

Understanding Institutional Change – A Gender Perspective E-Newsletter, Issue 3, July 2014

Welcome to the third bi-annual project newsletter. Again we have had a busy six months. We held a workshop on Gender, Politics and Institutions in Bachelet's Chile at the end of April and members of the project team have given papers at a number of conferences including the PSA annual conference in Manchester, ECPR joint sessions in Salamanca and the International Studies Association conference in Toronto. There are more details about all of these and forthcoming conferences in this newsletter.

It is also a time of changes for the project. There are some personnel changes in the offing. Both Laura McLeod and Rachel Johnson's two year contracts are coming to an end. And we have to congratulate both of them as Laura McLeod has been appointed to a lectureship in International Politics here in Manchester starting on 1st September and Rachel Johnson has been appointed to a lectureship in African History at the University of Durham. We wish them both well in the next stage of their careers. Congratulations are due too to Faith Armitage who gave birth to baby Julian Armitage-Razell on 27 June and is now on maternity leave until January 2015. We have also appointed a Research Associate for work package 4; Carmen Sepulveda from UCL takes up a two year post from 1st January 2015.

We hope you find the newsletter interesting – we start with some reflections from Laura McLeod on the research she has conducted during her two years spent working on the project.

Georgina Waylen, Principal Investigator

Final Reflections

Laura McLeod

My research on Work Package One, which alongside work package two focuses primarily on the creation of new institutions, is now drawing to a close. As part of this I have examined how gender concerns can be included into post-conflict settlements, paying particular attention to the role of women acting for women within negotiation processes. I have explored this in two main ways over the last two



years; firstly, by surveying the existing quantitative data assessing the relationship between female presence in the negotiation process, and gendered outcomes. Secondly, I have carried out detailed research on the process of creating and reforming the post-conflict constitution for Bosnia & Herzegovina, where women have played a very limited role, as a means of developing a deeper understanding of the practice, process and effects of gender exclusion from institutional change.

Exploring the existing studies of large-n surveys investigating the gender ramifications of peace agreements highlight that references to women have increased within peace treaties, especially since 1990 (and again since 2000).¹ Many of these references to women establish goals for women's long-term roles in the state and go beyond directly addressing conflict-related issues.² Furthermore, where the UN or women participate in peace negotiations, it is more likely that the final agreement will reference women.³ However, as my forthcoming working paper, *Gender and Peace Settlements from a Quantitative Perspective* reveals, there are many gaps where gender-disaggregated data is needed. Most notably, there is a need for a detailed breakdown of the numbers of men and women present in various aspects of the peace negotiation process. This would enable better quantitative conclusions to be drawn about the effects of female presence at the table.

However, the main focus of my research has been a detailed exploration of Bosnia & Herzegovina. Currently, scholarly literature about gender and peace agreements or constitutional reform in Bosnia & Herzegovina is limited, although there is much research about the effects of war (including mass rape) for women; feminist organising; and gender in transitional justice processes. This project fills an important gap in this regard by drawing attention to a relatively understudied aspect of the history and context of Bosnia & Herzegovina. It is a particular challenge to look at institutional change in Bosnia & Herzegovina: one joke I frequently hear after I explain the UIC project to someone in Bosnia & Herzegovina is a variation of "here, everything changes and yet somehow nothing actually does!" Another forthcoming working paper, *A Gender Perspective on Constitutional Change in for Bosnia & Herzegovina 1990-2014* explores this claim in more detail.

The limited inclusion of women (or gender) in a context where institutional change is very difficult has meant that my research has particularly sought to understand narratives of gender exclusion and the kinds of emotions that are significant in enabling change, as a means of better understanding some of the blockages preventing change.

It is a well-rehearsed statement that women were not present at the November 1995 Dayton negotiations that designed the peace settlement for Bosnia & Herzegovina. I have sought to understand the various historical and contemporary narratives of exclusion that exist. This has involved oral history interviews with Bosnian women who were present at Dayton (as interpreters, ambassadors and opposition politicians) and with feminist activists who were prominent in the mid-1990s. The overwhelming view is that gender inclusion in the peace process for Bosnia & Herzegovina was not considered especially important at the time (during 1994 and 1995), as women were focussed on humanitarian concerns related to the violence of

¹ Miriam Anderson (2014) 'Windows of Opportunity: How Women Seize Peace Negotiations for Political Change'. Unpublished Manuscript; Sahla Aroussi (2011) 'Women, Peace and Security: Implementing Security Council Resolution 1325 in Peace Agreements', PhD Thesis, University of Ulster; Christine Bell and Catherine O'Rourke (2010) 'Peace Agreements or Pieces of Paper? The Impact of UNSC Resolution 1325 on Peace Processes and their Agreements' *International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 59 (4): 941-80.

