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On 30 June, DIIS published a report on developments in the areas of the four Danish EU opt-outs. Commissioned by the Danish Parliament, the report was expected to provide a platform for debate on the opt-outs, leading to a Danish referendum. The Irish ‘no’ to the Lisbon Treaty changed all that. However, the conclusions are still valid: over the last sixteen years, the areas affected have changed in ways that were hardly foreseeable when the opt-outs were initially formulated in 1992.

Extensive changes have occurred at the global, European and national levels. Combined with a new political agenda, the consequences of opting-out are quite simply different from what could have been expected in 1992. The opt-outs must be reconsidered on the basis of the new conditions. The DIIS report provides important knowledge as a basis for such reconsideration.

DIIS also fully exploited its multi-disciplinarity in a commissioned study of fragile situations and aid. The synthesis report provides a set of recommendations with respect to the guiding principles for Danish engagement in fragile states and situations.

In 2008, DIIS was subject to an international evaluation conducted by the Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) and an international panel chaired by Dr Raimo Väyrynen, Director of the Finnish Institute of International Affairs. The panel concluded that DIIS has successfully established an effective research organization and that it conducts and publishes independent research and policy studies of good, and in some cases excellent quality.

According to the panel, DIIS’s broad mandate and modest resources make it difficult to be excellent in all domains, especially given strong international competition, but what makes DIIS special is our wide portfolio, the mix of research and policy studies, and the breadth of its theoretical and methodological approaches. As the panel points out, this is an important advantage for the Institute. We shall try to exploit this advantage even more in the years to come.

The panel encourages us to draw up a comprehensive strategy addressing all DIIS activities, and it also points out that serious thinking should be given to developing a career path at DIIS. It will be one of our tasks in 2009 to follow up on these to recommendations, and indeed we are already well on the way to achieving this.

To me personally, it was a great pleasure that the panel spoke with most of the staff at DIIS, concluding that we have a good working atmosphere, and that the staff expressed satisfaction with their jobs and working conditions. It confirmed and emphasized that enthusiastic, competent and hardworking staff are the real driving force of DIIS.

Finally, in 2008, DIIS was ranked 26 out of more than a thousand think-tanks in Europe in a study undertaken by University of Pennsylvania. Since we do not consider ourselves a think-tank, perhaps an even greater pleasure was our classification among the top ‘scholarly’ institutions.

Nanna Hvidt
Director
Since the mid-1990s, a wave of democratization has rolled over Africa, but it has coincided with an ambiguous revival of traditional authority: chiefs, clan elders and other kinship-based authorities are increasingly being recognized by international donors and African states alike. As during colonial rule, great faith is again being placed in traditional authorities to provide stability and facilitate development at the grassroots level. This marks a clear break with earlier post-colonial policies, when the legal powers of traditional leaders were seen as detrimental to modernization.

Why has traditional authority made a come-back, and what does this imply for political developments in Africa? Is it a sign of failed modernization and an oppositional reaction to current democratization? Or are traditional leaders the ‘new’ agents of change?

The conditions facing weak states provide the dominant explanation for the revival of traditional authority. It captures situations in which the absence of the state and its inability to cater for its citizens has enlarged the role of chiefs in governance, but it fails to explain why this resurgence is also occurring in countries with a relatively well-functioning state and where transitions to democracy are taking place. In state legislation, it is in fact the stronger states that are the most progressive in enlarging the legal status of traditional leaders. As partners in development, traditional leaders have become important entry points to local communities, whose interests they presumably represent. More questionable is whether this significantly changes unequal power configurations and distributions of resources.

The inclusion of traditional leaders in state-governance and development is ambiguous. There are clear indications that reliance on chiefs by state and donor agencies can make development projects more effective and locally legitimate, reduce crime and increase revenue collection. In this sense, chiefs are ‘new’ agents of change.

Then again, bolstering kinship-based, unelected and patriarchal authorities undermines efforts to promote gender equality, access to justice and democratic local governments. Despite contrary claims, recognition of traditional authority seldom results in increased inclusion of local community interests in public affairs.

Recognition cannot be separated from the support of traditional leaders by local populations. However, recognition has predominantly been used to bolster the influence of powerful national agents, particularly state officials and political party cadres. This limits, rather than fosters, a vibrant civil society of active citizens participating in politics and development. As partners in development, traditional leaders have become important entry points to local communities, whose interests they presumably represent. More questionable is whether this significantly changes unequal power configurations and distributions of resources.

Helene Maria Kyed

some cases, this is due to national legislation or donor policies that position traditional leaders as the representatives of local communities. In others it is a side-effect of democratic decentralization, as chiefs use a space opened by new locally elected governments, while in yet others chiefs are informally used to mobilize votes in competitive multiparty politics.

Democratization has increased rather than decreased the role of traditional leaders, providing a significant vocabulary for revised definitions of tradition. In Mozambique, traditional leaders are seen as representing a specific African democracy and as an element of democratic decentralization. However, revised definitions of traditional authority should not be confused with the achievement of democracy.

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Helene Maria Kyed
Tiger Prawns on your Dinner Table: They May Well Come from Bangladesh

Prawns are big business in Bangladesh, providing some 14% of export earnings. Khulna district produces the most. That is why Zarnia, Abishan and I are in a hotel looking out on three large concrete prawn depots adorning the central roundabout in Khulna town: we are here to study elites and policies at the local end of the industry.

The prawns are frozen and packed in modern plants where quality control is designed to meet the stringent demands of the EU, the USA, and Japan. The plant we visit on the Rupsha River uses Danish machinery and employs some 300 workers, mainly female.

The Khan Jahan Ali Bridge connects the plant to Khulna Town and beyond to where most of the local producers are to be found. Cycle rickshaws loaded with blue plastic drums filled with prawns labour halfway up the long slope and then freewheel down the other side. They come from the prawn depots to which small producers deliver their produce. A few farm several acres of ponds in a scientific way, but the majority cultivate a few prawns in flooded paddy fields.

Many have become rich from the processing and export of prawns; government bodies such as the Export Promotions Board have worked hard to support the industry, and the economy has benefited. Policies to aid the smaller producers are harder to find. The Khulna District Fisheries Officer tells us that productivity is less than 40% of that in Vietnam and Thailand, and that little is done to help the producers. The evidence of poverty speaks for itself. This is why we are here. Who is deciding policies, and what factors influence their nature and implementation? Studying elites involved aims to provide some answers to these questions.

Three young boys deliver eight tiger prawns in the depot where we are – a day’s catch. They will be paid after the prawns are frozen, packed and shipped. A packet of eight is what you can find in the supermarket freezer.

Neil Webster
While Copenhagen may be 5 degrees north and 3 degrees east of Gelnhausen-Meerholz (Germany), the geographical centre of Europe, in many respects Denmark is at the heart of Europe. Temporally, Denmark is neither a ‘founding member state, nor a ‘new’ member state; it is somewhere in the middle in European integration history. Demographically, a population of 5.4 million means that Denmark is neither a ‘larger’ member state, nor a ‘micro’ member state. Socially, Denmark is somewhere between Nordic austerity and an easy-going Mediterranean type of lifestyle. Politically, Denmark’s Cold War experiences are shared with ‘old’ Western Europe, while its post-Cold War aspirations are shared with ‘new’ eastern Europe. Thus temporally, demographically, socially and politically, Denmark is somewhere in the middle of the European Union (EU), that is, somewhere near the heart of Europe. As a small, open country somewhere near the heart of Europe, Denmark is deeply implicated in the processes of globalization which so define our era. The Danish economy has been transformed by globalization over the past two decades. Trade in goods and services is now over 80% of gross domestic product, with approximately 44% of trade being with the Eurozone (and 27% of trade with the rest of the EU). Globalization involves a transformation in the size, ease and technologies of human interconnectivity. In this respect, global container shipping firms such as Mærsk, low-cost airlines such as Cimber Sterling and internet telephony providers such as Skype all reflect how Denmark contributes to such global interconnectivity. At the same time, globalization also has its dark sides, for example, facilitating predatory capitalism, international criminality and human trafficking, and contributing to global warming. It is in this context of globalization and EU membership that Denmark’s relations with the rest of the world must be understood. When tackling global problems, it is the EU to which its members turn for the collective capacity to respond to these challenges.

Whilst globalization has been accelerating, the position of Denmark somewhere near the heart of the Europe has been increasingly called into question by the growth of the Danish opt-outs from the Treaty on European Union. In the autumn of 2007, the European Committee of the Danish Parliament commissioned DIIS to investigate the developments and consequences of the Danish opt-outs from the 3rd stage of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU); Security and Defence Policy (SDP); Justice and Home Affairs (JHA); and the declaration on union citizenship. Led by DIIS’s EU unit, the Danish Opt Out Investigation (DOOI) used a multi-method approach based on analysing four sources of evidence (secondary literature, public legal documents, ‘on record’ written/oral evidence, and ‘off-the-record’ evidence), as well as engaging in comparative analysis with other member states (especially Sweden, Finland, Ireland, and the UK).

Very early, it became clear that there was little secondary literature on the Danish opt-outs, and few scholars researching the topic. As the research progressed, it also became clear that there is not much documented evidence regarding the opt-outs, although this is not surprising, given that the DOOI was looking for evidence regarding Denmark’s absence from policy and politics. Ultimately, the DOOI found itself at the ‘cutting edge’ of investigative research, working with a mixture of empirical material, including standard social-science techniques of interview triangulation and verification interviews. To ensure the quality of the analysis, the DOOI incorporated two rounds of peer review using scholars and experts in the policy fields. By the end of the investigation a number of worrying developments

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Manners, Ian.“The Normative Ethics of the European Union”. International Affairs, 84 (1).
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Küger Rasmussen, Maja & Ian Manners.“Danish MEPs: A Channel for Danish Values?”. In Peter Niedergaard (ed). Fra fælles forsamling til folkestyre. European Parliament.
over the past sixteen years appeared to be hollowing out the claim of Denmark being at the heart of Europe.

