act to extend from July 1, 1995, to August 15, 1995, the President's authority to suspend the applicability of certain laws to the Palestine Liberation Organization.	S.962	07-02-95	Hesse Helms	R
59	To extend authorities under the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act of 1994 until March 31, 1996, and for other purposes.	To extend, from December 31, 1995, through March 31, 1996, the President's authority to suspend specified prohibitions against foreign and UN assistance to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the receipt or expenditure of PLO funds, and PLO membership in the IMF	H.R.2808	01-04-96	Benjamin A. Gilman	R
60	Middle East Peace Facilitation Act of 1993	Grants the President the authority to suspend specified provisions of law which prohibit foreign and UN assistance to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the receipt or expenditure of PLO funds, and PLO membership in the IMF.	S.1487	10-28-93	Claiborne Pell	D
61	PLO Accountability Act of 2017	This bill amends the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987 to authorize the President to waive for up to six months the prohibition against establishment or maintenance of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) offices, headquarters, premises, or other facilities within U.S. jurisdiction if the President certifies to Congress that the Palestinians have entered into a final negotiated peace agreement with, and have ceased hostilities against, Israel.	H.R.2390	05-18-17	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen	R
62	Authorization for the Use of Military Force Against al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria	This joint resolution: (1) authorizes the President to use all necessary and appropriate force against al-Qaeda, the Taliban, the Islamic State of Iraq and	S.J.Res.31	03-02-17	Todd Young	R

		Syria (ISIS), successor organizations, and associated forces; and (2) grants specific statutory authorization to introduce U.S. Armed Forces into hostilities or into situations wherein involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances.				
63	Authorization for the Use of Military Force against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.	Authorizes the President to use the U.S. Armed Forces against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) or associated persons or forces.	H.J.RES63	02-03-17	Adam Kinzinger	R
64	Jerusalem Embassy and Recognition Act	This bill states that it should be U.S. policy to recognize Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel.	S.11	01-03-17	Dean Heller	R
65	Iran Ballistic Missile Reporting Act of 2017	Amends the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 to extend through December 31, 2022, requirements for quarterly reports by: (1) the Office of the Director of National Intelligence on confirmed ballistic missile launches by Iran, and (2) the Departments of State and the Treasury on any efforts to impose unilateral or multilateral sanctions against the appropriate entities or individuals in connection with such a launch.	H.R.3078	06-27-17	Ruben J. Kuhen	D
66	Approving the location of a memorial to commemorate and honor the members of the Armed Forces who served on active duty in support of Operation Desert Storm or Operation Desert Shield.	This joint resolution approves the location within Washington, D.C. and the surrounding area of the National Desert Storm and Desert Shield Memorial authorized to be established under the Carl Levin and Howard P. `Buck' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015	H.J.Res.3	01-05-17	David P. Roe	R
67	Iran Sanctions Relief Review Act	This bill requires the President to transmit to Congress every six months for five years determinations and	H.R.2185	04-27-17	Robert Pittenger	R

		certifications of whether, on or after January 30, 2016: (1) specified foreign financial institutions, including Iranian financial institutions, have facilitated significant transactions or provided services for foreign terrorist organizations, sanctioned foreign persons, or Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps or any of its officials, agents, or affiliates; and (2) specified foreign persons have knowingly materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services for any such persons or entities.				
68	Stop Arming Terrorists Act	Prohibits the use of federal agency funds to provide covered assistance to: (1) Al Qaeda, Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), or any individual or group that is affiliated with, associated with, cooperating with, or adherents to such groups; or (2) the government of any country that the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) determines has, within the most recent 12 months, provided covered assistance to such a group or individual.	S.532	03-06-17	Rand Paul	R
69	Comprehensive Strategy to Destroy ISIS Act of 2017	A compressive strategic plan to fight and eliminate ISIS	H.R.1785	05-18-17	Adam Kinzinger	R
70	To amend the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 to modify the requirement to impose sanctions with respect to the provision of specialized financial messaging services to the Central Bank of Iran and other sanctioned Iranian financial institutions, and for other purposes.	President imposes sanctions under the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 with respect to the provision of specialized financial messaging services to the Central Bank of Iran and other sanctioned Iranian financial institutions. This requirement may not be waived. Sanctions are expanded to include, in the case of an alien who is a	H.R.2081	05-01-17	Lee M. Zeldin	R

		senior executive or member of the board of directors of a person that provides such messaging services, visa denial and exclusion from the United States, and revocation of any visa or other documentation.				
71	United States-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Enhancement Act of 2017	Requires the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to establish a grant program to support cybersecurity research and development, and the demonstration and commercialization of cybersecurity technology, in accordance with the Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the State of Israel on Cooperation in Science and Technology for Homeland Security Matters, done at Jerusalem, dated May 29, 2008, or a successor agreement.	S.719	03-23-17	Sheldon Whitehouse	D
72	To provide limitations on the transfer of air-to-ground munitions from the United States to Saudi Arabia.	Prohibits the transfer to Saudi Arabia of U.S. air-to-ground munitions until the President certifies to Congress that: (1) Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners are taking all feasible precautions to reduce the risk of civilian harm and exercising proportional use of force in the course of military actions and are making demonstrable efforts to facilitate the flow of critical humanitarian aid and commercial goods; and (2) Saudi Arabia is taking effective measures to target designated foreign terrorist organizations, including al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and affiliates of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, as part of its military operations in Yemen.	H.J.Res104	05-25-17	Ted Lieu	D

73	To provide limitations on the transfer of air-to-ground munitions from the United States to Saudi Arabia.	Prohibits the transfer to Saudi Arabia of U.S. air-to-ground munitions until the President certifies to Congress that: (1) Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners are taking all feasible precautions to reduce the risk of civilian harm and exercising proportional use of force in the course of military actions and are making demonstrable efforts to facilitate the flow of critical humanitarian aid and commercial goods; and (2) Saudi Arabia is taking effective measures to target designated foreign terrorist organizations, including al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and affiliates of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, as part of its military operations in Yemen.	S.J.Res.40	04-06-17	Christopher Murphy	D
74	No Bonuses for Terrorists Act	This bill amends the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to prohibit the provision of assistance to the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) until the Department of State has certified that the PA and the PLO have ceased paying financial compensation or any other benefit not generally available to the Palestinian population at large to the families of Palestinians killed in connection with an act of terrorism.	H.R.789	02-01-17	Ted Budd	R
75	Hamas Human Shields Prevention Act	This law states that it is U.S. policy to: (1) condemn the use of human shields by Hamas as an act of terrorism and a violation of human rights and international humanitarian law, and (2) act against those engaging in or supporting the use of human shields.	H.R.3542	11-15-17	Joe Wilson	R

76	To prohibit the use of United States Government funds to provide assistance to Al Qaeda, Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and to countries supporting those organizations, and for other purposes.	Prohibits the use of federal agency funds to provide covered assistance to: (1) Al Qaeda, Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), or any individual or group that is affiliated with, associated with, cooperating with, or adherents to such groups; or (2) the government of any country that the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) determines has, within the most recent 12 months, provided covered assistance to such a group or individual.	H.R.258	01-13-17	Tulsi Gabbard	D
77	U.S.-Israel Joint Missile Defense Act	This bill authorizes the Department of Defense to conduct a test of the Arrow 3 missile defense system, in conjunction with the government of Israel, to validate the system's capabilities and improve its performance.	H.R.2240	05-23-17	Josh Gottheimer	D
78	Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003	Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003 - (Sec. 3) Declares the sense of Congress that the Government of Syria should immediately and unconditionally halt support for terrorism, permanently and openly declare its total renunciation of all forms of terrorism, and close all terrorist offices and facilities in Syria, including the offices of Hamas, Hizballah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command.	H.R.1828	12-12-03	Eliot L. Engel	D

