

**Journal of Political Science  
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**Violence and Politics**



*Guernica* by Pablo Picasso

# BROOKLYN

## Journal of Political Science Brooklyn College 2008

# Violence and Politics

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# I. Rationale for State Deployment of Private Military Companies

*By: Joshua Bolden*

## **Introduction:**

Since the 1990s, private military companies (PMCs) have taken a crucial role in several conflicts, in some cases displacing traditional military forces. The use of PMCs is not restricted to a particular type of state, with both impoverished and powerful states utilizing their services. This paper examines the incentives for states as a rational actor to utilize PMCs in war. Weak states will use private militaries to maintain security and to procure control resources. States with powerful militaries, such as the United States, will also use PMCs as a means of avoiding costs of war they deem objectionable.

In the past decade, two types of high-profile geopolitical conflicts brought to attention the use of private military companies (PMCs); resource conflicts in West Africa in the late 1990s, and more recently, the deployment of PMCs in the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. The increasing use of PMCs in place of, or in conjunction with traditional military forces brings with it several political implications, challenging conventional notions of sovereignty, laws of war, and human rights. While such issues are crucial to a complete understanding of the full repercussions of for-profit armies fighting in conflicts, this paper will narrowly focus on the incentives and rationale for states to employ PMCs in place of state-controlled armed forces.

The monopoly of state controlled armed forces used in wars is a relatively recent phenomenon.

Historically, the use of mercenaries predominated armies in pre-industrial Europe. The system of scutage in twelfth century England allowed for men with adequate means to legally avoid military service in exchange for a payment to the king; thus, the revenue from scutage was used to pay professional soldiers (Thomson, 1994, p. 27). International mercenarism continued even past the advent of the Westphalian system; by the eighteenth century, “[f]oreigners constituted at least one-quarter and as much as 60 percent” of the four largest European armies (Thomson, 1994, p. 29).



However, as the interstate system became refined following the Napoleonic Wars, according to Thomson (1994), states began formalizing their right to monopolize the formation of military bodies (p. 86). The United States became the first modern state to regulate mercenaries when it passed the Neutrality Act of 1794, which prevented American citizens from forming a private army against a state with which the United States was not fighting and from joining a foreign military while under US jurisdiction (Thomson, 1994, p. 79). Through the nineteenth century, European states followed suit; Thomson

(1994) noted that: “[a]mong members of the interstate system, only the pre-unification German states and the Two Sicilies did not impose permanent laws restricting mercenarism” (p. 82). By 1938, every sovereign state in the world passed domestic legislation of some form that outlawed mercenarism (Thomson, 1994, pp. 80-81).

By the twentieth century, great power conflicts overwhelmingly involved conscripted armies. Neiberg (2001) noted that in the First World War, Britain was the only European power to not use conscripted armies in combat (p. 60); by the Second World War, every major power relied on conscription to populate their armies (p. 77). However, in the later twentieth century, political pressure for volunteer armed services began to mount. Many on the left criticized the American military draft for disproportionately affecting poor men and their families (Schulzinger, 1997). Libertarians challenged the draft on the grounds its infringement on personal liberties; Milton Friedman (1982) famously opposed conscription, calling the process “inequitable and arbitrary, seriously [interfering] with the freedom of young men to shape their lives” (p. 36). In addition to social and political opposition, economic literature suggests that military drafts inefficiently transfer productivity away from each generation that is subject to compulsory military service. Panu Poutvara and Andreas Wagener (2007) conclude that drafts “postpone [young people’s] education and entry into the labor market and shortens their remaining working career (p. 984). The end of the Cold War further eroded support for conscription for the states that still had military drafts (Neiberg, 2001, p. 89). Today, of the G7 states, only Germany conscripts citizens into the armed services (“Military service,” 2008).

In the wake of the Cold War, one could infer that the reduction of tensions between the great powers and their disinclination to wage proxy wars would lead to a reduction in the global demand for military services. However, a concurrent situation emerged. Great powers and regional powers reduced their expenditures on defense spending, discharging many skilled soldiers from service. As Ulric Shannon (2000) notes, in developing states once reliant on superpower military aid, “the end of the Cold War has breathed new life into [PMCs] by creating a power vacuum where superpowers once competed [...] and by loosing a torrent of professional soldiers made redundant by global military outsourcing” (p. 105). With the incentives to control natural resources so great, Shannon explains that “[i]nvariably, the governments most likely to patronize mercenary companies are those of impoverished countries dependent on a single source of revenue—usually minerals such as diamonds and copper, or oil” (p. 107). Even in cases where a legitimate government has the best of intentions, and recognizes the need for an external force to maintain security within the state’s borders, according to David Shearer (1998), such demand “has created a ready market for private military forces” (p. 71). Thus, with the convergence of weak states existing in geographic regions with abundant natural resource wealth, a serious agency problem emerges where PMCs are not simply replacing traditional military forces, but also have an incentive to see that conflict does not end, and their services remain in demand.

While PMCs first entered public consciousness in the resource conflicts of the 1990s, their most prominent deployment has been on behalf of the powers occupying Iraq and Afghanistan. By late 2006, over 100,000 contractors working for the

American government were based in Iraq (Merle, p. D1). Most of these contractors are civilians in engineering, logistics, and other non-military roles. However, this number includes several well-known PMCs that have large contingents in the country as well; MPRI with 500, Blackwater USA with over 1,000, and DynCorp International with 1,500 employees in Iraq (Merle, p. D1). While the number of PMC personnel on the ground pales in comparison to the US-led coalition of regular troops, PMC contractors have an important role in the occupation. Likewise, PMCs have been at the forefront of some of the most embarrassing and appalling events of the occupation, ranging from a leaked Blackwater memo that claimed, “it is 'fun' to shoot some people”, to Titan and CACI’s role in the Abu Ghraib prison abuse scandal (Kwok, 2005, p. 36).



Despite the negative externalities created by introducing an unaccountable combatant into a conflict, the insertion of PMCs into conflicts in developing states at least clearly depicts a set of rational decisions taking place. While their objectives may differ in the end, the leaders of belligerent factions, interested MNCs, and PMCs each have an economic incentive, at least initially, to introduce private armies into a conflict. However, since the US-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, the involvement of PMCs in these situations creates a more ambiguous picture; why would a state with the

overwhelming military strength of the United States need contractors to assist in fighting a war? It seems incongruous that a military force led by the United States would need the services of military contractors.

Supporters of PMCs involvement point to the specialized expertise the companies can bring to volatile situations. While regular soldiers continue to execute the traditional functions of wartime combatants, PMC contractors are trained in valuable ancillary skills useful for reconstruction efforts in Iraq, such as “police training, personal protection”, and consulting the Iraqi army (Kwok, 2005, p. 34). By freeing resources from these tasks, traditional military forces should be able to focus on their own areas of expertise.

However, the division between the roles of the traditional military and PMCs is indistinct, and many of the functions required are not skills unique to PMCs. Training, consulting, and protection roles are common for modern militaries in nation-building missions; one of the first duties for the NATO force in Bosnia in 1995 was to “establish a durable cessation of hostilities, ensure force protection, and establish lasting security and arms control measures” (Dobbins et al, 2003, p. 93). A separate UN entity had the responsibility to “monitor, advise, and train Bosnian police” (Dobbins et al, 2003, p. 93). Rather than representing a division of labor necessary for a mission, an alternate explanation for the inclusion of PMCs is in order.

Another possibility is that the US lacks the number of troops needed to maintain security in Iraq while still fulfilling existing obligations around the world. In the past, this point would have been

irrelevant; with a conscripted service, the supply of soldiers was unrestrained by wages. With a volunteer force, a shortage of able troops implies that the incentives for recruiting and retaining soldiers are inadequate for the dangers they could face. If the PMC contractors are willing to take on the risk of fighting in Iraq, it follows that their compensation is commensurate with this risk – and is higher than what traditional combatants receive.

If the previous premise is accurate, then it is unlikely that PMCs are utilized by a capable state such as the US because they represent a financial savings. Determining when and where the economies of scale generate cost savings would be difficult to calculate, and raises questions of to what extent financial considerations decide military operations.

A final possibility is that purely financial or operational reasons do not entirely drive the calculus for using PMCs. With much of the opposition to America's war in Iraq driven by the loss of American lives in combat, employing PMCs into especially volatile areas has the effect of externalizing this political cost. Besides avoiding politically harmful deaths of soldiers, utilization of PMCs may also disconnect the association between the actions of the state's own armed forces and that of the PMC.

