



précis

n. a concise summary of essential points, statements, or facts

précis Interviews Philip Khoury

Philip Khoury, associate provost and Ford International Professor of History, discusses foreign policy in the Middle East, MIT's relationship to the policymaking community, and how an engineering school benefits the humanities and social science community.

Khoury joined the MIT history faculty in 1981 and served as dean of the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (SHASS) between 1991 and 2006. He was appointed inaugural Kenan Sahin Dean of SHASS in 2002 and associate provost in 2006.



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Alliance Formation in Civil Wars

by Fotini Christia

Fotini Christia, assistant professor of political science, argues that "alliance formation [in civil wars] is tactical and motivated by a concern with victory and the maximization of wartime returns..." An excerpt from her book is featured.



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Publicity-driven Accountability in China

by Greg Distelhorst

Can strong authorities be made accountable to weak constituencies? If so, how? Greg Distelhorst, a PhD candidate in political science, shows how media liberalization improves government accountability even in a strong, authoritarian state like China. *Photo courtesy Wikipedia Commons.*



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OF NOTE

Yukio Okamoto joins CIS

Yukio Okamoto, a former special advisor to the prime minister of Japan, was named a Robert E. Wilhelm Fellow, and will spend his time at MIT doing research, writing, and working with students and faculty.

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Neuffer Fellow from India

Priyanka Borpujari, a journalist based in Mumbai, was selected as the Elizabeth Neuffer Fellow, and will be exploring topics such as malnutrition, hunger, displacement and violence, especially in light of India's surging gross domestic product.

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Attack of the Drones

The Starr Forum featured a panel of speakers who represented a wide array of perspectives, touching on the technical, ethical, and political consequences of the increased use of drones by the US.

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Philip Khoury

Associate Provost
Ford International Professor of History

précis: In the last ten years the Middle East has been at the center of national security and foreign policy discussion. Do Middle East scholars seek to convert their expertise into policy advice and do policymakers want input from Middle East scholars?

PK: The Middle East is rife with political tension—internal, domestic political tension, at least partially connected to the Israeli-Arab conflict—and because scholars often get typecast, rightly or wrongly, as belonging to one camp or another in this conflict, they are often perceived as biased. As a result there has not been a very deep reliance on university academics that specialize in the Middle East. A few have actually served on the National Security Council in the past, but there have not been many. Additionally, the “think-tank culture” of Washington has subsumed some of that because people living in Washington rotate between government and these institutions to craft policy.

précis: What is MIT’s relationship to the policymaking community?

PK: MIT has frequently sent its talent to Washington DC, particularly from the Department of Economics and the Sloan School, but also from the worlds of engineering and science. After all, Jerry Wiesner, MIT’s 13th president in the 1970s, was the science advisor for Presidents Kennedy and Johnson and MIT’s 10th president Jim Killian was science advisor to President Eisenhower. Former MIT dean of engineering Vannevar Bush, who advised Presidents Roosevelt and Truman, put the research university on the map as we know it today by creating the federal grant system during the heart of World War II, which has driven research in this country ever since. Other noted faculty such as Sheila Widnall, John



Philip Khoury is associate provost of MIT and Ford International Professor of History. Photo courtesy Donna Coveney

Deutch and Ernie Moniz have served as senior government officials. So MIT has had a long history of deep involvement with Washington.

précis: Over the last 10 years the US has been involved in various interventions in the Middle East with a mixed record of success, but do you think limited humanitarian interventions might yield different outcomes?

PK: I’d like to be optimistic and think that after the tragic mistakes of Iraq, for which we’re still paying the price in terms of Americans and Iraqis killed, we’re not that likely to jump into things in quite the same way. Despite triumphant claims, Iraq still isn’t resolved and a very wobbly balance remains. Though we went into Libya rather quickly partially on humanitarian grounds, we have hesitated with Syria because it is just a lot more complex. It was much easier to justify getting rid of Muammar Qaddafi than it is to justify ridding the Middle East of the Syrian regime, though perhaps it gets

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easier by the day as the conflict continues down a very negative path. Simply put, Syria has allies Qaddafi did not have.

précis: So strategically it is more difficult?

PK: It is much more complicated. I can't think of another country where an intervention could trigger so many known and unknown negative repercussions.

Lebanon, which saw the worst civil war from 1975-1990, and, it's important to note that this also involved Syria, is already worrying about the spillover effects from Syria and its leaders are doing everything in their power to contain the situation. But equally important, you have a tenuous political situation in Jordan, and Israel watching everything around it through a microscope. Then there is the Iranian connection with Syria that complicates matters. And finally you have Hezbollah in Lebanon, which could become problematic. As a result, going into Syria is not simply going into Syria. It may involve stepping into more messes than we realize.

Also, the Syrian regime will be a lot more difficult to get rid of than the regime in Libya. Syria has much more firepower and can do a lot more damage to an intervening force as well as to their neighbors. There's no question a lot of people are getting killed and more deaths will come, but after the fall of the regime, depending on when and how that happens, there could be real massacres of the regime's allies and especially the Alawite sect that undergirds it.

précis: Given all this, does it seem unlikely the US will lead a coalition to intervene in Syria?

PK: No question we're thinking about it but I just don't know how close we are to actually doing anything. I remain doubtful we are going to do anything because we simply don't think in humanitarian terms first and therefore stand to gain little. If events unfold that begin to draw in other actors—if Iran were to intervene more formally and more palpably than it already has—that might oblige us to do something in lieu of Israel taking action.

précis: How did it get to this stage? I remember there was once cautious optimism of economic reform and modernization in Syria under the new Bashar Asad regime.

PK: There was a brief period of opening up. When Bashar came in after his father died, he looked like a different kind of leader promoting a younger generation. This perception may have been abetted by his fluent command of English and his Syrian wife's London upbringing and former employment with JP Morgan. He did initiate some reforms and move a few things in a positive direction for Syria. He seemed to promote investments in technology and an information economy, and created opportunities to attract young talent, both within the country and from the Syrian diaspora. He even moved some of his father's old henchmen out of their positions. But as things grew unstable, he had to reinstate some of this old guard to reassert control. He had to rely on people who only know how to do things one way, and that is by ruthlessly dealing with dissent.

précis: Did anyone anticipate the magnitude of this conflict?

PK: Scholars and analysts may have imagined this possibility in Libya, in Yemen, and even in Bahrain. But most wouldn't have expected this in Syria. Syria was generally thought to be stable and one of the last places to go, but it is amazing how wrong this perception was. It suggests that at some level there had to be something simmering underground that was rather well organized; people must have been fed up with that kind of repressive regime, and old wounds must have still been open. This regime is eventually going to go. At this point it's hard to imagine the regime lasting much longer than another year given the damage to its credibility that it has sustained. But let's see.

précis: How is the reporting on Syria and general expertise that informs public and policy debate on the subject?

PK: Reporting is difficult because Syria cut off access very early. It's very difficult for journalists to enter the country let

alone move around freely and safely. My dear friend, the late Anthony Shadid of *The New York Times*—who was probably the leading American journalist to cover the Middle East in modern memory—had to sneak into the country through the North and use stringers or anything he could find to get information. So as a result we are forced to depend on more regional media outlets like *Al Jazeera*. Yet even Arab reporters have a hard time getting in to the country and much of the reporting comes from Beirut using unnamed sources from Syria who are working clandestinely.

précis: Is this purely a sectarian conflict or does your research on the urban/rural divide in Syria map on to the cleavages of this conflict?