79	Freedom for Refugees Escaping Enmity (FREE) Act	This bill nullifies Executive Order 13769, entitled "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States." No federal funds may be used to implement or enforce any of the policy changes set forth in such order. Among the order's major provisions are restrictions on the entry of immigrants and nonimmigrants from seven countries (Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen) and additional limitations on refugee admissions to the United States.	H.R.1075	03-06-17	Yvette D. Clarke	D
80	A bill to make technical corrections to section 1244 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, which provides special immigrant status for certain Iraqis, and for other purposes	Makes technical corrections to provisions of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 which provide special immigrant status for certain Iraqis employed by or on behalf of the U.S. government.	S.2829	06-03-08	Edward M. Kennedy	D
81	Stop Arming Terrorists Act	This bill prohibits the use of federal agency funds to provide covered assistance to: (1) Al Qaeda, Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), or any individual or group that is affiliated with, associated with, cooperating with, or adherents to such groups; or (2) the government of any country that the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) determines has, within the most recent 12 months, provided covered assistance to such a group or individual.	H.R.608	01-23-17	Tulsi Gabbard	D
82	Iraq Reconstruction Accountability Act of 2006	Amends the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 to change the date for termination of the Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (Office). Provides that the Office shall terminate 10 months	S.4046	12-20-06	Susan M. Collins	R

		after 80% of the funds appropriated or made available for the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund have been expended. Requires the Special Inspector General, prior to the termination date of the Office, to prepare a final forensic audit report on all funds appropriated or made available to the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund.				
83	State Sanctions Against Iranian Terrorism Act	To amend the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 to secure the authority of State and local governments to adopt and enforce measures restricting investment in business enterprises in Iran, and for other purposes.	H.R.3425	07-26-17	Ron DeSantis	R
84	Supply Our Soldiers Act of 2017	This bill directs the Department of Defense to provide for a program under which postal benefits are provided to a member of the Armed Forces who is on active duty and who is either: (1) serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, or another hostile fire area designated as eligible for hazardous duty pay; or (2) hospitalized at a military medical facility as a result of such service. The postal benefits shall be in the form of coupons, vouchers, or other evidence of credit to use for postal-free mailings. The benefits program shall apply during FY2016-FY2021.	H.R.963	03-23-17	Peter. T. King	R
85	Commission to Verify Iranian Nuclear Compliance Act	To establish the Commission to Verify Iranian Nuclear Compliance.	H.R.3810	09-21-17	Gerald E. Connolly	D

86	United States-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Enhancement Act of 2017	Requires the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to establish a grant program to support cybersecurity research and development, and the demonstration and commercialization of cybersecurity technology, in accordance with the Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the State of Israel on Cooperation in Science and Technology for Homeland Security Matters, dated May 29, 2008, or a successor agreement.	H.R.612	02-01-17	James R. Langevin	D
87	Authorization for Use of Military Force Against al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria	To authorize the use of United States Armed Forces against al-Qaeda, the Taliban, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, successor organizations, and associated forces.	S.J.Res.43	05-25-17	Jeff Flake	R
88	Iran Nonnuclear Sanctions Act of 2017	Prescribes requirements for sanctions with respect to: (1) Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and related entities; (2) Mahan Air; (3) Iran's support of terrorism; (4) Iran's human rights abuses; (5) certain Iranian individuals; (6) persons who conduct transactions with or on behalf of certain Iranian individuals; (7) financial institutions that engage in certain transactions on behalf of persons involved in human rights abuses or that export sensitive technology to Iran; (8) Iran's ballistic missile program and persons and Iranian sectors that support such program; and (9) certain entities owned by the Aerospace Industries Organization, the Shahid Hemmat Industrial Group, or the Shahid Bakeri Industrial Group.	S.227	01-24-17	Marco Rubio	R
89	United States and Israel Space Cooperation Act	directs the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to continue to work with the	H.R.1159	09-28-17	Derek Kilmer	D

		Israel Space Agency in identifying and cooperatively pursuing peaceful space exploration and science initiatives in areas of mutual interest.				
90	To allow otherwise eligible Israeli nationals to receive E-2 nonimmigrant visas if similarly situated United States nationals are eligible for similar nonimmigrant status in Israel.	Makes Israeli nationals eligible to enter the United States as E-2 visa nonimmigrant investors as provided for under the Immigration and Nationality Act if Israel provides reciprocal nonimmigrant treatment to U.S. nationals.	H.R.3992	08-08-12	Howard L. Berman	D
91	Countering Iran's Destabilizing Activities Act of 2017	Directs the Departments of State, Defense, and Treasury and the Director of National Intelligence to submit a strategy every two years for deterring Iranian activities that threaten the US and key allies in the Middle East, North Africa, and beyond. The President shall impose asset blocking and U.S. exclusion sanctions against any person that contributes to these activities.	H.R.3203	07-24-17	Eliot. L Engel	D
92	A bill to increase the number of Iraqi and Afghani translators and interpreters who may be admitted to the United States as special immigrants, and for other purposes.	Amends the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 to authorize special immigrant status for certain Afghan or Iraqi translators or interpreters working with the U.S. Armed Forces or federal agencies under the Chief of Mission in Afghanistan and Iraq. (Currently, such status is authorized for Afghan and Iraqi translators working with U.S. Armed Forces in Afghanistan and Iraq.)	S.1104	06-14-07	Richard G. Lugar	R
93	United States-Israel Advanced Research Partnership Act of 2016	his bill amends the Homeland Security Act of 2002 and the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014 to allow the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in coordination with the Department of State, to enter cooperative programs	H.R.5877	12-1616	John Ratcliffe	R

		with Israel to enhance capabilities in cybersecuriy				
94	Radio Free Afghanistan Act	Radio Free Afghanistan Act - Requires RFE/RL, Incorporated (also known as Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty) to submit to the Broadcasting Board of Governors a detailed plan for the establishment of surrogate broadcasting services (Radio Free Afghanistan) in the Dari and Pashto languages to Afghanistan. Authorizes the Board to make grants to support Radio Free Afghanistan.	H.R.2998	03-11-02	Edward R. Royce	R
95	Syrian War Crimes Accountability Act of 2017	This bill: (1) condemns the violence and human rights violations carried out by the Syrian government and pro-government forces; (2) urges all parties to halt civilian attacks; and (3) calls on the President to support efforts to ensure accountability for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide committed during the conflict.	s.905	06-12-17	Benjamin L. Cardin	D
96	Sanctioning Hizballah's Illicit Use of Civilians as Defenseless Shields Act	This bill states that it shall be U.S. policy to condemn Hizballah's use of human shields as a gross violation of internationally recognized human rights and act against those that engage in such practice. The President is urged to use U.S. influence at the United Nations Security Council to secure support for a resolution imposing multilateral sanctions against Hizballah for its use of human shields.	H.R.3342	10-26-17	Mile Gallapher	R
97	Dire Emergency Supplemental Appropriations and Transfers for Relief from the Effects of Natural Disasters, for Other Urgent Needs, and for Incremental Costs of "Operation	Dire Emergency Supplemental Appropriations and Transfers for Relief from the Effects of Natural Disasters, for Other Urgent Needs, and for Incremental Costs of "Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm" Act of	H.J.Res 157	12-12-91	Jamie L Whitten	D

	Desert Shield/Desert Storm" Act of 1992	1992 - Makes dire emergency supplemental appropriations to the Department of Defense for FY 1992 for specified military procurement.				
98	United States-Jordan Free Trade Area Implementation Act	This includes tariff modifications and relief from imports benefiting from the agreement as well as other provisions	H.R.2603	09-28-01	William M. Thomas	R
99	Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005	Provide Defense related supplemental appreciation pertaining to the Global War on Terror.	H.R.1268	05-11-05	Jerri Lewis	R
100	Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002	Expresses support for the President's efforts to: (1) strictly enforce through the United Nations Security Council all relevant Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq; and (2) obtain prompt and decisive action by the Security Council to ensure that Iraq abandons its strategy of delay, evasion, and noncompliance and promptly and strictly complies with all relevant Security Council resolutions.	H.J.Res.114	10-16-02	Dennis J. Hastert	R
101	Combating BDS Act of 2017	This bill allows a state or local government to adopt and enforce measures to divest its assets from, prohibit investment of its assets in, or restrict contracting with: (1) an entity that engages in a commerce- or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activity targeting Israel; or (2) an entity that owns or controls, is owned or controlled by, or is under common ownership or control with such an entity.	H.R.2856	06-08-17	Patrick T. McHenry	R
102	Taylor Force Act	This bill prohibits certain assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 from being made	H.R.1164	12-01-17	Doug Lamborn	R