### **Conclusion:**

The reasons for a state, weak or strong, to utilize private armies are varied and at times unclear. However, barring an international commitment to curb the powers of private armies, a market for their services will continue to exist. From a rational point of view, it seems that weak states will employ PMCs when they no longer have the ability to maintain security (and thus preserve trade relationships) within their borders. Conversely, states with a strong military apparatus but without the desire to face the

political implications of using it to its fullest extent, will externalize the political costs by outsourcing situations to PMCs. Essentially, the private military companies are in the business of fighting when a weak state cannot, and when a rich state will not.

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## II. Swedish Immigration Policies: An Extension of the Violence in Iraq

By: Lisa Carlbom

**Introduction:** In the world today, Sweden is one of the countries receiving the largest number of asylum seekers, and the trend is continuing. In 2006, 24,300 people applied for asylum in Sweden. Out of these people 6300 were children under the age of eighteen, and 820 of them came to Sweden alone without any parents or caregivers (Ahlsten, p.7). Sweden has also been one of the countries most open to refugees from Iraq. With the war in that country, the number of asylum seekers in Sweden is unlikely to drop anytime soon. \_At this time, a total of 20,000 refugees from Iraq have applied for asylum in Sweden (Brattberg, 2007). Since Sweden has a long history of granting refugees asylum, it might seem like a safe country. But the perception that Sweden is a safe haven for people fleeing war and persecution will in many cases prove to be false. During recent years, human rights abuses of asylum seekers- and especially asylum seeking children- have increased. Many of the asylum seekers will also be deported back to unsafe places. In the fall of 2007, the Swedish Migration Board concluded that there is not an armed conflict going on in Iraq, and therefore the Swedish Migration Court ruled that no Iraqi refugees will receive asylum in Sweden unless they can prove that there are personal reasons to why they cannot return. In this article I will show how Swedish immigration policies serve as an extension of the violence towards children in Iraq, due to the frequent human rights abuses of asylum seeking children in Sweden as well as the no-asylum policy towards Iraqi refugees.

It will also show that despite international protections, refugees are still subject to arbitrary actions and violence. The primary international law

for refugees is the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 protocol. They define the rights and duties of refugees, protect against *refoulement* (Article 33), which prohibits expulsion or forcible return of a person to their country under fear of persecution. This legal instrument also mandates rights to employment, public education and assistance, civil rights, access to courts, and other basic freedoms for all refugees. The fact that such rights are undermined in Sweden, which is one of the most progressive countries in the world, bodes ill for refugees around the world.

### **Human rights abuses of asylum seeking children.**

Since enactment of the 1951 treaty, additional international laws protect rights of different kinds of refugees. For children, the primary such law is the United Nations Children's Fund's Convention of the Rights of the Child, which was created in 1989. \_This convention has very clear guidelines for what rights each child has, such as to education, health care and protection from sexual abuse. Although Sweden signed on to this law, its immigration authorities often ignore its rights guarantees when dealing with asylum seeking children. As O'Connell Davidson and Farrow (2007, 48) state,

"Many governments have set in place systems that are designed to allow children to access these rights, as well as more general rights set out in the CRC. Despite this, the systems are often undermined by immigration policies that only grant children temporary or insecure immigration



status, as well as by dispersal policies.”

The human rights abuses discussed pertain both to asylum seeking children as well as undocumented children – that is, those who have “gone into hiding”. This is an important topic because a lack of knowledge among education and health care staff, ignorant immigration authority administrators, weak policies regarding the rights of asylum seeking children and hardening immigration policies, all contribute to violation of these children’s rights. Above all, there is a feeling of “us against them” towards children from other countries, which has made asylum-seeking children second-class citizens, unable to enjoy the same rights as Swedish children. Since Sweden has one of the most open immigration policies in the world, and since children everywhere are given more rights than adults, examining the rights of immigrant children in Sweden shows more clearly than other examples the real obstacles and risks faced by asylum seekers around the world.

For many people, remaining in Sweden and hiding from immigration authorities might seem like their only option if they are denied asylum. When this situation occurs, the human rights of asylum seeking children are being taken away from them. They are virtually without any protection, legally or practically. Children who are hiding from the immigration authorities are defined as children who have “gone into hiding” (“*gömt sig*”), or as “hidden children” (“*gömda barn*”). These children are undocumented, and are hiding from the authorities until their appeal goes to court, or simply until they are found. “The children with the least rights are the ones who haven’t applied for asylum” (Waldehorn,

p.19). These children are clearly some of the most vulnerable children in the Swedish society today.

Hiding from immigration authorities usually means moving around frequently, and staying indoors as much as possible in order to minimize the risk of being caught and deported. Children who have gone into hiding are especially vulnerable since they are easy prey of any adults who want to take advantage of them. In one report, a young Iranian woman spoke of how each time an employer learned that she was undocumented, the employer would try to force her to have sex with him. At first she switched jobs when this happened, but now she has given up. (Waldehorn p.26). Since the Swedish police also act as immigration authorities carrying out deportations of asylum seekers, the options for children who have been victims of crime are basically none. If they would come forward and report a crime to the police, they would most probably be reported to the immigration authorities and then be deported.

### **Failing to protect unaccompanied children**

Currently Sweden has signed on to the Dublin agreement as well as the Schengen agreement which both have strict rules about immigration. These agreements may be a reason why it has become more difficult for asylum seekers to be granted asylum in Sweden. This situation obviously affects the children the most. In “*Child Migration: the Construction of Vulnerability*”, As O’Connell Davidson and Farrow (2007, 48) state,

“One obvious problem with the implementation of the Dublin II ruling for children is that family reunification may be ignored. If a child is separated from his or her family it may be against

immigration laws to travel through another country to reach them. This effectively keeps children separate from their parents.”

Proper care for asylum seeking children who come alone to Sweden has been an issue for several years. “When the network “The Ombudsmen for Children in Europe, ENOC, met in September the unaccompanied asylum seeking children was an important issue being discussed” (Nyberg, 2006, 1). Children who are classified as “unaccompanied” (*“ensamma”*) are children under the age of 18 who are unaccompanied by their parent(s) or other caregiver(s) when they come to Sweden. During the past year, the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children has increased. It is “mainly young men who are escaping the military situation in Iraq”. (Nyberg, 2006, 1). The care for these children has often proven to be inadequate. The largest problem for immigration authorities has been providing a stable living situation for these children. Since most of these children are teenagers, they are usually not put into foster families, but rather into group homes with other adults and no supervision (Nyberg, 2006, 1) by social workers. For a child who has come to Sweden alone- often traumatized and sometimes having lost close family members- being put into a living situation with adults can be very problematic. We have already seen evidence that asylum seeking children are an easy prey for adults who want to take advantage of them. Along with the living situations for these children becoming worse, there has been an increase in the number of asylum seeking children who disappear. “Between the year of 2001 and 2006, a total of 573 children have disappeared from different homes in Sweden. By the new year, 416 of

these children have not been found.” (Chebchoub, 2006,11).

In 2002, a temporary group home for these children was being written about in Swedish media. The newspaper Aftonbladet reported that 50 children were living in the home, where only 18 children were supposed to live. Several of the children had disappeared, and adult men came to pick up the children in the middle of the day. There were strong suspicions that these children were being used for prostitution. The home was closed down after the reports were made. (Chebchoub, 2006, 5) A staff member at another home for asylum seeking children stated that the only way they can physically stop the children from running away would be to lock them up, which is something that the staff does not want to do. (Chebchoub, 2006, 12).

Clearly, Swedish immigration authorities are not able to protect these children from negative forces outside these group homes. While it is possible that the children who have disappeared have gone into hiding to escape the authorities, there are also strong beliefs that these children have been caught up in illegal networks and are used for prostitution, child labor or other illegal activities. Clearly, these children need to be cared for in a way that would not make an illegal lifestyle tempting in any way.