The French colonial administration played a significant role in playing the Alawites, a compact minority from the northwest of the country, off against the Sunni majority, who dominated the cities. The French pushed the Alawites, who were generally uneducated, rural people into the army and the security services. The French didn't advance them very far in terms of the actual leadership in the military so Alawites composed the rank and file along with other rural peoples. In time as the military academy opened up after Syrian independence, some of these Alawites managed to rise into the officer class and then promoted their own. As they rose, they formed alliances with other rural peoples so that rural Alawites and Sunnis would at times align against the cities, which were predominantly populated by Sunnis. Eventually Alawites gained control of the leading positions in the military and especially in the domestic intelligence services. This was also a huge step upward for them in terms of social mobility. Most urban Sunni elites had avoided the army, which afforded rural peoples access. Today those who once eschewed the military probably regret the decision that lost them control of this critical institution.

I think that the conflict we're witnessing today is really the struggle of a sect-class. The Alawites as a minority managed to gain a considerable amount of power

within the state system through their control of the military and intelligence services. They then managed to co-opt, through patronage and all kinds of deals, a certain element of the Sunni upper-middle and upper classes from the cities because they needed their mercantile know-how, which the Alawites lacked, in order to actually keep the economy going, and create opportunities at least for some people. However, this Alawite-led regime has managed to hold on to power by using a very powerful internal security system with many different units played off of each other and the president keeping a pretty close hand on things through his family members.

précis: Would Asad leave with a golden parachute?

PK: There are too many business interests, too many things at stake. The great fear that many observers have articulated is that if the regime collapses then the real massacres could begin in retribution. Bashar and the closest members of his regime may believe that he can't flee because there will be no one to defend the Alawite community from massacre.

précis: So the expectation is that they're fighting for their lives?

PK: Well, they are also fighting because they own a good chunk of the country. It's not simply that they are fighting for their own people, but also for enormous material wealth that they control. Asad's cousins, the Maaloufs, are the wealthiest family in the country. Asad himself may be very wealthy along with others close to him, and much of that wealth is tied up in the country.

There is undoubtedly a fear, which one hears next door in Lebanon, that massacres may be inevitable and the regime cannot afford to let its own co-religionists become victim to this. But if you probe a little further, you understand that they have enormous investments in the country, which also helps to explain why the

Asads are so far staying the course and may go down fighting.

One of the president's family members, the head of general intelligence for the country, was blown up a few months ago along with the defense minister. One might think that would bring down a regime, but the members of the regime's inner circle are not fleeing.

précis: What has Hezbollah been doing during this conflict?

PK: Hezbollah is looking for a way to save face. There's no question their leader Nasrallah's reputation has been sullied, though he is not dead in the water. He is supposed to be a revolutionary leader, but when the Arab revolts occurred throughout the Middle East, he offered little encouragement. The problem is that you are what you eat. Once Hezbollah become established, they don't want to risk giving up that power. And so they behaved differently.

Nasrallah's ties to the Syrian regime have discredited him in the eyes of many onlookers in the Arab world. Regardless of whether you are a secular liberal or an Islamic fundamentalist, the actions taken by Damascus are not appealing to most of the rest of the Arab world, much of which is Sunni. Across the rest of the Arab world there has been delight in watching the people of Syria rise up, much as the people in Egypt and Tunisia and elsewhere rose up; and the Syrian regime's response is not seen as a win for the Arab people.

Even though it controls the firepower in the country, Hezbollah has not taken over the government. But the concern in Lebanon is that Hezbollah, worrying that its Syrian ally is collapsing and its Iranian ally is losing position, may feel the need to consolidate its position with a military coup to pre-empt a potential usurpation of Hezbollah's stake in the country.

précis: Hasn't Hezbollah seen the re-

turns of being actively engaged in the Lebanese political process?

PK: Yes, but that was when Syria wasn't tottering on the brink and backed Hezbollah more directly. Hezbollah has to make calculations like any other major movement. It constitutes an enormous economic and social welfare organization, armed to the teeth. And it has relied on funding and arms from Iran and logistical support from Syria, up until recently. Washington is watching Syria so closely because it is far more consequential for US policy and interests in the region than Libya ever was.

précis: Switching gears, what is it like for social science and humanities professors to teach at what is known as primarily an engineering school?

PK: MIT isn't for everyone, but it is for very smart people, no matter what your field. It attracts talented people who have a deep commitment to research. And MIT has been supportive of all of us in the humanities and social sciences who can figure out how to fit in well without a chip on our shoulder for being comparatively small in number.

MIT has proved it is possible to have greatness in small departments. The economics department is the largest department in the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (SHASS) but small compared to many departments at MIT. Nevertheless, it has been ranked one of the top economics departments in the world since the time of Paul Samuelson. Our linguistics and philosophy department is also a leader. It remains strong because modern theoretical linguistics was basically invented here at MIT. And our philosophy program ranks in the top ten of the country despite being the smallest among its peers. ■

Yukio Okamoto Joins CIS

YUKIO OKAMOTO, a former special advisor to the prime minister of Japan, has been named a 2012-13 Robert E. Wilhelm Fellow.



Yukio Okamoto

From 1968 to 1991 Okamoto was a career diplomat in Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His overseas postings included stints in Paris at the OECD and in the embassies in Cairo and Washington. He retired from the Ministry in 1991 and established Okamoto Associates Inc., a political and economic consultancy.

Post-retirement, Okamoto has served in a number of advisory positions. From 1996 to 1998, he was Special Advisor to Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto. From October 2001 to March 2003, he was Special Advisor to the Cabinet. From March 2003 to March 2004, he was Special Advisor on Iraq to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. Concurrent with the above last two posts he was Chairman of the Prime Minister's Task Force on Foreign Relations. Until September of 2008 he was a member of Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda's Study Group on Diplomacy.

Okamoto is an adjunct professor of international relations at Ritsumeikan University. He sits on the Board of Directors of several multinational companies. He is the president of Shingen'eki Net, a non-profit group for active seniors with 16,000 members.

Okamoto has written books on Japanese diplomacy and government and is a regular contributor to major newspapers and magazines. Okamoto is a well-known public speaker and a frequent guest on public affairs and news broadcasts.

"Yukio Okamoto brings to MIT an unparalleled set of experiences on the world stage. The Center is delighted to have him with us to continue his research and writing, and to work with students and faculty through the next academic year," said Richard Samuels, director of the Center for International Studies and Ford International Professor of Political Science.

A generous gift from Robert E. Wilhelm supports the Center's Wilhelm fellowship. The fellowship is awarded to individuals who have held senior positions in public life and is open, for example, to heads of non-profit agencies, senior officials at the State Department or other government agencies, including ambassadors, or senior officials from the UN or other multilateral agencies. Previous Wilhelm Fellows include: Naomi Chazan, the former Deputy Speaker of the Israeli Knesset, Ambassador Barbara Bodine, Ambassador Frances Deng, and Admiral William Fallon.

Alliance Formation in Civil Wars

Fotini Christia



Fotini Christia is assistant professor of political science and member of the Security Studies Program. Photo courtesy Stuart Darsch

IN THE YEARS since the ousting of the Taliban, we have seen scores of lives, military and civilian, lost in Afghanistan. The internecine relationships between the warring actors have made the logic of the fighting hard to make sense of—so much so that it has prompted the United States to revise its counterinsurgency doctrine, shifting the strategic focus from killing the enemy to protecting the population. In that vein, the United States has sent anthropologists into the field to lead American soldiers and commanders through the maze of Afghanistan’s ethnic and tribal politics. This book argues that although the importance of cultural awareness can never be overestimated, no knowledge of history and culture alone, regardless of how deep or profound, will get us to understand why warring actors fight with or against one another.

Rather, we are arguably going to be just as well off going with one rule alone: the expectation that warring groups will aim to side with the winner, so long as they can have a credible guarantee that the winner will not strip them of power once victory is accomplished. Afghan commanders, not unlike other wartime commanders in similar circumstances, are the guardians of specific interests linked to the groups from which their men are recruited. And few factors have motivated them more over the years of war than the desire to end up on the winning side. They have often switched camps mid-conflict. In doing so, their rationale was obvious: In a war that drags on, changing camps means surviving longer and holding onto power.

