

A New Agenda seeks to explore all aspects of society using all the academic disciplines paying special attention to values ... with special interest in modelling ... not disinterested in practice ... and aspiring to high academic standards.

Commentary, April 2016

No. 28

Values, World Society and Modelling Yearbook, 2015

Chapter 1 (first draft)

Values, World Society and Modelling Yearbook, 2015

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Acknowledgements

When I joined the Conflict Research Society in 1982, there were two key figures. I never met John Burton but everybody talked about him. Values were at the heart of John Burton's approach to conflict resolution. 'World Society'¹ was the title of one of his books. Michael Nicholson I did meet – and continued to meet over the next couple of decades. 'Formal Theories in International Relations'² was the title of one of Michael's books – 'formal theories', in other words modelling. So there you have it: values, world society and modelling ...

1 Introduction and Overview ... John Burton, 1915-2010 ... (first draft)

The year 2015 was the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, the dropping of the atom bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the end of the Second World War, and the start of the 'Long Peace'. The year was also the centenary of the birth of one of those who attended the San Francisco conference in 1945, namely John Burton, founder of the Conflict Research Society. And it was the bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo.

¹ Burton, John. *World Society*. London: Macmillan, 1972.

² Nicholson, Michael. *Formal theories in international relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

The year saw a continuation of social progress overall – but at the same time the suffering of many individuals and groups. Economic tensions and the policy of austerity were at the centre of the three votes in Greece (the election in January, the referendum in July and the second election in September). Cultural tensions were displayed: between Islam and secularism in the Paris attacks (on Charlie Hebdo cartoonists in January - and then again in November); between Christian south and Islam north in the Nigerian elections (in March); and between religion and secularism in Ireland’s referendum on same-sex marriage (in May). Demographics, austerity, migration and nationalism were all issues in the UK general election (in May). An earlier history, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War, was reflected in contemporary conflict in Syria and Libya and elsewhere, with debates about intervention and debates about the refugees arriving in Europe ... Turning to the physical world, a total eclipse of the sun occurred on 20 March 2015 in the Faroe Islands.

The 2015 Yearbook discusses these events alongside a variety of other specific events and general issues. This is the second Yearbook. Like its predecessor, the 2015 Yearbook does not aim to be a comprehensive or representative account of the year's events – it is merely a personal selection, written from the UK, and informed by the UK press, mainly *The Times* - but with aspirations to reach beyond that particular location. It draws on the monthly issues of the *Commentary* which were produced during the year under the banner of *A New Agenda*.³ *A New Agenda* seeks to explore all aspects of society using all the academic disciplines paying special attention to values ... with special interest in modelling ... not disinterested in practice ... and aspiring to high academic standards. The rationale for the New Agenda is discussed in more detail in the 2014 Yearbook (Burt, 2016, pp. xii, 1-3)

Note: in what follows I shall provide links to the relevant issues of the *Commentary*. Later when I am preparing the Yearbook I shall be substantially revising what is in the original.

Values and world society: John Burton, 1915-2010

Issue 14; pp. 1-21

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDo1ZjQ5ZTJlZmI1NWYxZmFk>

The year 2015 marked the centenary of John Burton’s birth. Values were at the heart of John Burton’s approach to conflict resolution, and ‘World Society’⁴ was the title of one of his books. Kevin Avruch notes in the 2014 Yearbook that John Burton was ‘the one who began my education on the calculus of power, and through this, the ethical

³ Burt, Gordon. “A New Agenda.” Accessed 1 June 2015.

<https://sites.google.com/site/gordonburmathsocsci/home/a-new-agenda>.

⁴ Burton, John. *World Society*. London: Macmillan, 1972.

Hinkkainen, Kaisa and Madura Rasaratnam. (2015) [Peace and Violence Explained? Assessing John Burton’s Legacy](#). Conflict Research Society Annual Conference, 2015. Call for PAPERS.

Issue 14 of the commentary contains: the full call for papers; my remarks at the the Spetmeber 2010 commemoration

imperative of attending to what we think we are doing when we go out into the world' (Burt, 2016, p. 37).

Avruch, Kevin. (2016) Context and pretext in conflict resolution. Talk on receiving CRS Book of the Year Award. In Burt, Gordon (2016). pp. 25-37.

The Conflict Research Society's annual conference in 2015 had the following theme:

'Peace and Violence Explained? Assessing John Burton's Legacy

To mark the centenary of John Burton's birth, the Conflict Research Society conference this year returns to some of the enduring questions and issues that defined his work. Burton was a pioneer of peace and conflict research and integral to the establishment of the Conflict Research Society. He led the scholarly challenge to realist understandings of power within international relations and developed new ways of thinking about conflict and conflict management. He was also a conflict management practitioner, bringing his scholarly work into the 'real' world.

The Conference will be hosted by the Conflict Analysis Research Centre (CARC) and the School of Politics and International Relations at the University of Kent. John Burton helped establish CARC at University College London when it was known as the Centre for the Analysis of Conflict in the early 1970s. It is fitting therefore that the CRS and CARC, both of which Burton was instrumental in establishing, come together at Kent for the celebration of his Centenary.'