While the world and the EU has changed dramatically over the past sixteen years, with wars in Yugoslavia, global terrorist attacks, changing patterns of migration and demography, global financial problems, and a more than doubling of the number of member states, the opt-outs have remained in place. In this period, EU member states have attempted to respond to European and global challenges by strengthening security and defence policy, expanding judicial cooperation and increasing the coordination of economic and financial policy. By 2008 Denmark had largely excluded itself from active influence and full participation in three of the EU’s four main objectives. Equally worrying was the impact the opt-outs were having on Denmark’s position in the EU, with evidence suggesting that issues such as treaty negotiations, chairing the EU presidency, achieving administrative positions and overall perceptions were all negatively affected by the opt-outs. The DOOI and report leads to the conclusion that although Denmark maybe somewhere near the heart of Europe, it appears to have become a hollow heart.

The hollowing out of the Danish-EU relationship is not only due to the opt-outs, but also to the relative lack of research capacity on EU issues, which leaves public and democratic debates relatively under-informed. The DOOI illustrated the extent to which there is a relative lack of scholarship in the three crucial policy areas of EMU, SDP and JHA, as well as Denmark’s overall relationship with the EU. Similarly, there is relatively little Danish research on the EU’s external relations, in particular enlargement policy, multilateral diplomacy and Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). More problematic for Danish democracy is the relative lack of expertise and scholarship on the European Parliament and questions of improving democratic accountability in EU legislative processes. Again, this could be seen during the DOOI, where there was very little scholarship on the way in which the promotion of inter-governmentalism in the EU is contributing to a lack of democratic accountability in areas such as CFSP/SDP, as well as police and judicial cooperation.

This relative lack of research capacity runs the risk of leaving public and democratic debates devoid of informed content, something that a Danish centre of EU expertise and well-resourced network of experts could help to fill. The much shorter Swedish experience of EU membership has some examples here, with the well-resourced Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies (SIEPS) and Swedish Networks for European Research in political science (SNES), economics (SNEE) and law (NEF) helping to create a critical mass of international research for wider public and democratic debates.

The EU unit has endeavoured to enrich Danish-EU debates over the past two years. Its current research focus is on improving Danish and international research on changing political contestation in the European Parliament. The research places an emphasis on understanding the extent to which Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) from old and new member states, in particular Denmark, contest European issues along party-political lines, national-political lines, or perhaps emerging new lines of political contestation. The focus for the coming years is on the 7th European Parliament and compares the behaviour of differing national MEPs with that of national public opinion, national party agendas, and EP party groups’ agendas. As Denmark’s relations with the rest of the world cannot be understood outside the context of EU membership, the EU unit contributes to international policy research such as the EP contestation project, which aims to improve public and democratic debates and thus help return Denmark somewhere closer to the heart of Europe.

Ian Manners
LARS ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, PHD, SENIOR RESEARCHER

Currently, Lars Engberg-Pedersen is working on a study of the future of development aid which has been commissioned by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He has previously worked as Senior Advisor on decentralization in the Ministry of Home Affairs in Burkina Faso and as International Director of Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke (a Danish NGO). As a researcher, he has written on local politics, civil society organisations, poverty reduction and development assistance.

Millions and millions of people live in societies where tomorrow is more a threat than an opportunity, where the state constitutes a danger rather than a shelter, and where isolation and vulnerability rule the day rather than progress and prosperity. Under such conditions there are no quick fixes, no quick roads to “Denmark”. And the specific features of each particular society make it even more difficult to see what the heterogeneous so-called international community may be able to do to alleviate the plight of these many, many people.

When the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs approached DIIS to commission a study of societies in fragile states as a basis for the elaboration of a set of principles for Denmark’s engagement with such states, it was obviously a great opportunity. It was a pleasure to put our research knowledge to work for a cause as important and influential as this, but also a challenge to come up with insights and suggestions relevant to very many different societies. It was also a chance to bring together several of us working on distinct topics, but each providing our particular perspective on how to address issues of fragility.

We produced four background papers, twelve policy briefs and a synthesis report (see www.diis.dk/fragile). The idea was to give a critical overview of current discussions of fragile states and to take up fundamental development issues in the context of fragile situations. This way of organising the study enabled each of us to present our own ideas, which together produced a quite broad set of approaches and suggestions, but the organisation of the study was also a way of handling some of the tensions and disagreements that arose among ourselves.

One such disagreement was how far one can go in categorising societies for the sake of development action. Given the real world of donor agencies, with their limited numbers of staff to handle complicated, diverse development problems, it is obviously of great importance for researchers to provide relatively simple models suggesting how to understand and act in different situations. On the other hand, one obvious concern is that simple models limit understanding, sometimes to the extent that the suggested actions prove worse than doing nothing.

Another disagreement concerned the ability of external actors such as donor agencies to do any good in the case of fragile states. Historically, state formation has been a long, brutal experience, and there are few if any convincing examples of external actors having played a decisive, positive role in state building. On the other hand, it seems unacceptable to leave millions of people to their unfortunate destinies, as well as unsatisfactory to cold-shoulder development practitioners who are obliged to act.

In the end, the collective output of all our papers is a worrying number of recommendations of things that donor agencies should consider and do in fragile situations. In each of our fields of specialisation, we quite naturally think that there are significant issues to be addressed, and sooner rather than later. Gender, taxation, diasporas, corruption, natural resources and local governance are all themes that we put high on the agenda in the different papers. Unwittingly, therefore, we managed to contradict ourselves, as we all shared the concern that most donor agencies are struggling with too little capacity and too many non-developmental interests to be able to provide the flexible and adapted support that fragile situations call for.

So-called fragile states have moved up the international aid agenda. Commissioned by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, fifteen researchers from DIIS and two from the Chr. Michelsen Institute in Bergen have carried out a study of current debates and central dilemmas.
"We are at war, and I am a soldier." The suicide video of Mohammed Siddque Khan, the alleged leader of the group of Islamist terrorists in the 7 July 2005 London Underground attacks, leaves no doubt that Khan thought of himself as a "soldier" at "war" with the West. A West, which in his mind threatened his so-called Muslim brothers and sisters, that is the Ummah – the community of Muslim believers all over the world – and that this threat was so severe that he personally had to act in its defence by killing what he saw as supporters of a democratically elected government that was responsible for the so-called war against his fellow Muslims. And there can be little doubt that he thought that being at war made it legitimate to kill and wound people who had just happened to take the wrong carriage in the London Underground that July morning.

However, despite the fact that, since the al-Qaeda attacks on U.S. soil on 11 September 2001, scientists and intelligence services around the world have researched intensively the question of what is happening in the radicalization process, we are still only able to draw up indistinct sketches of the process. For no one knows exactly what happens in the process in which a person develops from having radical thoughts and ideas – and possibly expresses them among friends or in public – to actually taking action and committing political violence. All we know is that most radicalization processes are as individual as the person who undergoes them. As the official British intelligence investigation into the London bombings noted, there is "no simple Islamist extremist profile in Britain and the threat might just as well come from those who appear to be well integrated into the mainstream British society, with jobs and young families, as those from socially and economically poorer sections of society." But although there are great individual differences – not least in motivation – radicalization processes nonetheless have some common features, regardless of whether the radicals are right-wing or left-wing extremists, nationalists or religious extremists, including Islamist extremists.

Nobody is born an extremist – it's something you learn in the course of your life. Radicalization is a process. And a long process, because most people have many ties to their surrounding communities, friends and family, which must be broken first. It consists of many layers and forms, as it can be political, religious, social or cultural in its core. Few radicalize on their own. It is usually something people do in groups: "a bunch of guys" as the well renowned American al-Qaeda expert Mark Sageman expresses it.

Some of the leading European researchers in the field, such as Dutch Frank J. Buijs, Froukje Demant and Atef Hamdy, argue that the "major events" in your life – such as moving to the city to start at university, a death in the family, a serious case of discrimination, or a political event, for example, in the Middle East – may "provoke" or "enhance" an already ongoing radicalization process.

They also argue that the "hybrid identities" of many second-generation European Muslims may play a role. On the one hand, the latter feel that they do not properly belong to the European country they were born or grew up in. On the other hand, they do not feel that they belong in their parents' or grandparents' home either. Jørgen Staun

POVERTY, CHILDHOOD TRAUMA, OR POLITICAL CONVINCION? DESPITE INTENSIVE RESEARCH INTO RADICALIZATION PROCESSES, THERE IS A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT WHAT EXACTLY BRINGS A WANNABE TO BECOME A REAL TERRORIST.
The International Arab Dialogue Institute, Cairo, DIIS, has established a Danish-Arabic Social Science PhD School. This initiative aims at creating new and sustainable networks among PhD students and scholars from Denmark and Egypt who are working on social science issues and to introduce young academics to leading scholars and academic institutions in Denmark and Egypt in order to build long-term relationships between researchers in the two countries.

The programme focuses thematically on areas of shared concern for young academics enrolled at universities in Denmark and Egypt. It is believed that such areas could include methodologies and theories of the more cross-cutting and fluid than is usually appreciated, and how may they produce certain realities on the ground in themselves, thus becoming self-fulfilling prophesies?

This is the point of departure for a new research project on competing Middle Eastern security discourses on which I have just embarked. The intention is to go beyond current popular descriptions of Middle East security as they have unfolded since 2003. The idea is to emphasise how identities and allegiances in the region are more cross-cutting and fluid than is usually appreciated, and how we as researchers or policy-makers may participate in sustaining certain narratives about security and conflict in the Middle East. These narratives are far from innocent, since they contribute to the ways in which Western strategies and policies are shaped when dealing with the Middle East.