		available for the West Bank and Gaza.				
103	Palestinian International Terrorism Support Prevention Act of 2017	This bill states that it shall be U.S. policy to prevent Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, or any affiliate or successor from accessing its international support networks. The President shall report to Congress for up to three years identifying foreign persons, agencies, or instrumentalities that knowingly and materially assist any such organization and impose sanctions on them.	H.R.2712	11-18-17	Brian J. Mast	R
104	A joint resolution to support a ceasefire in the Iran-Iraq war and a negotiated solution to the conflict.	Declares that the Congress finds the continuation of the Iran-Iraq war: (1) would produce unacceptable levels of death and destruction; and (2) could result in an Iranian breakthrough which could threaten the stability of the entire region and would not be in the U.S. interest. Declares U.S. policy to support: (1) a cease fire and a negotiated solution to the Iran-Iraq conflict, including a withdrawal to the internationally recognized border; and (2) the establishment of an international tribunal to investigate the origins of the conflict.	H.J.Res.216	08-16-87	Stephen J. Solarz	D
105	Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017	Imposes additional sanctions with respect to Hizballah,	S.1595	10-12-17	Marco Rubio	R R
106	Comprehensive Peace in Sudan Act of 2004	Amends the Sudan Peace Act to authorize the President to assist Sudan to: (1) support the implementation of a comprehensive peace agreement that applies to all regions of Sudan, including the Darfur region (authorizes FY 2005 through 2007 appropriations); and (2)	S.2781	12-23-04	Richard G. Lugar	

		address the humanitarian and human rights crisis in the Darfur region and eastern Chad, provided that no assistance be made available to the Government of Sudan (authorizes FY 2005 appropriations).				
107	To provide for the establishment of separate campaign medals to be awarded to members of the uniformed services who participate in Operation Enduring Freedom and to members of the uniformed services who participate in Operation Iraqi Freedom.	Directs the President to establish separate campaign medals to recognize service by members of the uniformed services in Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom.	H.R3104	05-28-04	Vic Snyder	D
108	A joint resolution relating to the proposed sales of arms to Jordan.	Declares that no letter of offer, prior to March 1, 1986, shall be valid with respect to any proposed sales to Jordan of advanced weapons systems, including advanced aircraft and advanced air defense systems, that are described in the notification pursuant to the Arms Export Control Act, unless direct peace negotiations between Israel and Jordan are underway.	S.J.Res.228	11-28-85	Robert J.Dole	R
109	Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995	Declares it to be U.S. policy that: (1) Jerusalem remain an undivided city in which the rights of every ethnic religious group are protected; (2) Jerusalem be recognized as the capital of the State of Israel; and (3) the U.S. Embassy in Israel be established in Jerusalem no later than May 31, 1999.	S.1322	11-08-95	Robert J. Dole	R

110	Sudan Peace Act	Condemns violations of human rights on all sides of the conflict in Sudan (including the Government of Sudan), the ongoing slave trade there, the Government's use and organization of "murahalliin" (or "mujahadeen"), Popular Defense Forces (PDF), and regular Sudanese Army units into raiding and slaving parties in Bahr al Ghazal, the Nuba Mountains, Upper Nile, and Blue Nile regions, and its aerial bombardment of civilian targets. Recognizes that the use of raiding and slaving parties is a tool for creating food shortages as a systematic means to destroy the societies, culture, and economies of the Dinka, Nuer, and Nuba peoples in a policy of low-intensity ethnic cleansing.	H.R.5531	10-21-02	Thomas G. Tancredo	R
111	Israel Anti-Boycott Act	Declares that Congress: (1) opposes the United Nations Human Rights Council resolution of March 24, 2016, which urges countries to pressure companies to divest from, or break contracts with, Israel; and (2) encourages full implementation of the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014 through enhanced, governmentwide, coordinated U.S.-Israel scientific and technological cooperation in civilian areas.	H.R.1697	03-23-17	Peter J. Roskam	R
112	Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017	To amend the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 to impose additional sanctions with respect to Hizballah, and for other purposes.	H.R.3329	10-26-17	Edward R. Royce	R

113	Preventing Destabilization of Iraq and Syria Act of 2017	Directs the President to impose U.S.-based property blocking and entry sanctions against any foreign person that: (1) is responsible for or complicit in actions that threaten the peace, security, or stability of Iraq or Syria, actions or policies that undermine economic reconstruction and political reform in Iraq, or the obstruction of the delivery or distribution of, or access to, humanitarian assistance to the people of Iraq or Syria; (2) has materially assisted or provided financial, material, or technological support for any such activity; or (3) is owned or controlled by, or has acted on behalf of, a foreign person that has carried out any such activity.	S.138	01-12-17	Marco Rubio	R
114	Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015	This bill amends the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 to direct the President, within five days after reaching an agreement with Iran regarding Iran's nuclear program, to transmit to Congress: The text of the agreement and all related materials and annexes; a related verification assessment report of the Secretary of State; A certification that the agreement includes the appropriate terms, conditions, and duration of the agreement's requirements concerning Iran's nuclear activities, and provisions describing any sanctions to be waived, suspended, or otherwise reduced by the United States and any other nation or entity, including the United Nations; and	H.R.1191	05-02-15	Lou Barletta	R

		A certification that the agreement meets U.S. non-proliferation objectives, does not jeopardize the common defense and security, provides a framework to ensure that Iran's nuclear activities will not constitute an unreasonable defense and security risk, and ensures that Iran's permitted nuclear activities will not be used to further any nuclear-related military or nuclear explosive purpose, including any related research.				
115	United States-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act	The agreement general provisions, relief from imports, and customs provisions.	H.R.4340	01-11-06	Roy Blunt	R
116	United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act	The agreement general provisions, relief from imports, customs provisions and safeguard measures.	H.R.5684	09-26-06	John A. Boehner	R
117	ILSA Extension Act of 2001	ILSA Extension Act of 2001 - Amends the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996 (ILSA) to lower from $40 million to $20 million the threshold amount a foreign person's or entity's knowing investment in Libya's ability to develop its petroleum resources must reach before the President is required to impose two or more specified economic and trade sanctions (the same trigger threshold amount for investment in Iranian energy resources).	H.R.1954	08-03-01	Benjamin A. Gilman	R
118	To locate and secure the return of Zachary Baumel, an American citizen, and other Israeli soldiers missing in action.	Requires the Department of State to raise the matter of Zachary Baumel (a U.S. citizen), Yehuda Katz, and Zvi Feldman with the appropriate government officials of Syria, Lebanon, the Palestinian Authority, and with other governments in the region and elsewhere which in the Department's view may be helpful in	H.R.1175	11-08-99	Tom Lantos	D

		locating and securing the return of these soldiers.				
119	End Subsidizing Palestinian Terrorism Act	To prohibit assistance for the Palestinian Authority and the West Bank and Gaza, and for other purposes.	H.R.2497	05-17-17	Trent Franks	R
120	Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2017	Declares that it is U.S. policy to use all diplomatic and economic means to compel the government of Bashar al Assad to halt the slaughter of the Syrian people and work toward a democratic government.	H.R.1677	05-18-17	Eliot L. Engel	D
121	Iran Nonproliferation Act of 2000	Directs the President to report periodically to specified congressional committees on foreign persons who, on or after January 1, 1999, have transferred to Iran: (1) controlled goods, services, or technology; or (2) non-controlled goods, services, or technology that nevertheless would be, if they were U.S. goods, services, or technology, prohibited for export to Iran because of their potential to make a material contribution to the development of nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons, or ballistic or cruise missile systems. Excludes from identification in such reports any such persons who were previously identified, or who have acted on behalf of, or in concert with, the U.S. Government.	H.R.1883	03-14-00	Benjamin A. Gilman	R
122	Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996	Urges the President to commence diplomatic efforts with U.S. allies to establish multilateral trade sanctions against Iran and Libya, including limiting its development of petroleum resources, in order to end	H.R.3107	08-05-69	Benjamine A. Gilman	R