In advance of the conference, Issue 14 of the Commentary was devoted to John Burton. See Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Section titles in Issue 14 of the Commentary, February 2015

1 Kent, John Burton and the Conflict Research Society
1.1 Kent, September 2015: CRS annual conference – '... assessing John Burton's legacy'
1.2 Kent, September 2010: a commemoration of John Burton
1.3 John Burton ... Minutes of the Conflict Research Society, 22 nd April 1964
1.4 The objects of the Society ... September 1964?
1.5 De Reuck and Knight, 1965: Barbu, Boulding, Burton, Chance, Cohn, Deutsch, DeVos, Dicks, Emery, Galtung, Glass, Haddow, Lapter, Lasswell, Marcuse, Nicholson, Rapoport, Röling, Sondhi, Tomkins, Trist, van Doorn, Washburn
1.6 Burton, Groom, Mitchell, de Reuck, 1972 .. Centre for the Analysis of Conflict
2 John Burton, a life
2.1 John Groom: an obituary for John Burton
2.2 Wikipedia: John Burton 1915-2010
2.3 John Burton: an autobiographical outline [6 pages]
3 John Burton's perspectives on conflict
3.1 John Groom: <i>Conflict research avant la lettre</i>
3.2 David Dunn: <i>Engaging prevention: a pressing question of need</i>
3.3 Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall: Burton's approach to conflict resolution
3.4 Kevin Avruch: criticising Burton's neglect of culture – and second thoughts
3.5 John Burton: 'Conflict as a function of change', 1965
3.6 John Burton: 'Harmonious relationships', 2010
3.7 John Burton and 'A New Agenda'

In 1965 John Burton had been a central figure in organising a CIBA Foundation Symposium on *Conflict in Society*. Those participating included: Barbu, Boulding, Burton, Chance, Cohn, Deutsch, DeVos, Dicks, Emery, Galtung, Glass, Haddow, Lapter, Lasswell, Marcuse, Nicholson, Rapoport, Röling, Sondhi, Tomkins, Trist, van Doorn and Washburn. Anthony de Reuck and Julie Knight edited a collection of the contributions. De Reuck's Preface is interesting, not least in indicating the broad scope of the project:

‘About three years ago there began to emerge in this country a new discipline, or more properly, perhaps, a multi-disciplinary field of inquiry into the causes and control of conflict in human society. The subject had already been recognized for some time in the United States where a Centre for Research on Conflict Resolution had been created at the University of Michigan in 1959, and also in continental Europe where, for example, a Peace Research Institute exists within the Institute for Social Research in Oslo. The Centre in Michigan publishes the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* and the Institute in Oslo produces the *Journal of Peace Research* as vehicles for research papers in this field.

Formal recognition of this new area of discourse in Britain occurred in June 1963 when a meeting was convened at Windsor which resulted in the formation of the Conflict Research Society. The present symposium arose out of the ensuing discussions from a suggestion by Dr. Jack Mongar, of University College, London, that such a meeting might be held to mark the new status of the subject. In the meantime a senior research fellowship in conflict studies had been established in the University of Lancaster, and happily Dr Michael Nicholson, the present incumbent, was able to attend this symposium ...

... The programme does not reflect any firm theoretical view of the proper limits of the field or of the nature of conflict ...

... The intention of this symposium is to discuss conflict between social groups at a hierarchy of levels, ranging from situations involving small groups of people face to face, and proceeding through confrontations of large and apparently relatively impersonal institutions such as occur, for example, in industrial disputes between management and trade unions, right up to international conflict and nations at war ...

... The symposium is essentially inter-disciplinary, involving sociology, anthropology, social psychology, psychiatry, ethnology, systems analysis, political science, history and international relations ...'

Overview

Part I Values

Part I of the book is about Values. Values are fundamental. They are both cause and consequence. Values drive our actions and values provide the criteria for judging the consequences of our actions. Society is a multi-level system and values exist at each level. In Chapter 2 the life of an individual is seen as a journey in a social landscape.

It is a journey of ups and downs, supported by advice and nurturing. Values are placed on lives and on social locations. There are high and low status lives. There are high and low status locations. Journeys can exhibit upward or downward social mobility; or continuing high status or continuing low status. The 2014 Yearbook considered values at the group or societal level and asked how do 'we' see 'our values'? Do we think of them as unanimously held within our own group? Comparing ourselves with other groups, do we think of our values as 'exceptional' ... do we think of them as 'universal'? Are 'our values' good or bad? Are 'our values' safe or under threat? In many conflicts there are positive perceptions of self and of 'our values' and negative perceptions of the other and of 'their values'. Chapter 3 applies these general notions to the ideas of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. Briefly noting the debates, it looks at the great diversity of reactions in the case of the Charlie Ebo cartoonists who valued freedom of expression to satirise Muhammad and the Paris killers who loved Muhammad and took revenge on the insult to his honour. Chapter 4 notes that religious strife was much in the news in 2015 and considers the several distinct meanings of 'God' and religion, referring respectively to the universe, living things, afterlife, spiritual experience, life and society, gender, positivity and truth.