Helle Malmvig

The Future Shape of the Middle East

Just before noon the 27 of December, Israel launched a military offensive against Gaza. Within a few hours forty security installations in the Strip are being hit, several hundreds are wounded and a ground invasion appears to be looming. While Iran, Syria and Hezbollah are quick to condemn the Israeli attacks and voice their solidarity with Hamas, other regional players and Western actors appear more hesitant.

The war rapidly comes to be treated as part of larger battle between so-called Islamists and moderates, Israel and Iran, pro-western and anti-western forces in the Middle East. As with the wars in Iraq in 2003 and in Lebanon in 2006, the Gaza conflict is interpret-ed as part of an overall struggle defining the future shape and order of the region. Yet to what extent are such dichotomised analyses use-ful, and how may they produce certain realities on the ground in themselves, thus becoming self-fulfilling prophesies?

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Helle Malmvig

Go to the Primary Sources: Talk to Terrorists

Eight years ago the field of terrorism research was merely a niche attracting only a few researchers from various fields, but now it has become quite competitive. Among other things, this has lead to a debate on methodology. Prior to the al-Qaeda attacks on New York in 2001, a cross-disciplin ary tradition resulted in the application of a variety of methods, including studies based on interviews with people engaged in violent political action in groups such as the Brigate Rosse and the IRA. With the new wave of terrorism research, which is almost solely concentrated on Islamism, the collection of data through first-hand interviews with the perpetrators themselves has almost vanished.

The most commonly used sources are now newspaper articles, court transcripts, interrogation reports and ideological texts. This is valid data in answering the questions of the ‘how’s’, the ‘where’s’ and in teaching us on their own ideological explanations. But if we believe that also terrorists are active, acting persons with more than one agenda, it fails to answer the ‘why’s’. A person on trial will often either deny having participated or present an ideological explana-tion which reveals none of the accused’s personal or social motiva-tions.

What drives a human being to take part in a struggle against a perceived enemy? Why does the group decide to plan and actually conduct an act of terrorism? How does the group differ from other groups with the same ideological views, but who have not acted vio-lently? To obtain valid answers to these questions, we must find and ask the only people who know: the perpetrators themselves.

Jon Als Olsen

This research report was based on interviews with the perpetrators themselves. It is the only way to receive answers to the questions above. Without interviews the research is only a description of the perpetrators’ actions and may miss the actual motive behind the actions.

The Future Shape of the Middle East

Just before noon the 27 of December, Israel launched a military offensive against Gaza. Within a few hours forty security installations in the Strip are being hit, several hundreds are wounded and a ground invasion appears to be looming. While Iran, Syria and Hezbollah are quick to condemn the Israeli attacks and voice their solidarity with Hamas, other regional players and Western actors appear more hesitant.

The war rapidly comes to be treated as part of larger battle between so-called Islamists and moderates, Israel and Iran, pro-western and anti-western forces in the Middle East. As with the wars in Iraq in 2003 and in Lebanon in 2006, the Gaza conflict is interpret-ed as part of an overall struggle defining the future shape and order of the region. Yet to what extent are such dichotomised analyses use-ful, and how may they produce certain realities on the ground in themselves, thus becoming self-fulfilling prophesies?

This is the point of departure for a new research project on competing Middle Eastern security discourses on which I have just embarked. The intention is to go beyond current popular descriptions of Middle East security as they have unfolded since 2003. The idea is to emphasise how identities and allegiances in the region are more cross-cutting and fluid than is usually appreciated, and how we as researchers or policy-makers may participate in sustaining certain narratives about security and conflict in the Middle East. These narratives are far from innocent, since they contribute to the ways in which Western strategies and policies are shaped when dealing with the Middle East.

Helle Malmvig

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UNDP AND THE MDGs
Senior Researcher Steen Folke has been involved in evaluating UNDP's global programme, as well as its regional programme in Asia. Both evaluations are fairly critical, but according to Folke, it is important that UNDP continues to be a leading international development organization.

For the last two years, I have had the pleasure to be the team leader of international teams carrying out two major evaluations of UNDP programmes. The first dealt with UNDP's regional programme in Asia and the Pacific, the second with UNDP's global programme ('Third Global Cooperation Framework of UNDP 2005-07'). These programmes in a sense constitute a 'superstructure' on top of UNDP's country programmes, which they aim to support.

Within the UN family, UNDP has taken the lead in supporting country governments, the private sector and civil society to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, the eight goals adopted at the UN Summit in 2000. The goals include halving the number of people living in extreme poverty and under conditions of hunger, ensuring that all children have a chance to go to school, drastically reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, etc. - all to be achieved before 2015.

In the past, UNDP implemented a vast range of projects in most Asian, African and Latin American countries. But more recently the emphasis has shifted towards working in partnership with other institutions, civil-society organizations and governments. The global programme and the regional programmes play key roles in researching and documenting development trends, establishing and disseminating best practices, trying out innovative ideas, and supporting policy formulation in important thematic areas such as poverty reduction, democratic governance and sustainable development. Among other things, these programmes finance a complement of policy specialists in these areas who are stationed at UNDP headquarters in New York and in seven Regional Service Centres across the Southern part of the globe. They are instrumental in supporting the UNDP country offices in their concrete activities.

The two evaluations were fairly critical. They acknowledged the important role played by the programmes in supporting the achievement of the MDGs, but the programmes themselves were criticized for a lack of focus, for spreading resources too thin, for not being able to document results and more generally for a range of management weaknesses. It remains to be seen to what extent this criticism is reflected in the implementation of the next round of the two programmes. Like other members of the UN family, UNDP is a highly bureaucratic organization, and as with a supertanker it takes time to correct its course.

Personally, I find it extremely important that UNDP continues to be a leading multilateral development organization, cooperating closely with governments and the other UN agencies. There are strong forces in international society that are working to marginalize the UN at a time when the need for truly global and democratic governance is greater than ever.

Donor countries are tempted to give priority to bilateral development assistance, which enables them to use the aid to pursue other political agendas (commercial, security etc.). The World Bank is dominated by the rich countries. The UN and its agencies are democratically governed by all countries and thus ensure that even poor and weak states can have a little influence. The decision-making processes are cumbersome and often acrimonious, but UN institutions are of paramount importance in fostering a global polity where might does not always trump right.
Twice a year, the senior divisional chief in a small town in Ghana receives a container full of used computers and furniture, sent from Denmark by Kwaku, a Ghanaian townsman. This is one example of how African diaspora organizations and local authorities in Africa collaborate over development.

Kwaku is one of the many migrants involved in development in his home area. While most migrants prefer to send remittances to their relatives, there are still numerous migrant associations in Western countries that support development in their home areas. This has made national governments, as well as local and traditional authorities, reach out to the so-called diaspora. In Ghana, the traditional authorities have started seeking support from their citizens and townspeople living abroad, liaising with migrant associations, and sometimes touring Europe and North America. Indeed, the senior divisional chief in town is a former migrant himself and used to be a successful business manager in the US until he returned to Ghana ten years ago. Now his ambition is to strengthen education, and he uses the container equipment to help realize his ambitions, distributing furniture and computers to various schools in the area. This arrangement works to the satisfaction of both Kwaku and the chief. Kwaku makes a difference, as he says, and the chief explains that he is giving something back to the community. At the same time, they both enjoy the recognition that they receive from supporting development in their home town.

The container story is one of the cases in the research programme, ‘African Diasporas as Agents of Change’, which compares diaspora involvement in Ghana, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi. It shows how traditional authorities and other actors are calling on migrants to support basic social services. Likewise, it exemplifies the tendency for migrants to support their home areas and to focus on local issues. Sending used equipment from Western countries to Africa is just one of the ways that migrants become involved themselves. Such contributions are high in demand, but there are also problems. Communication can prove difficult. Expectations on both sides might be unrealistic. Old computers break down. Yet, in spite of this, migrants do make contributions to schools, hospitals, or water supplies, sometimes in collaboration with government agencies or other NGOs, sometimes on their own.

Kwaku is thus not an exception, not even in Denmark. A survey carried out by DIIS of African diaspora associations in Denmark located 120 associations from 22 countries and found that almost 60% of them have been involved in development activities. Typically, these activities range from sending occasional collective remittances, for instance, as emergency relief, to sending used equipment in containers destined for schools and hospitals, or organizing educational campaigns about HIV/AIDS. The study also found that most of these activities have been carried out with technical and financial assistance from the Danish institutional framework. However, only a few associations had been successful in applying for funds for larger development projects. One of the main reasons cited is that the application technicalities pose a hindrance. Indeed, all the associations that have been able to receive funds for their projects collaborate with Danes or Danish networks which have facilitated the application procedures. The study therefore recommends alternative application procedures, depending less on formal and written applications while permitting a more personal evaluation of the associations and the proposed project. It also recommends programmes for the capacity building of key association members and initiatives that seek to further collaboration and involvement between Danish NGOs and African diaspora associations.

A CONTAINER FROM DENMARK

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LIMITS TO STATE-LED TRANSNATIONALISM

The Tanzanian government is exploring ways to benefit Economically and politically from its diaspora. Whereas the diaspora was discur- sively non-existent during the heydays of socialism in the 1960s and 1970s, the diaspora is now seen and presented as part and parcel of the nation state and as endowed with a responsibility for playing its part in the development of the homeland.

Seeing remittances as an unattapped source of capital, government officials discuss ways in which the diaspora can be brought closer to Tanzania (e.g. by the granting of dual citizenship), meet in special inter-ministerial working groups on migration and attend interna- tional workshops on migration management.

