



## **World Orders and Global Governance: New Perspectives and Challenges**

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This first *International Politics* edition of *Political Perspectives* emerged as a joint project with the holding of the first Centre for International Politics postgraduate conference here at the University of Manchester. The conference theme of *World Orders and Global Governance: New Perspectives and Challenges* was chosen to enable us to take a broad look at our field and to engage fully with the great variety of postgraduate work being produced both here at the Centre for International Politics and throughout the wider discipline within the UK and beyond. We and our fellow organisers wanted to provide some perspectives upon the directions in which postgraduate students were taking the study of International Politics. We were aware of the well known pitfalls within PhD studies whereby we can emerge as qualified researchers who know a massive amount about a very tiny field of research. The early emphasis upon specialisation and the pressures to complete a thesis within three years can lead to a narrowing of interests. We wanted to give participants the opportunity to exchange ideas and viewpoints in a broader context.

At the same time we felt that these concerns were taking us beyond the PhD as a purely intellectual process and were prompting us to consider more broadly our role and situation as postgraduate research students. It was important that we reflected upon the need to offer students a constructive environment where they could develop skills and gain confidence in presenting work and receiving feedback. We also wanted to be able to share the practical skills and insights we had gathered in organising a conference. In essence we wanted to try and fill some of the occasionally bewildering gaps on the route towards the PhD.

Working on this journal has allowed us to continue with this agenda as *Political Perspectives* functions with a very similar ethos. It aims to facilitate the production and dissemination of innovative postgraduate research and to provide an introduction to the processes involved in getting work into a publication. The journal is open to submissions from postgraduates at all stages in their studies. It provides a full reviewing process by fellow students in the same field something which also allows students here at Manchester to gain experience in reviewing and editing an academic journal. This process has allowed us to continue a productive relationship with some of our original conference delegates. Working with the authors as they expand and develop their research has been an educational and enjoyable experience for all of us involved in the production of the journal.

We were extremely pleased to receive eleven papers that we feel reflect an exciting diversity of concerns and viewpoints. The papers have been grouped into three broad thematic areas reflecting the structure of the conference. The first set of papers examines contemporary concerns with issues of security

and terrorism. Bezen Balamir Coskun introduces a theme which is common to all four of the papers, that of competing visions in the definition of terrorism. Focusing upon the conflict between the Israeli state and the Palestinian government she analyses how the creation of particular hegemonic discourses shape the response and securitisation of these conflicts.

Claudia Brunner develops these themes in her examination of the discursive production of knowledge on 'suicide bombing'. Through a detailed analysis of the cover of a popular book on terrorism that represents the confluence of discourse, Occidentalism and intersectionality she unpacks the various practices and understandings that constitute hegemonic readings of the phenomena. She further expands the focus to reflect upon how we as an academic community are implicated in the creation and dissemination of particular conceptions of 'suicide bombing' within a wider 'epistemology of the west'.

Dominka Svarc's paper adds a further dimension to the analysis of terrorism by focussing upon the debates surrounding international law and a military response to contemporary threats. She focuses upon two particular aspects of contention. In the first section she discusses whether a military response is a legally amenable strategy to deal with terrorism and in the second how the legal dimensions may impact upon the actual conduct of military operations. Her analysis leads to the conclusion that international law provides a solid foundation for guiding a military response to terrorism

Amador Peleo analyses the continuing problems in the Philippines posed by communist and Islamic insurgent groups and the governmental response. He stresses the need to place the current security issues within a wider historical

and political context. This provides a frame for the central arguments of the paper, concerning how the actual understandings of, and attention paid to the insurgents by both the Philippine government and broader international powers may serve to reify the insurgent position and contribute to the apparent intractability of the conflicts.

The second strand of the conference focussed around 'future challenges to world orders'. Under this broad theme, papers were presented on regulating global corporations, competing models of capitalism and the rise of China in world politics. Amandine Bled begins this section by challenging the neo-Gramscian account of the role of corporations in regulatory processes. Using original research into the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, she argues that a pluralist account of decision-making and influence more accurately describes the process than one merely concentrating on the power of global corporations.

Ying Yu provides a compelling account of how civil society in China has been restructured in the 'transitional' phase of Chinese politics. The discussion is placed within the wider debate on civil society yet focuses strongly on those characteristics specific to China. The article offers an optimistic account of the future of Chinese politics and provides an analysis of how the development of civil society will be a key role in processes of democratisation.

The models of capitalism debate is engaged in Koji Shimohata's paper on Japanese models of corporate governance. The article presents a strong case for the endurance of the Japanese model of capitalism, offering a detailed analysis of the tensions between financial globalisation and national

modes of financial governance. He argues that despite the pressures of globalisation, features specific to Japanese political economy explain changes in the country's banking structure more accurately than explanations relying on financial globalisation alone.

The third theme of the journal deals with questions about development, inequality and agency in international politics and political economy. Craig Berry begins by building a case for the rediscovery of agency in analyses of international political economy (IPE). Berry argues that the original works of IPE as pioneered by Robert Cox have been neglected in contemporary debates. He argues that current research in IPE focuses on the analysis of structure at the expense of agency, and as such fails to account for an understanding of the role of agents in structural change. A potential solution, he suggests, is to rediscover Cox's work on 'historical structures'.

Lucy Ferguson's article explores the gender dimensions of poverty reduction strategies. Based on research in Central America into tourism development projects, Ferguson argues that the notion of 'gender equity' in such projects needs to be treated with caution. She argues that this conceptualisation of equality is bound up with liberal ideas about equality of opportunity, and that the potential for such projects to contribute to a reformulation of gendered power relations is fundamentally limited.

Staying with the theme of development, Khurshid Iqbal explores the United Nations' 1986 Declaration of the Right to Development (RTD). Analysing the emergence and struggles over implementation of the RTD, he offers a thorough critique of why the agreement has proved so difficult to implement. The main problems, he argues, have been the disagreement over how the

Declaration should be interpreted, and conflicts between developing and developed countries over the meaning of and commitment to 'development'.

Finally, Sophie Harman's paper rounds off the section with a critical analysis of change in the World Bank. Using extensive field research into HIV/AIDS organisations in East Africa, she argues that the Bank's claims to have changed its approach to should be treated with scepticism. Looking at three key areas of World Bank operations in this area – engagement with civil society organisations, government ownership and multi agency working – she concludes that the changes should not be considered substantive. Moreover, her analysis suggests that the Bank remains 'unaccountable, unrepresentative and illegitimate' to the Poor.

We would like to close this brief introduction by thanking all of those who have participated in the process of publishing this journal – conference organisers, authors, reviewers and general supporters of the project. We hope that you will find the articles relevant and stimulating and that they offer a broad spectrum of some of the high quality postgraduate work being produced. We also offer an invitation to the postgraduate community that has been fostered through this process to continue organising conferences, publishing together and supporting each other's research.

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