2 Life as a journey through a social landscape

Issue 19; 7; 13-15:

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoyZmE4MjYxMTdjMWEyNzk2>

Issue 18S; 1; 1-13

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoyMmIxNDdiYmExYWU0OTQ1>

Death invites reflection on life. The funeral of a friend was a celebration of his life. 'Great Lives', selected obituaries from The Times over the last hundred years, quotes Thomas Carlyle: 'history is the essence of innumerable biographies. The life of an individual is a journey in a social landscape. It is a journey of ups and downs, supported by advice and nurturing. Advice comes from sources as diverse as Robert Louis Stevenson's El Dorado, a popular Jack Berch song of the 1950s, and Constantine Cafavy's Ithaca – all agreeing that life should be embraced positively - and the Gideon Bible. The tenth anniversary of the London bombings reminds us of how life journeys can be cut short ... at random and by coincidence.

Lives involve interactions and relationships with others. Love or similar values such as empathy, or harmony or 'nurturing flourishing', have been identified by a number of writers as the key to more positive relationships and to a reduction in violence. Steven Pinker identified empathy as one of a number of features that allowed the 'Better Angels of Our Nature' to flourish. Just before his death in 2010 John Burton, founder of the Conflict Research Society, called for a Universal Harmonious Human Relations Research Association. John Burton's remarks find a surprising echo in Jack Berch's 1949 rationale for his radio show. Roger Mitchell of the Richardson Institute has introduced a distance learning course on a 'loving, inclusive politics of peace'. Interestingly, Lewis Fry Richardson himself suggested his arms race equations might be re-interpreted as the reciprocation of love. My own thinking about this has led me to the notion of 'nurturing flourishing'. Nurturing flourishing is a primary function of education and two perspectives on this are offered, one from Eton and the other from

Sidwell School, 'the most elite school in the world'. Finally, Jonathan Sacks provides an account of how religious communities provide the nurturing of flourishing.

Values are placed on lives and on social locations. There are high and low status lives. One indicator of the status of a life is the appearance of an obituary in a newspaper such as *The Times* – and the selection for inclusion in *Great Lives*. There are high and low status locations. Journeys can exhibit upward or downward social mobility; or continuing high status or continuing low status. A graphical portrayal of the ups and downs in life's journey are the fluctuating fortunes on the tennis circuit for Federer, Djokovic and Murray. Labour Party's Andy Burnham refers to his journey from a Merseyside comprehensive to Cambridge University. Michelle Obama talks about her upbringing as a black girl on the working-class south side of Chicago and how she worked her way into Princeton University. Sathnam Sanghera talks about his journey as a son of an illiterate labourer from an immigrant ghetto in Wolverhampton to Fleet Street. These life journeys are characterised by upward social mobility. However 'capitalism produces not just a shining city on a hill [Reagan, 1984], but two cities [Cuomo, 1984]'. Republicans resist Obama tax increases; excessive pay deals in the UK are criticised; and inequality was a dominant theme at the World Economic Forum in Davos.

See also 'The life of an individual – feeling at home in the world' (Burt, 2016, Chapter 5); 'Life and history: the speculative pursuit of value' (Burt, 2010, Chapter 13); and 'Relationships: family and friends, care and therapy, nurturing flourishing' (Burt, 2016, Chapter 4).

3 'Our values': the Enlightenment ... Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité (and Laïcité) ... loving the Prophet

Issue 13; pp. 1-17

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDo3NzhjOTVhODQ1MjA2YWVm>

'Grayling is the approachable upbeat carrier of the Enlightenment torch, while Gray is the gloomy critic of uplifting myths of human progress and rationality.'

'... whereas Elias was very aware of the fragility of [the 'Civilizing Process'], in Pinker's hands it is a classical liberal-Enlightenment story of progress.'

Waterloo reimposed the pre-1789 European status quo ... 'in some ways the imperialist genius Bonaparte betrayed the French Revolution, but its central political ideas, freedom of the individual and the rights of man, remain with us and must be the basis of any worthwhile society.'

The 25th of January marks the anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, Scotland's national poet. His life overlapped with the American Revolution and the French Revolution. His poem 'Is there for honest poverty?' has been referred to as 'the Marseillaise of humanity'. The Battle of Waterloo in 1815 might be seen as a postscript to the French Revolution (and a prelude to the First World War and the final collapse of the Austrian, Russian and Ottoman empires) – and two hundred years

later still prompted debate about values. Moreover are the values of the French Revolution - Libert ,  galit , Fraternit  (and Laicit ) – compatible with one another?

On 7th January this debate took on a tragic form: the Charlie Ebro cartoonists valued freedom of expression to satirise Muhammad and the Paris killers loved Muhammad and took revenge on the insult to his honour. The great diversity of reactions can be classified as follows:

- condemn the killings, uphold freedom of expression
- cartoonists, journalists, writers, secularists uphold the right to offend
- focus on Islamic fundamentalism and immigration
- call to Muslim moderation and reformation
- the need for more security, restriction of intolerance
- Muslim condemnation of the killings
- condemn the killings but what 'we' do or have done can be criticised
- the need to address both/all extremes
- alert to the threat to Jews and Christians
- condemn the killings but have disquiet about the virtue of causing offence
- criticise the cartoons, decline to condemn the killings
- condemn the cartoons and support the killings

See also ‘Our values’: unanimous? universal? exceptional? good? safe?’ (Burt, 2016, Chapter 6).