		its ability to support acts of international terrorism and efforts to develop or acquire weapons of mass destruction. Requires the President to report periodically to the appropriate congressional committees on the extent of the success of such efforts. Authorizes the President to waive such sanctions if certain requirements are met.				
123	SOLVE Act 2.0 of 2017	This bill states that: (1) beginning on March 6, 2017, Executive Order 13780, entitled "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States," is null and void, shall have no force and effect, and may not be implemented or enforced; and (2) no federal funds may be used to implement or enforce any of the policy changes set forth in such order. Among the order's major provisions are restrictions on the entry of nationals from sixcountries (Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen) and additional limitations on refugee admissions to the United States.	H.R.1503	03-31-17	Zoe Lofgren	D
124	To amend the United States-Israel Free Trade Area Implementation Act of 1985 to provide the President with additional proclamation authority with respect to articles of the West Bank or Gaza Strip or a qualifying industrial zone.	Amends the United States-Israel Free Trade Area Implementation Act of 1985 to authorize the President to proclaim the elimination or modification of any existing duty in order to exempt any article from duty if: (1) the article is wholly the growth, product, or manufacture of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, or a qualifying industrial zone (defined under this Act); (2) the article is imported directly from such area or zone; and (3) the sum of the materials and processing costs of such article is not	H.R.3074	10-02-96	Philip M. Crane	R

		less than 35 percent of the appraised value of such product at the time it enters into the United States.				
125	To award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.	Directs the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate to arrange for the presentation of a congressional gold medal in honor of President Shimon Peres of Israel.	H.R.2939	06-09-14	Joseph P. Kennedy	D
126	Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015	This bill states that it shall be U.S. policy to: (1) prevent Hizballah's global logistics and financial network from operating in order to curtail funding of its domestic and international activities; and (2) utilize diplomatic, legislative, and executive avenues to combat Hizballah's criminal activities in order to block that organization's ability to fund its global terrorist activities.	H.R.2297	12-18-15	Edward R. Royce	R

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Making Alienation "accessible"

Towards a tripartite understanding of the concept, and its application to the British working-class

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Abstract

This article explores the concept of alienation. While acknowledging the valuable contributions of scholars in expanding its scope and application, the article argues for a more accessible and immediately intelligible understanding of the concept. By adopting an author-based thematic approach, the article examines the works of Hegel, Marx, and Alasdair MacIntyre to identify the key characteristics that define alienation. It highlights the interconnectedness of three central elements: the lack of agency, meaning, and the detachment of oneself from the community. These elements are synthesised into a comprehensive framework that can analyse the position of the working class in contemporary society. By doing so, it demonstrates the continued applicability of alienation as an analytical tool for comprehending and addressing issues in the modern world. By presenting a more accessible and streamlined conceptualisation, this article aims to encourage wider engagement with the concept of alienation and promote its use in public discourse.

Keywords: Alienation, Hegel, Marx, Working-Class, Britain

Introduction

Alienation is a concept originating in Hegel's 1807 work The Phenomenology of Spirit. Since then, there have been a myriad of developments related to the term, most notably from those with a Marxist-orientation, like the Frankfurt School, but also communitarians, humanists, and others. These developments stretch the term so that it can be better applied across a range of issues and contexts. However, in this stretching there is a danger that we make the concept too unwieldy to operationalise in public discourse.

This article seeks to conceptualise alienation in such a way as to render it more accessible as an analytical tool to address contemporary issues. This is not to challenge the developments made by scholars but, rather, is an attempt to produce an understanding of alienation which is immediately accessible, can stand on its own, or serve as a gateway to more developed conceptualisations.

As such, I outline in-brief the way that I have conceptualised alienation to suggest that it is made up of three interlocking parts, these being a lack of agency, meaning, and the separation of oneself from the community. I then apply this to the position of the working-class within contemporary Britain to demonstrate its applicability, though I leave open the possibility of its application in other contexts.

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Conceiving Class

In order to contextualise the claims made in the application of alienation to the working-class, it is worthwhile the reader making note of the class-schema that these claims rest upon. Notably, the definition of working-class offered here, and elaborated upon in my previous work (Taylor Hill, 2023), follows the Bourdieusian inspired class-schema of Mike Savage, as established in his Great British Class Study. Under this scheme, the working class is able to be split into three working-classes known as the precariat, the traditional working-class (TWC), and the emergent service workers (ESW), alongside the class straddling new affluent workers (NAW), who are nevertheless tied to the class as their relatives, through their upbringing, and in relation to class-culture (Reay in Calver, 2022).

I utilise this framework to understand the complexity of the class experience, moving to suggest that the working-class experience is complicated by an individual's belonging within different sub-groups which are, nevertheless, ultimately tied together into one overarching group that we can still call the working-class. This reflects the diversity that is present within the class but acknowledges class-culture and attachments in the sense that, for instance, members of the NAW and ESW are often related to members of the TWC, with an upbringing in the class habitus to match this position (Savage, 2015).

Please refer to a more substantive discussion of my work for more detail, but the core of this class-definition rests on the belief that the impact of globalisation and changing economic circumstances has facilitated an evolution and warping of traditional understandings of class, and yet in that we can recognise a reconstituted working-class, defined by their unique class experiences, forms of work, upbringing, and relationships, as well as their degradations over the past forty-or-so years (Taylor Hill, 2023). This transforms the working-class into sub-groups, which is beneficial for inter-and-infra factional analysis, whilst alienation presents itself as a useful analytical tool here because it presents an overarching framework with which to consider the similar and different experiences of the working-class across said sub-groups.

Conceptualising Alienation

Hegel and Agency

Hegel (2018) argues that alienation occurs when individuals are disconnected from their species-essence (Gattungswesen) and fail to reconnect with it. The process of overcoming alienation involves the re-connection of mind and object, and that object's further utilisation in service of the mind's quest for freedom. For example, he sees human life, its objects, and its institutions as in a constant state of change in which they are renewed, reformed, and replaced through the interaction of ideas. These changes occur naturally in the dialectical process (Maybee, 2016). This refers to when one mode of living (the thesis) enters a logical, often conflicting, 'discussion' with another (the antithesis) until such a time as the two can be remedied (the synthesis). This occurs repeatedly throughout history, with the synthesis becoming the new thesis, driving its development forward until such a time as the mind and its products can be brought back into relation, though this final goal remains somewhat elusive (Singh et al, 2008, 15). Under this process, Hegel to some extent assumes a level of alienation within society that is to be met and remedied over time as our institutions and norms change. This offers some significance in the processes' definition as it establishes that alienation should diminish over time as citizens come to shape their community in a way that is reflective of themselves as a collective and an individual,

identifying the necessity of mutuality in these relationships as a foundational element of non-alienation. In other words, agency is tied to not only the individual, but to the way in which the individual has a hand in the collective shaping of their society. Agency then refers to mastery of oneself, and an ability to see oneself reflected in community, but it additionally refers to agential action for a collective purpose.

This highlights the agential-communal dimension of alienation, suggesting that one is not alienated if they are able to contribute to change in the world around them and to see themselves reflected in it. One must both be able to exercise control over their life and recognise their place within the frameworks of the community. Such a consideration highlights the importance of the subjective sense of one's place, which has relevance for the subsequent discussion around narrative in the latter half of this article.

Marx and Dignity

Marx makes an important distinction in suggesting that we might permit some level of alienation so long as it produces a positive and mutual outcome. One such example might be to permit a degree of alienation between the individual and the collective which gives that individual space to establish their own identity (Kuch & Ferald, 2021). This is called differentiated unity. Here desirable versions of community and individuality flourish together (Marx, 2000; Inwood 1992, 36). Indeed, in their new forms, communal and individual identities, and communal and individual interests, presuppose and reinforce one-another, but remain partly separate so that they can also flourish in themselves (Gould, 1980). This distinction recognises that the individual is shaped by the community, but that they remain an individual. Crucially, it establishes that the community, regardless of individual identity, will always continue to define them in some way and that, therefore, they should be an active part of it, using their individual expertise to ensure that it continues to flourish. This understanding of the interconnectedness of the individual with the collective is supportive of a mutualistic bond between the two which recognises that one does not have to supersede the other, but rather form equal parts of a greater whole. To sever this mutualistic bond would then be to produce negative alienation, causing serious harm by robbing the individual of part of their identity, and the community of something that could contribute to its maintenance and development.

