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Letter from the Editor

Political science is an everlasting phenomenon. Not only does it ‘change with the seasons’, but every individual issue is unique. Creating innovative solutions to solve 21st century political science challenges remains difficult. These problems include climate change, refugee crises, stabilizing world order, and the negative impacts of populism. However, with growing concerns about power - who wields it, what one does with it, and how it influences decisions - the solutions to the challenges in question require thinking outside the box. In a complex world, where pessimism and inaction remains a threat to encouraging fundamental innovative solutions to the constant perils of political science, one ought to remain optimistic in humankind, in particular, the current generation: we represent hope in changing how we view serious threats, how we deal with them, and ensuring a more peaceful and successful life for future generations. As Barack Obama famously affirmed at a 2008 campaign speech: “Change will not come if we wait for some other person or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”

The eleventh volume of *Inquiry and Insight* includes works from Masters and Ph.D. students from universities across Canada. With submissions received from several prominent Canadian universities, this year’s publication furthers the success of previous issues and gives students from across the world access to voice their informative and respected works. To this end, the articles selected for this year’s journal followed the theme “Shifting Power in the 21st Century” posed at our 2018 Political Science Graduate Student Association Conference with a fundamental focus on climate change, immigration, populism, the rise of China, and the changing world order. Furthermore, the works celebrated in this volume provide analyses of original research in order to further the empirical, normative, and theoretical understandings of political science.

I would like to formally extend gratuitous pleasantries to members of the Editorial Board for their commitment to producing a high-quality journal and invaluable insight. Notably, I’d like to thank Shanaya Vanhooren (Assistant Editor) and Nizar Mohamad (Assistant Editor) for assisting with the entire process and helping this year’s volume rival previous volumes in regards to importance, professionalism, and success.

Warm regards,

Bradley Noonan, Editor-in-Chief

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Canadian Aspects:

The Effects of Unionization Rates on Hourly Earnings in Canada: An Econometric Analysis

By Jack Arnott & Aizaz Malik

Abstract: This study utilizes empirical data from all 10 Canadian provinces across the years 2001-2015 to estimate the effects of unionization rates on average hourly earnings. Both levels and double log regressions are used to determine these effects; and control variables of education, type of family, work absence rates, occupation type, per capita GDP with fixed province effects added to improve the accuracy of the model. Results of the multivariate regressions demonstrate conflicting relationships between unionization rates and average hourly earnings in Canada, from 2001-2015, conditional upon the provinces analyzed. Multivariate regressions examining all 10 provinces show no statistically significant relationship between unionization and average hourly earnings, or a slight negative relationship. However, when the analysis isolated provinces that have experienced rising unionization rates from 2001-2015, the regression shows a positive relationship between the variables. Thus, other variables must be considered more relevant than unionization rates when studying changes in average hourly earnings. This study is particularly relevant in an era that has witnessed a general decline in unionization rates across Canada, resulting in shifting balances of power in the workplace.

Introduction

Following the conclusion of World War II, unionization rates increased across industrialized democracies.¹ In 1950, national unionization rates among industrialized democracies varied between 30% and 60%, and by 1980, most industrialized democracies had experienced a significant increase in unionization rates.² However, unionization rates declined throughout the 1980s, with more significant declines occurring in English-speaking countries. This decline coincided with a general shift in government policies; in particular, the expansion of de-unionization labour policies.³

While the decline of the average unionization rate in Canada was modest, falling from 37% in 1980⁴ to 32% in 2015⁵, the developments in Canada's labour conditions are similar to the changes that occurred in other nations, which experienced more significant declines. In Canada, the labour market since 1980 has been marked by the stagnation of real wages, an increase in unemployment rates, and a significant increase in income inequality.⁶ The correlation between decreasing unionization rates and rising income inequality has raised questions regarding the relationship between the two variables.

A number of studies suggest that de-unionization is a key factor in growing income inequality.⁷ However, there exists an absence of empirical studies assessing the effect of unionization rates on average hourly earnings. This article adds to the literature by employing panel data across Canadian provinces to evaluate the effect of unionization rates on average hourly earnings. The study utilizes data from all ten provinces across a fifteen year time period: between 2001 and 2015. In the time period assessed in this article, all provinces experienced a growth in average hourly earnings, while seven provinces experienced declines in unionization rates, and three provinces experienced increases in unionization rates.

By restricting observations to this time period, this study utilizes more recent data than existing literature, and thus provides a more accurate description of the relationship between unionization rates and earnings in Canada in the 21st century. Furthermore, this study uses a

variety of secondary independent variables to control for other factors which may affect average hourly earnings. Previous studies have not controlled for other variables influencing earnings, or income inequality, to this extent.

The utilization of panel data allows for multivariate regressions that include other factors which may influence average hourly earnings, for example gross domestic product per capita and education levels. Regression results are presented in both level models and double log models. This allows for the presentation of the results in both unit values, and in percentage changes. Further, dummy variables are used to control unobservable factors at the provincial level which may influence average hourly earnings.

The results of the regressions cannot confirm or deny the hypothesis that higher unionization rates result in higher average hourly earnings. The results show that the relationship between the two variables is either statistically insignificant, or is a small negative relationship. However, when our analysis isolated provinces that experienced increasing unionization rates, the regression demonstrated a positive relationship between the two variables, statistically significant at the 10% level. These results are important as they provide estimates relevant to the 21st century. Therefore, the results should contribute to the discussions regarding determinants of average hourly earnings in Canada and the changing balance of power in Canadian workplaces, as this study demonstrates that declining unionization rates do not necessarily lead to a decline in average hourly earnings.

Literature Review

Earnings in Canada

In order to understand the effects of unionization on average hourly earnings (“earnings”), it is important to evaluate trends of earnings in Canada over the past few decades. Academic literature relevant to earnings trends generally concludes that while earnings have increased, the growth of earnings among the 99th percentile of earners has far outpaced those below them.⁸ In addition, the literature largely holds that once earnings are controlled for certain factors, average hourly earnings are actually shown to have stagnated in recent decades.⁹ As noted by Statistics Canada, in 2017 the average hourly wage for full-time employees was \$28.40.¹⁰ According to Morissette, national average hourly earnings rose by 6% between 1997 and 2007, from \$17.68 to \$18.80 in 2002 dollars.¹¹

Differences in earnings growth were not significant within industries, except for manufacturing. Morissette noted that Alberta saw an increase in earnings of 9% in the manufacturing sector between 1997 and 2007, while British Columbia saw a decrease of 3%.¹² Growth in manufacturing earnings for the rest of Canada was moderate, with either minor growth in earnings occurring, or stagnant wages persisting.

Ornstein found that average hourly wages of full-time workers between 1980 and 2010 grew by 20.5%.¹³ Furthermore, those in the top 1% of earnings began significantly outpacing others in hourly wage increases in 1995. According to authors, the most significant factor influencing average wage trends between 1980 and 2010 is education level. In 1980, those with only some high school education made \$20.40, while in 2010 the same demographic made \$19.70.¹⁴ In comparison, those who had more than a bachelor’s degree made \$38 in 1980, and \$42.10 in 2010. However, within different education levels, wage increases are less significant.

Furthermore, Duclos and Pellerin conclude that wages have actually stagnated in Canada within similar-skilled groups. The authors use data from the national census between 1980 and

2010 and data from the National Household Survey to assess trends in earnings. Although at first glance the data shows increasing earnings, the authors found that controlling the figures for education, experience, and gender, reveals that earnings in Canada largely slowed after 1980.¹⁵ For example, average hourly earnings for those with only some high school education were \$20.40 in 1980 and \$19.70 in 2010, while average hourly earnings for those with 0-9 years of experience were \$19.70 in 1980 and \$21.30 in 2010.¹⁶

Unionization in Canada

An analysis of the effect of unionization rates on average hourly earnings across all ten provinces must also be preceded by an examination of the literature regarding unionization rates in Canada. This review will focus on two studies produced by Statistics Canada. In 2010, approximately 4.2 million Canadians belonged to a union, and 293,000 were covered by some form of collective agreement.¹⁷ However, the proportion of Canadians who belong to a union is declining steadily; this decline has transpired over several decades. This decline has been noted by several authors, in various articles, such as a 2013 study by Galarneau and Sohn that examined the years between 1981 and 2012.¹⁸

Although the authors note that this decline was most pronounced between the years 1981 and 2000, the unionization rate has steadily continued to fall even into the 21st century. Furthermore, the 2013 study determines that unionization rates have fallen across all provinces – in 2012, Alberta's unionization rate of 22% was the lowest in Canada, while Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec had the highest rates in Canada, at 38% and 37% respectively.¹⁹ The authors effectively remark that Newfoundland and Quebec were also the provinces with the highest unionization rates in 1981 – 45% in Newfoundland and 44% in Quebec.²⁰ The largest decline in unionization rates between 1981 and 2000 occurred in British Columbia, which experienced a decline of 13%, and New Brunswick, which fell 11%.²¹

Two of the main drivers in the decline of union rates, as identified by Galarneau and Sohn, is the movement of employees between industries and changes within occupations. In particular, young men have migrated from industries associated with unions, such as manufacturing, to industries where unionization is not as prevalent, such as retail services.²² Moreover, union rates are also declining in industries that have traditionally been associated with high union memberships. For example, from 1999 to 2012, the manufacturing sector experienced a decline in unionization of 7%, and the broader goods-producing industry saw its unionization rate fall by 4%.²³ These studies help to demonstrate the trend of declining union membership in Canada.

Effects of Unionization on Average Hourly Earnings

There exists an absence of substantial literature and studies that assess the effects of unionization rates on average hourly earnings, particularly in Canada. Although there is a lack of literature examining this topic, the studies that do exist offer conflicting evidence. In particular, Fang and Verma firmly state that there exists a wage gap between unionized and nonunionized workers, and that in Canada, from the 1970s to the early 2000s, that gap falls somewhere close to 10%.²⁴ Their 2002 study considers data from the first Workplace and Employee Survey (WES) conducted by Statistics Canada, and reviews the percentage differences between employees who are unionized and those who are not.

The authors deduce that there exists an average wage gap of 7.7% between unionized and nonunionized employees throughout Canada.²⁵ However, the authors also note that evidence from Statistics Canada survey between the years 1981 and 1998 suggest that this gap is slowly narrowing; reasons given by the authors for the decline in this gap are “the diminishing ability of unions to seek monopoly rents, due to factors such as technological advancement, greater competition from overseas, and deregulation.”²⁶ This conclusion is also advanced by Uppal in his 2011 article “Unionization 2011”: Uppal notes that in 2010, unionized workers enjoyed a higher average hourly earnings than non-unionized workers, and this relationship was true for both full-time and part-time employees.²⁷

However, some scholars have disputed this argument. In a study that examined the relationship between earnings and unionization through an examination of two waves of survey data collected in 2000 and 2004, Long and Shields discovered that although higher unionization rates in Canada resulted in an increase in a higher proportion of indirect pay as part of total compensation, there is no significant difference between the base pay to unionized and nonunionized employees.²⁸ In sum, although much of the literature suggests that unionization rates are correlated with higher average hourly earnings, some scholars challenge this interpretation.