4 Religion: the universe, living things, afterlife, spirit, life and society, gender, positivity and truth

Issue 19; pp. 13-15

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoyZmE4MjYxMTdjMWEyNzk2>

Issue 13; pp. 1-17

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoyNzhjOTVkdjMjA2YWVm>

Issue 18; pp. 2-10

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoyZjI4N2U4OTk4NWlzMzk0>

Religious strife – between different religions and between religions and secular beliefs – have been much in the news in 2015. I find it helpful to think of several distinct meanings of 'God' and religion, referring respectively to the universe, living things, afterlife, spiritual experience, life and society, gender, positivity and truth. These meanings indicate links between concepts of God and various academic disciplines: the sciences of physics and biology; the social sciences of psychology and sociology; and the humanities disciplines of literature and philosophy.

The film, 'A theory of everything' was about the physicist Stephen Hawking and prompted questions about the implications of modern physics for the existence of God. Darwin's theory of the evolution of the species continued to cause controversy. Half the people in Britain believed in an afterlife - but is there any empirical evidence? Sam Harris asked: is spirituality possible without religion?

Religion can be seen as providing a model of life, a community of support,

and an image of a positive society. One system of ideas might be characterised as a self-interested other-regarding happiness-seeking rational choice. Guidance is offered. There are imperatives with justifications, of generic types. To what extent in these arguments is the role of religion and God necessary or sufficient?

However, what counts as a positive society? Sex and gender issues are much debated in contemporary society, religions participating actively in the debate. Diarmaid MacCulloch noted that ‘Christian churches in the West were still tearing themselves apart over many sexual issues’. On 22nd May 2015 a referendum was held in Ireland on same-sex marriage with strong opposition from the Roman Catholic church. The ordination of women bishops in the Church of England continued to be a source of controversy. Headlines such as ‘young Iranians rightly flouting the mullah’s medieval view of sex’ run. Does the analysis of sacred texts indicate patriarchy?

Religion is seen by some as providing an image of a negative society. Are wars due to religion? Is terrorism due to religion? Is Islamic State Islamic? Steven Pinker has suggested that the Hebrew Bible is one long celebration of violence. Tom Holland has argued that Muhammad comes in many forms, both a moral leader and a war leader.

Seeking to appraise these various ideas, we deploy the propositional calculus, the statistical analysis of texts and a more wide-ranging historical analysis. The views of Waltzer and Sacks are noted. Are religious statements true and are religious arguments logical? Arguments relating to strict religious truth, to the authority of sacred texts and to the ordination of women bishops are formulated in terms of the propositional calculus. Asking, is religion a ‘Source of moral values’? ... or ‘one long celebration of violence’, texts are analysed and the Positive Speaking Quotient (PSQ) calculated: Sachs 63%; Moses 21%; Jesus 66%. In appraising religion there is a need to consider its history and diversity. The history of Christianity and Islam ... of Europeans and Arabs ... the myth of homogeneity and the reality of heterogeneity is considered.

Part II World Society

This second part of the book looks at world society. Chapter 5 provides an account of some of the events and issues that occurred in 2015. A perennial issue the question of intervention in a conflict by those outside and Chapter 6 looks at this in the context of the Arab Spring, Libya and Syria ... and Western intervention. The remaining chapters all consider the representation of world society using the basic concepts of space and time. Chapter 7 considers social space and geographical space. Chapters 8 to 10 consider political space and geographical space. In three cases – elections in Nigeria, Greece and Ireland - the vote is between two options and hence the percentages can be represented in one-dimensional political space. The fourth case is the Northern Ireland election – here, because there were many parties the percentages are represented in multi-dimensional political space. Chapter 11 provides a detailed analysis of the UK general election of 2015. It also looks at UK election results in the period 1945 to 2015. This consideration of times series is followed up in Chapter 12 which looks at world historical trends in relation to social value, population and violence and related debates.

5 The world today

Issue 17A; pp. 20-24

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDo3OGZjNmI3Yzc5MDhmZmQz>

Issue 19; pp. 1-2

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoyZmE4MjYxMTdjMWEyNzk2>

Issue 21; pp. 2

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDo0MmRlNTIyYTY1MWE3YzYi>

In recent times world society has continued to make progress in a number of positive dimensions and this is accompanied by decreases in a number of negative dimensions such as physical violence and ‘structural violence’. However there have been tensions in a number of spheres. In terms of demographics, population continues to grow, population ages and there has been an increase in migration, with many refugees. In the economic sphere the crisis of 2008 has led to austerity measures and these have been met with resistance. In the cultural sphere, there have been tensions between religion and modernity and between religions – see also Chapters 3 and 4. In the political sphere established parties continue to decline in the face of demographic, economic, cultural (religious and national) and military problems. In the military sphere, civil wars continue in several Arab countries and this is associated with terror attacks worldwide. These issues have been addressed by national governments, acting individually, or in concert, or through the United Nations.

Here we pick on just a few cases illustrating these general features. Economic tensions and the policy of austerity were at the centre of the three votes in Greece (the election in January, the referendum in July and the second election in September). Cultural tensions were displayed between Islam and others in the Paris attacks (on the Charlie Hebdo cartoonists in January - and then again in November); between Christian south and Islam north in the Nigerian elections (in March); and between religion and modernity in Ireland’s referendum on same-sex marriage (in May). Demographics, austerity, migration and nationalism were all issues in the UK general election (in May). Military tensions were displayed in the vote in the UK about intervention in Syria (in December).