² Miriam Anderson (2012) 'Gender and Peacemaking: Women's Rights in Contemporary Peace Agreements' in S A Nan, Z C Mampilly and A Brtolli (eds.) in *Peacemaking: From Practice to Theory*. California: Praeger. Pp. 344-77.

³ Aroussi, 192-202.

the war. Feminist and women's organising in Bosnia & Herzegovina emerged during the 1992-5 war, and this (alongside with nationalism) has somewhat hindered the ability of women to act for women in relation to formal and elite political processes.

However, most striking has been the contemporary narrative of regret that women did not seek to be at the peace table. This has manifested in two ways. First, women activists believe that there is a link between exclusion from the Dayton negotiations and their exclusion from the current debates about the need to reform the constitution of Bosnia & Herzegovina. The current constitution is an annex of the Dayton Peace Agreement and it is in sore need of reform to reflect contemporary realities within Bosnia & Herzegovina. Since late 2012, women activists have sought to develop a Platform for constitutional reform from a gender perspective. Investigating the emotions of activists involved in this particular initiative highlights how nationalism and images of the Bosnian nation often functions as a blockage for institutional change.

The second way that regret about exclusion of Dayton manifests in contemporary politics is in relation to an initiative aiming to link women from Bosnia & Herzegovina with women from Syria. Much of the anticipation underpinning this initiative is the belief that Syrian women can learn from the experiences and consequences of not being included, and therefore push for a seat at the table. This particular initiative highlights the feminist hopes invested into the female body, reminding us of the insights offered by the feminist historian, Joan Scott, in relation to feminist fantasies, where 'the promise of wholeness and completeness'⁴ is central to creating the desire and hope that drives activism for institutional change from a gender perspective.

Recent Team Publications Relevant to the Project

Journal Articles

Laura McLeod and Rachel Johnson, [Gendering Processes of Institutional Design: Activists at the Negotiating Table](#), *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, vol.16:2, June 2014

Georgina Waylen, [Informal Institutions, Institutional Change and Gender Equality](#), *Political Quarterly*, vol.67:1, pgs. 212-223, March 2014

Rachel E. Johnson, [Haunted by the Somatic Norm: South African Parliamentary Debates on Abortion in 1975 and 1996](#), vol. 39:2, pgs. 485-508, Winter 2014

Blog Posts

Laura McLeod [Gender Perspective should not be forgotten amid Bosnia Herzegovina unrest](#), Policy@Manchester Blog, 12 February 2014

Laura McLeod and Rachel Johnson [How can experiences of women negotiators help us achieve equity in times of change?](#) Policy@Manchester Blog, 20 June 2014

Georgina Waylen [Women and Constitutional Reform: Is a seat at the table enough?](#) Development Progress Blog, May 2014

⁴ Joan Wallach Scott (2011) *The Fantasy of Feminist History* Duke University Press: Durham, NC.

Conference Presentations January-July 2014

- Laura attended the ISA conference in Toronto in March 2014. She presented a paper entitled, 'Constitutional Spaces for Hope – Female and Feminist Bodies in Post-Conflict Institution Building'
- Georgina attended the ECPR Joint session workshops in Salamanca in April. She presented a paper, co-authored with Silke Staab, entitled, '[Gender, Institutions and change in Bachelet's Chile](#)'
- Rachel attended a special anniversary conference *Twenty Years of South African Democracy* at the University of Oxford in April 2014 and gave a paper entitled, 'Everyday Institutional Life in South Africa's Constitutional Court and Parliament' (please email Rachel if you would like to read a copy of this paper).
- Faith and Laura both attended the PSA Conference in Manchester in April 2014. Faith presented a paper entitled, 'Paying for our Politicians: MP's expenses and the Rules of the Game' whilst Laura's paper was entitled 'Emotional Futures: Hoping for Female Bodies and Female Presence in Peace Negotiations in Northern Ireland, Bosnia Herzegovina and Syria'
- Georgina presented at an ODI roundtable on 'Women, Peace and Security' in May 2014. Her paper was entitled, '[Gender and Constitutional Reform Processes](#)'.

Workshop: Gender and Institutional Change in Bachelet's Chile – 29 April 2014

The third programme workshop on Gender, Politics and Institutional Change in Bachelet's Chile took place in Manchester Museum on April 29. At a very exciting time, only six weeks into Michelle Bachelet's second term of office, twenty five participants from the UK, Canada, USA and Chile gathered to assess her first presidency and analyse the prospects for reform in her second presidency. The workshop was deliberately interdisciplinary bringing together a range of political scientists, social policy and development scholars who both had in-depth knowledge of the Chilean case and expertise in gender politics and institutionalism. In the first panel, Peter Siavelis (Wake Forrest University) and Marcela Rios (UNDP) provided overviews of politics in Chile today. This was followed by a panel on gender and executive which included papers by Susan Franceschet (University of Calgary) on cabinet formation and by Gwynn Thomas (SUNY Buffalo) on the Chilean presidency. The third panel focused on policy outcomes with papers by Silke Staab (UN Women) on gender egalitarian policy change in Bachelet's social protection agenda, Carmen Sepulveda (UCL) on emergency contraception and the Constitutional Tribunal, and Jasmine Gideon (Birkbeck College, London) on the health sector under Bachelet. Karen Beckwith (Case Western), Maxine Molyneux (UCL) and Sarah Childs (Bristol) also provided commentaries on the papers and discussion.