Theories On Union Wage Premiums

Whether unionization rates have a positive or negative effect on average hourly earnings, and what the theoretical basis of such effects are, are key questions to ask when assessing the relationship between the two variables. It is important to be aware of existing literature detailing theories regarding the correlation between higher union rates and higher earnings. Studies on the topic offer a range of possible theories.²⁹

In their analysis of union wage premiums, Fang and Verma compare the historical differences between union and non-union wages. Their analysis shows that unionized workers make significantly higher wages than non-unionized workers.³⁰ The authors present two possible theories to explain why unionization results in higher average hourly earnings. The first theory is that unions attempt to organize the most workers in an industry, thereby forcing wages out of competition – this compels employers to pay the same wage. The second theory is the “shock effect hypothesis,” which argues that unions enforce standardized uniformity in all company operations, including those related to the hiring and compensation of employees. This uniformity, the authors write, may make unionized firms more efficient than non-unionized non-standardized firms.³¹

Another study suggests that because unions traditionally ensure the security of their members, unions bargain for greater employee benefits, which are likely to meet members’ security concerns.³² Even if the bargained hourly earnings are not significantly high, the high employee benefits ensure that unionized workers receive higher total compensation than their nonunionized counterparts.

In his analysis of wage differentials for ‘blue-collar’ workers, Freeman suggests that unionized workers are paid at higher rates than non-unionized workers because unions tend to adopt wage standardization policies.³³ This standardization of wages does not just apply *across* organizations, but is even more pronounced *within* organizations. The result is that wage differentials among ‘blue-collar’ workers are reduced, compared to both ‘white-collar’ workers within the unionized organization, and to external non-unionized ‘blue-collar’ workers.

Card, Lemieux, and Riddell build upon Freeman's theory when assessing the effects of unionization on average hourly earnings in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States.³⁴ The authors suggest that union wage standardization policies also take into account worker skills. Unions have a compression effect on wages, as more lower-skilled workers with union coverage are paid wages similar or close to higher-skilled workers within the same organization.³⁵ This effectively reduces inequality, resulting in higher wages for all unionized workers regardless of skill level, while non-unionized workers are paid according to skill level.

Data and Trends

For this analysis, we utilized data for all variables from the Canadian Socio-Economic Information Management System (CANSIM), provided by Statistics Canada. The source of the data for each individual variable, is noted under its line graph. The purpose of our study is to determine the effect of unionization rates in Canada on average hourly earnings.

This analysis employed panel data from all 10 provinces, from the years 2001 to 2015. The territories were excluded from our study, due to a lack of information regarding several variables, including: unionization rates, education statistics, work absence rates, and types of occupation. Data from all 10 provinces was included so as to gain a complete understanding of the effects of these variables, throughout Canada. Our analysis sought to include as many observations as possible to increase the statistical significance and applicability of our study. Data was only available until the year 2015. All per capita figures reflect the population in each province between the ages 15-64.

Figure 1 depicts data taken from CANSIM, and shows hourly earnings across all provinces, in current dollars.

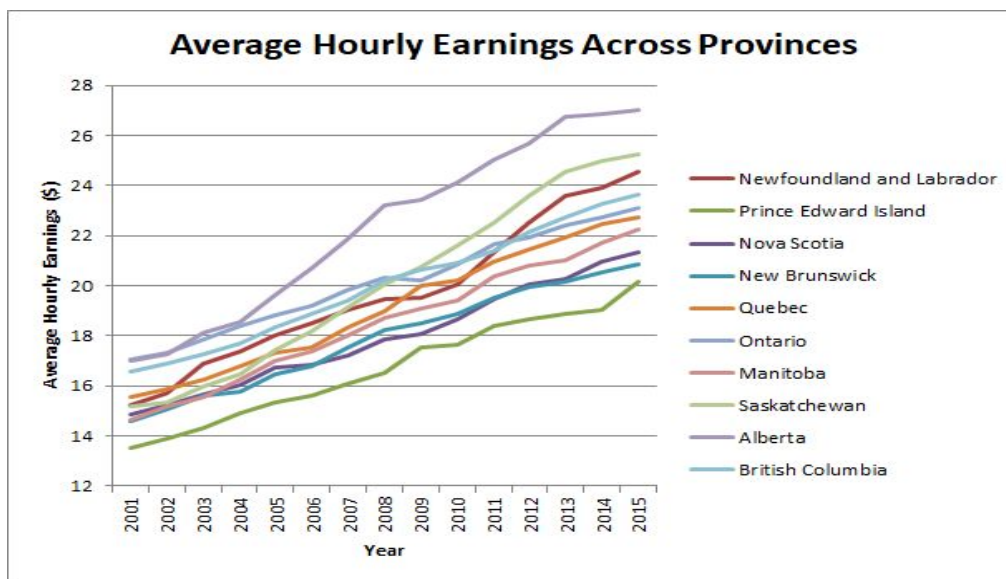


Figure 1: Graph of Average Hourly Earnings Across Provinces (2001-2015) from CANSIM 281-0030

The dependent variable utilized in this model is average hourly earnings. The average hourly earnings variable is measured in current dollars, and is measured as the industrial

aggregate, which includes all industrial sectors with the exception of agriculture, fishing and trapping, religious organizations and military personnel of the defence services. Further, this variable is based on gross payroll before source deductions.³⁶

From the years 2001 to 2015, average hourly earnings increased in all 10 provinces. Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Newfoundland and Labrador experienced the highest increases in average hourly earnings, with respective increases of \$10.08, \$10.03 and \$9.25. The provinces that experienced the lowest increases in average hourly earnings were Ontario, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, with respective increase of only \$6.08, \$6.27, and \$6.46. All other provinces experienced a moderate increase in earnings.

In 2015, Alberta had the highest average hourly earnings, with the figure of \$27.01 earned for every hour of work. The next highest province was Saskatchewan, which had an earnings of \$25.24. The third highest figure was Newfoundland and Labrador, with earnings of \$24.56. In 2015, Prince Edward Island had the lowest hourly earnings, of \$20.14.

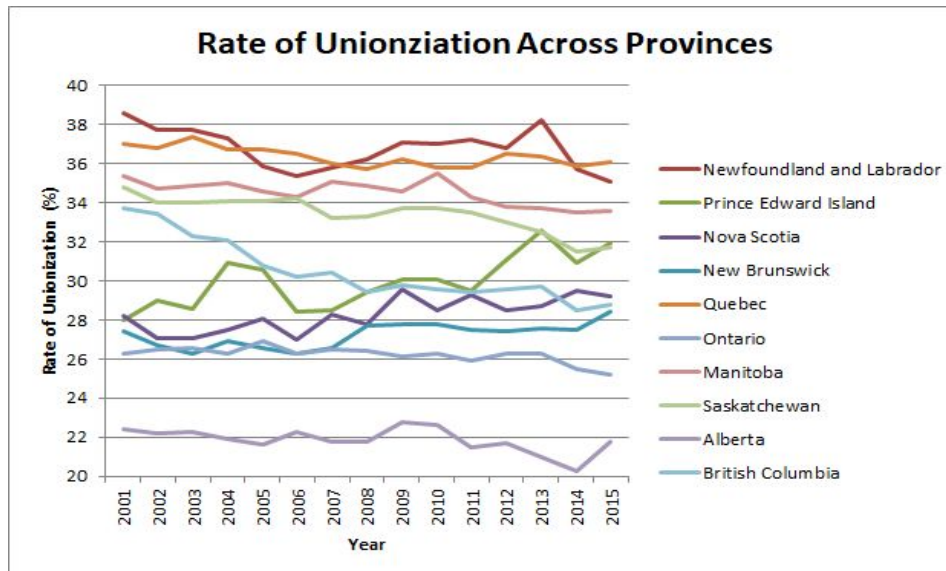


Figure 2: Graph of Unionization Rates Across Provinces (2001-2015) from CANSIM 282-0220

The main independent variable analyzed in this paper is unionization rates. This was chosen as the primary variable because there exists a general public perception that higher unionization rates result in significantly higher average earnings, and we concluded this topic merited further investigation. The unionization rate is calculated as the percentage of employees who are members of a union.

Overall, the unionization rate has declined across most provinces, from the years 2001 to 2015. However, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick all experienced an increase in unionization rates over these years. Moreover, several provinces have experienced fluctuations over the 15 year time period. For example, the unionization rate in Manitoba increased from 34.6% in 2009 to 35.5% in 2010, then declined to 34.3% in 2011. The provinces with the highest unionization rates in 2015 were Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Manitoba, with respective unionization rates of 36.1%, 35.1% and 33.6%. In contrast, the provinces with the lowest rates in 2015 were Alberta, Ontario, and New Brunswick, with rates of

21.8%, 25.2%, and 28.4%. The greatest decline in unionization occurred in British Columbia, where the rate declined from 33.7% to 28.8% over 15 years.

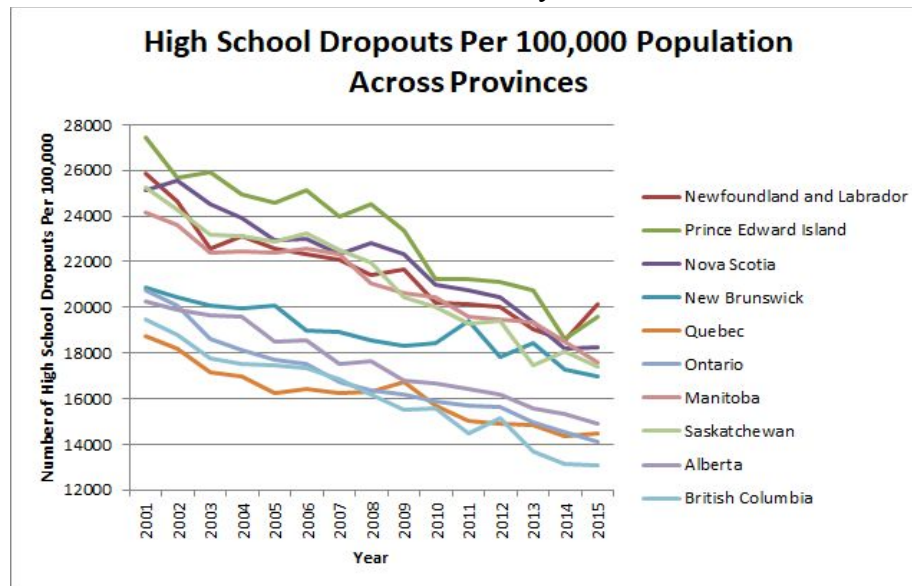


Figure 3: Graph of High School Dropouts Per Capita (100,000) Across Provinces (2001-2015) from CANSIM 282-0004

In sum, the proportion of high school dropouts (per 100,000 population) has declined across all provinces from 2001 to 2015. This variable was calculated by dividing the total number of people in the province who reported having only some high school education by the total population of the province (ages 16-64) and multiplying that figure by 100,000. This variable was chosen because earnings and income are often associated with the level of education attained.

The highest proportions of high school dropouts are in the Atlantic Canadian provinces. Specifically, in 2015, the provinces with the highest proportion of high school dropouts were Newfoundland and Labrador and Prince Edward Island, with 20,145 and 19,608 per 100,000 population. The provinces with the lowest proportion of high school dropouts were British Columbia and Ontario, with proportions of 13,098 and 14,084 per 100,000 population.