### **The Iraqi refugee crisis**

The conclusion by the Swedish Migration Board that there is no armed conflict in Iraq disregards the guide lines from UNHCR, which states that all refugees from south and central Iraq should be given asylum, due to the current situation in Iraq (Brattberg, 2007). The decision was made despite the fact that the staff from Migration Board who were supposed to travel to Iraq to investigate the situation,

never went into Iraq, but stayed in Jordan due to the lack of safety in the country. (Brattberg, 2007,01). As of 2008, asylum seekers from the Kurdish areas in Northern Iraq will be denied asylum as well, although the regional Kurdish government refuses to admit any returning asylum seekers. These asylum seekers will therefore be deported to Baghdad, since the Swedish government has made an agreement with the Iraqi government. In this agreement, the Iraqi government agreed to admit all returning asylum seekers from Sweden. (Dagens Nyheter, 2008).



Since Sweden signed on to the Schengen agreement in 1996 (Migrationsverket, p.1), an asylum seeker who has been denied applying for asylum in a country that has signed on to the agreement will automatically be barred from applying for asylum in any other country participating in the agreement.

The option for Iraqis to receive asylum in the United States is very limited; despite the US government's promise to resettle 7,000 Iraqi refugees in FY 2007, only 1,608 were admitted by September 30. (Younes, 2007). There are approximately 700,000 Iraqi refugees in the neighboring countries of Jordan and Syria, but neither Syria nor Jordan is offering local integration to the refugees, and the difficult economic, political, and social situation in those countries doesn't favor local absorption. (Husarska, 2007). And since more than 4.5 million Iraqis are currently displaced, Iraq's neighbors have increased restrictions on the refugees. (Younes, 2007).

**Conclusion:** It is clear that the human rights abuses of asylum seeking children in Sweden are frequent and systematic. This is a problem not only for these children, but for the entire communities when these children grow up. Through admitting refugees to pass the Swedish border and apply for asylum, the Swedish government has a responsibility to make sure that these children's human rights are protected. If they are not protected and these children are approved for asylum and stay in the country, the Swedish Government has bred a problem that grows with every year. Children who come to Sweden can almost always expect to have their rights violated, in one way or another.

The ruling that there is not civil war going on in Iraq seems to be a result of financial and political concerns, rather than a humanitarian concern based in the reality. In a country like Iraq, a child might be at risk for not receiving an education, not receiving proper health care, becoming a victim of sexual abuse, kidnapping or even murder. Through denying asylum to Iraqi refugee children in Sweden, the Swedish Government denies these children a safe place to grow up and enjoy the rights that all children are entitled to according to the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

When a child's need for having his/her human rights respected is finally put before his/her legal status in the country, there is a real possibility that the human rights abuses of asylum seeking children will stop. But the actors that need to start respecting children's human rights first are the governments. Governments across the world also need to recognize that there is an armed conflict and a refugee crisis in Iraq. When Sweden – which long has been one of the world's

most asylum-friendly countries does not recognize this crisis, it is currently contributing to the every day human rights abuses of children that are going on in

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### III. Turkey and the Kurds: An Ongoing Conflict in a Troubled Region

*By: Sabina Ibragimova*

#### **Introduction:**

Turkey has been the scene of many conflicts, many of which involve a struggle against terrorism. The activists of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Turkey, as well as in the region, have had an impact on both the domestic and foreign policies of the Turkish state. Frequently, the Kurds demand the protection of their culture and language, and they often strive for independent statehood, all of which initiates the emergence of a national reaction among them. By emphasizing the Kurdish issue, the PKK more specifically hurts relations between the Turkish government and the Kurds in Turkey. Internationally, it has threatened Turkey's relationship with its Western allies and worsened relationships with its opponents. The Turkish government's security forces in their turn have violated its citizens' human rights in southeastern Turkey, according to human rights watchers (Elahi, 1994, p.22). Perhaps the Kurdish question is the most serious internal problem in the Republic of Turkey, but it has not prevented some very basic internationally recognized human rights from being established within the country.

Turkey's poor record on human rights is not only the main obstacle to its aspirations to full integration into the European Union, but it also creates anger in its citizens towards the democratic system. Internationally, this issue is

defined as a matter of oppression and denial of rights by a Turkish majority group against Kurdish minorities. The problem of the Turkish government, on the other hand, is to fight against terrorism that receives outside support from foreign powers in order to weaken Turkey. In fact, the peaceful resolution of the Kurdish issue would increase Turkey's prospects for membership in the EU and would generally improve its image in the world. However, having failed to dialogue with the PKK, no Turkish government has been able to solve this problem. Abdullah Gul, then the Turkish Foreign Minister, in a speech to the UN General Assembly (2006), stated that "Turkey has no tolerance for applying double standards in the fight against terrorism."

A deeper examination of the conflict reveals that the issue between the PKK and the Turkish authorities involves both the problem of ethnic identity and the PKK's armed struggle. Turkey refused to acknowledge a distinct Kurdish ethnic minority with minority rights, while de facto limiting Kurds' participation in decision-making in national security and other areas of government structure. Even though the position of the Turkish authorities was that "we have no ethnic minorities," under pressure from Western countries, there were possibilities of recognizing the Kurdish reality by the Turkish governments (Bloom 2005, p. 104). Among Turkish officials, some leaders advocated the opening of Kurdish schools, and the broadcasting of radio and television in the Kurdish language (Kirisci and Winrow, 1997, p. 47). The importance of this issue for other government officials, however, provoked a

deep fear that this acknowledgment of Kurdish self-awareness might jeopardize the integrity of Turkey as a sovereign state.

This article investigates Turkey's Kurdish question and the impact that it has had on Turkey's domestic and foreign policies, its economy, and its relations in the international arena due to the factors of threats and terrorism. The central thesis of this paper is that neither the Turkish government nor the PKK can achieve a lasting resolution of this conflict by using coercive methods. Having observed the conflict between the Turks and Kurds, one may consider that the hatreds that the southeast conflict creates in Turkey do not have old roots; rather the conflict itself constructs the future aversions between these two groups.

An analysis of this conflict needs to clarify the term terrorism first, because the PKK is on an official international terrorist list (US, Department of State, 2004). This examination goes back to study the root of a conflict that touches upon the principles of international law, such as self determination for Kurds and the territorial integrity of Turkey. This paper will attempt to determine whether violent methods can help those Kurds and the Turkish government to achieve their respective aims, and accordingly, to what extent the types of hostilities, such as killing innocent people, which were used by both the PKK and the Turkish authorities, are capable of providing moral justification for violent behavior on both sides. The paper will also look at the United States' change in policy against terrorism after the September 11 terrorist attacks and its effect on the Kurdish issue in Turkey and in the neighboring countries.

**Definition of terrorism:** There are many approaches to the definition of terrorism, which has long been a contentious political and academic phenomenon. That terrorism is simply illegal violence or threatened violence directed against human or nonhuman objects as the conventional definition is questionable. This definition does not address those issues and problems that introduce a major problem in world politics. In fact, it is not a new phenomenon in all its different attributes and forms (Hoffman, 1998, p 3). While examining terrorism through the most unfavorable prism of political conflicts, the clash of national and ethnic tensions within a state or beyond borders, the meaning of the term leads experts to view the general nature of terrorism negatively. What can really be agreed on is that terrorism is a "pejorative" term, which is generally applied to one's enemies or opponents (Hoffman, 1998, p.23).

Globally, the methods and strategies undertaken to combat terrorism have changed considerably after September 11, 2001. Today, terrorism is a major security concern for most of the governments of the world, as it has become almost the central element in warfare. Terrorism should be distinguished from other types of violence and conflict. Thus, one should not label all irrational and violent gangs and criminals as terrorist organizations. However, this does not mean that terrorism should be viewed sympathetically as an acceptable method to engage in violence or threats. By making a distinction between this violence and other types of criminal acts, Hoffman (1998) defines terrorism "as the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change" (p.40). Such a definition may apply to both people or governments when their actions

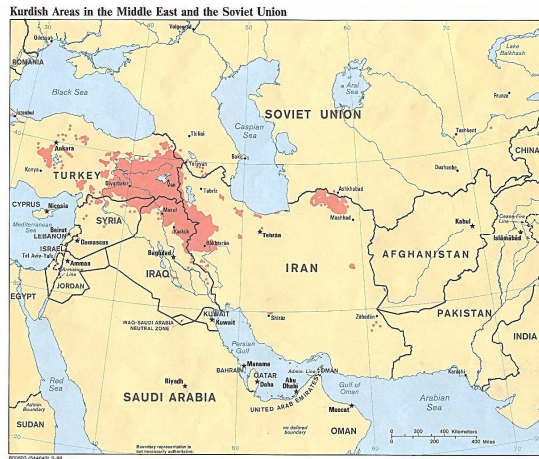
involve violence or the threat of violence against civilians. In fact, terrorism should be recognized as a political violence, where the intention of terrorists is to achieve political change by using force. Accordingly, one may define terrorism as a use of violence against non-combatants for the purpose of creating widespread fear in order to influence the political process, whether such violence is carried out by a government or by non-state actors.