Indeed, Afghanistan’s recent history is replete with examples of warring leaders choosing to switch sides. In the civil war that lasted from the collapse of the Soviet-backed regime in 1992 to the Taliban’s capture of almost 90 percent of Afghanistan in the fall of 1998, the heads of mujahedin groups constantly shifted their allegiances. The Uzbek general Abdul Rashid Dostum was the Tajik commander Ahmad Shah Massoud’s friend first, and then his foe. The Hazara leader Abdul Ali Mazari fought against the Pashtun headman Gulbuddin Hekmatyar before fighting by his side. Constantly shifting alliances meant no single group could gain the upper hand, eventually allowing the Taliban to persuade many factions to side with them. By the time the Taliban reached Kabul, their ranks were teeming with fighters once allied with someone else.

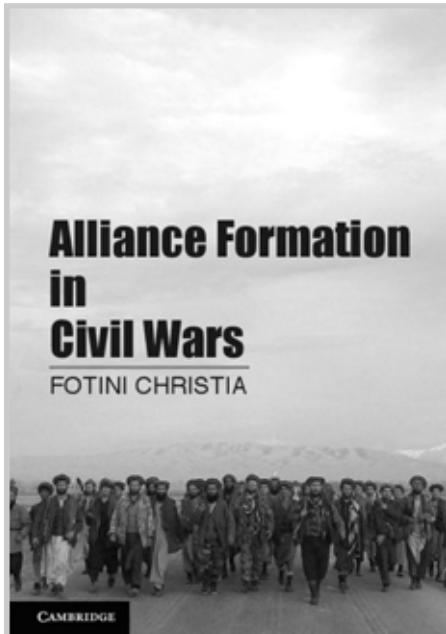
This book explains the choices behind the double-crossings in the Afghan civil war and develops a broader theory on alliance formation and group fractionalization in multiparty civil wars. It shows that changing sides, realigning, flipping—whatever one may choose to call it—is not just the Afghan way of war. Rather, the theory travels well across warring times and regions in Afghanistan, and also outside it. Indeed, apart from Afghanistan, some of the most brutal and long-lasting civil wars of our times—Bosnia, Lebanon, and Iraq, among others—are associated with the rapid formation and disintegration of alliances among warring groups, as well as with fractionalization within them. The resulting multiplicity of actors has paralyzed outsiders, who have often been unable to even follow the unraveling of the conflicts’ complex trajectories.

It would be natural to suppose that the way in which warring groups align and the determinants that shape their internal splits and takeovers result from similarities and differences of identity within and between these warring groups. For example, in a multiparty war of Christians versus Muslims (i.e., Bosnia or Lebanon), we might expect the Christian groups to always ally with one another. In reality, however, this is not what we see. Instead, there appears to be no such thing as an impossible alliance in the context of a multiparty civil war: Two groups that identify themselves as bitter foes one day, on the basis of some identity cleavage, might be allies the next day, and vice versa. Nor is any

group, however homogeneous, safe from internal fractionalization. Rather, I find that the relative power distribution between and within the various warring groups in a given conflict is the primary driving force behind alliance formation, alliance changes, as well as group splits and takeovers.

The Argument

In this book, I argue that alliance formation is tactical, motivated by a concern with victory and the maximization of wartime returns as anticipated in the political power sharing of the postconflict state. In principle, all groups want to be in a coalition large enough to attain victory while small enough to ensure maximum political payoffs. In practice, however, given the multitude of players and the chaos inherent in civil war, this outcome proves difficult to secure. A major reason for this is that commitment problems—the inability of actors to credibly commit not to exploit one another later—are inherent in warring group interactions. More specifically, while much of the literature has focused on commitment problems as a barrier to rebel groups reaching negotiated settlements with the state, commitment problems will also make groups wary of winning the war as a weaker alliance partner. Because there is no third party that can credibly enforce the agreed-on division of political control, the weaker party will often prefer to defect and prolong the war rather than risk being double-crossed at the hands of the stronger ally upon the war's conclusion, which may involve violent purges and political subordination. The implication of this dilemma is that unless one group is powerful enough to win the war on its own, the conflict will degenerate into a process of constant defection, alliance reconfiguration, and group fractionalization, as groups maneuver in an effort to win the war while ensuring they do not get victimized at the hands of the strongest actor left standing.



The excerpt from Alliance Formation in Civil Wars was reprinted with permission from Cambridge University Press.

Contrary to identity-based arguments, race, language, religion, or ideology do not appear to guarantee in any enduring way the formation of alliances. Instead, elites of the warring parties pick their allies based on power considerations and then construct justifying narratives, looking to their identity repertoires for characteristics shared with their allies and not shared with their foes. Likewise, local elites can make a similarly instrumental use of identity narratives when justifying whether or not to stay subservient to their group's leadership. This argument, which is consistent with a large body of research in comparative politics that shows elites strategically manipulate identity categories for political purposes, nonetheless suggests that identity attributes do have psychological and emotional import for the rank and file—hence the reason elites constantly invoke them. In other words, while identity factors do not determine alliance choices, the fact that leaders feel compelled to justify their choices in these terms implies identity narratives are useful for public consumption. My view is essentially an instrumentalist one: Wartime alliances, and the groups that comprise them, are not merely imagined but rather constantly reimagined communities. Given that there is nothing intrinsic about these alliances, the identity narratives that appear on the surface to hold them together are simply “invented traditions” developed by elites. When power considerations call for it, these communities and traditions will be cast aside and new ones imagined in their place.

More specifically, the argument of this book is that alliance formation takes place through two mechanisms, both of which rely on relative power rather than identity as the key explanatory variable. The first mechanism is the evolution of the relative power balance between groups. As groups lose battles or come out of them victorious, other groups are confronted with survival choices on whether to flock to them or abandon them. In making these choices, leaders consider their relative power both within and across alliances: While they desire to be on the winning side, commitment problems make them wary of winning the war as a weaker alliance partner. Such alliance changes occur more frequently in conflicts where relative power is more or less balanced between the various warring groups, because in these conflicts small changes in a single group's relative power can significantly alter the incentives of other groups to align with it or against it. Conversely, in conflicts where power is unevenly distributed, small shifts in

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Alliance Formation in Civil Wars

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the power distribution are unlikely to spur such alliance changes. The implication of this logic is that we should expect to see more alliance changes in multiparty civil wars in which there is a rough balance of power, as opposed to those conflicts in which power is unevenly distributed. In other words, conflicts involving a strong government force (i.e., Guatemala) should see less volatility in alliances than conflicts involving a weak government (i.e., Lebanon).

A second mechanism that drives alliance choice is warring group fractionalization. The uncertainty and complexity of intergroup relations in multiparty civil wars are to a certain extent mirrored at the level of intragroup relations, between the various subgroups that comprise these groups. These subgroups tend to be led by local elites—a critical unit of analysis in this book—and differ from each other along regional lines; they may also have leadership disputes between them that predate the war. Critically, these subgroups exist and are identifiable prior to the onset of war: They are not endogenous products of the conflict. Bonds between subgroups are stronger than bonds between allied warring groups because of a combination of increased trust, in-group bias, and institutionalized sanctioning and enforcement mechanisms. However, even the bonds between subgroups with the same identity repertoires are not immune to fractures when subgroup survival is threatened.

In this context, battlefield wins will foster intragroup cohesion by convincing local elites that they are on the winning side. On the other hand, battlefield losses, which are typically borne unevenly between the various subgroups, will shake the confidence of these local elites and will frequently encourage fractionalization along the preexisting regional or leadership cleavages. Fractionalization, in turn, is a form of relative power change, regardless of whether (1) a splinter faction joins up with an opposing group (increasing that group's power at the expense of the group it left), (2) a splinter group strikes out on its own (breaking the overall power distribution into smaller units), or (3) a group is taken over by a dissatisfied faction (decreasing that group's relative power as the turmoil rages). The resulting change in the intergroup distribution of power will spur alliance shifts, as groups seek to form updated, optimally sized coalitions.