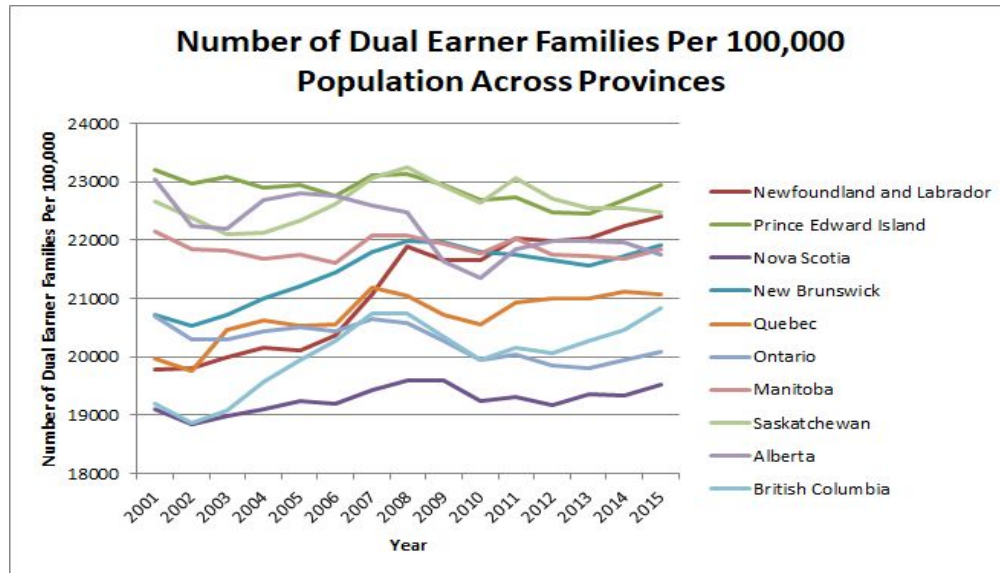


Figure 4: Graph of Dual Income Families Per Capita (100,000) Across Provinces (2001-2015) from CANSIM 111-0020

The number of dual-earning families was calculated by dividing the total number of people reported to be part of a dual income families by the total population of the province (ages 16-64) and multiplying that figure by 100,000. This variable was chosen because families with two incomes have been associated with reductions in child poverty and thus, there exists a potential correlation between dual income families and average hourly earnings.³⁷ The number of dual-earning families (per 100,000 population) across Canada has not changed drastically in the years between 2001 and 2015. The provinces that had the highest proportions in 2015 were Prince Edward Island, with 22,939 out of every 100,000 people, and Saskatchewan, with 22,487 people per 100,000 population. In contrast, Nova Scotia and British Columbia have the lowest dual-earning families per 100,000 people. Nova Scotia had a proportion of 19,536 people per 100,000, while British Columbia had a proportion of 20,841 people per 100,000.

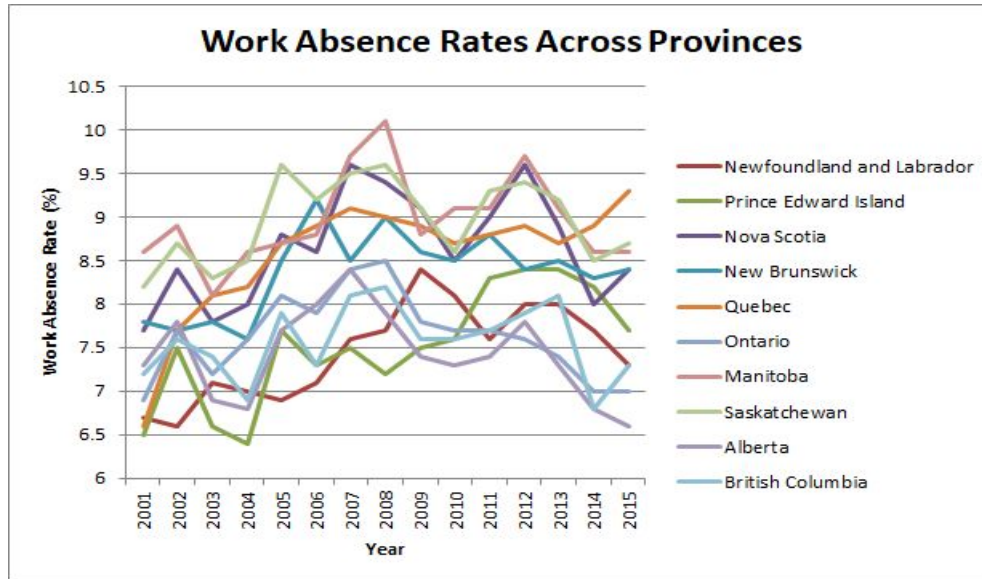


Figure 5: Graph of Work Absence Rates Across Provinces (2001-2015) from CANSIM 279-0029

The fourth independent variable is work absence rates. Work absence rates are measured as “the percentage of full-time employees reporting some absence” in the week surveyed.³⁸ This variable was chosen because frequent absence from work may correlate to lower general earnings. Work absence rates have varied significantly across provinces from 2001 and 2015. The rates are very inconsistent, with fluctuations of less than 1% observed from year to year in all provinces. In 2015, the provinces with the highest work absence rates were Quebec, with a rate of 9.3%, and Saskatchewan, which had a rate of 8.7%. The provinces with the lowest work absence rates were Alberta with a rate of 6.6%, and Ontario with a rate of 7%.

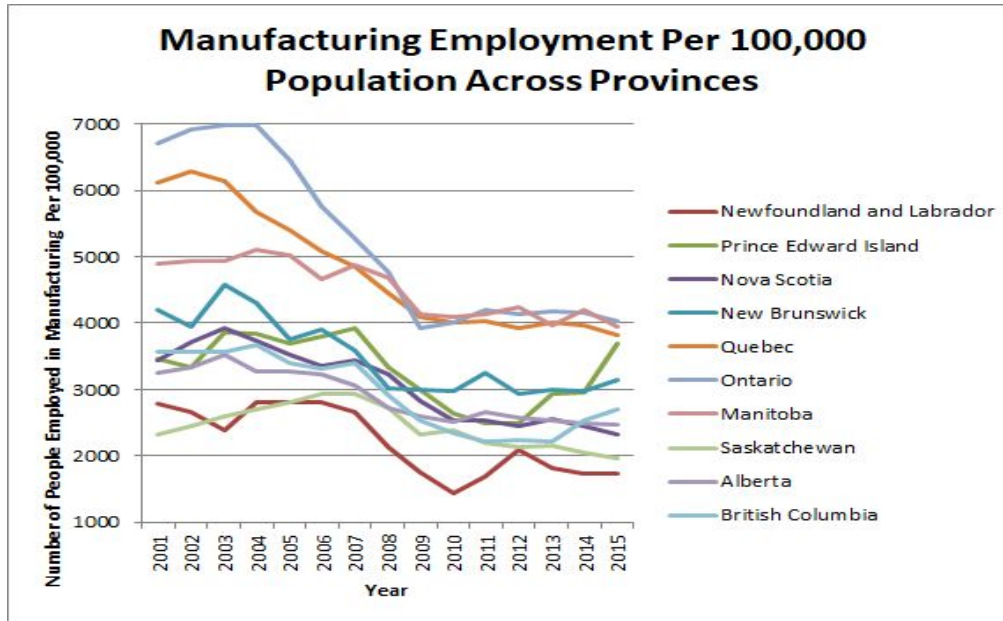


Figure 6: Graph of Employees in the Manufacturing Sector Per Capita (100,000) Across Provinces (2001-2015) from CANSIM 282-0142

The fifth independent variable is the proportion of the labour force employed in the manufacturing sector (per 100,000 population). This variable was calculated by dividing the total number of persons working the manufacturing sector by the total population of the province (ages 16-64), and multiplying by 100,000. This variable was chosen because the manufacturing sector tends to have a higher unionization rate.³⁹ Overall, the proportion of the labour force employed in the manufacturing sector (per 100,000 population) has declined over years across most provinces, with some provinces experiencing a more significant decline than others. In particular, Ontario experienced the steepest decline. Prince Edward Island saw a decline, before experiencing a sharp increase; this resulted in a greater proportion of employees in the manufacturing sector in 2015 in comparison to 2001. In 2015, provinces with the largest number of people employed in manufacturing per 100,000 were Ontario with 4,025 people per 100,000 population, and Quebec with 3,828 per 100,000 population. The provinces with the lowest number of people employed in manufacturing per 100,000 were Newfoundland and Labrador with 1,741 people per 100,000 population, and Saskatchewan with 1,957 per 100,000 population.

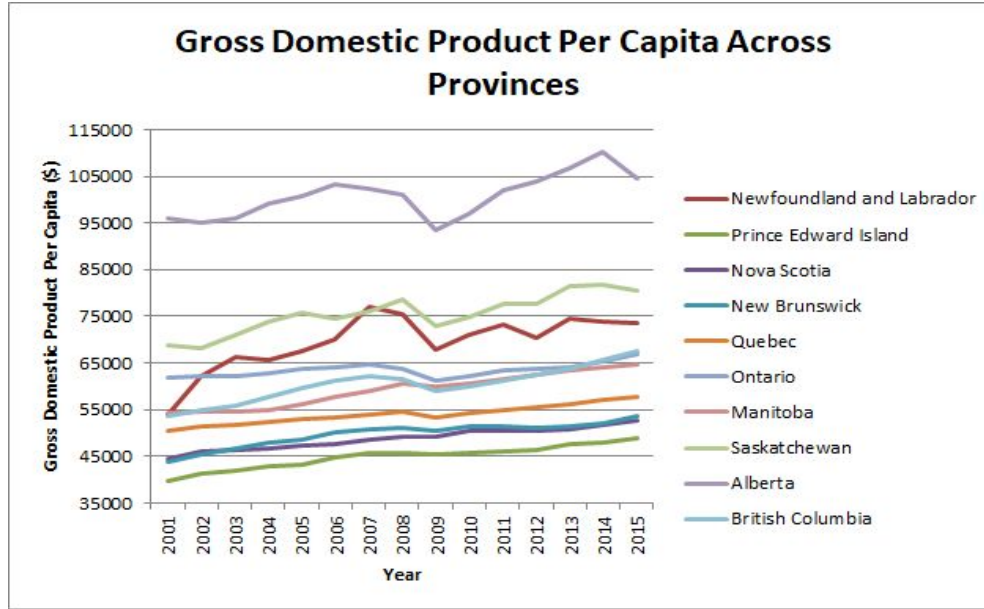


Figure 7: Graph of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Per Capita Across Provinces (2001-2015) from CANSIM 379-0030

The final independent variable considered in this study is Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita. This variable was calculated by dividing the total GDP by the total population of each province (ages 16-64). In this manner, the GDP per capita reflects the average GDP for working age individuals. This variable was chosen because overall provincial economic performance is likely to be associated with the average hourly earnings in that province. The data is presented in 2007 chained dollars. An effort was made to find current dollars, but unfortunately this data was not available. In sum, GDP per capita has steadily increased across provinces between 2001 and 2015. Alberta had the highest GDP per capita in 2015, with a GDP per capita of \$104,676. In fact, Alberta's GDP per capita is \$24,280 higher per person than the province with the second-highest GDP per capita in 2015, which was Saskatchewan (GDP per capita of \$80,396). In general, the Atlantic Canadian provinces had the lowest GDP per capita in 2015. Specifically, the lowest were Prince Edward Island with a GDP per capita of \$48,831, and Nova Scotia with a GDP per capita of \$52,646.

