



IPSA RC36 INTERIM CONFERENCE

THE CHANGING FACES OF POWER 1979-2019: 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE POWER GROUP

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ABSTRACTS

*Applying Power Analysis:
Using the 'Powercube' to Explore Forms, Levels and Spaces of Power*

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In a complex, globalised and rapidly changing world, power dynamics are multidimensional, constantly evolving, and full of complexity. The 'powercube' (Gaventa, 2006; powercube.net) is an approach to power analysis which can be used to examine the multiple forms, levels and spaces of power, and their interactions. This paper briefly outlines the evolution of the powercube, showing how it builds upon earlier work by Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, and my own earlier work: *Power and Powerlessness in an Appalachian Valley*.

The paper then goes on to show how this approach has been taken up and used for the analysis of power dynamics analysis across a range of fields. Google scholar shows over 500 citations of the powercube, and we have found over 60 studies where the powercube has been applied in a substantive way by a broad range of scholars and activists in INGOs, local NGOs, social movements, think tanks, universities and donors around the world. The uses include analysing power in relationship to participation, policy and governance issues (the areas from which the first applications emerged), but also the analysis of power in a range of contemporary issues, including digital inclusion, economic justice, environmental issues, trade (including fair trade), health, housing, humanitarian relief, human rights, hunger and nutrition, legal empowerment, mental health, peacebuilding, water and other natural resources. Following a review of a select number of these studies, and reflections on their substantive contributions to the study of power, eight lessons are derived on applying and using the power cube for a) power analysis and b) learning for social change.

***Domination and Acquiescence:
Beyond Uni-directional Power Discourses Towards New Configurations***

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Over the past few decades political scholars from different school of thoughts have often dribbled with comprehending the dynamics between domination and acquiescence in local development processes. The overarching and perennial question asked by many is ‘who dominates who?’ thus evoking incessant and indomitable incongruent debates amongst scholars interested in power theorising. Using a critical examination of scholarly literature on power relationships amongst actors in urban local development praxis, supplemented by a South African empirical study, the paper gives a scholarly overview of the shifting nature of relations of domination and subservience as found in power discourses. With the aid of an empirical qualitative study it is argued that power relations can be highly fluid and volatile. This is in contrast to the discourse from the time of Dahl’s treatise ‘Who governs’ that domination is to a large extent uni-directional and produces acquiescence. The paper opens this debate by presenting a historical and empirical scholarly discussion of power shifts from asymmetric binaries to a nuanced view of fluid, volatile and multidirectional power plays amongst actors. Deviating from earlier scholarly preoccupations with uni-directional, binary and power asymmetries, the paper augments power discussions with a focus on actors’ ability to promote hegemonic mutations, thus altering power dynamics to fluidity and volatile relationships.

The Fate of Russian Soft Power following the 2014 Ukrainian Crisis

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The question of Russian soft power continues to divide opinion. While interpretations of this concept among experts, officials and practitioners still diverge, the condition of Russian soft power is also subject to contrasting evaluations, particularly following Russia’s hard power interventions in Ukraine.

The paper will track the development of the various strands of the Russian discourse on soft power over the past decade and a half, drawing on statements by foreign policy leaders and articles by experts and practitioners. It will examine the various meanings of soft power in the Russian context, whether it be understood in terms of the perceived Western threat of colour revolutions, the result of normal cultural and public diplomacy, or a support to civilisational and geopolitical projects. Accordingly, the paper will analyse the extent to which efforts in these areas have yielded the desired result, pointing to problems articulated and perceived successes.

The contrasting verdicts on Russian soft power resulting from the differing interpretations of soft power are especially visible with regard to the events in Ukraine. The impact of the decision to intervene militarily in Ukraine in 2014 and the ensuing economic sanctions and diplomatic cold-

shouldering have posed challenges for Russian soft power, but have also bolstered Russia's 'credibility' in some capitals and among some populations.

While the focal points of Russian engagement with soft power sometimes appear at odds with one another, in order to best appraise the phenomenon it is very useful to keep in mind these differing elements and, crucially, how they interact.

Russia, Connectivity Principal and the Transformation of Russia's Indo- and Asia-Pacific Relations

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The work is devoted to the study of the main elements of the current policy of Russia in Asia and the Indo-Pacific region. The issues of integration Russian projects and, in particular, Greater Eurasia with the project of the Indo-Pacific region are considered. The principle of connectivity that is fundamental in Indonesia and ASEAN policies is analyzed from the point of view of Russian interests. The conclusion is that the proposals put forward by Indonesia regarding the future arrangement of the Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific spaces are fully supported by Russia.