Marx sees capitalism as the force which degrades this bond, creating structures that alienate citizens from one-another, and leaves them with weaker senses of self. Within the 1844 Manuscripts, Marx depicts this in relation to four examples (Marx, 2000, 29-31). First, he identifies alienation from the object that the worker produces when it is immediately taken away from them to be sold by their employer. Second, he suggests that work can become a torment through the monotony which is engendered by the extreme division of labour to the point that one worker is relegated to the position of a cog in a large machine. Third, that the worker can become alienated if they have no say in what they produce or to what ends they produce it. Finally, Marx sees how it might dawn on the worker that their inability to decide what they produce or why leads them to realise that such work does nothing to fulfil mutual, definitively human, needs but, rather, is to service the mode of exchange and the accumulation of capital by their employer. Within each of these circumstances, the worker is ultimately reduced to a mechanism designed to produce profit in service of capitalism, and in each case loses some part of themselves (Marx, 2000, 30-33). They have lost their species-essence because their minds are restricted from producing objects for others that satisfy their needs. In this, the structure of the capitalist system consequently provides real obstacles for the individual to overcome and ensures that they remain in an alienated position whereby they cannot be agents of their own destiny. This is a development of

Hegel's relationship between object and subject to say that alienation is far more than a mental reservation, it is a physical one as well defined in part by domination and active agential degradation.

Marx terms this subordination as fetishism. In this case, the fetishism of capital limits the minds of every group within society by making them subservient to the objects which they created (Marx, 2000, 53). The worker and capitalist are separated by structure and can no longer see each other as human having found themselves in roles that garner mutual loathing for one-another. (Marx, 2000, 4-6). Here, the structures that we have created have become their own independent entities which distort the relationship between individuals, leading to the development of damaging norms which destroy our humanity and ability to relate to one-another (Marx, 2000, 39). Under these systems we are objectively alienated because there is no way of developing meaning or dignity in what we do when our only aim is to generate capital, which in no way promotes the community togetherness from which we can foster mutually beneficial facets of our identity (Marx, 2000, 22). In this way alienation is underlined by an adherence to a structure which undermines the bonds necessary for community, and which extends norms that clash with erstwhile notions of worth as derived from it. This undermines our capacity for relational connectivity and severs the link between community and meaning-generation.

Put simply, Marx emphasises alienation as detachment from community and its ability to generate social goods such as recognition, meaning, and dignified respect. In this, subservience to the capitalist mode of production has a significant impact on our ability to generate meaning, which is a prerequisite for dignity, since relations have become 'poisoned' by these processes of reification and fetishisation (Hilton, 2003). Such distortions are taken here to cloud one's ability to form relationships that are not transactional, promotes a competitive and ultimately destructive individualism, and prevents human needs from being recognised. To put this complex web of alienation more simply, we can build on the agential-communal definition of alienation, in which one has a sense of self that is not realised within community, to suggest that capitalism degrades our common values and attachment to one-another. One is not only unrecognised within community and unable to shape it, but also has their dignity actively eroded within a society that privileges reified ends and struggles to treat citizens as ends in themselves.

Macintyre and Community

Macintyre also sees that capitalism corrupts our humanity. Indeed, for Macintyre, capitalism has rendered value a term that is often associated with wealth (Macintyre, 2007, 148). Therefore, for something to have value it must either be worth money or able to produce it. Such an understanding of the concept renders discussion about value amoral and disconnected from genuine human needs or relationships because we are defining it in financial terms; not in human ones. In this case, we become more alienated from what it means to be a human and fall into a survival mentality whereby we work to consume, lacking social identity or a sense of anything greater than ourselves (Macintyre, 2007, 107). He ultimately sees capitalism, and a selfish-individualism which arises out of it, as fracturing the moral bedrock of community, inhibiting our ability to value one-another in our considerations.

The loss of this consideration as a foundational ethical value is important because it provides a foundation of equal worth whereby we can recognise others as valuable members of the community. Macintyre sees that, by having an ethical frame for community that makes it expressly clear that we must commit ourselves to others, we are better placed to extend a dignity to our citizens, as well as to create a community that one can find recognition within. The prognosis for a society that fails in this is particularly bleak. By losing

something as crucial as our ethical foundation we are robbed of the ability to enjoy these common goods which otherwise arise out of mutuality and deprive citizens of the ability to realise meaning within their lives. He even extends this to our structures, especially those that promote agency (Macintyre, 2007;2016). Take, for example, the decline of the trade unions. As we become more selfish in our interests, not desiring to pay into unions because they are not seen as providing immediate gratification, we lose the ability to gain things that can only come through collective action, in this case the use of collective bargaining to improve conditions.

Taken together, the loss of an ethical basis for community because of selfish individualisation atomises us and robs us of the ability to generate meaningful relationships, as well as denying us those goods, both material and 'spiritual', which we can only gain in common (Macintyre, 2016). In essence, by embracing an individualism that is devoid of express moral sentiment, the desire for duty and responsibility to be extended to others, we deprive ourselves of the capacity to share bonds of equal worth. This contributes to alienation as we become distanced from our community and find our capacity for meaning-generation and, in the case of the unions, agential action, severely stunted.

Defining Alienation

From this, we can identify three fundamental characteristics which can be used to define alienation. This finds itself expressed here in a substantive way in relation to:

1) Community- The concept of community is essential for the realisation of human needs, according to philosophers such as Hegel, Marx, and Macintyre. Community enables collaborative interaction, helping individuals to understand themselves and others, and to find their place in the world through various roles, including citizenship and friendship. Marx highlights the benefits of communal identity, social engagement, and mutual relationships, which allow individuals to develop their faculties in ways that are not possible for atomised individuals. Macintyre critiques individualism, arguing that it leads to moral privatisation and a loss of identity and purpose. Without community, individuals lack a sense of right and wrong, and they miss the opportunity for a better future that can be achieved through collective action. These philosophers argue that community is necessary for the extension of mutual dignity and equal worth, and its absence results in alienation from oneself and others.

2) Agency- The loss of agency is the second aspect of alienation according to Hegel, Marx, and Macintyre. Hegel explains it as the inability to recognize oneself in the world and a feeling of powerlessness resulting from the perception of external forces controlling one's life. Marx expands on this idea, arguing that physical structures prevent individuals from exercising agency. Macintyre critiques capitalism and liberal-individualism, which create institutions that undermine human needs and distort the ability to exercise agency. The feeling of powerlessness that comes with the loss of agency alienates individuals who recognize that society's structures prevent them from engaging in processes that could improve their lives. Such individuals are excluded from decision-making power and from participating in associations that hold it, leaving them feeling a lack of control over their lives and unable to shape their communities in conjunction with others.

3) Dignity- The loss of dignity, defined as the inability of an individual to recognise their value, is the third component of alienation. According to Hegel, dignity is lost when individuals cannot find meaning in what they do or develop a strong identity based on their relationships. Marx sees dignity as related to the recognition of human needs and the ability of individuals to objectify those needs using their creative impulses. However, this dignity is taken away from individuals when they are forced to follow orders and when the fetishisation of capital trumps it. This alienates people from the relationships and actions

that give meaning to life and instead emphasizes survival through work. Macintyre also relates dignity to a person's ability to see themselves as part of a narrative created in tandem with others. The loss of dignity alienates individuals, leaving them without direction. It is psychologically damaging and detrimental to human development, separating us from our fellow human beings and categorising us into hierarchies that do not express our integrity. Like the other characteristics outlined above, dignity is necessary to make life worthwhile.

Potential Applications: The position of the British Working-Class

This article has so-far sought to identify an accessible means of understanding alienation and has moved towards a characterisation of the concept which is made up of three interconnected characteristics. These characteristics can be utilised to provide a tripartite understanding of the concept, wherein it is constituted by:

1) Decline in relation to a sense of belonging within community
2) The deterioration of agency.
3) The loss of dignity.

By re-focusing alienation along these lines, we enable it to be utilised as an analytical framework to understand contemporary issues in a way that provides a clear and joined-up account.