The Evidence

In the empirical portion of the book, I start with the Machiavellian in-group and out-group politics of the 1992–1998 intra-mujahedin war in Afghanistan. Drawing on interviews with warlords and mujahedin and on wartime primary sources that range from fatwas and religious decrees to Guantanamo Bay testimony, along with data on territorial control that capture relative power among warring parties, this chapter shows how considerations of relative power drove group alliance choices and fractionalization, as well as the creation of narratives, that unraveled in the context of this war. I then test the resonance of the power argument through a discussion of alliance politics and group fractionalization during the 1978–1989 Afghan Jihad of mujahedin against communists, and find similar dynamics. The external validity of the theory is reinforced by ascertaining whether the proposed framework only applies to warring groups or whether it holds at a more micro level of analysis: the local commander. A unique dataset on Afghan strongmen across Afghanistan's ideological and ethnic civil wars was collected and coded for this test, which shows that the behavior of local commanders tends to converge with the warring group-level predictions of the theory.

I then seek to show that the proposed power-driven theory of alliance formation and change is relevant not only to the specificities of Afghanistan. In that regard, the book takes us to a very different type of multiparty civil war in 1992–1995 Bosnia and Herzegovina, with only three groups and one main identity cleavage (religion). Drawing on interviews with former military and political elites as well as convicted war criminals, primary sources ranging from local news sources to wartime ceasefire and alliance agreements, fatwas and religious decrees, and municipal-level demographic data and

“In short, despite intuitive arguments to the contrary, policy makers should not be looking to race, language, or religion to predict or preclude civil war allies.”

data on territorial control, it illustrates that relative power determines the byzantine alliance choices and fractionalization patterns of that war, as in Afghanistan. The book then turns to the Bosnia of the past. Through the use of archival sources from all warring sides, this chapter shows that in the arguably ideological civil war of World War II Bosnia, much as in the Afghan Jihad of mujahedin against communists in the late 1970s and 1980s, the proposed theoretical mechanisms on warring group alliance politics and group fractionalization hold. These dynamics thus do not appear to be conditional on the character of war (ethnic or nonethnic).

Finally, I test the generality of the argument further by looking at other specific cases as well as the whole universe of cases of multiparty civil wars. Specifically, the validity of the theoretical framework is further probed, over time and space, through the use of an original fifty-three-case dataset of multiparty civil wars. I run a battery of statistical tests on this dataset that prove consistent with the proposed theoretical framework. The book's concluding chapter offers a short overview of alliance and fractionalization dynamics in the infamous civil war cases of present-day Afghanistan and Anbar in Iraq, again finding support for the theoretical argument.

Policy Implications

What do the findings in this book mean for policy makers? In short, despite intuitive arguments to the contrary, policy makers should not be looking to race, language, or religion to predict or preclude civil war allies. As the case of Bosnia indicates, Christians can align with Muslims at one point in the conflict and be their enemies at another. Similarly, in Afghanistan, Sunnis can befriend Shiites now and fight against them later. Shared identity attributes, much like ancient hatreds or historical friendships, are constants that fail to capture the variable nature of civil war alliances. Rather, such processes obtain a life of their own as the conflict unravels. And while the reasons that may have prompted the onset of conflict could remain important, they may just as easily get reshaped and recast, with their saliency ebbing and flowing throughout the civil war's trajectory. Depending on the victories and losses on the war's multiple fronts, local cleavages may also rise in prominence at one stage in the conflict and get trumped by other power imperatives at another. And it is these changes in the relative power distribution among warring parties that will determine the actors' decisions on whether to stay with their existing allies or to change sides. Policy makers who want to follow civil war alliance choices therefore need to monitor closely the developments among the warring actors in the civil war's theater of operations.

Changes in the distribution of relative power are not just good predictors of alliance shifts; they also indicate which of the warring actors may be susceptible to fractionalization. Indeed, the number and type of warring actors in civil wars should not be considered fixed, but rather liable to change depending on each actor's wartime performance. More specifically, if a warring party is faced with survival-threatening losses, or losses that are asymmetrically borne among its constituents, that group is a candidate for fractionalization. Tribal and geographic in-group divisions, as well as preexisting leadership disputes, can serve as good indicators of the lines along which group fractionalization is likely to happen. These divisions predate the conflict and tend to be manifested at the level of local elites. Awareness of the geographic and tribal subdivisions of the warring groups, as well as the idiosyncrasies of the groups' local leaders, can enhance policy makers' understanding of how groups will fractionalize and what could be done to avert fragmentation.

Wartime rhetoric, though inflammatory, is only marginally informative on alliance and fractionalization choices, as discussed at length throughout the book. In practical terms, and in the context of the current Afghan and Iraqi civil wars, this suggests that the present pro- and anti-Taliban coalitions in Afghanistan or the pro- and anti-Baghdad

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Publicity-driven Accountability in China

Greg Distelhorst



Greg Distelhorst is a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science.

GEORGE ORWELL'S fictionalized dissident in 1984 proposes a causal chain running from public wealth and knowledge to egalitarian democracy: "In the long run, a hierarchical society was only possible on a basis of poverty and ignorance."¹ Yet even in today's world of democratized communications and rapid economic advance, many institutions that govern human lives are designed for top-down control, rather than responsiveness to the governed. Billions live in states where elections function poorly or not at all, and even under political democracy, hierarchies persist in the workplace, church, or family. Unaccountable authority remains omnipresent in contemporary life.

Can strong authorities be made accountable to weak constituencies? If so, how? My graduate research in China shows how media liberalization improves government accountability even in a strong, authoritarian state. The news media not only monitors unelected officials but provides a channel of public input into government, through the mechanism of publicity-driven accountability.

Media change and information problems

This role for publicity in the accountability of unelected officials was developed through two years of inductive fieldwork on the effects of media change in mainland China.² China is frequently cited as an example of effective state control of information; the government manages multiple institutions to censor the formal news media and monitor online behavior. However, government efforts at control should be understood in the context of a decade of radical media changes. Internet use in China has grown from under ten million users in 2000 to over 500 million today. The creation of this market drew new technology firms, outside of the traditional system of news control, into the process of generating national news and created new opportunities for horizontal communication between members of the public. These media changes do more than change public conversations; they help to solve information problems faced by the authoritarian state.

A large non-democracy like China faces two information problems in running an effective state. First, political leaders manage a vast ecosystem of bureaucrats and lack information about how faithfully these agents implement policies.³ This is the traditional understanding of the principal-agent problem. A second problem regards the content of public policy. It is beneficial for even non-democracies to avoid complete reliance on coercion, seeking a modicum of voluntary public compliance with state policies. To do this, policymakers need information about the sources and extent of public discontent. Both problems are difficult to solve; there are great incentives for local officials to suppress information about their performance and conceal local discontent. In order to obtain better information about official behavior and public preferences, authoritarian regimes may allow limited media freedoms. This helps explain the empirical finding that many authoritarian states, including China, have permitted the partial-liberalization of the news media.⁴ When media outlets disclose malfeasance by local officials or other sources of public discontent, political leaders can respond by punishing local officials or changing policy. However, the consequences of a free media are broader than these regime-level benefits; they also alter the relationship between the public and authoritarian officials.

More than a monitor

The news media can indeed monitor public opinion and official performance, but I argue its role extends beyond the passive transmission of social information to political elites. Journalists and media outlets are themselves social actors who can influence the content and timing of public discontent. Their control over information and public

attention gives them power over officialdom, and their separation from the state (necessary for insulating them from local capture) makes them a source of public input into state policies. In addition to improving the accountability of officials to their superiors from the top down, media liberalization also serves to improve bottom-up accountability to the public.