No policies have yet been formulated, but a lot of thinking and exploration is taking place. One cost-effective way in which the govern- ment is trying to mobilize the diaspora is to praise it publicly for its potential in making investments, transferring human capital and working as individual ambassadors of Tanzania.

Government rhetoric aside, the Tanzanian case mostly illustrates the difficulties in designing and implementing an effective diaspora strategy. First of all, since migration as a development strategy is quite new, the capacity among government officials is quite low within this field. Secondly, no statistics or surveys are available to document the actual impact and potential of the diaspora. As a result, policy formation is not based on sound situational analysis, but on globally circulated discourses and the assumed potentials of diasporas. Thirdly, policy formation disregards the actual existence of the complex relationship that exists between different kinds of diasporas and homelands.

Peter Hansen

THE POLITICS OF YOUTH MOBILIZATION IN THE POST-COLONIAL WORLD

Research on youth is surging. Development policy is increasingly focussing on youth and the ‘youth bulge’. Religious institutions and political parties are mobilizing the young for their causes, and young people themselves are mobilizing for protest, migration and sur- vival. Media purport images of youth around the world as idle, vio- lent and dangerous for the social order. But what does ‘youth’ mean, and what kind of lives are associat- ed with being classified as young? As suggested by a series of ethnographic studies at an explorative workshop at DIIS, youth cannot necessarily be associated with a particular age group. Youth is a social category of ‘becoming’, of transition to status as adult. But conditions of poverty and a lack of prospects for employment, fam- ily, and recognition are postponing the transition indefinitely for the young in many parts of the world.

Hence, more recent studies have focussed on youth as ‘being’, that is, as a more permanent status and identity, with mutual recog- nition in the peer group as the most important aspect. We are seeing cultures of waiting develop among Indian students confronted with unemployment; cultures of hustling in the big African cities; cul- tures of incessant movement in order to be in the right place at the right moment; cultures of preparing year in and year out for migra- tion; cultures of endlessly making useful contacts through religious and political parties are mobilizing the young for their causes, and young people themselves are mobilizing for protest, migration and survi- val. Media purport images of youth around the world as idle, vio- lent and dangerous for the social order. But what does ‘youth’ mean, and what kind of lives are associat- ed with being classified as young? As suggested by a series of ethnographic studies at an explorative workshop at DIIS, youth cannot necessarily be associated with a particular age group. Youth is a social category of ‘becoming’, of transition to status as adult. But conditions of poverty and a lack of prospects for employment, fam- ily, and recognition are postponing the transition indefinitely for the young in many parts of the world.

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The rich in-depth studies of ‘youth’ in many different contexts illustrates the slippery nature of the youth concept and suggests that its use is often informed by political agendas.

The workshop took place in February 2008. It was co-organized by DIIS and the Nordic Network for Youth Studies and was spon- sored by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Finn Stepputat and Simon Turner
Land titles are one important element conferring security of tenure. Proponents of titling projects argue that titles help clarify land boundaries through their associated cadastral surveys, as well as making property rights inscribable in the public registry and thereby preventing challenges and reducing the costs of verifying ownership. Another argument is that titling and improved security of tenure improves access to credit and creates a more active market in land, which in its turn supposedly helps re-distribute land to the small-scale farmers. Finally, it is logically appealing that owners will carry out long-term investments in the land only when they feel secure about their present and future landholding(s). As environmental investments tend to represent long-term improvements, environmental benefits are often expected to derive from land-titling projects.

The World Bank and other donors provide large-scale credits for land-titling and administration projects around the world. Fifty-five World Bank projects have been implemented or under preparation since 1990, with land-titling as the primary component. They are often justified as strengthening security of tenure for all landowners, especially the poor. As such, they are considered pro-poor policy interventions.

However, recent research shows that, in practice, this is often not the case. In her PhD thesis, funded by the Danish Research Council for Development Research, Rikke Brandt Broegaard shows that the effects of land-titling are not as straight-forward as donors and pro-titling proponents argue: land titles alone do not create security of tenure. Where titles have been demonstrated to create security of tenure, it is rarely the poor who benefit because they lack the critical means (economic, social or political resources) to achieve such security, or whatever is locally perceived as such.

Titling and land administration projects spend considerable money and attract the support of many donors, yet they fail to satisfy important assumptions regarding equal access to and treatment by formal institutions, or equal access to an unbiased judicial system. Therefore, the outcomes of titling and land administration projects are sometimes the opposite of what is predicted. Instead, titling projects create security of tenure for the non-poor, thus exacerbating existing inequalities and diverting land from the rural poor to the urban non-poor through the market for land.

Titling projects make more land available in the market, thereby making it more easily available to larger-scale land-buyers, firms and absentee landowners. In settings dominated by high levels of inequality in wealth and access to formal institutions, the land market is structured by these inequalities and actually contributes toward exacerbating the existing levels of poverty and inequality. Land-titling is neither a neutral nor a pro-poor development intervention, given the existing levels of inequality in wealth, the biased judicial system and the resulting inequality of opportunities favouring the rich.

Starting in summer 2009, Rachel Spichiger will contribute to research on land rights and inequality through her PhD research on poor and not so poor women’s access to land in rural Zambia in order to assess the extent to which a new proposed land policy will contribute to redressing a gender imbalance in land rights.

Rikke Brandt Broegaard

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS
Koch, Julie. Perspectives on Access to and Management of Natural Resources. A Discussion of Selected Literature. DIIS.
POVERTY AND LOW CARBON DEVELOPMENT

The world’s Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are now facing an enormous task. Not only must they continue their uphill struggle for economic growth and poverty reduction, they also have to wrestle with global climate change, which threatens exactly these countries the most.

How should LDCs address this double challenge, and how can donors support them? In 2008, Danida commissioned DIIS to undertake a study of tangible options for supporting a development process in LDCs that is both climate-friendly and at the same time benefits poverty alleviation and national economic development.

The study examines a number of practical approaches and options within agriculture, energy and forestry that can help support local livelihoods and reduce carbon emissions.

Latin America’s fragile democracies have generally failed to establish systems of governance involving new social forms of political representation. However, recent changes in the political scenario of the region have set new standards for inclusive citizenship and local governance.

Social movements have played an important part in this development, one of the most successful being the indigenous peoples’ movement. Large-scale collective land-tenure for indigenous peoples has been carried out in several countries, altering local structures of power and political influence. The indigenous territories often overlap with nature conservation areas, creating a situation of both conflictual and joint interests, and necessitating the institutionalization of corresponding ethno-territorial regimes.

The project Territorialization, Governance and Conservation in Eastern Peru, supported by the Danish Social Science Research Council and carried out by Senior Project Researcher Søren Hvalkof, focuses on the process of establishing so-called communal reserves in the Peruvian Amazon, i.e. conservation areas co-managed by indigenous communities and environmental authorities. It explores the implications of a conservationist discourse for the indigenous agenda of local autonomy and livelihood improvements, and examines the effects on the operational framework of environmental authorities when these are obliged to share responsibilities with indigenous organizations.

The project documents the transformational processes of power and decision-making dynamics between very uneven partners, ranging from the World Bank to local communities. Important questions raised here concerning environmental governance may contribute to the development of better strategies for protecting tropical forests and operationalizing new climate-change policies.

Søren Hvalkof

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS?

Challenged to consume with less environmental impact, consumers buy certified organic products as a proxy for environmental governance. However, this proxy model may have its limitations as a general cure bringing sustainability to our agricultural systems. 

Researching this new field of environment-cum-development policy, Senior Project Researcher Henrik Egeleyng is carrying out a project on ‘institutions, livelihood and sustainability’, supported by the Danish Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries. Party to a larger programme known by its acronym ‘GLOBALORG’, and with a website at www.globalorg.dk, the project explores how globalization challenges developing nations and whether their institutional environments are really allowing market forces to serve environmental policy goals.

Despite Africa’s potential to benefit from certification, its institutions may be less conducive to organic producers than the institutional environments of the new giants in the world of certified organic agriculture, namely China and Brazil. Research questions include how far organic production methods are institutionally embedded at relevant levels of agency, and the conditions under which certified organics may provide sustainable rural development.

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Søren Hvalkof

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DIIS 2008

www.dis.dk/naturalresources
Let us compare two situations in foreign-policy decision-making: One is characterized by the tensions between the approaches of ‘hawks’ and ‘doves’, in which both, consciously or subconsciously, operate with inaccurate or exaggerated images of their opponents. The other is characterized by reasonably sound assessments of one’s opponents and a spectrum of pragmatic approaches, including the ‘iron hand’ and the ‘silk glove’. Here there is a complicated mix of dominance, balance, acquiescence and compromise.

Let us ask how these two situations influence the perception of when a ‘tipping point’ has been reached, that is, when reasoned argument and attempts to influence the values or behaviour of your opponent through normal diplomatic endeavours are replaced by the hard methods of sanctions, blockades, or armed force.

Deciding when a tipping point has been reached is one of the most precarious problems of timing in foreign policy. Show your iron hand too quickly, and you will regret it; show it too late, and you will regret that too.

The tipping point is a target that has to be hit with the greatest precision in order to make the best decision. To hit the bull’s eye will always be extremely difficult, even for the most rational and well-informed decision-maker. Unfortunately one rarely has enough rational and perfect information to be guided in such decision-making.

All kinds of impulses penetrate the ideal environment of the rational decision-maker. There will be clashes of emotion; there will be fear, hatred, humiliation, anger and sympathy, power struggles and, of course, egos. More often than not, hawks and doves play an important part in the formulation of foreign policy.

Identification with hawkish or dovish policies is a power tool of sorts for politicians who want to mobilize their followers, a hot-house for angry, frightened or humiliated minds.