This understanding of terrorism is important when considering the violent methods which were used by the Turkish authorities against the citizens of southeastern Turkey, as well as the PKK's "Vietcong-style terror" tactics, which were intended to terrify the local population into supporting this organization (Brown 1995 p.118). The PKK blamed the Turkish Republic for oppression and colonialism and identified itself as a warrior against its enemy (Ergul, 2000 p.42). As a matter of fact, terrorism remains a social and political problem in international areas, but the communities that the terrorists declare to stand for mostly reject those members. From this point of view, one should acknowledge that combat against terrorism ought not to be waged against those populations which terrorists belong to. Ironically, most world governments, including the Turkish administration, respond to terrorism at a political level based on cycles of violence.

**A brief historical background of the conflict:** Under the Ottoman Empire (1299-1922), religion was used to define one's group of identity, not ethnicity; thus, the Kurds along with other Muslims were part of the dominant Sunni community. Islamic jurisprudence regulated the system of education, and political autonomy supported a traditional social structure. Ottoman authorities used the *millet* system to ensure that

religious and tribal identities continued to prevail over any nationalist identity in a single political society. Natali (2005) noted that the millet system created two groups. The first group was the non-Muslims - Orthodox Greeks, Slavs, Catholics, Armenians, and Jews - who were given the *dhimmi* status of minorities (p.2). The superior group was the Muslims - Turks, Arabs, Kurds, Albanians, and Balkan-Caucasians. Since the Sunni were equally Muslims and believers, ethnicity and language differences among Muslims were of no legal importance (Barkey & Fuller, p.6).

Kurdish nationalism can be traced back to 1870, when Shaikh Ubaydallah struggled against the Ottomans to establish an independent Kurdish state (Kirici & Winrow, 1997, p.78). This evidence shows that even though the population of the Empire identified themselves on religious grounds, with the Turks and the Kurds sharing similar cultural and religious sentiments, ethnicity indeed mattered to those Kurds. The signing of the 1920 Sèvres Treaty in the Ottoman Empire could have provided the turning point for the Kurds, as it promised full autonomy for the predominantly Kurdish regions (Barkey & Fuller, 1998, p. 9). However, with the defeat of the Ottomans in World War I, and the redrawing of the map of the Middle East, the Kurds were divided among four states - Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey. A small community found themselves under the rule of the Soviet Union (Kirici & Winrow, 1997, p.67) (see map).



*Above: Map showing in red the Kurdish population living in the territory of Turkey, Iran, Iraq Syria and the former Soviet Union.*

The Treaty failed to come to pass, because Mustafa Kemal Atatürk signed the peace pact -- the Treaty of Lausanne on July 24, 1923 -- by which the sovereign Republic of Turkey was internationally recognized. Kirici and Winrow (1997) have noted that the greatest challenge to the Turkish Republic in 1925 was Shaikh Said's rebellion. Said was a Kurdish religious leader who began a national movement in order to struggle against the Turkish education system that opposed Shari'a Law. There were other rebellions between 1925 and 1938 fueled by indignation against new government policies. However, the Turkish government became discriminatory against those citizens who refused to support government nation-building and modernization policies. As a result, even though Kurdish nationalism emerged during the Ottoman years, it largely has developed in reaction to the rise of Turkish nationalism on the issues of ethnicity and language (p.103).

**The PKK challenges:** Turkey's modern Kurdish issue is one many contemporary examples of an ethnic minority's struggle to achieve legal

recognition and rights. The ethnic struggle for recognition, equality or autonomy within a sovereign state, or for secession from an existing territorial state emerged far back in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. One reason why ethnic struggle has kept its appeal this long, with or without coercion, might be that world societies are increasingly becoming conscious of their national identities. Another reason why the struggle of ethnic groups has preserved its popularity is the processes of cultural, economic, and political development that ethnic groups face. In this process, ethnic violence leads to guerrilla warfare, terrorism and civil war (Stavenhagen 1996 p.1).

Samuel Huntington (2003) argues that the fundamental source of conflict in the post-Cold War era is the division of cultures rather than economic interests (p.20). But this theory rests on assuming that people's desires and political choices are predetermined by deep connections with culture and religion. Huntington's 'clash of civilizations' theory may be a useful concept in analyzing the post-Cold War world to a certain degree, but there is a danger in using it as the only lens through which to view the whole picture of contemporary conflicts, given that it does not explain conflicts like the Kurdish issue in the Middle East.

This issue is Turkey's most difficult and painful problem, one that presents a huge moral dilemma for the country's territorial integrity and which has been with it since about 1923. After the Kurdish rebellions in the 1920s and 1930s were stamped out by Atatürk, the Turkish Kurds were inactive until the 1970s (Barkey & Fuller, p.21). The historian Martin Van Bruinessen (1984) pointed out that because of economic difficulties and unemployment, many citizens of eastern Turkey migrated to the western part of the country in the late



1960s and early 1970s, which brought an extensive Kurdish national movement back. After the 1980 coup in Turkey, the military completely defeated this movement by accepting it as a major threat to Turkey's national security (p.7).

In fact, contemporary Turkey has never recognized a Kurdish ethnic group with minority rights. The most radical of the Kurdish national movements is the Kurdistan Workers' Party that emerged in 1984, led by Abdullah Ocalan (Apo), which initially advocated a Marxist-Leninist philosophy. According to Van Bruinessen (1988), the party members and followers looked upon the PKK as their emancipators. The party drew heavily from the lowest social classes - very young, uneducated, and rural youth that wanted action against oppression, not ideological sophistication. He also notes that the party received support from "the most marginal section of Kurdish society, the ones who feel excluded from the country's social and economic development, victims of the rural transformation with frustrated expectations." The theory, that Ocalan provided them, was simple, but full of opportunities for action, "heroism and martyrdom" (p.41-42). In order to establish an independent and united Kurdistan from all four areas in which Kurds lived, including parts of Iraq, Iran, and Syria, which was their ultimate aim, the PKK claimed that the only tool was armed struggle and so committed itself to fight to create a Kurdistan in the territory of Turkey and its three neighbors. Ocalan proclaimed in one of his meetings that they should break their relations with any leftist movement that refused to recognize Kurdish national rights (Gunter, 1997, p.25).

The national demands for self-determination made nationalism even stronger among the divided Kurdish people. The Kurdish nationalist movement

entered a new stage of armed struggle, which led to clashes between the Turkish government security forces and PKK militants. These clashes cost the loss of more than 30,000 lives, including soldiers, policemen, civilians, innocent women and children, and many of the PKK armed forces (Ergul, 2000). As a matter of fact, the PKK has various political aspirations that are based on different forms of separatism, such as federalism, and an autonomous cultural and political life for the Kurds of Turkey. The PKK position seems to be in confusion, because while most Turkish Kurds support separatism, others are seeking a peaceful solution to the issue; however, the PKK's intention is to unite all of them under one idea (Brown 1995, p118).

In order to do so, the PKK committed numerous acts of violence, attacks targeting mostly members of Turkish nationalist groups, state collaborators, and feudal landlords, as well as military personnel and civilians. Its first attack on the military was made in August 1984. According to the US State Department, in 1993 the PKK committed numerous bombing attacks on hotels, restaurants and other businesses as well as tourism facilities (Kirici & Winrow p.126). Even though the PKK did not previously rely on suicide bombing attacks, members used this tactic periodically, while Ocalan was under arrest in Kenya and imprisoned in Turkey. Ergul noted that six suicide bombings occurred, starting on March 4, 1999, which resulted in the death of 22 civilians and the wounding of 13 policemen (p.47).