Thanks to all those who contributed to making the day such a stimulating and thought-provoking one for all concerned. The agenda from the workshop is available on [our website](#)

Feminist institutionalism and the Study of Political Institution Panels at the PSA Manchester

UIC Advisory board member Sarah Childs successfully submitted two panels scheduled at the UK Political Studies Association Conference Manchester 14 – 16th April 2014. These panels offered seven papers from leading feminist institutionalist scholars and early career scholars associated with the 'Understanding Institutional Change: A Gender Perspective' research and the FIIN (Feminism and Institutionalism International Network). The papers examined the gendered aspects of institutional arrangements operating in wide ranging political institutions from specialist gender equality entities in the Parliaments of Easter Europe (Barbara Gaweda); the United Nations system (Fiona Mackay), MPs' expenses in the UK (Faith Armitage), the Parliamentary Labour Party Women's Committee in the UK Parliament (Sarah Childs), as well as through institutional arrangements for political recruitment, in Scotland and Thailand (Elin Bjarnegard and Meryl Kenny), the new institution of UK Police and Crime Commissions (Francesca Gains and Vivien Lowndes), and post-conflict institution building in Northern Ireland and Bosnia Herzegovina (Laura McLeod).

Both panels were held on the first day of the PSA conference allowing not only a dedicated focus for sharing both theory building and empirical findings but a welcome chance to socialise afterwards in one of Manchester's many fine restaurants in the evening.

Papers are available for PSA members via the conference website <http://www.psa.ac.uk/conference/2014-conference>



Work Package 2: New Institutions: a Multi-Level Comparison



Progress on Work Package 2 has been continuing apace with Rachel's research into the South African Constitutional Court as a new institution. As this Work Package draws to a close this year she is currently busy collecting this research into a Working Paper provisionally titled 'The South African Constitutional Court and the Transformation of the Judiciary, 1994-2014'. A big boost came early in 2014 when the Constitutional Court Trust made publically available a large body of interviews carried out by the Trust as

part of its *Audible Legacies* project – which aimed to record the memories and experiences of the people involved in the establishment and early years of the Constitutional Court. These in-depth interviews are available to researchers through the [University of the Witwatersrand Historical Papers](#) and contain valuable insights for the project on the processes by which a new institution's rules and norms are designed and contested, and the ways in which institutional cultures are forged.

The comparative aspect of the Work Package will also come to fruition this year with Working Papers being written collaboratively with Fiona MacKay and Louise Chappell that will focus on, a parliament-to-parliament comparison of the South African and Scottish Parliaments, and a court-to-court comparison of the South African Constitutional court and the International Criminal Court. All will explore the 'newness' of these institutions.

Work Package 5: Change to informal institutions: UK and South African parliaments

The past half-year has been a busy and exciting time for Work Package 5. Faith kicked off 2014 by attending the annual Study of Parliament Group weekend conference in Oxford in January, where academics and parliamentary officials and staff get together to discuss legislative, governance and constitutional issues, particularly those affecting Westminster but also the devolved assemblies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, under Chatham House rules. As ever, the weekend proved to be a great source of insider information about what's happening at Westminster, and an opportunity to expand the potential 'user group' for WP5.



Faith spent most of February in Cape Town on her first fieldwork trip to South Africa. Housed in an apartment overlooking Parliament, she had a great first-hand view of the ceremony around the State of the Nation Address by President Zuma (not to mention the two full dress rehearsals and frequent street demonstrations in the run-up to the May national general election). Faith had the opportunity to interview MPs from the ANC, Democratic Alliance and COPE parties, as well as current and retired senior parliamentary officials. She observed a range of parliamentary proceedings, from rowdy plenary sessions featuring much 'audience participation' from ANC supporters, to committee meetings where important procedural controversies were worked out on the floor in camera. The trip provided the foundations for good comparative analyses of the rules around legislative disorder and MPs' expenses systems in the UK and South Africa.

Forthcoming Conference Participation

- For those attending the APSA meeting in Washington 28th – 31 August, more papers by Francesca Gains, Vivien Lowndes and Georgina Waylen are included in a panel on 'Institutions and the Processing of Feminist Demands' see: http://www.apsanet.org/mtgs/program_2014/program.cfm?event=1614618 for details