Empirical Model

This model utilizes two models in an effort to create an appropriate research design. Firstly, this study employs a levels model, where all the data are presented in their raw units; this model describes the relationship between the dependent and independent variables in terms of the units in which they were originally measured. Secondly, this paper will employ a double log model, which transforms all the observations into corresponding natural logarithms before analysis. The logarithm model demonstrates the relationship between the dependent and independent variables in terms of elasticities and percentages.

The equation of the model is as follows:

$$y_{i,p,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1,p,t} + \beta_2 X_{2,p,t} + \beta_3 X_{3,p,t} + \beta_4 X_{4,p,t} + \beta_5 X_{5,p,t} + \beta_6 X_{6,p,t} + e_{i,p,t}$$

$y_{p,t}$ = Dependent Variable ("Average Hourly Earnings")
 $X_{1,p,t}$ = Independent Variable 1 ("Rate of Unionization")
 $X_{2,p,t}$ = Independent Variable 2 ("High School Dropouts per 100,000 Population")
 $X_{3,p,t}$ = Independent Variable 3 ("Dual Earner Families per 100,000 Population")
 $X_{4,p,t}$ = Independent Variable 4 ("Work Absence Rates")
 $X_{5,p,t}$ = Independent Variable 5 ("Employees in the Manufacturing Sector per 100,000 Population")
 $X_{6,p,t}$ = Independent Variable 6 ("Gross Domestic Product per Capita")
 β_0 = Y-Intercept
 β_1 = Independent Variable 1 Coefficient
 β_2 = Independent Variable 2 Coefficient
 β_3 = Independent Variable 3 Coefficient
 β_4 = Independent Variable 4 Coefficient
 β_5 = Independent Variable 5 Coefficient
 β_6 = Independent Variable 6 Coefficient
 $E_{i,p,t}$ = Potential error in the model

The study also utilizes dummy variables, which create a fixed effect on each variable. These variables are 1-0 binary indicators that seek to explain any unquantifiable differences between provinces. In regards to our analysis, these unquantifiable factors could be differences in culture, policies, perceptions of unionization, etc. In total, 9 dummy variables were used (n-1). The province that was not assigned a dummy variable was British Columbia.

Econometric Analysis

Table A describes the number of observations, the means, the standard deviations and the minimums and maximums for each variable utilized in this study. Table B displays the results of all the regressions conducted on the data (including both levels and double log tests).

Variable	Number of Observations	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max
Average Hourly Earnings (in \$, current)	150	19.239067	2.950390561	13.5	27.01
Unionization Rates Across Canada (in %)	150	30.52	4.641781267	20.3	38.6
Number of High School Dropouts (per 100,000 population)	150	19491.509	3185.669394	13097.9	27441
Number of Dual Earner Couples (per 100,000 population)	150	21242.523	1214.455334	18848	23238
Work Absence Rates (in %)	150	8.1126667	0.810620887	6.4	10.1
Number of Workers Employed in Manufacturing (per 100,000 population)	150	3493.4262	1158.858619	1443.43	6991.1
Per Capita GDP, per person (in \$, chained to 2007)	150	62665.743	15980.22208	39843.9	110235

Table A: Summary Statistics

Variable	Reg. 1	Reg. 2	Reg. 3	Reg. 4 (ln)	Reg. 5 (ln)	Reg. 6 (ln)	Reg. 7, robust	Reg. 8 (ln), robust	Reg. 9, ln, sample, robust
Adjusted R Square	0.0325	0.7817	0.9128	0.0343	0.8066	0.9217	0.9217	0.9297	0.9657
Coefficient and P stat Unionization	-0.1255375 0.015*	0.0079696 0.769	-0.1442089 0.124	-0.1940465 0.013**	-0.0277381 0.475	-0.0520784 0.690	-0.1442089 0.077*	-0.0520784 0.655	0.241667 0.091*
Coefficient and P stat High School Drop Outs		-0.0006005 0.000***	-0.0008186 0.000***		-0.5953289 0.000***	-0.7857636 0.000***	-0.0008186 0.000***	-0.7857636 0.000***	-0.2358586 0.059*
Coefficient and P stat Dual Earner		0.000152 0.159	-0.0000482 0.806		0.1540595 0.153	-0.1476216 0.492	-0.0000482 0.847	-0.146216 0.549	-0.1187251 0.663
Coefficient and P stat Work Absence		0.3606181 0.017**	-0.0990339 0.554		0.2302234 0.000***	0.0737731 0.265	-0.0990339 0.539	0.0737731 0.270	-0.0567984 0.376
Coefficient and P stat # Workers Employed in Manufacturing		-0.0008285 0.000***	-0.0006873 0.000***		-0.1631512 0.000***	-0.1215853 0.001***	-0.0006873 0.000***	-0.1215853 0.005***	-0.1475325 0.003***
Coefficient and P stat Per Capita GDP		0.000057 0.000***	0.0001721 0.000***		0.1834982 0.000***	0.6429782 0.000***	0.0001721 0.007***	0.6429782 0.000***	1.408445 0.000***
Coefficient and P stat Newfoundland and Labrador			3.101747 0.011**			0.1098461 0.052**	3.101747 0.038**	0.1098461 0.122	
Coefficient and P stat Prince Edward Island			5.601295 0.000***			0.3347428 0.000***	5.601295 0.000***	0.3347428 0.000***	0.0909775 0.005***
Coefficient and P stat Nova Scotia			4.617406 0.000***			0.2611633 0.000***	4.617406 0.000***	0.2611633 0.000***	0.0240984 0.569
Coefficient and P stat New Brunswick			2.120877 0.005***			0.1641478 0.000***	2.120877 0.012**	0.1641478 0.000***	
Coefficient and P stat Quebec			2.4597 0.001***			0.0924289 0.029**	2.4597 0.001***	0.0924289 0.049**	
Coefficient and P stat Ontario			1.151789 0.066*			0.0725245 0.017**	1.151789 0.017**	0.0725245 0.012**	
Coefficient and P stat Manitoba			4.657739 0.000***			0.2069816 0.000***	4.657739 0.000***	0.2069816 0.000***	
Coefficient and P stat Saskatchewan			1.982457 0.080*			0.0563612 0.274	1.982457 0.186	0.0563612 0.400	
Coefficient and P stat Alberta			-4.61527 0.003***			-0.1568797 0.038**	-4.61527 0.065*	-0.1568797 0.125	

* Statistical significance at 1% level, ** statistical significance at 5% level, *** statistical significance at 10% level

Table B: Estimates of Independents on Dependent

Econometric Analysis of Regressions 1, 2, 3, and 7

Regressions 1, 2, 3, and 7 were all conducted utilizing the levels model. The first regression consisted of the dependent variable, average hourly earnings, and the main independent variable unionization rates. The results of this regression showed an Adjusted R-Square of 0.0325, suggesting that unionization rates only explain 3.25% of the variation in average hourly earnings from 2001 to 2015. Further, the regression demonstrated a slight negative relationship between the two variables, which suggested that as unionization rates increased by 1%, average hourly earnings decreased by \$0.125 (measured in current dollars). This relationship is statistically significant at the 5% level, as the P value is 0.015.

Regression 2 added supplementary right-hand variables, which included the number of high school dropouts per capita (100,000), the number of dual-earning families per capita (100,000), work absence rates, the number of people employed in the manufacturing sector per capita (100,000), and GDP per person (ages 16-64). The new Adjusted R-Square is 0.7817, indicating that this new model explained 78% of the variation in average hourly earnings – a much more significant explanation than the first regression. Regression 2 did not demonstrate a statistically significant relationship between unionization rates and average hourly earnings. In addition, the model did not show a statistically significant relationship between average hourly earnings the proportion of dual-earning families. However, the model does show a positive relationship between average hourly earnings and work absence rates, at the 1% level of statistical significance. Furthermore, regression 2 shows a negative relationship between average hourly earnings, the proportion of manufacturing employees, and the proportion of high school dropouts, which were statistically significant at the 1% level.

Following the addition of dummy variables to the test, which occurred in regression 3, the Adjusted R-Square rises to 0.9128, suggesting that this model now explains 91.28% of the variation in average hourly earnings. Similar to regression 2, regression 3 does not show a statistically significant relationship between average hourly earnings and unionization rates, or earnings and the proportion of dual-earning families. Further, in contrast to regression 2, this model does not show a statistically significant relationship between average hourly earnings and work absence rates. The analysis does demonstrate negative relationships between average hourly earnings and the proportion of high school dropouts, and the proportion of manufacturing employees. Both independent variables are statistically significant at the 1% level. In addition, regression 3 shows a positive relationship between average hourly earnings and GDP per capita, which is statistically significant at the 1% level.

The seventh regression utilized a robust function. The Adjusted R-Square is only slightly higher than regression 3, at 0.9217, demonstrating that the robust model explains 92.17% of the variation in average hourly earnings. Neither the proportion of dual-earning families or work absence rates are statistically significant in this model.

However, in comparison to models 2 and 3, this result shows a statistically significant negative relationship between average hourly earnings and unionization rates. Specifically, the model demonstrates that as the unionization rate increases by 1%, average hourly earnings decreased by \$0.14. The P value was 0.077, suggesting that this result was statistically significant at the 10% level.

In addition, the seventh model depicts a very slight negative relationship between average hourly earnings and the proportion of high school dropouts. As the number of high school

dropouts per 100,000 increased by one, average hourly earnings decreased by \$0.0008. This result is statistically significant at the 1% level. Moreover, the model suggests a very small negative relationship between average hourly earnings and the number of workers employed in manufacturing per 100,000. As the number of manufacturing employees per 100,000 increased by one, average hourly earnings decreased by \$0.0006. This result was also statistically significant at the 1% level.

Similar to the previous models, the seventh model suggested a positive relationship between average hourly earnings and the GDP per capita. As GDP per capita increased by \$1, average hourly earnings increased by \$0.0002. This result was statistically significant at the 1% level. The results of regression 7 demonstrated the significance of education, type of occupation, and the GDP per capita in determining average hourly earnings.

Econometric Analysis of Regressions 4, 5, 6, 8

Regressions 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 were all conducted utilizing the double log model, where the data was transformed into natural logarithms prior to analysis. The fourth regression, which comprised the main independent variable and unionization rates, resulted in an Adjusted R-Squared value of only 0.0343, which demonstrated that less than 4% of the variation in average hourly earnings can be explained by unionization rates. This regression also established a very slight negative relationship between unionization rates and average hourly earnings – as unionization rates increased 1%, average hourly earnings decreased by 0.19%, or as unionization rates increased by 10%, average hourly earnings decreased by 1.9%. This relationship is statistically significant at the 5% level, as the P value is 0.013.

The fifth regression added all the remaining right-hand variables, including education, type of family, work absence rates, occupation and GDP per capita. The new Adjusted R-Squared value of 0.8066 promptly indicates that this model better explains the variation in the dependent variables. These results showed no statistical significance between unionization rates and average hourly earnings. However, this analysis did show a slight negative relationship between the dependent variable and the proportion of high school dropouts, the proportion of workers employees in manufacturing, both at the 1% level. On the other hand, this model also demonstrated a slight positive relationship between average hourly earnings and both work absence rates and GDP per capita at the 1% level. The results did not determine a statistically significant relationship between the number of dual-earning families per capita and average hourly earnings.