The role of the Russian Far East in the cooperation of Russia with the countries of the region is also considered. The areas in which Russia is particularly successfully developing its cooperation with the countries of Asia, and especially with the countries of Southeast Asia, are shown. Inside the text there is an analysis of the key areas of cooperation between Russia and the countries of Asia and the Indo-Pacific region/. Special attention is paid to the areas of security, military-technical cooperation, food trade and activities of Russian It-companies.

All this cooperation and relations are based on the principles of equality and mutual benefit, which in fact coincide with what Indonesia and ASEAN countries offer to Asia. It is argued that Russia and Indonesia and the Southeast Asian countries have a huge potential for cooperation based on a common understanding of the essence of the processes that are developing in the Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific regions.

The conclusion speaks about the common interests of the ASEAN countries and Russia regarding the future of APR-IPR.

The Changing? Face of Power in International Relations 1979-2019

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The face of international power both in the academic community and the greater world at large changed significantly over the past four decades. The late 1970s represents an important watershed in scholarship on power given that it was the period in which Keohane and Nye's *Power and Interdependence* appeared. In the world at large the decade showed stark manifestations of the authors' arguments about the changing face of power in international politics, these manifestations testifying to the declining utility of military power. The US and Soviets found their preponderant military powers not only failed at containing the rival super power in the Cold War, but had feeble results in maintaining power even over peripheral territories with almost no conventional military

capabilities (Vietnam and Afghanistan). Neoliberalism as a theory of power was on the rise with the work of Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, at the same time that power politics in the world was challenged a growing recognition of the constraints on hard power and concomitantly the rising utility of a softer kind of power oriented around cooperation and the respect for international norms. Such cooperation was especially manifest with the creation of the ERM in Europe, which essentially established the European Monetary System. With the European Community's movement toward regional monetary integration, the very hotbed of war and balance of power politics over the past 5 centuries transcended into a region in which war was virtually impossible. The softening trend in power in world politics continued through to the present; and indeed even beyond the periodic events leading to a softer world, there has been a structural change that has raised the utility of soft power and concomitantly lowered the utility of hard power. But even so, the face may have altered somewhat, but it has been very much the same face as the period before the structural change. Indeed, the face of power has never really changed, it just softened a bit after 1979. Hard power is still and always has been a fixture in world politics, and with each major event that hailed the coming of a softer age, contemporary events reaffirmed the hard edge of the face of power. In fact, if we look closely at the bibles of the three main paradigms of international relations theory (for Realism Morgenthau's *Politics Among Nations*, for Neoliberalism Keohane and Nye's *Power and Interdependence*, and for Constructivism Wendt's *Social Theory of International Politics*) we see that the hard power vision of Realism strongly vindicated the importance of soft power (even before 1979). We concomitantly see that the softer visions of Neoliberalism and Constructivism strongly affirm the pervasiveness of the harder edge of the face of power. Hence even the very canons that proposed to define the face of power in world politics confirmed that competing visions of power themselves yielded the fundamentally same face. In the end, what people saw as distinct and incompatible theories of power in fact affirmed the dominance of *one* face of power: one that contemplated the pervasiveness of both hard and soft power. While the mix may have altered a bit, the face has always been consistently recognizable. In this respect, we see a greater agreement among the competing paradigms on the most important aspect of world politics: power. It is not too much to declare that it is possible to integrate all three with respect to their visions of power, given that they are really looking at the same face. We can call this a Cosmopolitan vision of the face of power. This paper traces out this argument and ultimately yields some concepts upon which to build a unified theory of power in world politics.

The Advent of the Power of Numbers: Rise of Ratings as a Global Governance Tool

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In the paper proposed we would like to present a systematic review of national ratings to discuss their evolution and significance for world politics and global governance actors. As we see, there is a clear tendency of such reports growth to the extent where think tanks and consulting agencies view their own ratings creation as some kind of mandatory attribute of their activity. No doubts, such reports have a positive effect on an organization status and help to promote its services, therefore we could expect a further increase in the number of such publications. Meanwhile, there are many questions related not only to the methodologies and the data of national ratings but concerning a selection of a specific rating for governance needs, especially at the global level. We argue that ratings used by various actors are another tool that allows establishing rules and norms in world politics, thus, it is so important to study their development and their power of numbers.