The year 2015 saw the seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War and of the establishment of the United Nations. The year 1945 saw the defeat of Germany - from the East and the West - and the defeat of Japan and the end of their short-lived empires. The armies of the USA, UK and Soviet Union occupied much of the world and this was reflected in these three countries’ membership of the about-to-be-formed Security Council, the other two members being France and China.

The intervening seventy years have seen the end of the British Empire, the rise and fall of superpower Soviet Union and the growth of the European Union, the hegemony of the USA and the rise of China, economic recovery by Germany and Japan and the alliance of these two countries with the USA and the West, the end of French and other European empires, and fluctuating relations between China, India and Russia/ Soviet Union. These varying histories prompted varying remembrances and there was debate in the West about participation in the Victory Day parade in

Moscow. These varying histories were also reflected in contemporary tensions such as how the US and its NATO and EU allies should respond to Russia over the Ukraine crisis. An earlier history, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War, was reflected contemporary conflict in Syria and Libya, with debates about intervention and debates about the refugees arriving in Europe.

6 The Arab Spring, Libya and Syria ... and Western intervention

Issue 24A; pp. 1-4

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoIM2Q2YTIIMTgxYTM5ZTI2>

Issue 24A; pp. 1-4

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDo0MTBiZGFjNDVmYzNiYTNm>

Libya intervention, 2011, talk

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoyNGQzMTRhYzJiYWEwYjFk>

Libya intervention, 2011, slides

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoxZjI5N2RjYzA3OGJjZmE4>

1915, Christmas Day: fighting the Senussi in Libya

‘The Western desert campaigns in the First World War arose after Germany and Turkey attempted to raise Islamic communities against the Entente powers.’ One such community was the Senussi in Libya who rose up against the Allies.

... The Royal Bucks Hussars held a Christmas eve service and the next day they attacked the Senussi. Private William Bowyer wrote that it was ‘very strange singing ‘Peace on Earth’ and off to kill as many as we can early next morning’.

2015, Today, 2nd December, the House of Commons votes on bombing Syria

‘The attacks in Paris on the 13 November have provided an emotional justification for deeper military intervention in Syria by the French and UK governments. As peace researchers, however, we urge caution, prudence and reflection, before authorising more extensive military engagement. The Middle East has already suffered 14 years of military intervention with little positive to show for it. The challenge facing us, now, is how to develop creative, plausible and non-violent alternatives to the current cycle of violence.’

(Clements, Cochrane and Miall, 2015)

The rest of the chapter is devoted to a paper which I wrote in 2011 about intervention in Libya. Table 1.2 below gives the section titles.

7 Social space: social value, psychology and geography - international and regional comparisons

Issue 16; pp. 2-4, 6-8, 26-30 ... pp. 4-6, 17-26

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoyMmRiMDFiZWZjZWVknGE4>

This chapter has two parts. The first part is on social value. How do countries differ? How do different dimensions of social value relate to one another? Does more money lead to more social value? World maps of social progress for 133 countries appear in

Table 1.2 Contents for *Obama, the financial crisis, the Arab Spring and Libya*
– *the lessons of history and mathematical social science*

Introduction

1 ‘Mathematics ... but not as we know it.’

2 Mathematical models of history

3 Mathematical objects and specific realities

4 ‘How can mathematics provide an account of the specific complex social reality that constitutes the Arab Spring and the crisis in Libya?’

4.1 Arab Spring: situation-outcome lessons of history

4.2 Information and reasoning

4.2.1 Information sources and the possibility of good history

4.2.2 Quantity and quality of argument

4.2.3 Ordinary language, datasets, abstract patterns and reasoning

4.3 The Libyan crisis

4.3.1 Key events in the Libyan crisis

4.3.2 The whole system of actions in the Libyan crisis

4.3.2.1 Conceptual framework – Handbook of International Relations

4.3.2.2 Actor structure ... criteria ... unity v disunity

4.3.2.3 Generalising general disequilibrium theory

4.3.3 A single action: why intervene in Libya?

4.3.3.1 Binary choice models for Libyan intervention

Possible branching paths of history / future

Genocide: the lessons of history

Choice and the lessons of history

Correct and incorrect choices

Three choice models for Libyan intervention

4.3.3.2 More complex choice models for Libyan intervention

5 Conclusion

Postscript 1: mathematics and number

Postscript 2: Gullible Gordon: ‘we saved the people of Benghazi’ – Cynic: ‘it’s all about oil’

the 2015 Report for the Social Progress Index (SPI). ‘We define social progress in a comprehensive and inclusive way. Social progress is the capacity of a society to meet the basic human needs of its citizens, establish the building blocks that allow citizens and communities to enhance and sustain the quality of their lives, and create the conditions for all individuals to reach their full potential.’ The overall SPI correlates 0.8 with GDP per capita. It correlates 0.8 with life satisfaction and -0.8 with extreme poverty – but it has only a weak negative correlation with inequality. A detailed analysis of the twelve variables in the SPI identifies a first principle component which explains almost 50% of the total variance, running from basic features of progress to more advanced features; from nutrition, water and shelter to health and wellbeing and environmental sustainability. However the correlations involving the more advanced features are weaker. A separate study considers the relationship between GDP per capita and democracy: does more money lead to more democracy? - or is there a U-shaped relationship? The relationship between money and social value (guns or butter?) is modelled in Chapter 14 which also discusses the principle component analysis of points in abstract space.