Much political leverage can be derived from the animosities and passions of small minorities. What is at stake is presented as a conflict between good and evil. What is necessary to the hawk is not compromise, but the will to fight things out to a finish. Conversely, for the dove, the eternal appeaser, no fight will ever be worth fighting.

Occasionally politicians will superimpose yet another layer of animal life on foreign policy by alluding to the need to separate the sheep from the goats amongst their fellow countrymen, thereby denying the goats any legitimacy. As the apostle Matthew says: ‘He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. … Then he will say to those on his left, “Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire that has been prepared for the devil and his angels!”’

The point is simple there is a high probability that one’s judgment as to where the tipping point lies will have lost some of its rational accuracy if one’s mind is inundated by sheep and goats, hawks and doves, which populate the first situation without the discipline of the pragmatic approaches offered by the second situation. Missing the tipping point is dangerous and costly for a country and its people, being points of fate.

Hence it is the task of the research community to instil a modicum of well-founded, well-balanced knowledge into the inevitable clash of emotions in foreign policy.

Svend Aage Christensen is a Slavonicist and a historian. He has coordinated and been a contributor to many reports commissioned by government and parliament, e.g. on nuclear weapons in Greenland, humanitarian intervention, the threat to Denmark during the Cold War, and issues of naval strategy, disarmament, and security policy. He has worked in Danish, Russian, Polish, German, US, and UN archives and has written and edited books and articles on Russian and Polish history, energy policy, intelligence history, archival policy and the Arctic.
If roles were to be distributed between NATO and the EU and the choice was restricted to a ‘Tarzan role’ and a ‘Jane role’, most would probably pick NATO as Tarzan and the EU as Jane. After all, it is widely assumed that the strength of the EU is as a ‘normative power’, whereas the strength of NATO is simply as a ‘military power’. In other words, the Tarzan and Jane roles seem to fit an EU that is mainly associated with the soft and feminine ‘Jane role’ emphasizing norms and values, whereas NATO is associated with the hard and masculine ‘Tarzan role’ emphasizing practical security and military solutions.

The stereotyping is strange, since throughout their respective histories, both organizations have been deeply engaged in both the promotion of norms and security activities. Despite the reassuring logic in the ‘Jane and Tarzan’ division of roles, my research reveals that, not only is the reality of role division between the two organizations more complicated than the stereotypes suggest, but also that the two organizations may be in a process of constructing narratives about themselves that emphasize the opposite of what we would otherwise expect.

The puzzling thing is that, although NATO’s practical security activities far outstrip those of the EU – even with an EU Security and Defense Policy that has been developing rapidly over the past five years – NATO is constructing a narrative that focuses on values and norms, whereas the EU is constructing a narrative which focuses on its nearly 25 ESDP missions. Similarly, although the EU’s normative role far outstrips that of NATO, the latter emphasizes its identity as a community of values and promoter of norms. Although the EU does not reject being engaged in norm promotion, its narrative no longer privileges values, but seems to be increasingly focused on practical security activities.

After years of the EU being stuck with an image as an ineffective security actor, it has largely managed to change that image from one of sluggishness to one of style and dynamism. At the same time, the war in Kosovo and the debacle surrounding the invasion of Iraq in 2003, and now mounting difficulties in Afghanistan, has left NATO exhausted and demoralized. NATO simply cannot construct a positive and practical security role, but can only do so in the area of norm promotion where it can construct a story of success. The paradox is that, although NATO’s military missions are far larger and far more demanding than those of the EU, the impression of NATO is of an organization lacking dynamism and of the EU as a dynamic and modern organization.

My research shows that substance without style is worth little. The EU has plenty of style but little actual substance behind the many operations, whereas NATO has plenty of substance but little style. Therefore NATO needs to learn from the EU – not by becoming a ‘Jane’, but by adopting the role of a so-called ‘metrosexual power’ – a man that is muscular but suave, confident yet image-conscious, assertive yet clearly in touch with his feminine sides. The EU, on the other hand, needs to address the problem of substance in its operations and capabilities, because style without substance may prove to be a short-lived position in the security field.

Trine Flockhart

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Beukel, Erik: ASEAN and ARF in East Asia’s Security Architecture: The Role of Norms and Powers. DIIS.


Flockhart, Trine, & Kristian Søby Kristensen: NATO and Global Partnerships – to Be Global or to Act Global? DIIS.


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INSIDE A WAVE OF TERRORISM

Terrorism is not evenly distributed in space and time, but rather occurs in concentrated waves: four in recent history. This suggests either a strong independent variable causing terrorism, which it has not yet been possible to identify, or a self-reinforcing dynamic in terrorism itself.

Terrorism is the outcome of a number of factors being present at the same time: grievances, frame, technology, maneuverability, finance, ideologies and so on. “Software” is the “know-how” to be a terrorist in a specific setting: how to communicate clandestinely, how to overcome the psychological inhibitions against killing, selection of targets, choice of weapon, ideologies etc. Terrorism affects the factors leading to it both positively and negatively. When we see a wave of terrorism, it is the result of a self-reinforcing dynamic. Grievances and the frame are reproduced through the counter-terrorism measures that invariably follow terrorism. However, the frame and software are also reproduced directly by terrorism.

It is complicated to be a terrorist. If one wants to be involved in terrorism, it is almost impossible to make up all the elements, from ideology to the technical, practical, social and psychological aspects, in setting up a terrorist cell and carrying out an operation. When one has committed a terrorist attack in a similar setting to oneself, the “software” of a terrorist attack becomes available, thus making it practically feasible and changing the status of terrorism from an idea to a cause of action.

Self-reinforcing dynamics can in theory feed themselves indefinitely, but they are relatively vulnerable to outside interruptions stopping the dynamic. Martin Harrow

THE PIRATES OF SOMALIA

Pirates mainly attack smaller ships without much planning and with rather modest hauls. Somali pirates, however, have gone after bigger prey such as oil tankers, boarding, seizing and holding them for long periods of time until ransoms are paid.

During the past couple of years, piracy off the coasts of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden has grown dramatically. The main causes of this new development are to be found ashore, since Somalia provides unique opportunities for these activities, as well as having a pressing need to exploit them.

The opportunities are created by the density of shipping from the Middle and Far East via the Gulf of Aden, the Red Sea and the Suez Canal to Europe, as well as by deliveries of emergency aid to the population in urgent need of it. The need arises from the widespread and extreme poverty in Somalia, partly caused by the unfortunate combination of a civil war with a war of national resistance against what was in reality an Ethiopian occupation from 2007 to 2008. In addition, there is no state here capable of containing piracy.

Terrorism affects the factors leading to it both positively and negatively. When we see a wave of terrorism, it is the result of a self-reinforcing dynamic. Grievances and the frame are reproduced through the counter-terrorism measures that invariably follow terrorism. However, the frame and software are also reproduced directly by terrorism.

It is complicated to be a terrorist. If one wants to be involved in terrorism, it is almost impossible to make up all the elements, from ideology to the technical, practical, social and psychological aspects, in setting up a terrorist cell and carrying out an operation. When one has committed a terrorist attack in a similar setting to oneself, the “software” of a terrorist attack becomes available, thus making it practically feasible and changing the status of terrorism from an idea to a cause of action.

Self-reinforcing dynamics can in theory feed themselves indefinitely, but they are relatively vulnerable to outside interruptions stopping the dynamic. Martin Harrow

DEFENCE AND SECURITY
www.diis.dk/defence

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NUCLEAR WEAPONS DISARMAMENT
The notion of a nuclear weapons-free world has regained momentum, with calls for states to work toward a nuclear zero coming from governments themselves. The call is being echoed from London to Sydney and from Oslo to New Delhi. Obama campaigned on his desire to work toward a world without nuclear weapons.

In theoretical terms, however, we do not have sufficient conceptual illustrations to understand disarmament. In her research on nuclear disarmament, PhD Candidate Cindy Vestergaard is looking at past examples of successful multilateral disarmament of a weapon of mass destruction (WMD) in order to build a conceptual approach that explains these processes.

Focusing on the examples of negotiations leading up to the entry into force of the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention, we can begin to understand the steps required to move to a world free of nuclear weapons. Cindy Vestergaard
ISLAMISM AND THE RISE OF SALAFISM

Islam is often associated with terror and violence. This image obscures the current transformation of Islamist groups in Europe and the Middle East, which increasingly seek power within a democratic framework. Small groups, who disapprove of this soft version of Islamism, turn to militant Salafism.

Within the last few years, religion – and most often Islam – has made the headlines on a regular if not a daily basis. To all appearances, major events such as ‘9/11’, the cartoon crisis or the terror attacks in Mumbai had religious dimensions.

The sudden appearance of religion in international politics has caused some embarrassment among researchers. How are we to conceive of religion? What is the relationship between religion and violence? Is Islam the cause of terror?

The branding of Islam as a war-prone religion leading to terror and violence has, however, obscured other facets of Islam. There might indeed be a few ‘radicalized’ Muslims, dreaming of a spectacular ‘al-Qaeda career’, but what about the rest?

There is little doubt that we are currently witnessing a thorough transformation of Islamism. Islamism – today a fancy buzzword – is a political ideology that emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century with movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt or the Jamaat-e Islami in Pakistan.

At the core of the Islamist ideology was the idea of the Islamic state. The Islamists were revolutionaries who wanted to overthrow existing regimes in their homelands.

The aim was to construct a truly Islamic state, implementing sharia from above. The project was only actually realized in Iran and – temporarily – Sudan and Pakistan. But all this is old Islamism. Today, Islamist movements in the Middle East increasingly accept the idea of democracy and secularism. They have surrendered the ideal of the Islamic state and accepted the secular rules of the political game. They run for elections and even assume governmental responsibilities.