***China from Old Greatness to A New Power Image in the 21st Century.
Xi Jinping's Rise and New Era Under Sharp Power as A Populist Leader?***

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With the introduction of the “logic of Westphalia” -translated into an international political order founded on a right established by a system of politically independent and territoriality sovereign states- and its corresponding European System of States, an unprecedented adventure for Europe began, which culminated in its rule over the world, and today is marked by a crisis that for many is inevitable and for others it is but a moment in a long process whose outcome is somehow unpredictable. But what is most relevant to an analysis of the European process will perhaps be to emphasize that, in reality, construction has been based on equilibrium that has simply disappeared as the international political paradigm changes under the sign of globalization characterized by dissensions that return as identity manifestations. There was an accumulation of tensions and impasses, all of them with strong political and cultural manifestations. In this context, it is important to analyse the new political role of the People's Republic of China in the projection of its power in international relations in the 21st century. Hu Jintao's successor, Xi Jinping, has been opting for another style of governance that seems to resemble or remind one of Mao Zedong's leadership. However, although similar in nature to the strengthening of the role of the state and the centralization of the party as well in order to promote his personality, there are clear differences, not only because of the times but also because the context of the balance of powers is different. Thus, it is imperative to analyse China's power, specifically from its strategic culture to understand the nature of sharp power that has been applied in China's international projection, hence it is important to position this new form of power over Russia and the United States under Trump's leadership.

The Two Languages of Power

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Although generally recognized as a central concept in the social sciences, the diverse and in part seemingly contradictory conceptualizations of power have triggered the suspicion that completely different phenomena have been subsumed under the same term. In contrast, this paper argues that the conceptual confusion can be resolved by, first, distinguishing between three levels of power (essence, action, social; see my *Logik der Macht*, *Velbrück* 2012).

Arguing that discussions in the social sciences are about what I have called social power, the paper then traces how the familiar distinction between power over and power to refers to two different functions of social power, namely the repression and the constitution of social relations. A sketch of how both of these functions have been *analyzed* in action-theoretical as well as structural and systemic theoretical frameworks leads to a four-field-matrix which substantiates the claim that the different aspects of social power may only be separated analytically. Any essentialist isolation of these aspects into different types of power necessarily *loses* sight of and masks how power permeates social phenomena.

Accordingly, all social relations are power relations; power cannot be escaped and evaluated from an external standpoint. However, the study of power has traditionally been motivated by critical concerns. Analyses of power aim at criticizing and altering power relations. The final part of this paper argues that a totalizing conception of power and a critique of power are compatible because they are formulated in different languages: the former in the objectifying language employed by an observer of the social dynamic,

the latter in the performative language of a participant entangled in social practices. The relation of these two languages of power is the topic of the theory of *pespecival* dualism which, I argue, forms the core of any comprehensive social theory.

The Resource-Based Account of Power

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Almost thirty years ago the author published *Rational Choice and Political Power* which defended a resource-based account of analyzing and measuring power. Most of the attention on the book centered around whether examining agential resources really captured everything we want to say about social power in society and over the account offered there on systematic luck. The book is to be re-issued by in 2018 with a new introduction and postscript. In this paper I will return to the account of power in that book, further deepening and expounding on its analysis of power. I will say more about how the five types of resources identified in the book can be used to measure the nature of the power structure in a comparative statics framework. Power as a type. Explain how resources can be utilized in more dynamic strategic and game-theoretic manner to look at actual power games. It suggests what measurement strategies we can adopt. It will return to the issue of systematic luck and how that helps us understand the power structures of society and how problematic it is to change them. It adds to the framework of the original book in terms of power to, power over and power with and how we can help empower people, and shows how our language is both an important power resource but also systematically works to the advantage of some – a form of systematic luck.

Heterarchism: Toward Paradigm Shift in World Politics

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"International Relations" theory has been dominated since the study of IR formally began at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, in 1919. There have in recent decades been three mainstream "competing paradigms" (Wolin 1966), realism, liberalism and constructivism, all of which assume that the dominant independent variables are states and the inter-state system -- what could be called methodological state-centrism. We argue that this way of conceiving world politics was (a) always problematic (Cerny 1990) and challengeable, and (b) time-bound and increasingly anachronistic. Since the mid-20th century, a dialectic of globalization and fragmentation -- political, economic and social processes above, below and cutting across states -- has caught states and the interstate system in a complex evolution or process of restructuration toward what has been called "heterarchy." Heterarchy is defined as the coexistence and conflict between differently structured micro- and meso quasi-hierarchies that compete and overlap not only across borders but also across economic-financial sectors. The core of this process is the triangulation of (a) the "disaggregated state" (Slaughter 2004), (b) fragmented global governance and "regime complexes" (Alter and Raustiala 2018), and (c) "sectoral differentiation" in the international political economy, leading to a spectrum of market/hierarchy (Williamson 1975) or public/private de facto policymaking



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processes and forms of "mutual capture." The result is the decreasing capacity of states to control both domestic and transnational political/economic processes or to act as Waltzian "unit actors" in world politics. This requires a new and robust competing paradigm that we call "heterarchism."