The second part of this chapter is on psychology and geography and a range of important social variables. How do regions within the UK differ? How do the different variables relate to one another? ‘Friendly Scots and grumpy Londoners’ was typical of the superficial newspaper headlines, belying the depth of the actual study of 380 Local Authority Districts in the UK by Rentfrow and his colleagues. The pattern of results was similar to findings from previous research which looked at national

differences or regional differences in the USA: personality traits are unevenly distributed geographically and this is associated with a range of important political, economic, social, health and demographic outcomes. Personality was assessed using the Big Five Inventory. In this chapter an analysis of the correlations at the individual and group level locates the Five along a continuum: from Agreeableness to Conscientiousness to Stability to Extraversion to Openness. The correlations for each of the Five had a single-peaked profile on the continuum. Likewise the correlations for each of twenty-four political, economic, social and health variables had a single-peaked or single-troughed profile on the continuum. This type of analysis of points in abstract space is further discussed in Chapter 14.

8 Nigeria and Greece: geographical space and one-dimensional political space

Issue 16; pp. 4, 8-17

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoyMmRiMDFiZWZjZWVknGE4>

Issue 19; pp. 6-13

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoyZmE4MjYxMTdjMWEyNzk2>

This chapter is the first of four chapters about elections. The chapter is in two parts. The first part is about Nigeria – see background in Chapter 5. Presidential elections were held in Nigeria in March 2015. Muhammadu Buhari gained 54% of the votes and sitting president Goodluck Johnson gained 45% - a sizeable win for Buhari. Variation in voting percentages across the 37 states revealed a highly divided society ranging between 1% and 95%. The distribution was fairly flat, with some central clustering and some polarisation. Despite this, variation within states was much greater than variation between states – as indicated by predictability and multi-level analyses.

Political space relates to geographical space. This can be studied in various ways. Looking at the 50% ‘winning contour partition’, Buhari won in a single set of connected states and Johnson won in three connected sets of states: the mid-south the east-middle and the Federal capital. Contour-partitions at different levels divided the area into four: north, upper middle, lower middle, and mid-south, ordered according to decreasing Buhari vote. Latitude north correlates 0.9 with the Buhari vote. The voting surface can be represented by a series of west-east sections for different latitudes north and this suggests an interaction between latitude north and longitude east and also a special mid-south effect. The pattern of results is also illustrated by looking at the spatial network of states and the correlated profiles for the primary and secondary concentric perimeters.

The second part of this chapter is about Greece – see background in Chapter 5. Three elections were held in Greece in 2015: a legislative election on 25 January and a second legislative election on 20 September – but it is the bailout referendum, held on 5 July between these two other elections, that we focus on here. In terms of differences between states the three elections correlated 0.7 with one another. The bailout proposal was rejected with 61% voting ‘No’ and 39% voting ‘Yes’ - a sizeable win for ‘No’. Variation in voting percentages across the 57 regions revealed a moderately divided society – ranging between 51% and 74%. Political space relates to

geographical space. Perimeter profiles exhibited local jaggedness superposed on single-peakedness.

The chapter ends with a comparison of seven binary-option elections: USA 2008 and 2012; Ukraine 2014; Scotland 2014; Nigeria 2015; Ireland 2015; and Greece 2015. The type of analysis of political and geographical space used in this chapter is further discussed in Chapter 14. The 2014 Yearbook discusses the political and geographical space associated with Ukraine (Chapter 9) and Scotland (Chapter 10).

9 Ireland: geographical space and one-dimensional political space

Issue 18; pp. 10-21

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoyZjl4N2U4OTk4NWlzMzk0>

On 22 May 2015 a referendum was held in Ireland to mandate provision for same-sex marriage. The bill was supported by all political parties but officially opposed by the Roman Catholic Church, in Ireland and in the Vatican (85% of the population in Ireland is Catholic). The bill's approval, 'Yes', was seen by some as heralding a 'kinder, gentler, more accepting' society, by others as 'a defeat for humanity'.

The 62% 'Yes' vote (less than opinion polls had predicted) was, as well as being a sizeable win, also reflective of a divided society. Voting across the 43 constituencies exhibited a uniform distribution with the 'Yes' vote ranging from 75% (Dublin South East) to 49% (Roscommon Leitrim). So variation within constituencies was much greater than variation between constituencies.

Political space relates to demographics: the 'Yes' vote correlated 0.9 with the logarithm of population density, with the area of the constituency and with the 'internal distance'.

Political space relates to geographical space, in particular to an urban-rural divide. The highest 'Yes' vote was in the capital, Dublin, in the East; next were 'medium urban' areas, the east & south coastal corridor and the two urban areas in the west, Limerick and Galway; and finally rural and lesser urban areas, the south being higher than the north. An equation seeks to capture east-west and south-north gradients as well as urban peaks.

Ireland has a lower urban population (63%) than the UK (83%) and just nine urban areas with more than 30,000 people (following a power distribution). These areas and their internal transport linkages are mostly situated on the east & south coastal corridor, and are the primary terminals for transport to the UK and the rest of Europe.