The most obvious examples of this Islamism light are the Turkish Islamists in the AK Party, who have been in government since 2002. However, the Muslim Brotherhood, Hezbollah and Hamas have also used democratic elections to gain power, though this does not prevent them from being utterly conservative in values and sometimes even supportive of violence.

In the 1980s, Islamism came to Europe with a number of political refugees. As political activists, they soon gathered in formal organizations (e.g. Islamisk Trossamfund in Denmark, UOIF in France). In the 1990s, they began to display their Muslim identity in the public space and to support girls who wanted to wear the hijab. Tariq Ramadan advocated a ‘Euro-Islam’, inviting Muslims to respect European laws, but as ‘religious citizens’, while the French Islamist, Tareq Oubrou, defined a ‘minority-sharia’, reflecting on how sharia can be ‘acclimatized’ to a European context.

But as the formalized Islamist organizations increasingly accept the secular framework of political life in Europe, they tend to lose the support of some young Muslims, who see them as bourgeois ‘lab-Muslims’ who are watering down Islam. Some of these young people, who also disapprove of Danish cartoons and European engagement in Afghanistan, turn to militant versions of Islam offered on jihadist websites.

But these young people are not – as many seem to believe – Islamists. They adhere to a Saudis-inspired trend called ‘Salafism’, which is currently on the rise in Europe. Salafis seek to purify Islam of cultural influences by emulating the life of the Prophet in every detail. The primary concern of Salafis is not national politics, but global politics and individual salvation. Therefore martyrdom might be a tempting solution in very rare cases as the ultimate form of realizing oneself.
ORNIC CONTRACT FARMING IN AFRICA

Observers of agricultural development in Africa are concerned for the future of smallholder farming, which is considered critical to rural poverty reduction. The conditions under which smallholder farming is taking place are seen as increasingly adverse. Smallholders experience declining access to public research and agricultural advisory services, while inputs are becoming more expensive. In export markets, they also face global value chains in which buyers have become increasingly powerful and demanding in terms of required standards, volumes, logistics and prices. In bulk markets, African smallholders are losing out on cost and volume to large-scale operations in countries like Brazil. Meanwhile, they are generally marginal in markets for higher-value products because of the demanding quality standards in those markets.

Some donors have adopted a ‘smallholder exclusion’ agenda, designing interventions aimed at reversing this. The main focus is improving access to higher-value product markets through, e.g., farmer group formation and subsidies for certification. Among these is the Swedish EPOPA (Export Promotion of Organic Products from Africa) programme in East Africa, which has supported smallholder certification to EU organic standards, focusing on the development of organic contracting schemes operated by established exporters.

Organic standards demand less from smallholders than many agricultural systems are becoming the smallholder norm, use of ‘genuine’ organic farming methods have a measurable impact on revenues in most cases, although there were considerable obstacles confronting their wider uptake.

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Lazaro, Evelyne A., Jeremiah Makindara, Fredy T.M. Kilima: Sustainability Standards and Coffee Exports from Tanzania. DIIS.

Mortensen, Jon: Emerging Multinationals. The South African Hospital Industry Overseas. DIIS.

Risgaard, Lone, & Nikolaius Hammer: Organised Labour and the Social Regulation of Global Value Chains. DIIS.

Vestergaard, Jakob: Crisis? What Crisis?. Anatomy of the Regulatory Failure in Finance. DIIS.

Gibbon, Peter & Stefano Ponte: “Global Value Chains. From Governance to Governmentality”. Economy and Society, 37 (1).
ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO FINANCE DEVELOPMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Over the past decade, development policy has witnessed a shift towards a poverty-reduction agenda. This has been accompanied by changes in views concerning development finance, including a sustained critique of traditional aid practices. Consequently, alternative sources and approaches to providing aid have been advocated. These encompass private-sector flows, new official bilateral donors (e.g., China) and new instruments for channelling aid to specific causes such as HIV/AIDS. In a series of studies, DIIS researchers have investigated the nature of these alternative sources of development financing with a focus on countries in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

The studies demonstrate that private-sector flows to SSA have surged over recent years, growing to double the size of official aid flows in 2007. While these flows have been dominated by foreign direct investment (FDI), remittances and portfolio flows have been important in specific cases. Even so, private-sector inflows are distributed unevenly. South Africa receives the vast majority of portfolio flows, and FDI remains predominantly focussed on resource-rich countries.

Other ‘new’ flows are also highly selective. Innovative financing has principally focussed on the provision of basic needs, such as health and primary education. Thus, improving the quality and quantity of financing to more complex areas such as agriculture and government remains a major challenge.

The studies conclude that alternative financing mechanisms do not represent comprehensive solutions to weaknesses in traditional aid. This is likely to be underlined as private-sector and innovative flows come under pressure as a result of the current financial crisis. However, where managed carefully, alternative financing mechanisms can complement and enhance official flows.

Sam Jones

CHINA’S RE-ENTRY INTO AFRICA: MALIGN OR BENIGN?

All sectors of the Zambian economy face fierce competition from Chinese companies. Although ownership of most sizeable economic activities is indeed foreign, the fast growth of Chinese investments in economic sectors previously dominated by Zambian businesses has made the ‘China issue’ politically hot, and concern has been voiced over the increased Chinese domination of the economy.

The ‘China issue’ has led to a commission to guarantee benefits to Zambian citizens. Everybody seems to agree that it would be futile to return ownership to the Zambian people, yet the commission has managed to counter opposition criticism so that the 2008 Presidential elections were free from anti-Chinese rhetoric.

China’s increased involvement in Africa is one of the most significant recent developments in world politics. China is Africa’s second biggest trading partner and tops the list in terms of foreign investments. Chinese involvement also extends to large-scale development aid, the arms trade, and peace-keeping operations. The trend has not gone unnoticed by academics, politicians and journalists alike, who may describe it as either malign or benign to Africa.

Yet, the effect of China’s involvement in Africa is not easy to assess, since it depends on the motives of the Chinese themselves and local socio-political conditions. A research project undertaken by Peter Kraglund and funded by the Danish Consultative Research Committee for Development Research sets out to further our understanding of these issues by scrutinizing Chinese investments in Zambia.

Peter Kraglund
During the past two decades, denial has been a recurrent problem within the field of Holocaust studies. But recently the question about how to address the problem of Holocaust denial has been caught up in the complex debate on the limits of free speech, which has been taking place between the Muslim world and the West. A debate boosted by cartoons.

During the Cartoon Crisis, the question about Holocaust denial was raised. Voices in the Muslim world asked how the West could preach the gospel of free speech when, at the same time, making it illegal to deny the Holocaust. This development was met by European policy makers with skepticism and with attempts to make denial generally illegal in Europe. In 2007, during the German presidency of the European Union, the member countries approved legislation that would make denying the Holocaust punishable by jail. The law was hotly debated, and it was agreed that, even though there would be a general law against denial, member countries would have the option of not enforcing it, if such a prohibition did not exist in their own laws.

The European legislation “calls for jail terms of as long as three years for ‘intentional conduct’ that incites violence or hatred against a person because of their ‘race, color, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin.’” The same punishment would apply to those who incite violence by “denying or grossly trivializing crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.”

During the negotiations leading to the legislation, Britain, Sweden and Denmark, which have particularly libertarian traditions, pressed for wording that would avoid criminalizing the act of debating the Holocaust and would ensure that films and plays about the Holocaust were not censored. The legislation also states that individual countries’ constitutional protections of freedom of speech would be upheld.

The legislation was met with criticism in the American public from among others, Harvard law professor, Alan Dershowitz and Holocaust historian, Deborah Lipstadt. What would we solve by criminalizing the denial, they asked? And would a general ban against denial make the lie more dangerous and powerful?

Lipstadt has identified an unintended consequence of such legislation. By criminalizing Holocaust denial, she argues, you risk making so-called soft-core deniers – those who avow deeply anti-Semitic sentiments in the guise of anti-Israeli comments – relatively more acceptable. Furthermore, she fears that such legislation might make deniers feel more important and elevate their status in the eyes of the public. In the end, Lipstadt believes that “history and truth” – and not criminalization – are the only meaningful weapons against denial.

To adopt legislation against Holocaust denial could thus be seen as a way to admit that we do not have sufficient historical documentation to prove that the deniers are wrong, which is decidedly not the case – the Holocaust is the most documented genocide in history. Alan Dershowitz finds it wrong, in principle, for governments to judge the truth or falsity of history. The most dangerous ‘revisionists’ are not the hard-core deniers of the Holocaust, but “those who minimize it, comparativize it, deny its uniqueness, question the veracity of survivors, and try to turn it against the Jews or the Jewish state.” As such, and as a true adherent of liberal democracy, Dershowitz thinks a law against Holocaust denial illustrates “a lack mass killing of Jews during World War II and the massacre in Rwanda in 1994.”

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of faith in the marketplace of ideas and the power of truth. And, therefore, he asks: “If the evidence is so clear, why do you need laws shutting down the marketplace?”

I think this is the crucial question for today’s discussion. Why do we need laws against denial? Is the historical evidence not strong enough? Do we not believe in the power of history anymore?

Another example of how the question of Holocaust denial has entered the discussion about freedom of speech concerns the upcoming Durban II conference on racism. In preparation for this conference, a resolution combating defamation of religions was prepared and supported by a majority of members of the United Nation’s Human Rights Council.

A debate has been going on during the past months between those members of the UN who see this resolution as a threat to a free and open democracy, and those members who want to combat growing Islamophobia. In the debate, supporters have used the same argument put forward by the Iranian president, Ahmedjinedjad, when he, during the Cartoon Crisis, questioned the Holocaust. The argument is very simple: How can the free and open democracies of the West preach freedom of speech when, at the same time, they have a ban on Holocaust denial?