The role of media in guiding public discontent has been exemplified by the emergence of China's major news websites.⁵ Prior to the 2000s, national news in China was dominated by a handful of newspapers and television broadcasts with close financial ties to the state. As China fostered the growth of technology firms to match the success of American technology stocks in the late 1990s, new web-based media portals became involved in the news industry. These firms were primarily market-oriented and sought to maximize public attention for advertising revenues. My research found that, despite strict oversight by state regulators, these firms developed tactics to exercise editorial control over public narratives of Chinese government. Forbidden from fielding their own journalists, they would instead pore over obscure local newspapers, looking for stories that might elicit a national response. When they found them, they promoted these stories from the back-pages to the national headlines. In one example, a local article with the innocuous title, "Rural Girl Drowns" was republished as a top headline: "Village Official Knocks Girl into Water, Refuses to Rescue."

These technology firms broke the state monopoly on national news, involving new social actors into the production of information about government in China. This channel of public input into the national conversation about government is one way in which media liberalization fosters improved accountability, but its complement is the increased visibility of public discontent in the Internet age.

Generating "collective witness"

The role of online media goes beyond focusing public discontent about certain issues; it also informs the public about the breadth of collective discontent. Under traditional communications, individuals receive useful information about the behavior of government and can form their opinions accordingly. However, they know little about how widely shared these opinions are. In the participatory media that has developed alongside Internet diffusion—such as blogs, discussion forums, and social networking sites—readers express their reactions to events and see the reactions of others. This allows officials to monitor sources of public discontent, but it also makes discontent public knowledge. Individuals can see to what extent their discontent is shared by others. This form of "collective witness" raises the stakes for government response; when political elites fail to act on discontent that is widely shared, they are viewed as even more insensitive to public opinion, further harming governing legitimacy.

China has seen a particularly rapid growth of participatory media that enable "collective witness" of governance failures. In the early years of Internet development this was primarily through discussion forums, blogs, and the comment threads of news websites. More recently, microblogging services (or *weibo*⁶) have exploded in popularity, with each major service provider claiming over 300 million subscribers. As information about government behavior spreads through these services, citizens receive information about government and the discontent of other members of society. This makes government response to public discontent even more pressing.

Publicity-driven accountability in action

In today's China, the combination of information flows dictated by social actors and collective witness has produced a characteristic cycle of publicity-driven accountability: publicity, social reaction, and government response. Social actors, whether inside or outside the media, seek to publicize their grievances with government. If this publicity is successful, it elicits a social reaction that both informs political elites about social dis-

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Publicity-driven Accountability in China

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content and makes knowledge of discontent public. Political elites then respond to this discontent, either by punishing local officials, purchasing the acquiescence of aggrieved citizens, or changing policies to bring them in line with public interest.

The power of publicity-driven accountability in the Internet era can be illustrated by comparing cases of official abuse in the same issue area, the first from before the spread of participatory media and the second from today. In 2005, a rural lawyer sought to publicize abuses by local officials implementing China's family planning policy, including violence and forced abortions. As with many activists in China, part of his strategy was to elicit media coverage that would expose these activities. However, due to the political sensitivity of these issues in China, a media blackout kept his story from wide circulation. The last domestic journalist to successfully write about him described what happened when she tried to publish a new story. After posting the article to the magazine's website, local officials called the editors to demand its removal before it attracted attention. The relatively small online community never widely picked up the story, and the absence of public attention opened an opportunity for official repression of the lawyer and his story.

What started as a local forum posting was amplified by the rich media landscape that now spans media professionals and ordinary Internet users. It appeared in the morning on June 11 and was quickly reposted by other Internet users to microblogs (*weibo*) and other forums. By the end of the following day, a national news portal published a front-page story: "Web Exposes Shaanxi Ankang Seven-Months Pregnant Mother Suffers Forced Abortion."⁷ This generated a surge of public attention; web searches for "forced abortion" inside China spiked and grew for the following three days. In response to this widening negative publicity, higher level officials delivered punishment. Town and county officials were immediately suspended from their posts, and two weeks later seven local officials were punished, including the dismissal of the town chief where this occurred.

The political sensitivity of China's one-child policy was unchanged from 2005, but a vibrant online community quickly spread information and elicited a rapid response by political elites to remedy the situation, a process which recurs frequently in today's China. This is the process by which publicity-driven accountability shapes governance, making it more responsive to public discontent.

Citizen resources and official incentives

One prediction of publicity-driven accountability is that unelected officials will have more to fear from citizens who enjoy easy access to the news media. Where individuals can publicize their grievances, potentially activating public discontent and sanction from above, even unelected officials will see a potential threat to their career prospects.

To test this hypothesis, I conducted a survey experiment on over 80 officials in China. Bureaucrats from two urban economic regulators were asked in a questionnaire to examine different citizen complaints and assess how detrimental each complaint would be to their careers. While the complaints were identical from survey to survey, the identity of the complainant was randomized. In the control group, the complainant was an ordinary individual with whom these bureaucrats interacted. In the treatment group, the complaint instead originated from "a journalist." Consistent with the theory, Chinese bureaucrats rated complaints from journalists as more detrimental to their careers. This fear of journalists held across both bureaus and when we limited the sample to Communist Party members who have better information and longer career paths in government.

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Neuffer Fellow from India

PRIYANKA BORPUJARI, an independent journalist based in Mumbai, India, was selected as the 2012-13 Elizabeth Neuffer Fellow. Borpujari is the eighth recipient of the annual fellowship, which gives a woman journalist working in print, broadcast or online media the opportunity to build skills while focusing exclusively on human rights journalism and social justice issues.



Priyanka Borpujari

The award is offered through the International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF) and is sponsored in part by CIS. Borpujari is spending the seven-month fellowship as a research associate at CIS. She will also complete internships at *The Boston Globe* and *The New York Times*.

Borpujari will explore topics such as malnutrition, hunger, displacement and violence, especially in light of India's surging gross domestic product. She would like to "return home to report ... in a better, stronger way, which would hopefully have an impact on policies, or at least in the way we perceive development."

Borpujari, 27, has worked as a reporter for six years for publications including *Mumbai Mirror*, *The Asian Age* and *exchange4media.com*. Since launching her freelance career three years ago, she has focused on the plight of indigenous groups that are being systematically displaced from their land. Borpujari reported on the ways in which indigenous populations in the state of Chhattisgarh were being caught in a war between a government keen on displacing them to make way for mines and factories, and armed Maoists. Her reports brought focus to what she describes as "deprived, malnourished, burning India," even as false police charges were levied against her in an attempt to keep her away from reporting in the region. She says she has "attempted to uncover the gory hidden civilian war for resources in India, which is often ignored by the mainstream media, in its rush to portray a shining, emerging economy."

"We are honored to have Priyanka with us. Her work as a human rights journalist is informative and admirable. We hope her time in an academic setting adds to the achievement of her noble goals," said Richard Samuels, director of the Center for International Studies and Ford International Professor of Political Science.

Attack of the Drones: Ethical, Legal and Strategic Implications of UAV Use



ON TUESDAY, November 13, CIS along with the MIT Technology and Culture Forum co-sponsored the Starr Forum: Attack of the Drones. The speakers included Barry Posen, Ford International Professor of Political Science and director of the MIT Security Studies Program; Rabia Mehmood, Correspondent and Producer, for Pakistan's *Express Tribune*; Bryan Hehir, Parker Gilbert Montgomery Professor of the Practice of Religion and Public Life, Harvard Kennedy School of Government and Secretary for Health Care and Social Services in the Archdiocese of Boston. Moderating the discussion was Kenneth Oye, Associate Professor of Political Science and Engineering Systems and director of the MIT Program on Emerging Technologies.

The panel represented a wide array of perspectives, touching on the technical, ethical, and political consequences of the increased use of drones by the United States.

Barry Posen began the discussion by providing a technical analysis of the unmanned aerial systems (UAVs) that are generally associated with US engagements in Afghanistan and Pakistan followed by an analysis of the legal and strategic concerns that undergird debates about the use of drones.