Turnout was positively related to the 'Yes' vote; and (hence?) to demographics.

10 Northern Ireland: multidimensional political space and geographical space

Issue 17B; pp. 5-25

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDo3ZTg4Y2JkNTNiYjAwMTc>

Issue 18; pp. 21-23

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoyZjI4N2U4OTk4NWlzMzk0>

This chapter is the second of four chapters about elections. The chapter is about Northern Ireland - whereas Chapters 11 is about the UK as a whole. Whereas Chapters 8 and 9 look at elections offering voters just two options, in the Northern Ireland election of 2015 voters can choose between many parties. So the voting percentages can be represented by a point in multidimensional political space. The overall result is a point in political space; each constituency result is a point in political space; and the set of constituency results can be represented as a set of points in political space. The space is a percentage space and so is finite with a well-defined centre. What is the shape of the set of points in relation to the centre?

Overall, there are a few large parties and many small parties and so the 'overall point' is quite far from the centre of the space. Moreover many of the individual constituency results show dominance by a single party – and so the constituency points are quite far from the overall point. Different parties have dominance in different constituencies ('multidimensional polarisation') and so the constituency points are quite far from one another - in different directions from the overall point.

Larger parties overall vary more across constituencies than do smaller parties, and this is reflected in differential variation in different dimensions. A principle component analysis identifies the principle dimensions of variation. The first component concerns the primary competition between the two largest parties: Sinn Fein against the Democratic Unionists (and the smaller Alliance and Conservatives). It explains 30% of the total variance. The thirteen parties can be ordered along this primary continuum with Sinn Fein at one extreme and the Democratic Unionists (and the smaller Alliance and Conservatives) at the other. The eighteen constituencies can also be ordered along this primary continuum with Belfast and Newry & Armagh (where Sinn Fein is strong) at one extreme and Belfast East and North Down (where Democratic Unionists, Alliance and Conservatives are strong) at the other. This is referred to below as the S score (Sinn Fein high). Other components concern the competition between the other parties – the second component explains just 15% of the variation and the remaining components explain less than that. Restricting attention to the subspace containing the largest five parties, another analysis finds the same first component as before, and a second component being Ulster Unionists versus Social Democratic and Labour.

Prompted by the notion that individuals have single-peaked preferences in option space, the notion that parties have single-peaked preferences in percentage space is considered. On a one-dimensional continuum, parties tend to peak to the left or to the right. In a two-dimensional space, constituencies are located on a closed loop and parties peak at the point on the loop nearest the party vertex, giving an approximately sinusoidal curve.

Political space relates to geographical space. There is a gradient of increasing S score running from North-East to South-West – with contours of equal S-score at right angles to the gradient. The capital, Belfast, is in the North-East; and East-West Belfast reflects the gradient. The borders also reflect the gradient, the North-East looking to Scotland and the UK and the South-West adjoining Ireland – Ulster Unionists look to the UK and Sinn Fein looks to Ireland.

11 The UK general election of 2015: prelude, results and aftermath ... 1945-2015

Issue 17A; pp. 2-19

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDo3OGZjNmI3Yzc5MDhmZmQz>

Issue 17B; pp. 1-5

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDo3ZTg4Y2JkNTNiYjAwMTc>

Issue 19; 4; 4-6?????

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoyZmE4MjYxMTdjMWEyZnk2>

Issue 23; pp. 12-26 -34

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDo3MTBiZGFjNDVmYzNiYTNm>

Issue 20; pp 1-18

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDo3YzAwYWU4ZjhjYjZlNWJh>

Prelude. Widespread dissatisfaction and disagreement characterised the debate in the lead-up to the election. On election morning the poll of polls indicated a hung parliament. The day before, the press on the right, left and centre had warned the electorate of the consequences of making the wrong choice. Over the preceding month The Times had headlined: ‘panic in the markets’, Farage and Sturgeon winning the seven-way leaders’ debate, Clegg opening the door to Miliband government backed by SNP, Cameron inching ahead, and the Queen to take control of the election aftermath. Briefings were provided - throughout by the Institute of Fiscal Studies and three weeks before by the Political Studies Association. The previous election in 2010 had replaced Gordon Brown’s Labour government with a coalition between David Cameron’s Conservatives and Nick Clegg’s Liberal Democrats. Since then opinion polls had tracked the almost immediate collapse of Liberal Democrat support and the steady rise in UKIP support. In Scotland, Scottish Nationalists overtook Labour, briefly in 2011 and again, massively, in 2015. Less dramatically, in the UK, overall Conservative support had fallen and Labour support had risen but the gap closed as the 2015 election approached. The results of by-elections, local government elections and European elections were broadly consistent with the patterns indicated by the polls. Migration of support on the left-right continuum followed a distance model. Would the legitimacy question be satisfied if the median MP was Labour? Voters had single-peaked preferences in relation to possible coalitions. Criteria for the optimal coalition had different, multiple-peaked profiles on the left-right continuum.

The results. The dramatic change in just 24 hours: the belief on election morning that this was going to be ‘the closest vote for decades’. At 10pm the same day the Exit poll put the Conservatives well ahead. The ‘sweetest victory’ for the Conservatives and ‘the Scottish lion has roared’ ... the leaders of Labour, Lib Dems and UKIP resigned. But was it a political ‘earthquake’? The competition between parties during the election

gave way in the aftermath to competition within parties. The performance of the opinion polls was appraised.