Below, one sketches out one of its potential applications, seeking to understand how we might view the position of the working-class as alienated. One demonstrates this by bringing together arguments from across the political spectrum and shapes them into a more cohesive narrative, which is by no means definitive or unproblematic, but which illustrates the potential usefulness of alienation as a unifying framework to generate discussion. The reader should note that this argument is constructed using a diverse literature that might not necessarily run together if understood within other frames. As such, one takes the reader through an argument that combines literatures around the economic woes of the working-class, the structural and cultural declines and conflicts that have taken place within it, alongside more narrative issues associated with their position.

Are the working-class alienated?

The application of alienation to the working-class requires us to answer three pivotal questions, namely:

1) Has their dignity declined?
2) Has their sense of community declined?
3) Has their agency declined?

If we find evidence of decline across the three, then we can consider the class to be alienated. To illustrate this one offers a limited overview of the literature.

Dignity: Is working-class dignity in decline?

For both Goodhart (2020) and Sandel (2020), a loss of dignity can be identified within the working-class in reference to three interconnected parts, namely the limitation of routes for social mobility, the inflation of credentials, and the de-valuing of non-cognitive roles within society. Taking this first point, both highlight how, in the past, working-class people had more opportunity to 'better themselves' whilst remaining rooted within their communities. Indeed, as university education remained uncommon, most working-class people, including the most intelligent workers, remained close to home and took up positions which either were rooted in the trades sector, in shopfloor or administrative work, or within key public services and associations. Most of these roles did not require a university education and

were generally seen as 'good jobs' that gave people a decent living and community-derived prestige (Goodhart, 2020, 195). The outlook towards these jobs, which are now being de-valued, was one which was not centred on value as derived from how much money one earned but, instead, based upon contribution to the community. What one saw in the past was multiple routes to not only social mobility but dignity, which was built into many jobs and was tied to a stronger sense of community. With the breakdown of community, the closure of workplaces, the cuts to public services, and the destruction of associations, one has seen the decline in prestige associated with those positions (Sandel, 2020).

These changes have been accompanied by a cultural shift towards merit and the attainment of credentials, which had been part of society in the past but found itself less-pronounced since most people did not go into higher education and were able to live dignified lives, perhaps most within the post-war years (Sandel,2020; Edgerton, 2021). However, in the 21st century where poorer regions have few suitable jobs, people must almost leave those communities to find employment, usually in large cities such as London, in which well-paying jobs require a bachelor's degree or more (Goodhart, 2020, 16). This has narrowed the possibility of social mobility for many people who do not either have the time, resources, or ability to go through university (Sandel, 2020). The result of this narrowing has been to create a situation in which a majority do not go to university, whilst a sizeable minority leave their communities for good upon graduating. In both cases there are issues as, within the university group, many must stay on to acquire a Masters degree or higher so that they can 'get ahead', whilst others become under-employed in non-degree work because there is an oversupply of graduates and an undersupply of well-paid middle-class jobs. For those without a degree, these people are immediately labelled as "losers" and have many jobs closed off to them (Goodhart, 2020, 93-95).

For Sandel especially, this demonstrates what he calls the "Tyranny of Merit", which is to make working-class people out to be "failures" deserving of their reduced status if they do not go to university. They deserve this status because they are not seen to possess sufficient knowledge, skill, ambition, nor perhaps work ethic. Having not gone to university, there is also a distinct lack of educational opportunities as the university has, to some extent, become synonymous with education, to the detriment of vocational courses. A degree now confers greater respect than what is an equivalent vocational qualification, whilst qualifications like the City and Guilds carry much less-weight than say, a Russell Group University (Goodhart, 2020, 242). To make matters worse, not even universities are equal, and one finds that those considered 'lesser' have a higher number of working-class students and alumni (English & Bolton, 2015). We thus see a situation where working-class people tend to become even more alienated as, not only are they less likely to attend university in the first instance, but those that 'make it' often find themselves in universities that lack prestige, and consequently suffer in their prospects for social mobility (Reay, 2021). This underlines Goodhart's claim that, by making a top 20 university the single route to social mobility we de-value others and limit their opportunities to acquire prestigious jobs. In this one sees how even a job that is skilled and pays relatively well, like a tradesperson, nevertheless lacks the prestige associated with roles which require a degree. What we see here then is not only a situation in which most workers do not have 'trades' and receive poor pay, but that even those who do are not adequately recognised for their skills, in spite of what pay they can obtain for them.

This has a corresponding impact upon the working-class psyche, which Sandel picks up on to suggest that having seen a particular kind of university-derived knowledge pushed to the forefront, those that miss out are made to feel they are worth less than their fellow citizens. Such a sense is borne out by the statistical evidence as those without a degree are likely to be labelled as 'unskilled' workers, which means low pay, poor security, and variable but

often poor conditions, with median wages at least £10,000 lower than those with a degree (IFS, 2020). This represents, for Sandel (2020), Cruddas (2021), and Goodhart (2020), a clear example of indignity as employers fail to treat their staff with the respect that they deserve, neglect to provide them with security, and are consequently seen to be "exploitative" and, in Marxian terms, "alienating". The failure to ensure 'good work' and the degradation of one's role to that of an 'unskilled' worker underlines such demeaning treatment, whilst a lack of recognition for skilled non-university workers undermines their more sustainable economic position, impoverishing their material and spiritual dignity (Bloodworth, 2018, 36).

Community: Is a working-class sense of community in decline?

There is a growing literature that cites cultural tensions as fomenting community decline. Several working-class respondents, mostly white and older, cite the changing demographics of their localities as a key source of crisis. This is a point to which Kaufmann speaks, although not unproblematically. Kaufmann (2018) and Goodhart (2020) point to an influx of migrants into traditionally working-class areas accompanied by a sense of 'loss'. It has been accompanied by this as minority groups have tended to begin re-shaping communities. For the working-class people already there, having suffered the decline of their communities because of structural loss, now feel such loss compounded by cultural and ethnodemographic changes. The fears that arise out of this is said by Kaufmann (2018) to reinforce negative stereotyping and to exacerbate the feeling of community loss because relations often degenerate either into segregation or resentfulness. The means to ameliorate such hostility between the existing working-class population, and the new population, which is likely to be working-class in economic terms, is virtually non-existent too, again owing to structural decline as the strength and number of trade unions, youth centres, and similar associations has diminished. This lends weight to the notion of being left behind, connecting with narratives already present within our society that resonate with many, typically white, working-class people who feel that 'their' leaders have forced such declines, and yet allowed the community to be reshaped in another's image (Goodhart, 2020). In this way, the white working-class struggle to navigate the landscape of cultural change and find it especially difficult to re-integrate themselves into a narrative of progress since their daily experience of life is alienating. They believe genuinely that they are ignored by government and left without a community to rely upon. Alienation is, therefore, related to community-loss here as the white working-class is left without a means to assert their claims for recognition, whilst the circumstances and old forms of association have been left to crumble (Kaufmann, 2018, 410).

This latter decline also prevents white and minority working-people from overcoming their present misrecognitions. Without these vital associations, there is little to stem the feelings of loss and fear that divides communities, further fomenting their breakdown. The working-class suffer in this as minority and majority peoples struggle to see each other as equals, grow distrustful of one-another, and consequently find it difficult to build community anew. These challenges worsen alienation and undermine a cohesive sense of working-class-ness, which in turn makes it harder to exert collective agency. In this analysis we see an overlap of declines across each of the three characteristics.

Disconnection from a national narrative

This disconnection is also prevalent within our national politics and the stories that we tell to make sense of our lives. Cruddas (2021) and Sandel (2012;2021) highlight the importance of a cohesive narrative that includes and enables people to see themselves as living in-common. This has traditionally been achieved among the working-class in reference to patriotism, which resonates with working-people to the extent that most of the ~70% of people who describe themselves as such also consider themselves to be working-class,

including most minority peoples within Britain (More in Common, 2020). However, at present there is a distinct lack of vision for working-people to buy into. For example, Cruddas (2021) and McKenzie (2017) point to their conversations with working-people and the moral issues that are included when they air their concerns. They cite discussions surrounding concepts such as "fairness", "justice", "equality", and "solidarity" and complain that they do not see this reflected within our politics, which they suggest has lost its ability to inspire. Sandel (2021) speaks to this. He tracks how our moral discourse has changed over time and demonstrates how the "big questions" of morality, injustice, inequality, essentially those challenges which people face on a daily basis and which used to galvanise people into action, has been replaced by a sterile "rhetoric of rising" in which politicians now speak of encouraging "opportunity", which is for many a hollow term (Sandel, 2020). According to IPSOS (2022), many working-class, and other, people are dissatisfied with the lack of direction for our country, and of politician's inability to offer something more. The working-class are alienated here because they are unable to imagine themselves to belong to something more. Where, in previous decades, they had means of meaning-creation owing to the structures of the associations or access to a national narrative of some kind, they now lack each of these things, without which it becomes significantly harder to find one's place or to see themselves in common (Edgerton, 2021).