The drones primarily used by the US in Southeast Asia are the Predator and Reaper models, neither of which is particularly fast or stealthy. Traditionally, these types of drones have been used for reconnaissance and surveillance, until recently when precision guided missiles were integrated into the systems.

The primary technical benefit of drones is their ability to travel to an area and hover for an exceptionally long time, without falling victim to pilot fatigue or other human limitations. The level of resolution on many of these systems is

state-of-the-art, and the precision of their missile systems is quite good. The current arsenal of drones allows the military to have eyes around the world for extended periods of time. However, “unmanned” is a bit of a misnomer—there are rotational operating crews of 15-20 soldiers tasked with operating, monitoring, and assessing the drones and the information that they produce. All of these features allow for a highly controlled mission—the time constraints are much broader, which allows for more decisive targeting and analysis. Finally, the notion that all of these can be achieved with no soldiers on the ground makes this technology doubly appealing.

The issues associated with drone warfare are of two types: the first relates to the laws of war and violations of international law, and the second relates to the principles of proportionality and distinction. On the international law side of things, the general impression is that US lawyers have been able to guard against questions of sovereignty and violations of international laws. However, violations of the principles of proportionality and distinction must be considered on a more specific basis. That said, drone systems do appear to make these considerations of proportionality and distinction easier—by providing more time and clear pictures of the situation on the ground, soldiers have more accurate information on which they can base their decisions.

Though critics often argue that drones have resulted in an unacceptably high rate of civilian casualties, the standard of past wars makes us look more favorably on drone technology. While estimates of civilian casualties from drone strikes do vary, the New America Foundation recently reported that in the 2004-2012 period only 15% of drone casualties have been non-militant casualties—approximately 500 people—and in 2012 the rate was down to 1%. By comparison, shelling in France during World War II resulted in nearly 70,000 French civilian deaths.

In addition to the technical and legal questions raised by the use of drones, Posen also discussed two of the primary strategic issues involved in drone warfare. First, he noted that insurgents in Afghanistan and Pakistan have proven fairly resilient, even in the face of stepped-up drone strikes. This has raised questions about the strategic effectiveness of the strikes. When combined with the potential public image drawbacks, these strategic concerns become even more pressing. Fundamentally, drone strikes kill people, and in doing so, the US alienates the friends, family, and (at times) the broader public of states where drones are operating. While most students of war would argue that civilian casualties from drone strikes have been relatively low, the general public may not readily recognize this fact. Thus, while the technical utility of drones may be high, it should be tempered by acknowledging some of the strategic challenges, as well as its potential for overuse.

According to Rabia Mehmood, who joined the discussion via a pre-recorded video interview with Kenneth Oye, the Pakistani media has presented two different images of the drone attacks—official channels have focused on the killing of militants, whereas non-state media has begun to expose some of the more graphic footage of drone strikes, as well as the civilian impact. Generally, the latter footage and reporting comes from activists in the local population.

Five years ago there appears to have been an informal understanding between President Pervez Musharraf, the Pakistani military, and the United States regarding the operation of US drones in Pakistani soil. In fact, it is largely an open secret that Musharraf was a proponent of this technology. More recently, the civilian government has framed the argument in such a way that places the blame on the United States, but Pakistan's capacity to combat terrorism unilaterally remains a concern in the international community. However, politicians like Imram Khan have gotten a great deal of political mileage out of their opposition to US drone attacks.

Ideally, the Pakistani Army would like to obtain and operate drone technology on their terms, in large part because the US is targeting groups that are operating involved in the Afghan insurgency, rather than those who create a direct threat to Pakistan. In an effort to make a compelling argument to the US that they can successfully operate the drones, the Pakistani army has pointed to their effective use of F-16 jets.

Generally, however, Mehmood said that the political mood in the country is that of condemning the strikes. Most major political parties are aggressively speaking out against US strikes, while emphasizing that they should be in charge of taking care of the terrorist threat within their borders. In general, the political parties will admit that terrorism is a problem but demand that the Pakistani government be in charge of the technology used to address it.

The notion of extrajudicial killings remains peripheral to the debate about drones in Pakistan. Instead, the focus largely remains on civilian deaths and the violations of sovereignty. While there is a diversity of views related to the drone attacks (with some even supporting US oversight) there is little room for in-depth debate in the media, concluded Mehmood.

Brian Hehir began his discussion with a review of the broad spectrum of ethical views that can be brought to bear on questions of war and technology. In particular, he noted that there are two extreme evaluations of war ethics that provide the bookends of analysis. The first is that all war is ethically wrong, which precludes any use of force on another human being. At the opposite extreme is the morality of Thucydides, who argues that the nature of war is such that there cannot be any morality. In between these two positions, however, is a third argument, where the state must justify the use of forces each time it engages in that behavior. Under this position, the burden of proof lies in the aggressor. Moreover, one must ask not just who has the authority to make these decisions, but also when and why the use of force can be justified.

The use of drones brings to the fore a larger debate about the means and ends of modern, transnational warfare. Specifically, drones significantly expand the arsenal of US military capability, while simultaneously insulating it against the risk of hurting its own citizens. In addition, the privatization of war, in which the United States' enemies are private actors, who find havens around the world, has allowed the US to see the world as a single battlefield. The use of drones has been a manifestation of that inclination, and has permeated the borders of allies and sovereign nations alike. Without better defining the battlefield, the US will find itself challenged to find coherent answers about the means of warfare insofar as it lacks a clear picture of the ends of warfare. These are difficult questions that must be guided by principle. While Hehir acknowledged that the precision of drone attacks also has the potential to limit damages associated with these attacks, the insulation of remote operation raises concerns about whether the US is sufficiently engaged in the reality of drone operations. But while these technical questions should be considered, they are not new to the study of war. However, Hehir makes the important point that there are larger strategic questions about the globalization of battle that are unique to the 21st century.

The question and answer portion of the Starr Forum focused primarily on the vetting and decision making process for drone targeting. While neither of the panelists felt that the United States was likely to go about this process cavalierly, they noted the importance of civilian oversight and inquiry into these matters. By applying ethical lenses and continuing to ask policymakers for information, civilians are in a position to check overuse and misuse of this technology. Finally, the panelists added that while Pakistan may only provide implicit support for the drone attacks, other states—like Yemen—are more supportive of the US presence.

Lena Andrews served as rapporteur.

"Becoming Enemies" Emerges from US-Iran Project

The first book from the Center's US-Iran project was published in May—*Becoming Enemies: US-Iran Relations and the Iran-Iraq War, 1979-1988*. Published by Rowman & Littlefield, the book is the work of five coauthors who are the key players in the project: James Blight and Janet Lang (University of Waterloo), Malcolm Byrne (National Security Archive), Hussein Banai (Occidental College), and the Center's John Tirman. Bruce Riedel, who advised President Clinton on US-Iran issues, contributed a foreword. The project is designed to bring together policy makers from the US, Iran, and elsewhere to explore in detail, often for the first time as a group, the key events in a difficult relationship. The project asks if there were missed opportunities to improve the relationship, and why. Later works will examine the period of reform and the 2001-2009 period. It is supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Arca Foundation, and an MIT alumnae family.

Urban Resilience: Cities Coping with Violence

Ordinary people show remarkable capacities for coping with and resisting violent actors in some of the world's most dangerous cities, a new study from the Center shows. "Urban Resilience in Situations of Chronic Violence," a two-year undertaking led by former MIT professor Diane Davis and Center executive director John Tirman, examined eight cities to answer questions about what adaptive strategies communities adopt in response to criminal and other forms of persistent violence. The study uncovers new insights into conditions of "positive" resilience, in which communities forge and utilize social relationships within their neighborhoods and negotiate productive relations with city and state officials, police, business leaders, and the like. Not all cities achieve this outcome, however.