When dummy variables were added to the analysis in regression 6, the Adjusted R-Squared value increased to 0.9217, suggesting that the independent variables explained 92.17% of the variation in average hourly earnings. This test indicated a slight negative relationship between the number of high school dropouts and workers employed in manufacturing per 100,000 population and average hourly earnings; these were significant at the 1% levels. In contrast to previous regressions, this test did not show a statistically significant relationship between the dependent variable and unionization rates, type of family or work absence rates. Nevertheless, it did show a slight positive relationship, significant at 1% between GDP per capita and hourly earnings.

The results of the eighth regression, which utilized a robust function, were similar to those from the previous regression. The Adjusted R-Square remained constant at 0.9297. This robust test demonstrated that the impact of unionization rates on average hourly earnings was not

significant. The double log model also showed that there was no statistical significance between the proportion of dual-earning families and work absence rates.

On the other hand, this test presented evidence that the proportion of high school dropouts, proportion of workers employed in manufacturing, and GDP per capita all impact average hourly earnings. First, the regression demonstrated a negative relationship between the number of high school dropouts (per 100,000 people); specifically, as the number of high school dropouts increased by 1%, the average hourly earnings decreased by 0.78%, or as this proportion decreased by 10%, average hourly earnings decreased by 7.8%. This relationship was statistically significant at the 1% level. Secondly, the analysis found a statistically significant negative relationship between average hourly earnings and the number of workers employed in manufacturing at the 1% level. A 1% increase in the proportion of workers in manufacturing (per 100,000) resulted in a 0.12% decrease in average hourly earnings. Finally, the relationship between GDP per capita and average hourly earnings was positive and statistically significant at the 1% level: as GDP per capita increased by 1%, average hourly earnings increased by 0.64%. These findings demonstrated the significance of education levels, type of occupation, and GDP per capita in determining hourly earnings.

Econometric Analysis Regression 9

Regression 9 was conducted as a double log model, and specifically removed all provinces except Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. These three provinces experienced a growth in unionization rates over the fifteen year time period observed in this analysis, while all other provinces experienced a decline in unionization rates. In Prince Edward Island, the unionization rate increased by 3.9%, while in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick unionizations rates increased by 1%. In contrast to the results of previous regressions, the regression showed a statistically significant *positive* relationship between unionization rates and average hourly earnings. As the unionization rate increased by 1% in those three provinces, average hourly earnings increased by 0.24%. This relationship is statistically significant at the 10% level. Further, in comparison to previous regressions, the results showed a stronger relationship between GDP per capita and average hourly earnings. As the GDP per capita increased by 1%, average hourly earnings increased by 1.4%. This relationship was statistically significant at the 1% level.

Consistent with previous results, the proportion of high school dropouts and the proportion of manufacturing employees had statistically significant negative relationships with average hourly earnings. As the number of high dropouts per 100,000 people increased by 1%, average hourly earnings decreased by 0.24%. This relationship is statistically significant at the 10% level. As the number of manufacturing employees per 100,000 people increased by 1%, average hourly earnings decreased by 0.15%. This relationship is statistically significant at the 1% level. Neither the proportion of dual-earning families, nor the work absence rate, had statistically significant impacts on average hourly earnings.

Conclusion

There has been a lack of comprehensive empirical evidence detailing the relationship between unionization rates and average hourly earnings. The present paper has sought to add to the literature on this topic by analyzing data from all 10 provinces between the years 2001 to 2015 through multivariate regression models. This paper also controlled for the effects of education,

type of family, work absence rates, occupation type, GDP per capita, and unquantifiable province-specific factors through the use of dummy variables.

The results of this study do not support or confirm the hypothesis that higher unionization rates results in higher average hourly earnings. In fact, most models demonstrated no statistically significant relationship between unionization rates; furthermore, a robust levels test that examined all 10 provinces demonstrated a negative relationship between the variables, while a test that isolated the provinces Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick (the only provinces that saw an increase in unionization rates) showed a slight positive relationship between average hourly earnings and unionization rates. However, it must be noted that the restricted sample that found a positive relationship between the variables had significantly fewer observations than the Pan-Canadian analyses. In this manner, our results indicated a stronger relationship between GDP per capita and average hourly earnings. Thus, as the Canadian workplace continues to change, and unionization rates continue to decline, workers could continue to see higher wages, if current upward trends in variables, such as GDP per capita, persist. The only independent variable effects that remained consistent and statistically significant throughout our study were the amount of high school dropouts per 100,000 population, the amount of workers employed in the manufacturing sector per 100,000 population, and GDP per person (ages 16-64).

There are a number of limitations associated with this study. Firstly, this analysis did not consider immigration status as a determinant of average hourly earnings. This variable was examined, but there was not enough reliable data available to analyze. Secondly, this study may have been improved by looking at total benefits paid to workers, rather than limiting analysis to average hourly earnings. In their 2009 study, Long and Shields note that unionized workers may receive higher benefits than their nonunionized counterparts. Finally, this analysis only considered the years from 2001 to 2015; hence, a different relationship between unionization rates and average hourly earnings may have existed in past years, such as the twentieth century, but it was not accounted for in our study.

To conclude, the findings of this article demonstrate that the topic of unionization and earnings requires additional attention and study. In particular, further research should focus on the relationship between average hourly earnings and GDP per person, as well as the relationship between unionization rates and overall benefits to workers. These relationships will continue to influence and shape the balance of power between employers and employees in the 21st century.

Endnotes

¹ Wallerstein and Western, 2000

² Ibid

³ Ibid

- ⁴ Ibid
- ⁵ Employment and Social Development Canada, 2016
- ⁶ Dufour and Russell, 2016
- ⁷ Card, Lemieux, and Riddell, 2004; Freeman, 1980; Long and Shields, 2009; Dufour and Russell, 2016
- ⁸ Morissette, 2008; Ornstein, 2011; Duclos and Pellerin, 2016
- ⁹ Ibid
- ¹⁰ Statistics Canada, 2017
- ¹¹ Morissette, 2008
- ¹² Ibid
- ¹³ Ornstein, 2011
- ¹⁴ Ibid
- ¹⁵ Duclos and Pellerin, 2016
- ¹⁶ Ibid
- ¹⁷ Uppal, 2011
- ¹⁸ Galarneau and Sohn, 2013
- ¹⁹ Ibid
- ²⁰ Ibid
- ²¹ Ibid
- ²² Uppal, 2011
- ²³ Galarneau and Sohn, 2013
- ²⁴ Fang and Verma, 2002
- ²⁵ Ibid
- ²⁶ Ibid
- ²⁷ Uppal, 2011
- ²⁸ Long and Shields, 2009

- ²⁹ Fang and Verma, 2002; Long and Sheilds, 2009; Freeman, 1980; Card, Lemieux, and Riddell, 2004
- ³⁰ Fang and Verma, 2002
- ³¹ Ibid
- ³² Long and Sheilds, 2009
- ³³ Freeman, 1980
- ³⁴ Card, Lemieux, and Riddell, 2004
- ³⁵ Ibid
- ³⁶ Statistics Canada, CANSIM 281-0030
- ³⁷ European Commission, 2016
- ³⁸ Statistics Canada, CANSIM 279-0029
- ³⁹ Galarneau and Sohn, 2013

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Regression 1:

. * reg 1: bivariate; hourly earnings and unionization rate

.
. reg Hourlyearnings Unionrate

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	150
Model	50.9339838	1	50.9339838	F(1, 148)	=	6.01
Residual	1254.78669	148	8.47828842	Prob > F	=	0.0154
				R-squared	=	0.0390
				Adj R-squared	=	0.0325
Total	1305.72067	149	8.76322597	Root MSE	=	2.9118

Hourlyearn~s	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Unionrate	-.1255375	.0512181	-2.45	0.015	-.2267508	-.0243242
_cons	23.07047	1.581153	14.59	0.000	19.94592	26.19502

Sources of data: Data from CANSIM Tables 281-0030, 282-0220.

Regression 2:

. * reg 2: multivariate; earnings, unionization rate, high school dropout, dual earner families, work absence rate, manufacturing occupation, and GDP per capita

.
. reg Hourlyearnings Unionrate Edu Dualearner Absencerate Occupation GDP

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	150
Model	1032.16841	6	172.028068	F(6, 143)	=	89.93
Residual	273.55226	143	1.91295287	Prob > F	=	0.0000
				R-squared	=	0.7905
				Adj R-squared	=	0.7817
Total	1305.72067	149	8.76322597	Root MSE	=	1.3831

Hourlyearn~s	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Unionrate	.0079696	.0270867	0.29	0.769	-.0455725	.0615117
Edu	-.0006005	.0000405	-14.83	0.000	-.0006805	-.0005204
Dualearner	.000152	.0001073	1.42	0.159	-.0000601	.0003642
Absencerate	.3606181	.1490203	2.42	0.017	.0660508	.6551854
Occupation	-.0008285	.0001049	-7.90	0.000	-.0010357	-.0006212
GDP	.000057	9.05e-06	6.29	0.000	.0000391	.0000749
_cons	23.86917	2.42499	9.84	0.000	19.07571	28.66263

Sources of data: Data from CANSIM Tables 281-0030, 282-0220, 282-0004, 111-0020, 272-0029, 282-0142, 379-0030, 051-0001.

Regression 3:

```
. * reg 3: same variables as reg 2, but with dummy variables for all provinces except BC
.
. reg Hourlyearnings Unionrate Edu Dualearner Absencerate Occupation GDP NF PEI NS NB QB ON MB SK AB
```

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	148
Model	1200.46091	15	80.0307273	F(15, 132)	=	103.56
Residual	102.005557	132	.772769371	Prob > F	=	0.0000
				R-squared	=	0.9217
				Adj R-squared	=	0.9128
Total	1302.46647	147	8.8603161	Root MSE	=	.87907

Hourlyearn~s	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Unionrate	-.1442089	.0932501	-1.55	0.124	-.3286668	.0402489
Edu	-.0008186	.0000819	-10.00	0.000	-.0009806	-.0006567
Dualearner	-.0000482	.0001958	-0.25	0.806	-.0004355	.000339
Absencerate	-.0990339	.166936	-0.59	0.554	-.4292498	.2311819
Occupation	-.0006873	.0001709	-4.02	0.000	-.0010254	-.0003492
GDP	.0001721	.0000421	4.08	0.000	.0000888	.0002555
NF	3.101747	1.208539	2.57	0.011	.7111365	5.492357
PEI	5.601295	.8564022	6.54	0.000	3.907247	7.295343
NS	4.617406	.633383	7.29	0.000	3.364512	5.8703
NB	2.120877	.7409099	2.86	0.005	.6552837	3.58647
QB	2.4597	.7161777	3.43	0.001	1.043029	3.87637
ON	1.151789	.621478	1.85	0.066	-.0775562	2.381134
MB	4.657739	.6553888	7.11	0.000	3.361316	5.954163
SK	1.982457	1.122011	1.77	0.080	-.236992	4.201906
AB	-4.61527	1.54821	-2.98	0.003	-7.677783	-1.552757
_cons	30.9447	5.554223	5.57	0.000	19.9579	41.93151

Sources of data: Data from CANSIM Tables 281-0030, 282-0220, 282-0004, 111-0020, 272-0029, 282-0142, 379-0030, 051-0001.