Thus, the activities of the PKK in Turkey and the region have had an impact on Turkey's domestic as well as foreign policies. The Kurdish question has in fact become the country's main foreign policy concern, affecting relations with the U.S., Europe and the Middle East. One of the

strongest obstacles to strengthening democracy in Turkey has been the government's treatment of its Kurdish citizens. Although Kurdish is the native language of many residents of Turkey, the government prohibited the teaching of Kurdish in schools and also the broadcast of radio and television programs in Kurdish for a long time. These restrictions were caused by a continuing refusal on the part of the Turkish government to recognize the cultural identity of its Kurdish citizens. Van Bruisnessen (1984) pointed out that military operations took place and the villages were raided by state forces in all areas where Kurdish nationalists were active. The treatment of prisoners also was unfair, and the state imposed over 600 death sentences. This domestic policy has created extensive frustration among the Turkish Kurds (p.14).

In fact, though, both the PKK and the Turkish government used violent methods, causing thousands of deaths of innocent people on both sides. The PKK polarized the Kurdish region by increasing its support from "the lowest echelons on the socioeconomic ladder." The growth of Turkish counter-terrorist policies generated an actual cycle of violence (Bloom 2005, p.105). If such deaths cause the PKK to be labeled as a terrorist organization, then what should we call states which commit violence against their citizens? Rama (2004) suggests that if a state "resorts to terrorist acts to oppress particular parts of the population for political ideological, religious, cultural, racial, or other reasons or to act preemptively against susceptible threats to authority," this can be called "proactive terrorism," which is part of state terrorism (p.222). As with other ethnic minorities whose rights have been denied in many countries throughout history, the Kurdish situation in

Turkey is generally characterized by such actions (Bakerly & Fuller, p.1).

Even in stable Western countries, like the United Kingdom and Canada, such ethnic minorities as the Scottish, Welsh, and French-speaking Quebecois still pursue a dream of creating their own independence. Of course, the Kurdish issue in Turkey differs in many respects from these and other conflicts around the world. However, after almost two decades of armed conflict and thousands of casualties, the Turkish officials attempted to use all their security and intelligence resources to face the terrorists' challenges. Moreover, after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the U.S., President George W. Bush immediately made it clear that the US would take action forcefully against those responsible, for the "evil, despicable acts of terror," which took thousands of American lives, and this action was supported by western powers (New York Times, 2001). The reason why the U.S. has taken this position is to defend its national security. From this point of view, Turkey cannot be labeled as a terrorist state, because it has also fought against terrorism to protect its national security against the PKK's attacks within its borders. Thus, the Kurdish problem in Turkey involves not only the social individuality of the Kurds, but also the war on PKK terrorism. Nevertheless, the denial of the Kurds' desired cultural autonomy; the right to study their own language, and to read Kurdish books are violations of the human rights of minority citizens, and this jeopardizes Turkey's democratic values.

This issue is internationally important as well, because it involves a close ally of the West and the largest stateless ethnic group in the world. Kirisci and Wirnov (1997) point out that while European

governments have recognized the PKK as a terrorist organization, they were also engaged in convincing the Turkish authorities to change their domestic policies toward their Kurdish citizens (p.174). Western concerns over Turkey's Kurdish issue arise because events that occur in Turkey could have effects in Europe.. Turkey's issues matter for different reasons for the Western countries. The problem already has spread to Western Europe, particularly Germany, because over half a million Kurds live there, and most are politically active (Bakerly & Fuller, p.4)

The United States became involved with the Kurdish issue in Turkish foreign policy because of the NATO alliance (Gunter, 1997, p.106). Turkey's longtime and continuing geo-strategically important position as a U.S. and NATO ally is clearly the main reason for this support. Other explanations include the U.S. fear of Islamic fundamentalism and Turkey's developing alliance with Israel. As a constitutionally secular nation state, Turkey is seen as a support against Islamic fundamentalism, while support for Israel, of course, remains a given for U.S. foreign policy. The United States supported the Turkish government's position on the Kurdish issue, that Kurdish demands would threaten Turkish territorial integrity.

**Resolution of the Kurdish issue:** The Kurds in Turkey represent only fifty percent of the Kurds in the Middle East. The others are in Iraq, Iran, and Syria. The aspirations of people to exercise any stimulation of nationalism or separatism by claiming self-determination in one country affects the actions of those governments that want to ensure their territorial integrity. In this case, in order to ensure their territorial integrity, the regional countries cooperate together against the Kurdish ethnic groups

who revolt against those governments. To follow this approach, it seems that two legal issues - the right of peoples to self-determination (Article 1(2) the UN Charter) and territorial integrity (Article 2 (4)) - conflict with each other.

The Peace of Westphalia in 1648 established that the sovereign state is a formal political authority and thus this marked the initial stages of modern international law. According to international law, an essential component of a state's sovereignty is territory. This implies that the states preserve ultimate sovereignty over their territory within their borders. In Article 2 (4) of the UN Charter, territorial integrity of sovereign states is established to be one of the primary means of maintaining peace and stability in international relations (Riggis & Plano, 1994, p 314).

The contradiction between the right of external self-determination and territorial integrity is a fundamental issue of international law, because the demands of one principle will violate the principles of the other. The need to protect one group's interests against those of another usually poses a question of preference of one of these laws over the other. The Kurdish demands for the right of self-governance seriously challenges the doctrinal purity of territorial integrity and sovereignty of Turkey. However, to have an equal opportunity to enjoy their own culture, to speak their own language, and practice their own religion as a national minority is their right. As far as self-determination is concerned, ethnic groups and minorities can fully develop internal self-determination within the framework of an existing territorial state (Cassese 1995, p 352).

Since statehood is the ultimate recognition of self-determination in international law, then it is important that people can identify themselves as

belonging to a nation that recognizes their ethnicity. But instead of being committed to their nation, many people are more attached to their ethnic group, the roots of which stem from the same history, culture, language, religion or race. In a case where outsiders intervene in that nation-state and force ethnically different groups of people to be ruled under one centralized authority, this usually forms a national identity. Yet this also emerges as a motivation to attain the status of self-governing nationhood, which eventually breaks away from a large neighbor or colonial rule (McKim & McMahan, p.13). Such logic also leads to the argument that since there are practically no more colonies in the world, the significance of self-determination of peoples is gone. Thus, this concept implies that it will not be easy to set new state boundaries just because a particular group argues for a right to territorial control. Because the world map already is divided into particular nation-states, developing a successful claim over boundaries involves struggles with other groups over political and economic interests and brings out ethnic tensions or even clashes between nations (Price, 1995-96).

After September 11, 2001, Turkey actually succeeded in connecting the PKK primarily with terrorism and other evils in the world, mainly in the eyes of the Americans and Europeans. However, human right violations within Turkey create an unwelcome dilemma for West, because Turkey's policies toward its Kurds make it clear that Turkey is being aggressive. For that reason, the Turkish government also should understand that to ensure a democratic, civilized, and pluralistic state, moreover to succeed in its goal of attaining EU membership, its policies must be based on valid improvements in the protection of human rights and freedom. Turkey must

deal with its Kurdish dilemma with firmly increasing negotiations, because the Kurdish self-awareness is growing and will not go away easily.

Furthermore, the Turkish government has persistently refused to accept the Kurdish population's identity and demands, thus undermining its democratic standards. GA Resolution 47/135 (Dec 18, 1992 Article 2 (1)) states very clearly the rights of minorities. In order to ensure stability in the region, Turkey and its neighboring governments should refer to this document and allow people or groups to speak their own language and practice their own culture in public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination. In addition, in order to achieve peaceful negotiations with Turkey, the PKK should understand that it cannot succeed by armed struggle in any military sense, because this implies forcing the government to recognize the PKK in some form. Thus, the PKK must put additional pressure on the Turkish government to go faster to come up with acceptable solutions to the Kurdish demands, but this pressure should not be a military one.

**Conclusion:** The inability of Turkish authorities to peacefully resolve their Kurdish citizens' concerns and demands for cultural recognition not only destabilizes the country, but also is a threat to international security. Additionally, it is obstructing the country's acceptance into the European Union (EU), which Turkey has been attempting to join for so long. Indeed, in light of the PKK's participation in numerous violent attacks against the Turkish government and against civilians, one might understandably support the government's policy toward its Kurdish population but with reservation.

To assume that the PKK is simply a terrorist organization would be mistaken. The violence used

by the PKK to define and pursue political objectives was basically secondary to its primary aim, but this does not mean that the use of force was insignificant for them. Where violence has taken place against one nation's people and their homeland, a sudden revival of ethnic hatred from outsiders creates nationalism quickly and develops its own momentum. In such a way, the Kurdish people's desire to enjoy their national rights by belonging to one culturally, economically or politically strong nation made nationalism inevitable within that community. Moreover, struggling for their common identity and determination of their national boundaries strengthened nationalism among them.