Populist-Nationalism

This is partly why we have seen a surge in support for populist groups, because they have offered something that appears different to politics as usual for those, typically white, members of society who are not targeted by populist narratives (Gerbaudo, 2021). Unfortunately, the narratives that these groups promote tend to be divisive, actively promoting "culture wars" on topics like statues, immigration, or minority rights (Beckett, 2020). Such examples underline the narrative issue as this vitriolic rhetoric widens already deep divisions within the working-class and demonises those that it is targeted against. Indeed, minority working-people have been pushed to the margins of society and are robbed of the prestige associated with belonging (Akala, 2018).

In fact, minority workers have long suffered from a lack of recognition as constituent members of the British nation, whilst the working-class nature of many of these peoples has been highlighted by Stuart Hall (1980) to often worsen their situation, leading to ostracism or, alternatively, either their non-recognition or a recognition which takes no account of race. As Akala (2018) argues in relation to the 'Black' community, when one does something worthy of praise, they are no longer 'black' or 'black-British'-they are just British. For Hall and Akala, this is a case of misrecognition because being, in this case, black, working-class, and being British are fundamentally interlinked parts of one's identity that define their existence. Indeed, Hall notes that race and class are both concepts which involved the erection of "those systems of meaning, concepts, categories and representations which make sense of the world, and through which individuals come to 'live' … in an imaginary way, their relation to the real, material conditions of their existence." (Hall, 1980, 334). It is, therefore, important to consider them as they provide a narrative framing for one's life, much like community, which makes sense of the context in which we live. Our narratives should connect and resonate with different aspects of people's identities.

This is not the case for the minority members of the working-class today. Although efforts have been made to facilitate equal rights, and to undermine discrimination in law, minority peoples do not see those aspects of their identity recognised on an institutional or narrative level. Indeed, in a poll conducted by ICM (2021), when asked to name someone who contributed much to British history, only 1% of respondents named a non-white person. We see here evidence of exclusion from community as minority groups are unable to see their

histories, and their contributions, reflected in the stories that we tell about Britain, nor are they recognised by the community. This represents alienation from community if one cannot see themselves as belonging, see their struggles and their contributions go unnoticed, nor be appreciated by the national community. In this instance, a lack of recognition for one's role in shaping our community is demonstrative of alienation from it.

How does alienation measure against alternative frameworks?

One accepts that these are more complex issues than that which the article might reasonably articulate, but the application of alienation to contemporary issues does offer us a means of 'testing' other frameworks, which can generate beneficial questions.

Questions of community breakdown have recently been understood in relation to Social Capital Theory. This theory, developed by Robert Putnam (2001), claims to measure interactions between people and develop structures to promote communication. It analyses tangible resources like private property, alongside intangibles like human capital, and assumes that community breakdown can be reversed primarily by encouraging interaction. One accepts this premise to some extent and sees value in addressing structural issues which hamper community. However, this is insufficient because the theory does not understand 'community' in a deeper sense. The point is to measure forms of capital with the assumption that more capital for more people will create a 'better' community. It is then unclear what it means by community other than it being a physical entity and a network of interactions in which people exchange resources. For this reason, it often appears overly individualistic, rational, and reductionist in the sense that community becomes but the sum of its parts. Indeed, social capital is reflective of the detached marketisation that is now prevalent throughout our society. Many of its scholars, Putnam included, focus upon a transaction of resources, and hold that it is desirable, and community is desirable, because it enables individuals to use those resources for their own gain (Castiglione, 2008). It does recognise the community's role in establishing norms, and encouraging interaction, but the way that scholars of social capital portray this is without some sense of the ends which it looks towards. Community is taken to exist, and is beneficial for individuals, but it is not much more than that. It becomes a hollow term that refers to a stable network of transactional relationships built upon shared norms. Here, community is instrumentalised. This logic does not give due to the community as anything more, nor appreciates its potential as the spiritual embodiment of 'us'. What one is suggesting is more Marxian and Hegelian, a sense that we must be respectful of community because it is something that creates meaning, and which we should be able to connect to give our lives purpose. Community in-itself is not about getting ahead, it is about meaning-creation and connectivity in the realisation of flourishing (Hegel, 2018). It is born out of moral questions and grand narratives of the nation. This is important because many working-class people, although practical, are also idealistic, and desire a community predicated on notions of fairness, justice, or solidarity, amongst other things. Indeed, in the 2021 Hartlepool by-election, many working-class people complained that the Labour Party "don't have a vision" and offered nothing to the restoration of community (Armstrong, 2021). Working-people want this and to be able to find a place within it. They want a way of understanding their daily lives in the context of something more.

We have noted how populist groups have done this, but this neglects the building of community in terms of its infrastructure, whilst its narrative is one that has increased division. This is not a healthy basis for the reconstitution of community, and one in which the narrative, whilst appealing to some, is likely to damage that sense of community that many so desire. This reflects an issue that structure alone cannot solve, and which social capital is ill-equipped to handle. To re-connect people with community, we must be able to

appreciate its value and the associated value of narrative. In many respects, it has the potential to enable us to transcend our mundane realities, inspiring a sense of something greater than ourselves. It is this spiritual nature of community that bonds people as much as our relationships.

This has a structural component, yet there is a need to create narratives that connect with people, enable them to make sense of their experiences, and imagine themselves to be part of something greater. The problems facing the working-class can, therefore, be understood as a case of alienation from community. Social Capital Theory might partially acknowledge this, but it cannot explain how important community itself, and narratives which are tied to it, are and is therefore insufficient in diagnosing the issues faced by the working-class. The application of alienation asks us to look more critically at existing frameworks.

Agency: Is working-class agency in decline?

There is a complex literature on agency that has been advanced by scholars such as Surridge (2021) and Gerbaudo (2020), yet here one identifies the argument of Cruddas (2021), who speaks of a value-gap between what has become a middle-class dominated parliamentary Labour Party and the working-class, and its impact on agency. He highlights how three successive New Labour governments championed "Education, Education, Education" and social mobility within this new neoliberal Knowledge Economy (Blair, 2001). He notes this as being where working-people increasingly lost faith in the party which had long been considered a guardian of their dignity, and a conduit for the shaping of society in their image (Embery, 2021; Cruddas, 2021, Bloodworth, 2018). Cruddas points to the growth of working-class alienation as arising out of New Labour's shift towards the capture of the middle-class vote, and the creation of a society with no clear place for the working-class. He argues here that that a key guarantor of working-class dignity, with historical and powerful roots in their communities, ties to the trade unions, and other bodies which had once sought to give voice to, and protect, working-people, had now been seen to shun them. This attitude would transform the party to the extent that it is now only around 8% working-class in its PLP composition (O'Grady, 2018).

Embery (2021) speaks to this in stating that, during the Blair years:

"blue collar and white collar united in the struggle for social and economic justice — started to fall apart as Labour began to be dominated by the latter, transforming itself into a party of the managerial and professional classes, graduates, and urban liberals…"

The party of dignified work became that of technocracy and social mobility. It still sought to help the working-class but not by listening to them. Instead, what one saw was a politics emerge in which votes were to be won with 'transactions'. This is reflected in Cruddas' assertion that "votes are the form of exchange, policies the commodities, and elected office the derived profit" (Cruddas, 2021, 32). Such a transactional model of politics sought to 'buy' working-class votes which, for many working-people, felt disingenuous. This was to literally alienate them in Marxian terms, dehumanising them as a commodity. For all the promise of opportunity that came with this marketisation too, the working-class saw little of it. They continued to suffer the effects of globalisation, made worse by a post-New Labour austerity. The impact of this was to further limit the agency of the working-class who, having already lost out from the restraining of the unions and the breakdown of their communities, now lost its connection to the force which it had viewed as most capable of protecting them. According to Goodwin, this rejection led to a deep-seated political resentment that would later be unleashed by Brexit (Goodwin, 2021; Evans & Tilley, 2017, 186).