Regression 4:

```
. *reg 4: log bivariate; hourly earnings and unionization rate
```

```
. reg lnHourlyearnings lnUnionrate
```

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	150
Model	.141074178	1	.141074178	F(1, 148)	=	6.29
Residual	3.3179068	148	.022418289	Prob > F	=	0.0132
				R-squared	=	0.0408
				Adj R-squared	=	0.0343
Total	3.45898098	149	.023214637	Root MSE	=	.14973

lnHourlyea~s	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
lnUnionrate	-.1940465	.0773541	-2.51	0.013	-.3469076	-.0411853
_cons	3.606331	.2637694	13.67	0.000	3.08509	4.127572

Sources of data: Data from CANSIM Tables 281-0030, 282-0220.

Regression 5:

```
. * reg 5: log multivariate; earnings, unionization rate, high school dropout, dual earner families, work absence
> rate, manufacturing occupation, and GDP per capita
```

```
.
. reg lnHourlyearnings lnUnionrate lnEdu lnDualearner lnAbsencerate lnOccupation lnGDP
```

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	150
Model	2.81708422	6	.469514037	F(6, 143)	=	104.60
Residual	.641896756	143	.004488789	Prob > F	=	0.0000
				R-squared	=	0.8144
				Adj R-squared	=	0.8066
Total	3.45898098	149	.023214637	Root MSE	=	.067

lnHourlyear~s	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
lnUnionrate	-.0277381	.0387631	-0.72	0.475	-.1043607	.0488845
lnEdu	-.5953289	.0379527	-15.69	0.000	-.6703498	-.520308
lnDualearner	.1540595	.1072585	1.44	0.153	-.0579575	.3660765
lnAbsencerate	.2302234	.0578783	3.98	0.000	.1158158	.3446311
lnOccupation	-.1631512	.0187489	-8.70	0.000	-.2002121	-.1260903
lnGDP	.1834982	.0297064	6.18	0.000	.1247779	.2422186
_cons	6.197889	1.045017	5.93	0.000	4.132213	8.263565

Sources of data: Data from CANSIM Tables 281-0030, 282-0220, 282-0004, 111-0020, 272-0029, 282-0142, 379-0030, 051-0001.

Regression 6:

```
. * reg 6: same variables as reg 5, but with dummy variables
```

```
.
. reg lnHourlyearnings lnUnionrate lnEdu lnDualearner lnAbsencerate lnOccupation lnGDP NF PEI NS NB QB ON MB SK A
> B
```

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	148
Model	3.20965493	15	.213976996	F(15, 132)	=	116.41
Residual	.242636681	132	.001838157	Prob > F	=	0.0000
				R-squared	=	0.9297
				Adj R-squared	=	0.9217
Total	3.45229161	147	.023484977	Root MSE	=	.04287

lnHourlyear~s	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
lnUnionrate	-.0520784	.1304211	-0.40	0.690	-.3100642	.2059074
lnEdu	-.7857636	.0894562	-8.78	0.000	-.9627169	-.6088103
lnDualearner	-.1476216	.2142117	-0.69	0.492	-.5713535	.2761103
lnAbsencerate	.0737731	.0658714	1.12	0.265	-.0565269	.2040731
lnOccupation	-.1215853	.0372318	-3.27	0.001	-.1952334	-.0479372
lnGDP	.6429782	.1357084	4.74	0.000	.3745337	.9114228
NF	.1098461	.0560886	1.96	0.052	-.0011028	.220795
PEI	.3347428	.0467171	7.17	0.000	.2423317	.4271538
NS	.2611633	.0332144	7.86	0.000	.1954619	.3268648
NB	.1641478	.037925	4.33	0.000	.0891283	.2391673
QB	.0924289	.0418944	2.21	0.029	.0095575	.1753003
ON	.0725245	.0299617	2.42	0.017	.0132573	.1317916
MB	.2069816	.0310879	6.66	0.000	.1454867	.2684765
SK	.0563612	.0513096	1.10	0.274	-.0451343	.1578567
AB	-.1568797	.074757	-2.10	0.038	-.3047565	-.0090029
_cons	5.978813	2.295639	2.60	0.010	1.437813	10.51981

Sources of data: Data from CANSIM Tables 281-0030, 282-0220, 282-0004, 111-0020, 272-0029, 282-0142, 379-0030, 051-0001.

Regression 7:

```
. * reg 7: levels robust; same variables as reg 3

.
. reg Hourlyearnings Unionrate Edu Dualearner Absencerate Occupation GDP NF PEI NS NB QB ON MB SK AB, robust

Linear regression                                Number of obs   =       148
                                                F(15, 132)        =      130.40
                                                Prob > F           =       0.0000
                                                R-squared          =       0.9217
                                                Root MSE          =       .87907
```

Hourlyearn~s	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Unionrate	-.1442089	.0810072	-1.78	0.077	-.3044492	.0160313
Edu	-.0008186	.000107	-7.65	0.000	-.0010302	-.000607
Dualearner	-.0000482	.0002495	-0.19	0.847	-.0005417	.0004453
Absencerate	-.0990339	.1609135	-0.62	0.539	-.4173367	.2192688
Occupation	-.0006873	.0001577	-4.36	0.000	-.0009992	-.0003754
GDP	.0001721	.0000629	2.73	0.007	.0000476	.0002967
NF	3.101747	1.481648	2.09	0.038	.1709002	6.032593
PEI	5.601295	1.086885	5.15	0.000	3.451328	7.751262
NS	4.617406	.5888229	7.84	0.000	3.452656	5.782156
NB	2.120877	.8322909	2.55	0.012	.474523	3.76723
QB	2.4597	.7175019	3.43	0.001	1.04041	3.878989
ON	1.151789	.4766796	2.42	0.017	.2088694	2.094708
MB	4.657739	.6325537	7.36	0.000	3.406486	5.908993
SK	1.982457	1.490143	1.33	0.186	-.9651938	4.930108
AB	-4.61527	2.477964	-1.86	0.065	-9.516928	.2863882
_cons	30.9447	6.584813	4.70	0.000	17.91929	43.97011

Sources of data: Data from CANSIM Tables 281-0030, 282-0220, 282-0004, 111-0020, 272-0029, 282-0142, 379-0030, 051-0001.

Regression 8:

```
. * reg 8: log robust; same variables as reg 6

.
. reg lnHourlyearnings lnUnionrate lnEdu lnDualearner lnAbsencerate lnOccupation lnGDP NF PEI NS NB QB ON MB SK A
> B, robust

Linear regression                                Number of obs   =       148
                                                F(15, 132)        =      159.79
                                                Prob > F           =       0.0000
                                                R-squared          =       0.9297
                                                Root MSE          =       .04287
```

lnHourlyearn~s	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
lnUnionrate	-.0520784	.116342	-0.45	0.655	-.2822144	.1780575
lnEdu	-.7857636	.1192705	-6.59	0.000	-1.021692	-.5498348
lnDualearner	-.1476216	.245696	-0.60	0.549	-.6336325	.3383893
lnAbsencerate	.0737731	.0666312	1.11	0.270	-.0580301	.2055763
lnOccupation	-.1215853	.0427125	-2.85	0.005	-.2060748	-.0370958
lnGDP	.6429782	.1765369	3.64	0.000	.2937707	.9921857
NF	.1098461	.0704837	1.56	0.122	-.0295777	.2492698
PEI	.3347428	.0537637	6.23	0.000	.2283928	.4410927
NS	.2611633	.0303083	8.62	0.000	.2012104	.3211162
NB	.1641478	.0398788	4.12	0.000	.0852635	.2430321
QB	.0924289	.0465221	1.99	0.049	.0004037	.1844541
ON	.0725245	.0285824	2.54	0.012	.0159857	.1290633
MB	.2069816	.0280156	7.39	0.000	.151564	.2623992
SK	.0563612	.0667021	0.84	0.400	-.0755822	.1883046
AB	-.1568797	.101684	-1.54	0.125	-.3580207	.0442613
_cons	5.978813	2.987746	2.00	0.047	.0687565	11.88887

Sources of data: Data from CANSIM Tables 281-0030, 282-0220, 282-0004, 111-0020, 272-0029, 282-0142, 379-0030, 051-0001.

Regression 9:

```
. * reg 9: log model; only provinces with union growth, PEI NB and NS
.
. reg lnHourlyearnings lnUnionrate lnEdu lnDualearner lnAbsencerate lnOccupation lnGDP PEI NS, robust
```

```
Linear regression               Number of obs   =           45
                               F(8, 36)         =        174.10
                               Prob > F          =         0.0000
                               R-squared          =         0.9657
                               Root MSE       =         .02511
```