Given the importance of nationalism in any particular nation-state and the discussion of it throughout its history, one may conclude that what makes nations unique is that they have a common identity and share common cultural features (myth, values, etc) while believing in their right to territorial self-determination. In this view, even though nationalism contains both negative and positive values, every nation has its nationalism. Being a nationalist does not necessarily mean being a terrorist.

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#### IV. Introduction to Art Review

*By: Shani A. Hines*

Through still shots produced by photography, or stories told through the arrangements of color, art is used as an outlet for expression. The art in this section all attempt to tackle or at least reconcile artistically, the injustices and human rights violations that are prevalent in regions dismantled by war. See how **Grace-Graupe-Pillard** uses the marriage between photography and paint to illustrate cruelty, and the dilution of human value taking place in war-affected regions. Experience the

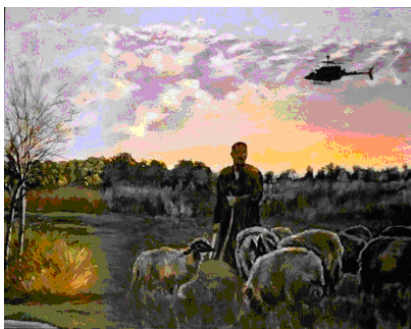
power of **Robert Capa's** candid photographs as they capture the raw intensity and carnage of war. Observe **Eleanor Gilpatrick's** meticulous usage of bright colors as she re-creates the collision of violence and everyday life. Explore **Kara Walker's** symmetrical expression of violence as she graphically creates silhouettes that address the role of gender and race. With each snapshot and brushstroke capturing the essence of the International crisis within the war torn regions, these artists have successfully created a well-seasoned politico-art gumbo flavor filled with quality, technique and skills.

## V. Review: New York Exhibits and CUNY Artists on Violence and Politics

*By Shani A. Hines and Jamie Hagen*

Before turning to art, **Eleanor Gilpatrick** studied social sciences in college and graduate school, which led to her becoming an expert in health care policy and human resources. She authored four books on these subjects and worked as a professor at the School of Health Sciences at Hunter College, City University of New York (CUNY), creating courses in critical thinking and writing as well as directing a masters program in health services administration.

With her attraction to art, coupled with the colorful images she viewed during her travels through Europe, Gilpatrick found herself drawn to the brushstroke of drawing and painting in 1998 while studying in the plein-air workshops in Italy.



Returning from her travels, Gilpatrick pursued her studies at Hunter College where she received mentoring by Gabriele Evertz and Bob Swain. Her work includes romantic landscapes in New York as well as places she visited in Europe.

She credits her influence to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century sensibility of Turner and The Hudson River School, but endorses her 21<sup>st</sup> Century perspective with the strength of her brushwork and composition.



But her most noted work reflects violence in the modern era. In 2007, she put her impressions of the current state of the world into pieces that have been brought together in her [In The World Series](#).



As a modern colorist working in acrylic on canvas, she juxtaposes clashing scenes of violence and everyday activity. Gilpatrick, who has won prizes for painting and draftsmanship at the Educational Alliance in New York City, has an annual solo show at the Jadite Galleries, 413 west 50<sup>th</sup> Street, Manhattan, and has solo shows at the Landmark Lobby Gallery, Eastview Tarrytown, NY, the Gallery at the Merritt Crossing, Milford, CT and the Bulgarian Consulate, Manhattan.

**Grace Graupe-Pillard** who attended City College of CUNY, is known for fusing paintings and photographs, often incorporating stills from cinematic masterpiece

With heavy emphasis on the devastating effects of war and its chronic impact on the population

In her series of work, entitled Manipulation/Disintegration/Displaced she captures the current fabric of terrorism and ethnic cleansing



The series illuminates the situation of civilian displacement in war torn countries. By way of translating manipulated images into oil paintings, an evolution of color, texture and scale emerges.



Graupe- Pillard's work has been exhibited throughout the United States and has graced the pages of many published collections. She has also received art commissions from Shearson Lehman American Express, AT&T, Peat Marwick, Port Authority Bus Terminal in NYC- just to name a few. Additional projects include commissions from New Jersey Transit for the new Hudson Bergen Light Rail System





Photography made **Robert Capa**, born Andrei Friedmann in 1913, a legend. Capturing the heartache of war and the various attempts of political sanitization throughout particular regions are visible in his black and white portrayals.



With his intuitive eyes and famous camera lenses, Capa manages to stop time with his photography. His pictures are widely considered

the greatest records of modern history. As evidenced in his photograph D-day Landings, 1944, where he swam ashore with the second assault wave on Omaha Beach, Robert's dedication to his craft was never ending.



In 1933, Capa fled from Germany to France as a result of the rise of Nazism. During World War II, he traveled the European Theatre on photography assignments for *Life* Magazine. As seen by his work during this time, he was able to get to the frontlines.

Like his photography, Capa's aptitude for written journalism was also evident. His four books freeze-framed war through the usage of words. On May 25, 1954 while on assignment for *Life* covering the Indochina Front, Robert stepped on a landmine and died with his camera in hand.

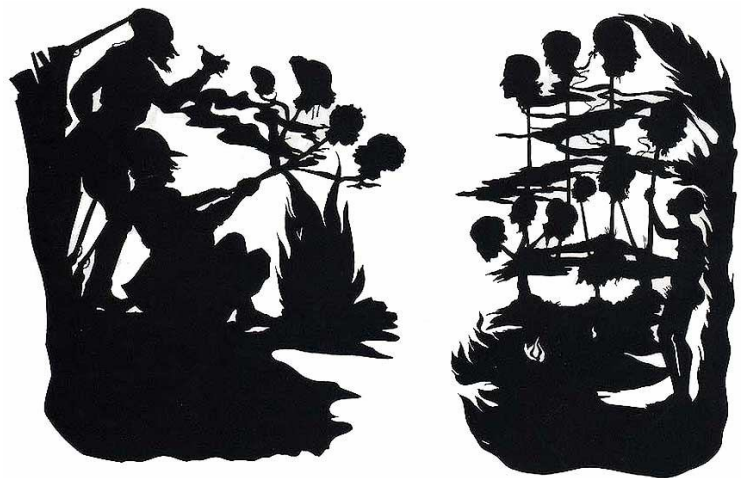
With the uncovered photographs of Capa's being published posthumously, his artistic contribution and reputation as the most colorful war photographer lives on.

Born in 1969 in Stockton California, **Kara Walker** received her MFA from Rhode Island School of Design in 1994 and currently serves as a faculty member of the MFA program of Columbia University. Most prominently known for her work in black silhouettes, Walker's pieces address issues of race, gender and sexuality



Walker utilizes the silhouette, most characteristically known as a Victorian art form, to graphically depict violence, exemplified by such works as **“Burn”** (1998) (Pictured above, at left) and **“Untitled (Hunting Scenes)”** (2001) (Pictured at right) Discussing the role of racism in her work Walker states, “The gross, brutal

manhandling of one group of people, dominant with one kind of skin color and one kind of perception of themselves, versus another group of people with a different kind of skin color and a different social standing. And, the assumption would be that, well, times changed and we've moved on. But this is the underlying mythology, I think, of the American project. The history of America is built on this inequality, this foundation of a racial inequality and a social inequality. And we buy into it. I mean, whiteness is just as artificial a construct as blackness is.” To view some of Kara Walker's work in NYC, visit the Museum of Modern Art or the Guggenheim museum.

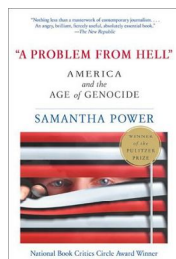


## VI. Book Reviews: Recent Scholarship on Violence and Politics

By: Jamie Hagen

Understanding and exploring violence has presented the discipline of political science with particularly difficult questions. Is violence to be understood cyclically, born in the past, lived in the present, and continued into the future by those witnessing violence today? Or is violence something intrinsic to humanity, never completely eradicated? How does one responsibly and successfully represent violence in art, taking into account the victim?