The answer seems to be obvious: Out of respect for the victims of the Holocaust, we cannot accept a denial of the immense crime that resulted in their murder. However, Ahmedjinedjad’s argument does represent a paradox embedded in European democracies: While we have an extended notion of freedom, we also have regulations to limit and control the most extended forms of freedom. How do we live with this paradox?

Cecilie Felicia Stokholm Banke

Based on the introduction for the panel “Legal Responses to Holocaust and genocide denial” at the international conference in The Hague, “60 Years Genocide Convention”, 7-8 December 2008, organized in cooperation with the Dutch Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Amsterdam

EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL ON ANTISEMITISM AND OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE

In August 2008, as schools recommenced after the summer break, the Department for Holocaust and Genocide Studies launched new educational material on antisemitism and other forms of intolerance. Initiated by the OSCE, the educational material is the result of a pan-European project involving academic and educational experts, and aimed at informing younger generations about the long legacy of antisemitism on European soil and highlighting current problems of contemporary antisemitism, racism, xenophobia and discrimination.

The countries that initially implemented the project were Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Holland, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine. Core material was developed in the international working group and then adapted to particular national contexts. The Danish version, intended for teaching in primary school years 7 to 10, consists of three booklets, a teachers’ guide and a glossary. The first booklet takes a historical look at the roots of antisemitism, including Christian antisemitism and Nazi anti-Jewish policy. Part 2 gives primary attention to contemporary antisemitism, exemplified by issues of Holocaust denial and Neo-Nazism. Part 3 has a broader focus on prejudice, racism and discrimination, and reviews some of the pressing issues related to intolerance in Denmark.

The material has been reviewed in very positive terms by teachers and educational consultants. Likewise, the OSCE and partner institutions such as the Anne Frank House and Yad Vashem have spoken highly of the Danish material. It can be ordered, free of charge, from Danish centers for educational material. More information about the material and how to order it is available at: www.folkedrab.dk/intolerance.

Stine Thuge
WORKING IN PARTNERSHIPS
No matter how productive we are as researchers, and no matter how successful we are at fundraising, some achievements can only be attained in partnerships with researchers elsewhere.

Working in partnerships also greatly enhances the quality of our research when methodological and analytical frameworks are developed jointly to cater for a multitude of contexts and cultures. In recognition of these potential benefits, in 2008 five of the seven research programmes and projects of DIIS’s Natural Resources and Poverty research unit were collaborative programmes involving research institutions elsewhere. In some of these programmes, we participate as invited partners, while in others we are the coordinators.

Based on our experiences, three aspects have proved to be crucial to successful research partnerships. First of all, the partnership must benefit all participating parties beyond the mere remuneration for work done. In our experience, shared rather than strictly divided responsibilities for fieldwork, analysis and publication contribute to the development of successful partnerships. Clear agreements regarding the ownership of data, authorship and the allocation of time to all parties for fieldwork are important elements in creating trust that the partnership represents true gains for all participating researchers.

Secondly, research objectives and expected results must be coherent and clearly formulated, while the planning and budgeting of activities necessary to achieve these objectives and results should be kept flexible. Despite careful planning, certain activities take longer than expected, while others take less time. In some years and places, activities have to be postponed due to droughts; in others, activities have to be brought forward in order to benefit from favourable circumstances. All this requires that flexible planning and budgeting is allowed for by funding agencies.

Thirdly and finally, coordination and communication are key elements. While responsibilities for fieldwork, analysis and publication should preferably be shared among the participants, responsibility for coordination and for providing inclusive platforms for communication among participating parties should be clearly assigned. In order for collaborative programmes with partners in different parts of the world to be truly collaborative, it is imperative that problems and concerns with respect to plans and methodological and analytical frameworks can be raised and discussed among participants, including in face-to-face meetings. Stimulating and facilitating such communication, as well as clearly communicating conclusions and consequent actions, are key tasks in programme coordination. It takes time, but is truly worth the effort!

The Natural Resources and Poverty research unit was involved in the following partnerships in 2008:

As coordinators:
• Competing for Water research programme (www.diis.dk/water)
• IBESo programme (www.diis.dk/ibeso)

As invited partners:
• Rural Territorial Dynamics programme coordinated by Rimisp-Latin American Centre for Rural Development (http://www.rimisp.org/dr);
• GlobalOrg programme on the sustainability of organic agriculture in a global food chain perspective coordinated by International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems (see elsewhere in this publication);
• EU-funded research programme Palm Harvest Impacts in Tropical Forests, coordinated by Department of Biology, Aarhus University (http://www.fp7-palmis.org)

HELLE MUNK RAVNBORG, PHD, SENIOR RESEARCHER, HEAD OF THE RESEARCH UNIT ON NATURAL RESOURCES AND POVERTY
Helle Munk Ravnborg works on environmental governance and poverty issues. Together with Mikkel Funder, she coordinates the research programme Competing for water. She has previously been employed as a researcher at CIAT, Colombia, and undertaken research on poverty and agriculture in Tanzania and Uganda.
The most prominent example in this connection is Russia, where geopolitics has acquired an almost dominant place in the analysis of world politics. There are consistent and widespread references back to early twentieth-century geopolitical thought and ‘geopolitical necessities’, not the least by Alexander Dugin, perhaps the best known representative of this resurgence. But the smaller countries in the post-Soviet space have also seen a revival. Indeed, the space given to Huntington’s ‘clash of civilizations’ has been truly remarkable. For example, the Estonian Minister of Foreign Affairs wrote the foreword to the 1999 Estonian translation of Huntington’s book. Even more strikingly, perhaps, Italy has seen a revival of ‘geopolitics’, with General (and political advisor) Carlo Jean as its figurehead. The new journal of geopolitics, Limes, has succeeded in making geopolitical vocabulary permeate the daily discourses of politicians and newspapers as well.

How has this come about? I am currently carrying out a collaborative study of seven European countries (Russia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Italy, Romania, Russia, and Turkey) analysing the relationship between the events of 1989 and the resurgence of geopolitical thought, and making four central claims.

First, there was no necessary link between 1989 and this revival of geopolitics. Indeed, two countries in the study had no geopolitical tradition (Germany and the Czech Republic), and some versions of geopolitics are different in kind from neo-classical revivalism. Instead, the significance and impact of the event is itself a result of the ways in which foreign-policy discourses in different countries made sense of it. The study claims that we have to understand the role of international events in foreign-policy ideas from the inside out, i.e. in how the meaning of such events is articulated within national foreign-policy discourses.

This leads to the second claim, namely that the revival of geopolitical thought is best understood in the context of several foreign-policy identity crises in post-1989 Europe. The foreign-policy traditions of many countries came up for discussion when their identities — i.e. their international roles and recognition, or their self-understandings — were closely tied to the Cold War divide, or indeed, when such an identity had to be established afresh for some newly (re)established countries.

Thirdly, geopolitical thought is particularly well suited to respond to such an identity crisis, since it provides allegedly objective and material criteria for circumscribing the boundaries (and the internal logic) of ‘national interest’ formulations. Neo-classical geopolitics provides easy ‘coordinates’ for thinking about a country’s role in world affairs.

Finally, however, whether or not geopolitical thought is mobilized to fulfill this function is dependent on a series of factors: the ‘common sense’ embedded in the national interest discourse and the wider foreign-policy expert culture which is pre-disposed towards it, the institutional structure and political economy in which foreign-policy thought is developed in a country, including the place of civil/military relations in foreign-policy expertise, and the possible instrumental use by actors in the national political game.

This geopolitical revival has some wider implications. Neo-classical geopolitics mobilizes realism’s militarist and nationalist gaze on world politics. With its rhetorical power, it prepares the ground for, and accompanies, the re-militarization of foreign-policy thought. Hence, the very success of 1989, the diplomatic and peaceful end of the Cold War, may paradoxically usher in the very conditions under which re-militarized understandings of foreign policy and security come to the fore and inform foreign-policy action.

Stefano Guzzini

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Hvidt, Nanna & Hans Mouritzen: Danish Foreign Policy Yearbook 2008. DIIS.
THE UNEXPECTED RETURN OF THE EU’S NORTHERN DIMENSION

The creation of the European Union’s Northern Dimension Initiative (NDI) in 1998 raised considerable expectations. In failing to live up to these expectations, it soon vanished from the sphere of broader public interest. In view of this outcome, would it not be better to write off the NDI and perhaps bury it formally? This was the question that the Finnish Foreign Ministry was confronted with around 2003. The NDI had turned into liability, and something had to be done in order to remedy the situation.

Yet, somewhat surprisingly, the outcome of the review and the extensive consultations carried out spoke in favour of the initiative. Both Brussels and Moscow wanted to stay with it. No outright resistance was registered, and instead most of the countries of the region showed an interest in contributing to the creation of a new NDI. However, it had to be turned into a vehicle for regional cooperation among the members themselves, rather than remaining just one aspect of the EU-related action plans. Broader and more concrete projects of cooperation had to be devised in certain limited fields, and the infrastructure conducive to cooperation had to be improved.

In consequence, a new Northern Dimension saw the light of the day. A joint political declaration on the Northern Dimension as ‘a common regional policy’ was endorsed at a November 2007 summit. New guidelines were established, and a joint steering group was set up with equal partnership between the EU Commission, Russia, Iceland and Norway.

The existing focus on social and environmental issues was extended to include logistics and issues of energy. In the same vein, there is now much emphasis on ensuring that the ownership of the projects are seen as a concern common to all those taking part in the initiative.

Since initially the Northern Dimension took the form of a political initiative, it was rather sensitive to currents in EU-Russia relations. However, in falling below the radar screen of public interest it became far more technical in nature, although it also appears that its rather non-political character has largely worked in favour of the new NDI. Thus, the recent war in the Caucasus region did not undermine the NDI or push it out of sight. In other words, the impact was quite different from the experiences gained in the context of Russia’s engagement in Chechnya in the 1990s and beginning of the new millennium.