lnHourlyear~s	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
lnUnionrate	.241667	.1393263	1.73	0.091	-.0408998	.5242339
lnEdu	-.2358586	.1208322	-1.95	0.059	-.4809177	.0092006
lnDualearner	-.1187251	.2705634	-0.44	0.663	-.6674532	.430003
lnAbsencerate	-.0567984	.0633113	-0.90	0.376	-.1851997	.0716028
lnOccupation	-.1475325	.0470593	-3.14	0.003	-.2429731	-.0520919
lnGDP	1.408445	.183566	7.67	0.000	1.036156	1.780734
PEI	.0909775	.0301661	3.02	0.005	.0297978	.1521572
NS	.0240984	.0419105	0.57	0.569	-.0609	.1090969
_cons	-8.321092	2.789993	-2.98	0.005	-13.97946	-2.662724

```
.
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Sources of data: Data from CANSIM Tables 281-0030, 282-0220, 282-0004, 111-0020, 272-0029, 282-0142, 379-0030, 051-0001.

Populist Aspects:

Twitter and Institutional Change: Insights from Populist and Pluralist Discourses in Venezuela
By Adriana Farias

Abstract: Should we take a politician's tweet seriously? This paper argues that tweets sent out from the accounts of political elites reflect a particular worldview that looks to support or challenge the legitimacy of an institutional order. As Twitter provides a direct connection between the speaker and mass audiences, it offers political leaders a platform to articulate a vision, justify democratic or undemocratic strategies for competition, and mobilize support across frontiers to influence the perception of power structures. Therefore, this study carries out a content analysis of the tweets of the opposition and incumbent leaders in Venezuela to explore the relationship between their discourse and the erosion of democratic institutions. The results show that, on one hand, the incumbent's discourse was framed within a *populist* worldview, which perceives politics as a zero-sum struggle, such that the incumbent's infringements on democratic procedures were justified as an effort for emancipation of the people from global oppressors. On the other hand, the opposition articulated a pluralist discourse that defended electoral competition, understood as the way to resolve the various interests and goals of a heterogeneous society. Given the unprecedented reach of social media, this study highlights the extent to which Twitter contributes to the interpretation of power structures, and the extent to which political elites use it to articulate a narrative that influences the legitimacy of an institutional order.

Introduction

In light of Venezuela's reliance on social media for news and political communications¹, this research project looks at the tweets of political elites during three electoral moments in order to explore the relationship between discourse on social media and institutional change in the post-Chávez era. Known for his charismatic appeal to the *pueblo*, late president Hugo Chávez pioneered the use of Twitter to disseminate a populist discourse that polarized Venezuelan politics. As social media provides a direct connection between the speaker and mass audiences, it lends itself to the logic of a populist discourse: the interpreter of the people's will is able to mobilize support for bypassing the existing structures of power. The relationship between tweets and institutional changes is especially important in hybrid systems like Venezuela, where the rules of the game are contested, and ultimately depend on the ability of political leaders to harness popular support to legitimize their worldview.

To explore the legacy of Chávez's populist discourse, and its relationship to Venezuela's democracy, this research carries out a content analysis of the Twitter communications of incumbent and opposition politicians. The analysis identifies populist and pluralist discursive elements in all their Twitter communications and yields a numerical representation of the proportion of each type of discourse that dominates their communications. The findings show

¹ In 2011, comScore reported that Venezuela was the fifth highest Twitter penetration rate in the world as 21% of Internet users in the country visited Twitter at least once a month (Friedman, 2014). A 2013 Pew survey showed that 49% of Venezuelan respondents said that they shared views about politics on social media. Also that in the five major Venezuelan cities, the Internet is the third most used media for finding the news after cable television and open-signal television, with 70% of people in low-income urban areas spending more than half an hour online each day to look for news, mostly on Facebook and Twitter (Nalvarte 2016).

that the incumbent's communications reflect a populist rhetoric that intensifies as the system becomes more authoritarian. A populist discourse is identified with the belief in politics as a cosmic struggle between a conspiring elite and the people, whom the speaker claims to represent.

Meanwhile, the opposition's communications are generally reflective of a pluralist discourse – the belief in a plural society where the various interests and goals are resolved through electoral competition. The two opposition leaders were found to follow similar discursive patterns for all elections, which indicates a communicational cohesion between different opposition parties, and suggests the presence of a concerted strategy for challenging the incumbent. When comparing these discursive patterns with the authoritarian shift of the Venezuelan system, the findings suggest that a populist discourse is compatible with undemocratic practices while a pluralist discourse is compatible with electoral strategies. The relationship between the types of discourse, style of political competition, and institutional change explored in this research underscores the importance of the politician's Twitter feed. Just like any other official communication, tweets work to prompt, justify, and legitimize the politician's truth claims.

Literature Review

Despite the prevalence of structural and agency-based definitions of populism (Malloy 1977; Germani 1978; Di Tella 1997; Weyland 2001, 2004, 2013; Roberts 2003), this research will look at the discursive dimension of populism in order to explore the relationship between language and institutional change. Ultimately, a discursive definition captures the underlying logic of populism as the agency of political actors are motivated by the articulation of a worldview (Hawkins 2010, 49). In this sense, economic policies, organizational structures or historical moments are all consequences of the articulation of a populist discourse (Hawkins 2010, 40). Therefore, a populist discourse here will be more concretely defined as a worldview that perceives history as a Manichean struggle between Good, identified with the will of the people, and Evil, a conspiring elite that has subverted this will (Hawkins 2009; 2010; 2015).

Within this perspective, Mudde (2004) understands populism as a “thin-centered ideology”, characterized by a Manichean outlook that understands politics as the expression of the people's will, which is fundamentally moralistic rather than programmatic (543). As such, populism is distinguished from two other “thin-centered” ideologies: elitism – the mirror-image of populism, which advocates for politics as an expression of the views of a moral elite, instead of the amoral people – and pluralism – a more democratic perspective, which rejects the homogeneity of populism and elitism, and sees society as a heterogeneous collection of groups and individuals with often fundamentally different views and wishes (544). These broad categories will be the basis for classifying the discursive patterns of competing groups in Venezuela. Even though these types of discourse represent exaggerated categories, they generate contrast and serve as benchmarks to establish the particular features of each type (Skocpol and Somers 1980). Therefore, populist and pluralist discourse are conceptualized here as two mutually exclusive categories that capture opposite interpretations of power structures.

The type of discourse that predominates in the communications of key actors reflects their view of the system, which translates into the mechanisms they use to influence institutional development. Some scholars contest the link between a populist discourse and any form of government – they see populism as ontological since its meaning is not found in any political or ideological content, but in a particular mode of articulation of whatever social, political or

ideological content (Laclau 2015, 153; Mudde 2004). Other scholars contend that institutional changes have been established with the use of a populist discourse (Hawkins 2015; Weyland 2013). For them, the entrenchment of authoritarianism in Venezuela is related to the use of an increasingly populist discourse that villainizes the political opposition and polarizes society, ultimately distorting electoral competition (Hawkins 2010, 2015; Weyland 2013; Corrales 2015).

Furthermore, by suggesting that processes are theorized and justified by the careful use of language and rhetoric, Rodner (2016) argues that discourse consolidates collective meaning and becomes the basis of institutions (629). In other words, as discourse articulates a worldview, it provides a normative benchmark to interpret the moral basis of the legitimacy of the system. This second group of scholars offer the theoretical foundation for the argument of this paper, that rhetorical trends frame strategies for political competition in hybrid regimes where populist and pluralist worldviews contest over the legitimacy of the system, which ultimately impact the country's institutional development.

Through the case of Chavismo, much has been said about how competitive authoritarian governments tilt the playing field in their favour and distort democratic institutions (Levitsky and Way 2002, 2010; Penfold-Becerra 2007; Corrales and Penfold 2011; Corrales 2015; Handlin 2017). However, not enough attention has been given to how opposition groups challenge an increasingly authoritarian and populist government. Schedler (2006) suggests that in hybrid systems, the opposition has to manage the tension between acknowledging the unfairness of the system on one hand, which discourages voters who already mistrust the system, and on the other, successfully articulating a movement that mobilizes voters and allows for their forces to grow. Studies on Venezuela's hybrid system suggest that throughout the years, despite increased authoritarian abuses, a large segment of opposition forces that have favoured such electoral strategy ended up enjoying electoral victories (Corrales and Penfold 2011, Cannon 2014; Hawkins 2015). Thus, analyzing the actual rhetorical strategies of incumbent and opposition groups at the peak of electoral contestation informs how opposition groups manage this tension, and whether they sustain a discourse that looks to restore democratic legitimacy.

Method

In order to compare the discourses of political elites, and relate the discourses to institutional changes, and how they relate to institutional changes, this research focuses on Twitter communications to carry out a qualitative content analysis. It looks at the tweets of incumbent and opposition politicians during three electoral moments: the presidential elections in 2013 that elected Nicolás Maduro, the 2013 municipal elections that elected a majority of Chavista mayors, and the 2015 parliamentary elections that gave the opposition a historic electoral advantage. Although these elections pertain to different levels of government, they are comparable cases because they each represent moments of intense competition where the legitimacy of the system was deeply questioned. Since the presidential election was tainted by unresolved fraud claims, the opposition framed the following 2013 municipal elections and 2015 parliamentary elections as plebiscites against Maduro who distorted the institutional order to further consolidate power (Meza 2013; AFP 2015).

In order to categorize and code the politician's tweets, the concept of discourse, understood as a multi-dimensional variable, was broken down into three dimensions, according

to their respective themes². The first dimension refers to the speaker's vision of society. Here, the populist discourse has a dualistic vision and is characterized by the following themes: the presence of a Manichean logic, the belief in politics as a zero-sum struggle between two homogenous groups, and the association of good with a single political project (Hawkins 2009; Engesser et al. 2017). By contrast, the pluralist discourse has a heterogeneous vision of society, thus, an understanding of society as a collection of different views and wishes (Mudde 2004, 544), an appeal to diversity of ideas within nationhood, and reference to national unity around an inclusionary political project.

The second dimension refers to the speaker's perspective on policy issues. Here, the populist discourse is moralistic: as the good is always identified with the will of the people, policy decisions are made based on normative justifications rather than official socio-economic indicators. Moreover, public officials, instead of being criticized for their performance or track record, are attacked for their character traits³. On the other hand, the pluralist discourse has a programmatic perspective on issues, such that policy issues are discussed based on indicators and numbers, and assessed in terms of successes or inefficiencies (Mudde 2004, 543). The third dimension looks at the speaker's stance towards the system. The populist discourse exhibits an "anything-goes-attitude" towards decision-making processes. This is because formal procedures are seen as obstacles for realizing the will of the people (Hawkins 2010, 36)⁴. Moreover, the populist discourse alerts that what is at stake is the people's sovereignty, which is to be defended at any cost, even the infringement of democratic norms. The pluralist discourse defends liberal democratic institutions, namely by articulating a sense of respect towards public office, calling electors to the polls, discussing the importance of electoral participation, as well as emphasising the need for fair competition.