Beginning the section is a review of "*A Problem from Hell*" the extensive study of genocide by Samantha Power. Approaching violence in different contexts from the past to modernity are reviews of three anthologies, *On Violence: A Reader*, *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*, and *Violence and Politics: Globalization's Paradox*. Through the historical perspective outlined by Powers to more philosophical topics discussed by the writers in the three anthologies, the reader may better approach these seemingly unanswerable questions of violence and politics.



Written by **Samantha Power** and published in 2002, "*A Problem from Hell*" *America and the Age of Genocide* takes on America's relationship to genocide. Beginning with the history behind the term "genocide," which was coined in 1943 by Raphael Lemkin, Power dissects America's passive

reaction to the all of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century's genocides – from Armenia during World War I to Bosnia and Rwanda in the 1990s. A *New York Times* bestseller, this book received many awards including the Pulitzer Prize for the Best Book in Nonfiction.

After taking part in the creation of the Convention of the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in 1948 at the United Nations, how is it that America was not compelled to act in Cambodia in the late seventies? In a world where "Never again" was the resounding phrase following the atrocities of the Nazi holocaust, how is it that the international community could sit by and allow the genocide in Rwanda to occur? Refuting excuses made by those in the American government, Power documents the reality of the genocides as they unfolded, and the

communication informing the international community, including the American government, of the horrors and atrocities committed.

Through Power's detailed analyses, it becomes clearer that America's lack of response to each of the genocides is a reflection of America's diplomatic intention to abstain from involvement in any political situation not directly effecting domestic affairs. As Power writes, "No U.S. president has ever made genocide prevention a priority, and no U.S. president has ever suffered politically for his indifference to its occurrence. It is thus no coincidence that genocide rages on." Understanding why this is the case better enables readers to imagine how this reality can be changed – crucial in a time when genocide continues to be committed without effective international action, in Darfur.



*On Violence: A Reader* breaks down the complex issue of violence into five themes: The Dialectics of Violence, The Other of Violence, The Institution of Violence: Three Connections, The State of Violence and The Representation of Violence.

Editors **Bruce B. Lawrence** and **Aisha Karim** choose these five perspectives to view the chain of violence, writing in the introduction, "Once violence is recognized as equivalent to power and endemic to the human condition, then one's attention is drawn to ways that one can respond to its outcomes."

Through this perspective, from classical to more modern theorists, the anthology explores violence as intrinsic to the human experience. Opening with works on violence written by the likes of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Friedrich Engels, Karl Heinrich Marx and Frantz Fanon, the book then turns to writing by actors such as Mohandas K. Gandhi and critics such as Antonio Gramsci. The three connections made in part three on The Institution are the familial, legal, and religious while Thomas Hobbes, Hannah Arendt, Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari make up the writers in the section on The State of Violence.

Concluding the book are authors addressing violence as representation, through diverse perspectives ranging from the role of revolutionary art as viewed by Trotsky and the surrealists to Doctors without Borders working in the Third World.



**Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology** (Blackwell Publishing, 2004, edited by Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois) uses the disciplines of philosophy, literature and sociology to tackle the origins, patterns and impacts of violence in society.

The authors acknowledge the complicated reality of violence as experienced not only in times of war, but also during times of peace. Because the book addresses less obvious forms of violence, the structure of the book juxtaposes diverse writers and subjects in an effort to follow these various anthropological paths leading to violence.

Explaining the dangers of typical approaches to the topic of violence, the editors write, "Focusing exclusively on the physical aspects of torture/terror/violence misses the point and transforms the project into a clinical, literary, or artistic exercise, which runs the risk of degenerating into a theatre or pornography of violence in which voyeuristic impulse subverts the larger project of witnessing, critiquing, and writing against violence, injustice, and suffering." Among the key themes within the anthology are Conrad's "fascination of the abomination", Arendt's "banality of evil", Benjamin's "modern history as a state of siege" and Foucault's "bio-power."



Addressing the rising role of globalization in violent conflicts around the globe are the essays of **Violence and Politics: Globalization's Paradox** published in 2002 and edited by **Kenton Worcestor, Sally Avery Bermanzohn and Mark Ungar**. Broken into two parts, the book

consists of *Part One: States, Social Groups, and*

*Contentious Politics and Part Two: Identities, Adversaries and Democratic values*. Focusing on the many types of conflict in the contemporary era, the book is a must read for students of political science today.

Predominantly concerned with violence internal to the state, the book questions the idea that with democracy and the exportation of the western ideal of government comes a more peaceful civil society. Instead, the authors demonstrate the opposite through five themes: the exercise of state power, violence in the context of regime change, the persistence of violence in stable democracies, the relationship between economies and violence and the role of society and societal groups in fomenting violence.

Acknowledging the complicated view of violence created through these five themes the editors write, "rather than viewing violence as something to be encouraged or abolished, the most appropriate stance may be one that seeks to limit violence while recognizing that not all forms of violence are equivalent, and that under certain conditions, (e.g., self-defense and some revolutionary situations) violence may be justified and even appropriate."

### **Additional Reading: Suggested Texts on Violence**

**Collective Political Violence: An Introduction to the Theories and Cases of Violent Conflicts** by Earl Conteh-Morgan

**The Politics of Collective Violence** (Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics) by Charles Tilly, Douglas McAdam, and Sidney Tarrow

**The Letter of Violence: Essays on Narrative, Ethics, and Politics** (New Directions in Latino American Culture) by Idelber Avelar

**Vulnerability and Violence: The Impact of Globalization** by Peadar Kirby

**Politics of Atrocity and Reconciliation** by Michael Humphrey

**Political Movements and Violence in Central America** (Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics) by Charles D. Brockett (2005)

**State, Identity and Violence** by R. Brian

Ferguson

**Nationalism, Violence and Democracy: The Basque Clash of Identities** by Ludger Mees

**Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence** (Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics) by Jeremy M. Weinstein

**Anthropology, Politics, and the State: Democracy and Violence in South Asia** (New Departures in Anthropology) by Jonathan Spencer



## VII. Focus on Genocide: The Case of Darfur

By: Jamie Hagen

Unfortunately, Samantha Power's groundbreaking study of America's history with genocide, "A Problem from Hell" proves incredibly pertinent to today's ongoing crisis in Darfur, the Western region of Sudan, and the surrounding region. Numbers are disputed, but the United Nations estimates that up to 400,000 people have been murdered or have died of disease in Darfur since the conflict began in February 2003. While the international reaction to the genocide in Darfur is on a scale never before seen, some of the primary critiques made by Power play out both in American politics and the actions of the United Nations in the struggle to make change and put a stop to the continued displacement, rape and slaughter of men, women and children by the government-supported *janjaweed* militias, which have been carrying out most of the killing.



Unlike previous genocides, with Darfur there has been a large response among American citizens. An estimated 100,000 supporters marched on the National Mall in Washington D.C. on April 30, 2006 for the "Save Darfur:

Rally to Stop Genocide" – an unprecedented outpouring acknowledging a genocide, calling for change, and letting officials in charge know Americans will not stand idly by this time around. In addition, groups such as Human Rights

Watch, Amnesty International and Save Darfur are all actively politically engaged in ending the genocide through avenues such as the International Criminal Court and the United Nations. Student activism, in particular the Genocide Intervention Network, has led to divestment in Sudanese businesses among universities and the public pensions of over a dozen states. As opposed to the atrocious dismissal of the horrors of Rwanda, the American government has sought to lead international action against this genocide by issuing sanctions in the form of asset freezes and travel bans, as well as funding the African Union protective forces on the ground.

While the United States has made these significant moves, Nicholas Kristof, a *New York Times* columnist, believes there is more that we as a nation must do. In an Op-Ed in the *New York Times* on April 10<sup>th</sup> 2008, he recommended assisting France in ending the proxy war between Sudan and Chad, broadening the "save Darfur" campaign to "save Sudan", holding an international conference on Sudan prior to the G-8 summit, and working to start a peace agreement with Darfur.



Others who have been at the forefront of the anti genocide movement including Eric Reeves of Smith College, John Prendergast of the International Crisis Group, and Ruth Messinger of the American Jewish World Service.

Power's updated volume of "A Problem from Hell" published in 2007 includes an article written for *The New Republic* in May 2006 in which she writes, "The key to protecting Darfur is for the United States to mobilize a united front including Russia and China-to force Khartoum to allow the employment of a far larger U.N force." Clearly solving this crisis will require the United States to pursue and promote a unified voice and action for Sudan among the international community-truly bringing the responsibilities of the Convention of Prevention of Punishment of the Crime of Genocide to bear not only for the well being of those in Sudan, but also for the benefit of the entire international community.