Despite the fact that most EU-Russia relations were frozen due to the war in Georgia, the EU recently organized a ministerial meeting on the new NDI in St. Petersburg. In all probability the meeting took place so a signal could be sent that there was no reason to cut off all ties. In being largely comprehended as non-political in character, the new NDI could thus be utilized as platform for communicating the fact that the reduction in relations caused by the war was not a total one. Similarly, the tone in the interventions presented at the meeting remained quite positive, despite the strains experienced in Russia-EU relations in general.

There seem to be good reasons to bring the Northern Dimension back on to the radar screen. The initiative seems to be very much alive and is the focus of renewed interest. The Baltic Sea region is, as such, high on the agenda, as the EU Commission is preparing a Baltic Sea Strategy. Given various developments in the spheres of energy, logistics and environment, the High North is of increasing importance.

Europe’s North seems to be turning into a hub that connects Europe with major parts of Asia. New shipping routes are opening up in the High North, railways such as the Trans-Siberian are providing new connections, and the same goes for flights connecting Europe and Asia. Turning into a hub is a quite positive move, but it is also something of a surprise. Pertti Joenniemi
DIIS IN GENERAL

The Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) was established for the purpose of strengthening research, analysis and information activities in Denmark on international affairs (foreign, security and development politics), conflicts, Holocaust, genocide and politically inspired mass atrocities.

The Institute works for this purpose by means of research and analysis of international affairs with particular reference to assessing Denmark’s foreign and security political situation, including development issues. Parallel to this, the results of this research and analysis are communicated through documentation, library and information activities.

DIIS contributes to the education of researchers, including supporting research capacity in developing countries. Doctoral students are affiliated to existing research programmes and are involved in other activities at the Institute.

The overall vision is that the Institute should be recognized in Denmark and abroad as a leading research institution that produces independent research at the highest level. This research is not only to be of the highest quality, but also to be understood by and communicated to the Institute’s target groups. Contented employees are a precondition for fulfilling this vision, and therefore DIIS must be a workplace which is able to attract and retain talented research and other staff from Denmark and abroad.

DIIS consists of ten thematically defined research units which constitute its scholarly backbone.

The Institute is headed by a board of eleven members who supervise that the Institute fulfils its scholarly obligations and appoints the director, who is in charge of the Institute’s day-to-day management. An internal research committee gives advice to the director on strategic research planning and development of the Institute’s research profile, and an internal executive committee acts as a link between management and staff, primarily on administrative matters.

FACTS AND FIGURES

ORGANIZATION CHART
HELENE MARIA KYED
Politics and governance
Recognition of traditional authority: authority, citizenship and state formation in rural post-war Mozambique

STINE JESSEN HAAKONSSON
Trade and development
TRIPs, Medicines and the International Pharmaceutical Industry

OLAF WESTERMANN
Natural resources and poverty
Poverty, access and payment for watershed hydrological services. A social feasibility study with case in Tiquipaya Watershed, Bolivia

RIKKE BRANDT BROEGAARD
Natural resources and poverty
Struggles for land and security in Nicaragua: Moulding the slope of the playing field

FACTS AND FIGURES
PhDs 2008
FACTS AND FIGURES
DIIS IN FIGURES

INCOME 2008
76.0 MILL. DKK

- Income-generating research activities: 27% · 20.6
- Core grant, Finance Act: 49% · 37.3
- Allocated grants, Finance Act: 14% · 10.9
- Other grant-financed activities: 7% · 5.1

EXPENDITURES 2008
76.4 MILL. DKK

- Research and analysis: 58% · 44.1
- Office rent, administration, IT: 21% · 15.7
- DCISM library: 5% · 4.1
- Management and support: 8% · 6.0
- Dissemination and outreach: 8% · 6.4

STAFF

- Research staff: 47
- PhD candidates: 14
- Student assistants and interns: 12
- Technical-administrative staff: 18

EXTERNAL PUBLICATIONS

- 27 peer-reviewed articles in academic journals
- 28 peer-reviewed book chapters
- 3 non-Danish monographs
- 7 non-Danish books as editor
- 11 editor-reviewed articles in academic journals
- 25 editor-reviewed book chapters
FACTS AND FIGURES
DIIS IN-HOUSE PUBLICATION 2008

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DIIS BOOKS
De danske forbehold over for Den Europæiske Union
Udviklingen siden 2000
Danish Foreign Policy Yearbook 2008
Edited by Nanna Hvidt and Hans Mouritzen

Islam og den islamiske ideologi
En kort introduktion
Nadeem Irani

Islamisk lov
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In 2009, Global Economy Mondays will continue to focus on the global financial crisis. One seminar will ask what a new, more effective approach to international financial regulation might look like, while the other will focus on the meltdown of the Icelandic economy.

For further information, see www.diis.dk/globalconomy or contact Jakob Vestergaard, jve@diis.dk.
I argue that no liberal-capitalist global economy can be stable for more than a limited period of time before it experiences problems that need to be addressed by controversial transformations. This is not a Marxist argument about the inherent contradictions in capitalism, but rather a Polanyian argument about the strained relationships between politics and economics.

There are two principal forms of the state-market relationship in a liberal economic order. One is the Liberalism of Restraint, which is pluralist and seeks to leave very substantial political-economic decision-making power in the hands of individual states: they should comprehensively participate in international economic exchange at all levels, but they should also be given maximum freedom to construct their own preferred version of the state-market relationship, be it ‘social democratic’, ‘catholic conservative’ or ‘neo-liberal’.

The Liberalism of Imposition, on the other hand, is universalist; it aims to impose a certain set of market-economic principles in all countries. These principles are drawn primarily from the neo-liberal understanding of the state-market relationship, meaning that they include liberalization of investment inflows and interest rates, competitive exchange rates, fiscal discipline, deregulation, and tax reform.

The restraint system was crisis-prone because it depended on a hegemonic stabilizer: the system depended on the benevolent management of the United States, including a willingness to forego short-term national interest for the sake of the wider picture. First, the United States provided liquidity for the system by promoting a huge outflow of dollars. Secondly, the US accepted Japanese and European trade restrictions while encouraging exports from these countries to the United States. Liquidity provision undermined the confidence in the dollar’s convertibility into gold. By 1971, the US was showing a trade deficit for the first time in the twentieth century. President Nixon dismantled the system through what the Japanese called the Nixon Shokku, which opened up a period of economic crisis and stagnation.

The coming to power of Ronald Reagan in the Unites States and Margaret Thatcher in Britain helped usher in a Liberalism of Imposition system in the 1980s. The aim was to set market forces free through the lifting of trade restrictions and currency regulations, public sector cutbacks, and the removal of industrial and agricultural protectionism. But the imposition system was crisis-prone as well: first, it was not aimed sufficiently at addressing the major problems impeding long-term economic development in weak states: the promotion of stronger institutional capacities, combined with more transparency and accountability. Nor was the system a great success in directing the transition from planned economies to market economies in Eastern Europe, including Russia. Second, Liberal Imposition economics was not an effective way forward for ‘emerging markets’ in Latin America and Asia.

Economic openness and the aspiration for ‘sound money’ eventually led to enormous capital outflows rather than inflows, and a large number of local companies could be bought up by outsiders at fire-sale prices. Finally, the system has become exposed to the current financial crisis in the liberal core countries with the US at the centre. Deregulation of the financial system led to solvency and liquidity imbalances that could not be absorbed by market adjustments, nor was there any multilateral institutional framework among liberal states ready to face the problems: they had to be handled through national reactions in terms of country-specific rescue packages.

This led to the current dilemma: although the liberal market economy is the best and only available system for providing benefits to all in terms of growth and welfare, the system is inherently unsta-
ble. Solutions to the current crisis face three major problems. First, it has become increasingly difficult to formulate a set of substantial liberal economic principles that can be fully supported by the vast majority of countries. Countries at different levels require dissimilar answers to their problems of economic development, depending on the specific challenges they face. There is no one-size-fits-all Imposition model that all can embrace.

Secondly, the advanced liberal countries face their own set of problems. Years of deregulation and financial integration have led to a crisis of melt-down-like proportions, forcing countries to rethink the concrete shape of an appropriate state-market matrix. The neo-liberal market principles of Imposition have proved insufficient, and there is no easy road back to a Liberalism of Restraint. The crisis has demonstrated that no single country is capable of firmly stabilizing financial and stock markets; integration has apparently proceeded beyond the point where purely national responses are sufficient.

At the same time, national responses have dominated during the crisis in the absence of a strong multilateral framework of governance. There is a tension between cooperation and autonomy: countries are in principle willing to cooperate but unwilling to sacrifice national policy autonomy in the process. The largest difference between now and the previous postwar period of successful Liberalism of Restraint is the lack of a leading country or group of countries able and willing to take responsibility and go in front. As Ian Campbell lamented already in 2004, talking about trade: ‘the world no longer has a leader in economic policymaking’.

Finally, the indicators of economic downturn and crisis are presently stronger than they have been at any point since the 1930s. A complete breakdown of the liberal economic order will probably not take place, if the early reactions are valid indicators of what is going to come. But in a period of severe crisis, countries will be less willing to forego what they see as core national economic interests. This is no less true for finance than it is for trade, or any other major economic domain.

A stable liberal economic order, with the benefits for all as foreseen in the liberal tradition, will not emerge any time soon. On the one hand, it is not clear what should be the principles of such an order: neo-liberal Imposition will not do, but a return to classical Restraint is not feasible. On the other hand, there is no leading power, or group of powers, able and willing to take control and show the way forward. Therefore, the world economy will continue to pose problems for any aspirations towards a stable liberal world order.

Georg Sørensen
Chairman of the Board
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