Volatility measures are used to check the claim that the result was a political 'earthquake'. A comparison of the 2010 and 2015 results is made. The distribution of shares is studied, overall and by nation, power and representation is considered, and the flight from the centre is noted.

After the election there was strong competition within all the parties, none more so than within the Labour party. The process for the election of a new leader started immediately after the general election and ran through May and June until on July 15th The Times announced 'shock poll puts Corbyn on course to lead Labour'. The campaign and debate was strongly negative. The July poll results are analysed in detail and can be understood in terms of a left-right continuum. Party priorities and leader qualities, party background and demographics were all relevant. Different election procedures would have given different results. Group preferences were single-peaked. Individual preferences cluster on or near a single-peaked transversal of the preference tetradecahedron.

The trends in UK general elections over the period exhibit: the post-war decline of two-party politics; the post-war decline of three-party politics; the rise of 'Other' parties; and the decline in electoral support for incoming governments. The time series for party support are modelled by first-order auto-regressive models and equilibrium values noted. The time series for Liberal Democrats suggests a model with two equilibria.

12 World historical trends: social value, population, violence ... debate

Issue 23; pp. 4-9

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoMTBiZGFjNDVmYzNIYTNm>

Issue 22; pp. 17-19

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoyNmRmYjZjZjI4MzI1YmRk>

Issue 22; pp. 8-16

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxb3Jkb25idXJ0bWF0aHNvY3NjaXxneDoyNmRmYjZjZjI4MzI1YmRk>

Only since the middle of the twentieth century has social science grown to challenge history as the favoured approach to studying the history of society. There are debates within social sciences notably between a scientific approach and a constructivist approach. In particular this debate occurs in the field of international relations. In 2013 the journal *Sociology* published a Book Review Symposium on Steven Pinker's *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, one of the reviewers being Larry Ray. At the 2015 annual conference of the Conflict Research Society, Scott Gates asked 'have we seen the end of the waning of war?', while Larry Ray also addressed Steven Pinker's thesis, raising broad questions about the conception of violence.

Has social value increased? Taking structural violence as the opposite of social value, has structural violence decreased? One measure of social value is the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI shows a linear increase in the period

1980-2013. More recently the inequality-adjusted HDI has been developed one component of which is inequality in life expectancy. Life expectancy in England has had a linear increase over the period 1991-2014. There is some inequality between regions which has reduced slightly over the period. At least in these studies then social value has increased (and hence structural violence has decreased).

De Long gives Kremer's estimates of the total human population from one million BC to the present and notes that similar estimates are given by other authors. The simplest model of population dynamics is an exponential one with constant growth rate. Applying this model, we find that growth rates increase: low in the early period up to 5000BC; and 0.0007 in the period 5000BC-1500AD, 0.00375 in the period 1500AD to 1940 and 0.017 in the period 1945 to 2000.

The presentations noted above by Scott Gates and Larry Ray prompt a re-examination of Steven Pinker's, Chapter 5, 'The Long Peace' and its thesis of declining violence, specifically the declining death rate due to war. The underlying equations are formulated. Attention then focuses on the war death rate and its probability distribution. A beta distribution gives a fair approximation to the data. A space-time varying probability distribution on the subset structure of space-time is proposed.

Part III Modelling

13 Sets and functions ... time and space ... elections ... physics

The preceding chapters have discussed a variety of topics and in many cases drawn on mathematics to provide a model of the topic. In the present chapter we bring all these applications together and also deepen the mathematical treatment a little. All these applications relate to the social world. The section titles are:

Redefining sets and variables

Functions

Distributions

Time

Space (world society)

Space (geographical)

Space (abstract)

A space-time varying probability distribution on the subset structure of space-time

The relationship between money and social value

Election analysis

The chapter ends with two examples from the physical world, both involving modelling space and time in the solar system: the total eclipse of the sun occurred on 20 March 2015 in the Faroe Islands; and the notion of midsummer.

How the 2015 Yearbook relates to my previous work

The 2015 Yearbook has the same overall three-part structure as the 2014 Yearbook. Both Yearbooks analyse contemporary world events drawing on foundational ideas in academic disciplines. These foundational ideas are discussed in my book *Conflict, Complexity and Mathematical Social Science*⁵ (CCMSS, 2010). In some cases there is a very direct correspondence between chapters in the three books. See Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Correspondence between the chapters in the three books

Topic	CCMSS, 2010	Yearbook 2014	Yearbook 2015
Values	4 to 6	I	I
Individuals / psychology	8, 9	2, 3	(2)
Relationships		4	(2)
Life	13	5	2
'Our values'	-	6	3
Religion / culture		2, (6)	4
World society	8 to 14	II	II
World today	-	7	5
World history	14	8	12
Politics / case studies	4 to 6, 11	9, 10	8 to 11
Economics	12	11	-
Gender	-	12	(4)
Sport	-	13	-
Modelling	2-5, 7, 15	14	13

⁵ Burt, Gordon. *Conflict, complexity and mathematical social science*. Bingley: Emerald, 2010.