#### **Continued Reading:**

*The Devil Came on Horseback: Bearing Witness to the Genocide in Darfur* by Brian Steidle and Gretchen Steidle Wallace

*Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur* by Ben Kiernan

Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide, Revised and

Updated Edition by Gerard Prunier

*Genocide in Darfur: Investigating the Atrocities in the Sudan* by Samuel Totten and Eric Markusen

*Darfur's Sorrow: A History of Destruction and Genocide* by M. W. Daly

*Not on Our Watch: The Mission to End Genocide in Darfur and Beyond* by Don Cheadle and John Prendergast

#### **Anti-Genocide Campaigns:**

##### **Save Darfur**

Around the country and across the globe, the Save Darfur Coalition is inspiring action, raising awareness and speaking truth to power on behalf of the people of Darfur. Working with world leaders, we are demanding an end to the genocide, and our efforts are getting results.

<http://www.savedarfur.org/>

##### **Genocide Intervention Network**

The Genocide Intervention Network empowers individuals and communities with the tools to prevent and stop genocide. Our members envision a world in which the global community is willing and able to protect civilians from genocide and mass atrocities. As part of the anti-genocide movement, we raise both money and political will for civilian protection initiatives around the world.

<http://www.genocideintervention.net/network>

##### **STAND-A Student Anti-Genocide Coalition**

With more than 700 chapters at schools around the globe, STAND is the fastest-growing student anti-genocide coalition in the world today.

STAND chapters actively organize to prevent

and stop genocide wherever and whenever it may occur. In partnership with the Genocide Intervention Network, STAND's long-term goal is to establish a permanent anti-genocide

constituency that holds elected officials accountable for doing all that they can to prevent and end genocide.

<http://www.standnow.org>



VIII. Spotlight: The Refugee Law Project – *Issues of Reconciliation & Rebuilding After the Genocide in Rwanda*  
By Shani A. Hines

Established in 1999 at the Makerere University in Uganda, the Refugee Law Project (RLP) has created an agenda for refugees affected throughout the world and has fought tenaciously to have the agenda addressed. With an endeavor to protect and to promote refugee rights, RLP uses the information it receives to determine the steps necessary to improve the situation of displaced individuals. The crux of the RLP mission is to ensure that refugees and asylum seekers get the rights guaranteed to them by international law. Ultimately, RLP works to reverse injustices to asylum seekers by educating them of their human rights and arming them with the skill set necessary to successfully integrate in society. Though there are countless NGO's who share a similar passion for obtaining justice for Refugees and asylum seekers, the RLP has shown great determination to raise public awareness within the hosting countries as well as, designing campaigns ensuring that there are adequate reception facilities for those seeking asylum. The RLP was formed as a result of war and a need to tackle the terrible circumstances of the invariable refugees. By any comparison, the RLP organization is small in both size and financial resources; yet, the RLP has managed to attract substantial international attention to the issue at hand through their various publications and efforts on the ground. Through their commitment to combat global socio-political injustices, RLP pugnaciously try to help reform laws, policies and practices that affect refugees. This essay looks at RLP's work in Rwanda

with regards to the reactivation of the traditional justice system, and its impact.

More than ten years have passed since the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, one of the most heartbreaking display of man's inhumanity to man in recent times. Approximately 800,000 people were slaughtered in less than 100 days, and the country continues to be buried beneath its lingering effects. As talks surrounding the justice system in Rwanda called Gacaca (based on a local custom) saturate the air, panicked citizens- fearful of a new wave of violence and governmental accusations concerning their own role in the genocide- began packing up their meager belongings in preparation for the exodus to Uganda in 2005.



*Picture from the Refugee Law Project Website*

The Gacaca courts are based on the traditional village mode of deliberating justice; however, since the opening of the new system in March 2005 the court has the power to try, acquit or convict of genocide and hand down sentences ranging from community service to life imprisonment" (*The International Refugee Rights Initiative, Vol 2, Issue 1, May 2005* ). The Gacaca began hearing cases of those alleged to be accomplices suspected in the genocide. With the enforcement of the new regulations of the Gacaca courts; coupled with the geographical location of Uganda, many Rwandans, fearful of being arbitrarily

prosecuted for involvement in the genocide, have taken refuge in Uganda.

Through legal counseling, education, and training, the RLP seeks to aid these Internally Displaced Persons (IDPS) within Uganda. However, many of the Rwandans are nevertheless continually faced with omnipresent and seemingly impassable “road blocks” in their attempt to gain asylum status. The adoption of some policies by both Kenya and Uganda prohibit asylum seekers from obtaining a country’s refugee status determination procedures if they have already traveled through another country where refugee status and/or protection could have been attained. Clearly, this bodes ill for those who are displaced. Due to economic reasons, many times asylum seekers resort to passing through a country and residing there for a month or two before reaching their final destination. This is done in an effort to accumulate the funds necessary to continue their journey.

Although there are no guarantees of protection, the policy states that the asylum seeker should be returned to the first country to which they fled and should seek protection there. Consequently, asylum seekers are discriminated against and criminalized by citizens, and in some instances, regrettably by government officials of Uganda. Specifically, the refugees -in their efforts to be “self-sufficient” and to harmoniously integrate, are often rejected when enrolling in schools or applying for jobs primarily because of their undocumented status. In the 2005 publishing of the *International Refugee Rights Initiative*, vol 2, issue 1, a Ugandan government official stated that the influx of refugees will seriously strain the government economic resources; insofar as providing adequate food, shelter and security for the refugees. Extra financial attention

would have to be directed towards providing more police officers and government aids to manage the increase in the population.

### **Drastic Measures taken by Rwanda’s Government:**

Sadly, the suffering and mental trauma experienced by the refugees are not assuaged by their return home. Many refugees are bright-lined and targeted by rebel groups and are often prevented from reclaiming their land and property as a result.

Nevertheless, the Rwandan government is determined to implement their development and reconciliation program, which requires Rwandans to remain in Rwanda.



*Soldiers in Rwanda*

To achieve this, the Rwandan government has joined forces with Uganda in the Repatriation exercises. This exercise has been labeled as coercive and involuntary. According to reports published in the Uganda paper *New Vision*, October 4, 2007, returnees are stating that they were not aware of their departure. One returnee stated that they were surrounded by Ugandan police officers, and was forced to quickly pack up a portion of their belongings to return to Rwanda. Many of those who were caught in the repatriation sweep, according to RLP reports, should not have been returned to Rwanda; instead, they should have been protected by the right of non-refoulement- an international legal principle forbidding the return of those who might face serious harm in their home countries (*Refugee Rights News*, Vol 4, Issue 1, January 2008).

Regardless of the sharp double edged sword bolted to both borders, the RLP's intervention has lead to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) review of asylum cases concerning the involuntary removal of the asylum seekers in Uganda. To expedite their legal claims of the asylum seekers, and to hasten the usually long and often arduous review process to obtain asylum status, the RLP and its Legal Aid Clinic (LAC) provides refugees with analysis of their cases and assists them with the preparation of a possible appeal to the Refugee Eligibility Committee (REC). To date, RLP's Legal Aid Clinic (RLP-LAC) has represented thousands of refugees and asylum seekers in Uganda. However, despite their efforts, the Refugee Law Project has a major logistical problem. They have one office in the city of Kampala (the capital of Uganda), making it extremely difficult to service those outside the city.



*Main RLP office in the city of Kampala*

As a result, the RLP has ambitiously broadened its scope of operation to reach all those who are affected by embarking on field trips to the rural areas. Drawing from the saying: “give me a fish, I will eat for a day, show me how to fish, I will eat for a lifetime”, the RLP has launched a strategic plan which aims to equip the rural settlers with the knowledge and tools necessary to advocate and assert their own human rights and freedoms. The RLP is committed to the prospects of policy reform. It

continues through its Legal Aid Clinic to build relationships with International actors who can aid in the reform and implementation of refugee policy.

### **Conclusion:**

The RLP now consists of three departments and a staff of around 30. This implies growth in its delivery capabilities. However, one cannot help but to look in awe and admiration at the pluck and tenacity of RLP in attempting such an undertaking. We should be comforted to know that in the face of human suffering an NGO like RLP exists and is willing, able and sufficiently committed to step to the fore.

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