SSP Wednesday Seminars

The Security Studies Program's lunchtime lectures included: Avery Goldstein, University of Pennsylvania, on "First Things First: The Present (If Not Clear) Danger of Crisis Instability in US China Relations"; Karl Eikenberry, Stanford University, on "The Future of the American Military"; and Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Washington Post*, on "Little America: The War Within the War for Afghanistan." hts."

Starr Forums

The Center hosted a variety of well-attended Starr Forums, including: "An American in China," James Fallows, *The Atlantic*; "Why Nations Fail," Daron Acemoglu, MIT; and "Attack of the Drones: the Ethical, Legal, and Strategic Aspects of UAV Use," featuring Barry Posen and Kenneth Oye, both from MIT, Bryan Hehir, Harvard Kennedy School, with comments from Pakistani journalist Rabia Mehmood.

Alice Amsden Memorial

DUSP hosted a commemoration of Alice Amsden in the new Media Lab building. A day-long symposium honoring her academic legacy was held October 19 followed by a memorial on October 20. A colleague noted on her memorial web site that “she will long be remembered as one of the best development economists, and political economists, of her time.”

Rovner Wins ISSS Best Book Award

The International Security Studies Best Book Award Selection Committee announced the selection of Joshua Rovner, *Fixing the Facts: National Security and the Politics of Intelligence* (Cornell University Press, 2011) as the recipient of this year’s prize. “Forty-seven very good books were nominated, but Rovner’s book was the unanimous choice for its outstanding contribution—both methodologically and substantively—to the understanding of a challenging and understudied area of our field,” said the Committee.

CIS Audits the American Prospect in Post-Imperial Times

Ambassador Chas W. Freeman says that the “American Century” is behind us. “As a country, we have fallen pretty low. We are in an unacknowledged depression. Our politics are paralyzing and our fiscal situation is dire. Our longstanding grand strategy of containment succeeded and thereby became irrelevant. We’ve failed to adjust to the new world this remarkable success created or to develop an effective strategy to deal with it. The lack of situational awareness can have serious consequences, as 9/11 should have shown us. Technology is now such that anyone we bomb anywhere in the world can find a way to bomb us back. Yet, I am optimistic about the United States of America.” Read more of this *Audit*, taken from a Seminar XXI keynote address given by Amb. Freeman in Sept. 2012, here: http://web.mit.edu/cis/editorspick_Chase_Freeman_audit.html

Petersen Wins ENMISA Awards

Roger Petersen’s book *Western Intervention in the Balkans* won the ENMISA Distinguished Book Award. Awarded by the Ethnicity, Nationalism and Migration section (ENMISA) of the International Studies Association, the award recognizes the best book published over the past two years in the study of the international politics of ethnicity, nationalism or migration. The criteria for the award include the originality of the argument presented, quality of the research, ability to draw on the insights of the multiple disciplines, innovative methods or methodological syntheses, readability of the text and the policy or practical implications of the scholarship.

CIS Artist in Residence

The Center launched its first Artist in Residence Program. Joining MIT for one week in November was Kiana Hayeri. Hayeri is a young photojournalist whose work is represented by Reportage by Getty Images Emerging Talent. Hayeri grew up in Tehran but left in 2005 when she was 17 and moved to Toronto. She returned to Iran in 2010 to explore the dual lives of Iranian young women who are expected to behave a certain way in public yet behind closed doors act very much like her Canadian friends. Her CIS residency concluded with a public talk and viewing of her exhibit “Looking Beyond the Veil.” Her work is on display at CIS and may be viewed during normal business hours.

People

PhD Candidate **Daniel Altman** will be teaching “Introduction to Security Studies” at Boston University in the spring of 2013.

Professor of Political Science **Nazli Choucri** organized a third workshop on “Who Controls Cyberspace? A Puzzle for National Security and International Relations.” The November 6-7 workshop was held at the Media Lab and was sponsored by Explorations in Cyber International Relations (ECIR), a joint MIT and Harvard University project, for which she is the principal investigator. She led off the workshop with her presentation: “The Challenge, the Dilemma, and the Agenda.” The workshop focused on three sets of issues regarding the Internet: (a) essentials of infrastructure and physical connectivity; (b) matters of content and data; and (c) international cyber law and governance.

Assistant Professor of Political Science **Fotini Christia** was featured in MIT News discussing “Violence and Protests in the Muslim World,” in September. On November 1, 2012, her new book, *Alliance Formation in Civil Wars*, was featured in MIT News article “How Civil Wars Evolve.”

Security Studies Program Associate Director **Owen Cote** gave a presentation to the Chief of Naval Operations Executive Panel on the future relevance of aircraft carriers on November 28.

On September 12, Senior Advisor to the Security Studies Program **Jeanne Guillemin** attended an all-day workshop on chemical and biological weapons policy issues held in Washington, DC, at the National Defense University’s Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction and co-sponsored with the Monterey Institute’s James Martin Center for Non-proliferation Studies. On October 4, she gave a lecture on “American Anthrax; How the Nation Responded to the 2001 Anthrax Letter Attacks” at the Topics in Biosecurity Symposia Series, National Laboratory at the University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston. The National Laboratory is the site of a new Biosafety Level (BSL)-4 laboratory (for research on dangerous incurable diseases like SARS and the Ebola virus) and the first in a university context. UTMB Galveston also supports over 30 BSL-3 laboratories for its biomedical research. On October 25, she was an invited participant at the G-8 Global Partnership working group meeting on Biosecurity held at the Center for Global Security Research, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in Livermore, California. The day prior to the meeting she gave a presentation based on her recent book, *American Anthrax*, to the LLNL Bioscience and Biotechnology Division. On November 11-14, in Dubai, she attended the annual summit of the World Economic Forum’s Global Agenda Council (GAC) on WMD.

PhD Candidate **Brian Haggerty**’s analysis from his SSP Working Paper, “Safe Havens in Syria: Missions and Requirements for an Air Campaign” was featured in *Chicago Tribune* (July 16, 2012), on the web site for the US Naval Institute (August 22, 2012 and September 5, 2012) and *The Economist* (September 15, 2012). He also published an op-ed “The Delusion of Limited Intervention in Syria” in *Bloomberg* on October 4, 2012.

PhD Candidate **Jason Jackson** accepted a postdoctoral fellowship at The Wharton School and The Lauder Institute, University of Pennsylvania for 2012-2014. He presented “Critical Law and Heterodox Political Economy” at the American University of Cairo conference on International Law and the Periphery (February 2012); “Culture, Capital and the State: Insights from Subaltern Studies on the Political Economy of Development” at the After Subaltern Studies Workshop at Princeton University

(April 2012); “Economic Interests and Policy Preferences: Insights from the Political Economy of Foreign Direct Investment in India” at the Yale University Modern South Asia Studies Workshop (April 2012); “The Political Economy of Foreign Direct Investment: Constructing Business Interests and Policy Preferences in India and Brazil” at The Business History Conference (March 2012) and Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics (June 2012); and was invited to present it at The Hagley Library and Museum Center for History of Business, Technology and Society Seminar Series (December 2012).

SSP Research Affiliate **Peter Krause** was on *New England Cable News* on October 22, 2012, to discuss the upcoming presidential debate. The news segment was “Understanding the Foreign Policy Debate.”

PhD Candidate **Sameer Lalwani** was named a part of the Center for New American Security’s Next Generation National Security Leaders Program for 2012-2013.

Political Science Department Chair and Deputy Dean of the Sloan School of Management **Richard Locke** has been appointed director of the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University. He will begin his new duties at the Watson Institute in July 2013.

SSP Research Affiliate **Gautam Mukunda**’s book, *Indispensable: When Leaders Really Matter*, was reviewed in the *New York Times* on November 6, 2012, in the op-ed “Filtered or Unfiltered?” by Thomas L. Friedman.