Assessing the narrative of structural exclusion

Such a narrative begs us to incorporate empirical data into our account, broadening the range of material that can be understood in relation to claims about alienation. Evans and Mellon (2020) confirm a working-class dissatisfaction with Labour by pointing to the dramatic rise in working-class voter disaffection during New Labour's period in government. According to Evans and Tilley (2017) 23% of those voters who had voted for Labour in 1997 did not vote in the 2001 General Election at all, which is a trend that they see as broadly continuing over time. Heath (2016) too identifies 2001 as a turning point in working-class voter apathy as, previous to this election, it was typical to witness a working-class voter turnout rate which was within 5 percentage points of their middle-class counterparts. However, by 2010, this had become a near 20% gap in turnout between the working-and-middle classes, with Heath (2016;1997) drawing a correlation between the number of Labour candidates from a working-class background, and turnout, seeing that the decreasing number of candidates from such backgrounds has increased the likelihood of non-voting, to a point that many working-people do not vote, whilst others no longer vote Labour. In fact, from 1997-2010, the percentage of the working-class that voted for Labour fell from 55% to 34%, declining further in 2015 before a small rebound in 2017, which was later wiped out with the decisive Conservative victory in 2019 (IPSOS MORI, 1997;2001;2010;2015;2017;2019).

This is the context in which we see the decline of the Labour Party's ability to connect with the working-class to the point where only 15% of working-people feel that the party is "close" to them, a considerable decline from even 2010 where 64% of people would have suggested that Labour predominantly stood for working-people (YouGov, 2022; Ford & Sobolewska, 2018). This part of Cruddas' argument is self-evident. However, this does not necessarily demonstrate wider alienation, and although an argument could be made for increasing levels of apathy being indicative of such, these statistics largely suggest a dissatisfaction with the Labour Party alone. What is needed is a further exploration of the why question.

Social Mobility statistics indicate dissatisfaction with the direction of society both under New Labour and successive Conservative governments, and reveal a working-class that does, as Cruddas (2021) points out, feel left behind within society. 86% of working-people see class as the fundamental determiner of opportunity, rather than factors like merit, and see that the 'opportunity' of social mobility has largely meant nothing for them. Their belief that they are left out, and that social mobility has failed, is underlined by deepening structural inequalities as working-class people now earn 17% less on average than those in the middle-class and are significantly less likely to be able to access quality education, nor jobs with any serious chance of progression. Furthermore, since the 1980s, children who grew up in poverty are four times more likely to be stuck in poverty as an adult than children in the 1970s. In fact, child poverty, which fell somewhat under New Labour but still hovered at around 3.5m, is now estimated at some 5.4m- meaning that 1 in 3 British children are likely to be in poverty, and over half of all working-class children, with this being particularly harmful for its British-Bangladeshi sub-group (JRF, 2022). This, like many working-class issues, has not sufficiently been addressed by any government. Indeed, the 3% increase in the pay of the poorest workers in the past two decades under both parties' governments has not been enough to reverse the dramatic fall in living standards (JRF, 2022).

The reality of this for working-class people is significant (Social Mobility Commission, 2020). In contemporary Britain many now suffer not only the effects of precarity but there is also a sense that they are being exploited in those jobs which are accessible to them. One such example is a recent study into workers for Amazon, one of the UK's larger employers, which found that over 80% felt that their conditions constituted exploitation (GMB, 2020). This has itself been validated by research conducted by the TUC detailing complaints against the

employer for abuse of contract, safety violations, surveillance, and other actions detrimental to wellbeing (TUC, 2020). Under these circumstances, it is no wonder that only 29% of working-people feel that their job provides them with security (Cruddas, 2021). These poor conditions show the increasing precarity of the working-class across its sub-groups in this globalised world and indicate that they really have found themselves unable to alter their new-found position. Their concerns are under-represented, whilst their personal agency is hampered by structural insecurity and exclusion.

The empirical data seems to confirm Cruddas' argument. Whilst transactional politics delivered some benefits to the working-class, it did little to change the structures which limited their agency. The New Labour government became considerably unpopular over the course of its 13 years in government and alienated further the working-class by taking society in a direction that they did not desire, and which did not afford them a place within it, nor any means to voice their dissent. The examples given of the past two decades lay bare the loss of agency which had occurred within the class.

Conclusion

Having set out a tripartite understanding of alienation in the first section of this article, one has endeavoured in the second to utilise the concept in addressing a diverse literature that seeks to understand the issues faced by the working-class in contemporary Britain. Readers who are familiar with this will have noticed that this article utilises scholarly accounts from across the political spectrum. This is one of the methodological benefits of viewing such issues within a framework of alienation. Research can be utilised to track declines across these three characteristics in a clear manner, where we arrive at a more joined-up account of the working-class position. In this instance, accounts by Kaufmann, Goodwin, and Goodhart, who sit on the right in terms of their proposed solutions, have been utilised. Their focuses are certainly useful, but they do not consider the current position of the working-class as one related to a multifaceted social condition. However, by broadening this perspective to say that their concerns are but one part of a wider condition, it opens the study of working-class issues to further insights, in this case from Sandel and others, as well as the application of developed facets of alienation.

I should also note that this conception of alienation reflects the fact that the nature of class is changing, as are our considerations around it. Indeed, as literature from Kaufmann, Goodwin, and to some extent Sandel, identify, class cannot be fully understood according to socio-economic stratification, and instead is reflected in considerations both around factors like age and generation, as well as more subjective ideas such as one's sense of attachment, or understanding of community. This conception of alienation recognises the importance of these more subjective strands and appreciates that we need a concept that maintains a focus on the subjective, community, or a civic participation dimension in its own right, rather than as part of a mainly economic analysis, if we are to comprehend the position of the working-class in contemporary society.

In particular, it acknowledges how members of the class can hold quite different understandings of self and place as derived from factors like age, ethnicity, and socialisation. This complicates class-analysis because there exist a broadly similar set of economic constraints upon the working-class, differing only in their intensity, but some unique narratives which impact upon its sub-groups in different ways. For instance, minorities are most likely to make up the precariat, as are young people, and tend to see themselves as a forgotten class left behind in a globalised and increasingly insecure economy, with often worse prospects than their parents, and consequently might prioritise advancements that secure them material dignity (Standing, 2011). However, the older, and more often than not white, working-class (TCW), who usually own their own homes and are

more economically stable, if not secure, might well see their agency constrained in relation to what they wish Britain to be 'about' given its socially progressive turn, and thus seek redress in respect to the laws that govern our community (Goodwin, 2023). These narratives and the way that they shape the sub-group's response to the issues facing them differ, but we need to comprehend these experiences and the subjective ideas of self which they help to shape and reinforce if we are to understand how working-people live in contemporary society. Alienation as I have presented it considers this in reference to both agency and narrative, therefore giving academics the tools to examine both the respective positions of working-class sub-groups in relation to one-another, as well as to elaborate the similar and differing qualities which make up their narratives and sense of self or belonging. This will be useful in elaborating about a wider working-class position, as well as directing attention towards the complex and multifaceted needs of those who make it up.

As an overarching framework then, alienation can have a positive impact on the way that we approach and understand such contemporary issues. As I have described, this tripartite conceptualisation makes it easier to engage with a theory of alienation in the first instance. Indeed, we can begin on a fundamental level to identify alienation and track it across these characteristics, considering whether a group is suffering from it based on whether they have a lack of agency, dignity, or a sense of belonging in community. This opens space for more quantitative analysis of such problems, as well as greater debate around the meaning of these three characteristics, whilst the concept moves us beyond economically-rooted understandings of working-class decline towards an understanding of the class position as one beset by a series of challenges to their subjective sense of self, their 'narrative', and place within our community.

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