In late August, Stanton Junior Faculty Fellow **John Park** participated in the “SIPRI Countering Illicit Trafficking—Mechanism Assessment Projects” experts seminar at the UN in New York. In October, he briefed a Stanton Foundation panel in Washington, DC, on his project “How Effective are Financial Sanctions as a Counterproliferation Policy Tool? The Case of North Korea.” In October, he presented “The North Korean Nuclear Imbroglia: A Case Study of Complex Diplomacy” at the Harvard Kennedy School. In November, he participated in a simulation on China’s management of the Six-Party Talks process at the Harvard Kennedy School. In November, he presented “US Rebalance to the Asia-Pacific Region: Assessing Key Challenges & Opportunities” at Harvard University’s Weatherhead Center and the U.S. Institute of Peace’s inaugural Asia-Pacific Naval Attachés Roundtable Series. In November, he presented “Reading the Commercial Tea Leaves: New Insights into Regime Dynamics in Pyongyang” at the Harvard Korea Institute and the National Bureau of Asian Research’s Track 1.5 dialogue with a South Korean Ministry of Unification delegation in Seattle. In December, he presented “Political Transition and Economic Stagnation in North Korea” at the Naval War College. In December, he briefed newly promoted general officers on “US Strategy toward North Korea” in the Senior Manager Course on National Security at George Washington University’s Elliott School.

Roger Petersen, the Arthur and Ruth Sloan Professor of Political Science, has been awarded the winner of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES) Marshall Shulman Book Prize for outstanding monograph dealing with the international relations, foreign policy, or foreign-policy decision-making of any of the states of the former Soviet Union or Eastern Europe for his book, *Western Intervention in the Balkans: The Strategic Use of Emotion in Conflict*. He was also the winner of the International Studies Association ENMISA (Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Migration Section of the International Studies Association) Distinguished Book Award. In addition, he recently

signed an agreement with Cambridge University Press in collaboration with a Chinese publisher, Central Compilation and Translation Press (“CCTP”), to translate his first book *Resistance and Rebellion* into Chinese for publication and sale in Mainland China.

On November 13, Ford International Professor of Political Science and Director of the MIT Security Studies Program **Barry Posen** and Associate Professor of Political Science and Engineering Systems **Kenneth Oye** participated in a Starr Forum “Attack of the Drones: A Discussion About the Ethical, Legal and Strategic Aspects of UAV Use” hosted by MIT’s Center for International Studies.

Julia Reynolds joined MISTI as the Africa Program Manager. She recently returned to the US from four years in Rwanda as Country Manager and Field Learning & Development Coordinator for One Laptop per Child (OLPC). Prior to her work at OLPC, she founded Girls Preparing to Succeed, a state-renowned organization to empower young women.

Ford International Professor of Political Science **Richard Samuels** presented a lecture “Japanese Security Policy After 3.11” at the Department of War Studies, King’s College London.

Ford International Professor of Urban Development and Planning **Bish Sanyal** is the Principal Investigator for a recent grant of \$10 million dollars from USAID’s Higher Education Solution Network. He will be leading a team of faculty at MIT from the School of Architecture and Planning, School of Engineering, the Sloan School, Engineering Systems Division and Center for Complex Engineering system. They will be evaluating the Suitability, Scalability and Sustainability of technologies for improving the livelihood of low-income households in developing countries. This project will complement a second grant of \$15 million dollars MIT’s D-lab received from USAID to create a global network of innovation centers. Professor Sanyal and D-lab Director Amy Smith—who is the Principal Investigator for the second grant—co-teach the flagship course on Development Technologies for D-lab.

Ford International Professor of Political Science **Ben Ross Schneider** delivered the keynote, “Hierarchical Capitalism and the New Developmental State,” at the 9th Annual Economic Forum, São Paulo, September 2012.

Associate Professor of Political Science **David Andrew Singer** was appointed to the Executive Committee of the Political Economy Section of the American Political Science Association, and to the editorial board of *International Studies Review*.

SSP Research Associate **Jim Walsh** was on *C-Span* November 26, 2012, discussing US-Iran Relations.

Published

Mark Bell, PhD candidate

“Can Britain Defend the Falklands?” *Defence Studies*, Vol. 12 No. 2 (June 2012), 283-301.

Nazli Choucri, Professor of Political Science

Cyberpolitics in International Relations (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2012).

Fotini Christia, Assistant Professor of Political Science

Alliance Formation in Civil Wars (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

M. Taylor Fravel, Associate Professor of Political Science

“The Dangerous Math of Chinese Island Disputes,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 28, 2012.”

“Something to Talk About in the East China Sea,” *The Diplomat*, September 28, 2012.

“Much Ado About the Sansha Garrison,” *The Diplomat*, August 23, 2012.

Benjamin H. Friedman, PhD candidate

“Mitt Romney vs. Barack Obama: Hawk vs. Hawk,” *US News & World Report*, October 26, 2012.

Brian Haggerty, PhD candidate

“Safe Havens in Syria: Missions and Requirements for an Air Campaign,” SSP Working Paper, July 2012.

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Publicity-driven Accountability in China

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Implications

My study argues that the introduction of a semi-liberalized news media improves the accountability of officials to the public. While media reforms benefit political elites by solving key information problems of large states, semi-independent media outlets also exercise discretion in focusing public discontent, which makes these actors sources of social power over authoritarian officials. As a consequence, activists and other social actors attempt to guide the media in order to exert power over otherwise unaccountable officials.

While this study drew upon studies of media change, activist projects, and official incentives in contemporary China, it suggests a pathway to improved public accountability in other authoritarian regimes. Where effective bureaucratic control is combined with media liberalization, social actors can gain power over unelected officials. The case of China illustrates that even when the public is formally excluded from political selection and largely barred from forming advocacy organizations, media liberalization can contribute to public accountability.

It remains unclear whether changes in the media environment will ultimately prolong or shorten authoritarian rule. Free flows of information generate the possibility of making discontent broad public knowledge and help dissatisfied members of the public to coordinate action against the government, a role which some observers suggest digital communications played in the Arab Spring. On the other hand, by reining in official abuses and aligning policy with public opinion, media liberalization renders governance more responsive to the public. This may allow authoritarian government to remain more resilient over time. Whether it augurs a shorter or longer tenure for single-party states, publicity-driven accountability shows how incremental change within authoritarian institutions can make government more accountable to the public. The persistence of formally unaccountable hierarchy in modern life is not cause for complete despair; there exist opportunities for seeding accountability even in this seemingly barren ground. ■

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Alliance Formation in Civil Wars

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coalitions in Iraq are not capable of being sustained by existing narratives of cooperation—and could easily collapse based on the relative power dictates of the conflict.

Through the discussion of civil war alliance formation and group fractionalization, this work also touches on issues of external intervention. I have suggested that in the absence of a warring actor that can win the war on its own, the vicious cycle of alliance shifts and fractionalization is likely to go on until the intervention of a powerful and determined external arbiter that can enforce peace. This book is by no means a work on external intervention or civil war termination—subjects that span rich literatures in their own right—but it does put forth the claim that for a civil war deadlock to come to an end, it may often require a credible external intervener willing to commit massive resources. This should not be interpreted as a case for imperialism or encouragement of third-party actors to meddle in the internal affairs of sovereign states. I simply recognize that external interference is almost ubiquitous in civil wars, and that the resultant deadlocks and quagmires are unlikely to come to an end without the involvement of a credible external guarantor.

The present-day context of Bosnia and Afghanistan further confirms the need for committed and sustained external assistance after the guns are silenced. In Bosnia, which received the highest amount of humanitarian aid in the world in the six years following the cessation of conflict, lasting peace has been largely effected. Conversely, in the Afghan conflict, hostilities rose as the United States diverted resources and aid to Iraq. These examples suggest that intervention in terms of developmental aid needs to be lasting and committed for years after the cessation of hostilities. And that may be a more viable policy prescription in Europe, where regional institutions such as the EU can continue to work as external credible guarantors, than it is in Central Asia, the Middle East, or Africa, where there is a regional institutional void. ■

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