To compare the discursive strategies of the incumbent and opposition leadership in Venezuela, the content analysis looks at the 1,198 tweets⁵ from three high-profile politicians: president Nicolás Maduro (@NicolasMaduro), two-times opposition presidential candidate and governor of the state of Miranda, Henrique Capriles (@hcapriles), and former mayor of a Caracas municipality and primary presidential candidate who then became the regime's most prominent political prisoner, Leopoldo López (@LeopoldoLopez). The communications of opposition and incumbent politicians test for the presence of two distinctive types of discourses – populist and pluralist – and follows the Method of Difference; while the communications of two opposition politicians with a presumably similar discursive strategy, following the Method of Agreement, indicates the presence of a type of discourse that can be attributed to a broader strategy within the opposition leadership. These specific politicians are also recognized as the leaders within their own groups, and their leadership has gained a national scope through elections. In addition, their Twitter accounts are amongst the most influential accounts of

² The themes serve as indicators to code each type along the two types of discourse (Bracciale and Martella 2017). Each tweet will be categorized three times, once for each dimension, such that the coder will enter the number 1 to indicate the presence of a populist theme and the number 0 to indicate the presence of a pluralist one for each dimension.

³ The presence of @mentions indicating interaction between speakers in a conflictive way points to the presence of a populist discourse.

⁴ Common themes here may be the call to action using military vocabulary or one that ignores the democratic process.

⁵ The sample of tweets were collected using the Advanced Search option on the Twitter Web Browser, which offers a Refine Search tool by accounts and dates. This allows collecting the sample tweets for each politician across the three time periods. The tweets will be downloaded as pictures into a PDF document using the Google Chrome Extension called Data Screen Capture, which captures all the tweets in their original format.

politicians in the country based on the number of followers and tweeting activity.⁶ Given their leadership, this study suggests that the type of discourse found in their communications is representative of the overall strategy of each group, and as such, their tweets highlight the way political elites look to influence the system through the articulation of different worldviews. Once all tweets have been categorized and coded, this holistic content analysis yielded a numerical representation of the types of discourse that predominated the communications of each politician across each election.

Results and Discussion

A total of 1,198 tweets were coded based on the three-dimensioned rubric, which yielded 3,594 observations (each tweet yields an observation for each of the three dimensions). After extracting the 2,208 observations that were not classified as populist or pluralist (61%), the content analysis found a total of 1,386 observations with discursive themes (39%). The analysis of results that follows is based on these observations only in order to systematically compare observations with the presence of pluralist and populist themes relative to each other.⁷ Out of the 1,386 observations, 1,033 were classified as pluralist (74%) and 355 as populist (26%) for incumbent and opposition politicians combined.

The Incumbent's Divide and Rule Discourse

The study found that the incumbent's Twitter communications contained a larger proportion of populist themes relative to pluralist ones. Out of 326 tweets collected from Nicolas Maduro's account (@NicolasMaduro), the content analysis identified 377 observations with discursive themes: 204 were classified as populist, and 173 as pluralist.⁸ Hence, Maduro's communications across the three elections were 54% populist and 46% pluralist. In addition, 13 tweets were found to contain populist elements across all three dimensions. When looking at the distribution of populist and pluralist themes across each election, the content analysis sheds light on the trends of Maduro's predominantly populist discourse on Twitter (See Figure A).

⁶ Delgado-Flores and Salom (2016)'s study finds that during the two weeks around the 2015 parliamentary elections, Maduro's account ranked first (62%) among the top five government accounts with the highest number of re-tweets; Capriles' also had the most re-tweets among the opposition leadership accounts (23%), and López' account ranked third (19%).

⁷ Removing non-discursive observations prevents the possibility of exploring the speaker's strategy behind a communication that has a neutral discourse.

⁸ Maduro's sample of 326 tweets resulted in 978 observations as each tweet is categorized three times, once across each of the three dimensions. There were 601 observations coded as 999, which indicated that there was not enough information to categorize the tweet under any discursive type for a particular dimension.

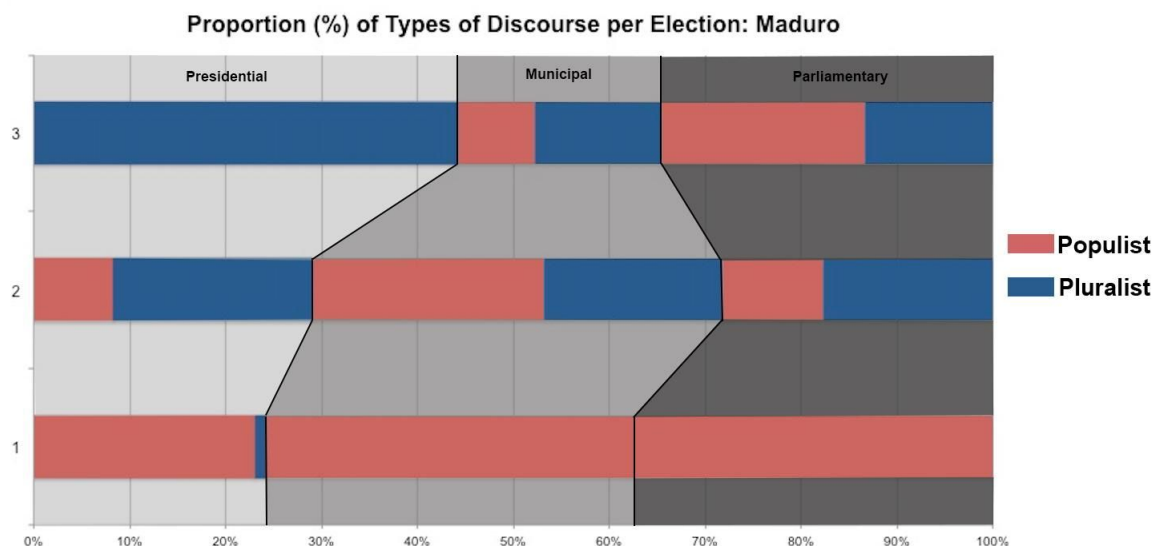


Figure A: Proportion of Types of Discourse per Election at Each Dimension (For Data see Table 1).

Figure A shows that for the first dimension, which refers to the speaker's view of society, Maduro's discourse contains almost only populist themes. This indicates an entrenched belief in a politics as a zero-sum game in which political opponents are considered existential threats that are to be defeated (see Figure 1). For the second dimension, the speaker's perspective on issues, Maduro's discursive themes vary. While they are mostly populist for the Municipal election, during the Presidential and Parliamentary elections, Maduro takes on a more programmatic approach when discussing public policy issues. This may have to do with the success of the opposition in dominating the public discussion with a focus on Maduro's economic mismanagement. However, when looking at the third dimension, which refers to the speaker's attitude towards the system, there is a steady increase of a populist worldview at each election, which matches the authoritarian surge in Venezuela since 2013.



Figure 1: “I call on to respect different ideas, to true democracy, to defeat with reason the intolerance and discrimination of Right-wingers.”

Only for the first election, the 2013 presidential election, Maduro's discourse was found to favour a pluralist view of the system. A pluralist discourse across this dimension indicates the belief in the legitimacy of a democratic process. This suggests that in 2013, the discourse of

actors ultimately reified Venezuela's system as competitive authoritarian (Levitsky and Way 2002). The incumbent demonstrated a belief in elections as the mechanism that legitimizes authority, while the opposition also saw them as the way to challenge the incumbent's abuses. The reason for Maduro's emphasis on elections could be because the 2013 presidential elections were held only five weeks after Chávez's death was announced on March 5th. Right before his death, Chávez had named Maduro as his political successor and had called on his supporters to vote for him (Hernández 2012). Still, during this electoral campaign, Maduro's communications emulated Chávez's populist discourse, which underscores a view that juxtaposes intolerance for political dissidence and acknowledgement of democratic legitimacy (see Figure 2). That is, while there was constant allusion to the electoral process, there was also a recurrent use of military jargon ("commander", "battle", "offensive", "on-guard!"), showcasing the war-like dialectic that further antagonizes political competition.⁹



Figure 2: “The oligarchy’s reactions demonstrate their despair, I call you to maintain our Offensive strategy, and to watch out for the provocations of the bourgeoisie.”

⁹ Paying attention to collocations - word associations that are representative of a recurrent message in the communication (Armony and Armony 2005, 38) – was important for the classification process. In the Venezuelan case, where political competition is intense and the rules of the game are unclear, words such as “offensive”, “revolution” and “fight” in a tweet, which may allude to an “anything-goes attitude”, are not necessarily indicators of a populist discourse for the third dimension (the speaker’s stance towards the system). If the words “election” or “votes” are also included in the tweet, it is categorized pluralist because ultimately it reflects an observance to the democratic process.

However, over time, Maduro's communications show a shift in attitude towards the system. The study found that the presence of populist themes across the third dimension increases with each election. By the time of the parliamentary election in 2015, the study found that populist themes dominated Maduro's communications. His recurrent use of the hashtag *#PaLaAsambleaComoSea*, "ToTheAssemblyNoMatterHow", conveys explicitly the belief that conquering seats in the assembly merits the use of any means. This "anything goes" attitude fits in within the populist worldview that places political competition as an existential struggle for the defense of the *patria* against a global elite. This escalation of populist themes across the third dimension in the incumbent's communications is in line with the institutional shift from competitive authoritarianism to autocratic legalism in Venezuela (Corrales 2015). The 2015 parliamentary election saw an unprecedented abuse of state power to the incumbent's advantage: the partisan National Electoral Council denied registration to nine opposition parties, gerrymandered districts, and denied access to opposition candidates to public media, while PSUV candidates were built through official broadcasts and special programs (Alarcón et al. 2016, 24). This irreverence towards the democratic system also coincides with a decrease in public support for the incumbent. By 2015, Maduro's approval rating was found to be under 25%, according to the survey-research firm Datanalisis (Alarcón et al. 2016, 28).

Based on the study's finding, this research argues that Maduro's tweets point to a strategy of divide and rule, as the use of a populist discourse across three dimensions looks to disarticulate the opposition and legitimize authoritarian practices. First, a populist discourse treats political opponents not as adversaries but as profound threats, as "enemies of the people" who are to be defeated and marginalized. This logic turns politics into struggles of "us against them", which negates the possibility of dialogue or the compromise that characterizes democratic life (Weyland 2013, 21). Second, this research argues that promoting an understanding of politics as a moral conspiracy against the people raises society's tolerance to authoritarian abuses of power (Romero-Rodríguez and Gadea 2015, 103). Lastly, a discourse that shows an ambiguous relationship to democracy looks to break up the opposition's electoral efforts, as it fosters disagreements over whether they should compete on an uneven playing field (Corrales and Penfold 2011, 32).

The Opposition's Democratic Conviction

For opposition politicians, the study found a larger proportion of pluralist themes relative to populist ones. Out of 374 tweets that López (@LeopoldoLopez) sent out, 442 discursive themes were identified: 384 pluralist themes and 60 populist themes – for a total of 86% pluralist and 14% populist.¹⁰ And out of 498 tweets sent out from Capriles' (@hcapriles) account, 567 discursive themes were identified: 476 pluralist themes and 91 populist – for a total similar to that of López, 84% pluralist and 16% populist.¹¹ The study found four tweets that contained all pluralist discursive dimensions, all of which were sent from the opposition politicians' Twitter accounts. When looking at the distribution of populist and pluralist themes across each election,

¹⁰ López's sample of 374 tweets resulted in 1,122 observations as each tweet is categorized three times, once across each of the three dimensions. There were 680 observations coded as 999, which indicated that there was not enough information to categorize the tweet under any discursive type for a particular dimension.

¹¹ Capriles' sample of 498 tweets resulted in 1,494 observations as each tweet is categorized three times, once across each of the three dimensions. There were 927 observations coded as 999, which indicated that there was not enough information to categorize the tweet under any discursive type for a particular dimension.

the content analysis sheds light on the patterns of the opposition's predominantly pluralist discourse on Twitter (See Figures B and C).

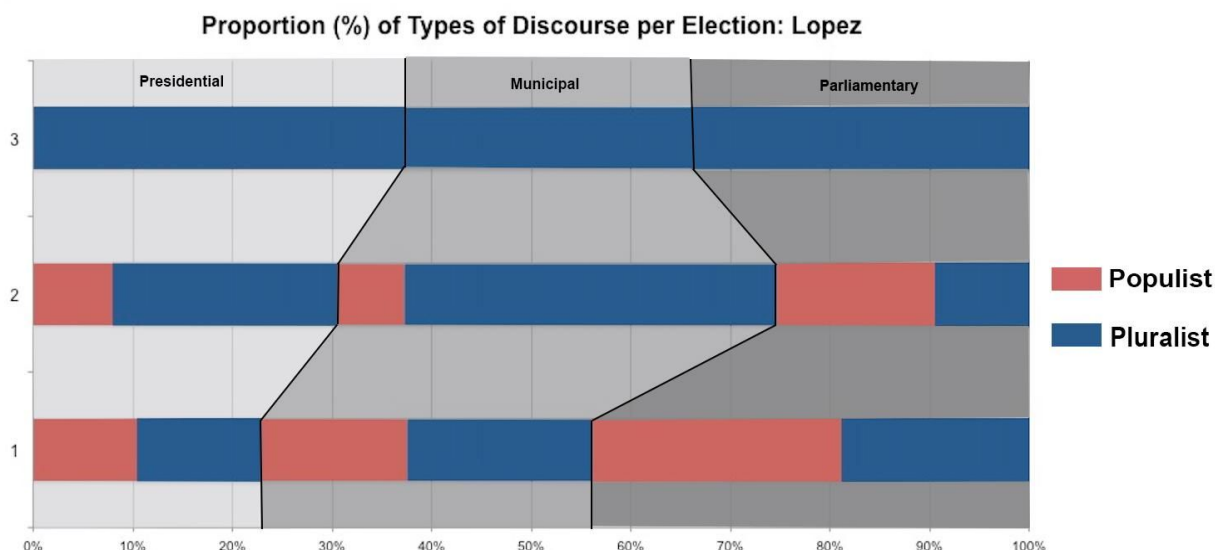


Figure B: Proportion of Types of Discourse per Election at Each Dimension of López's Tweets.

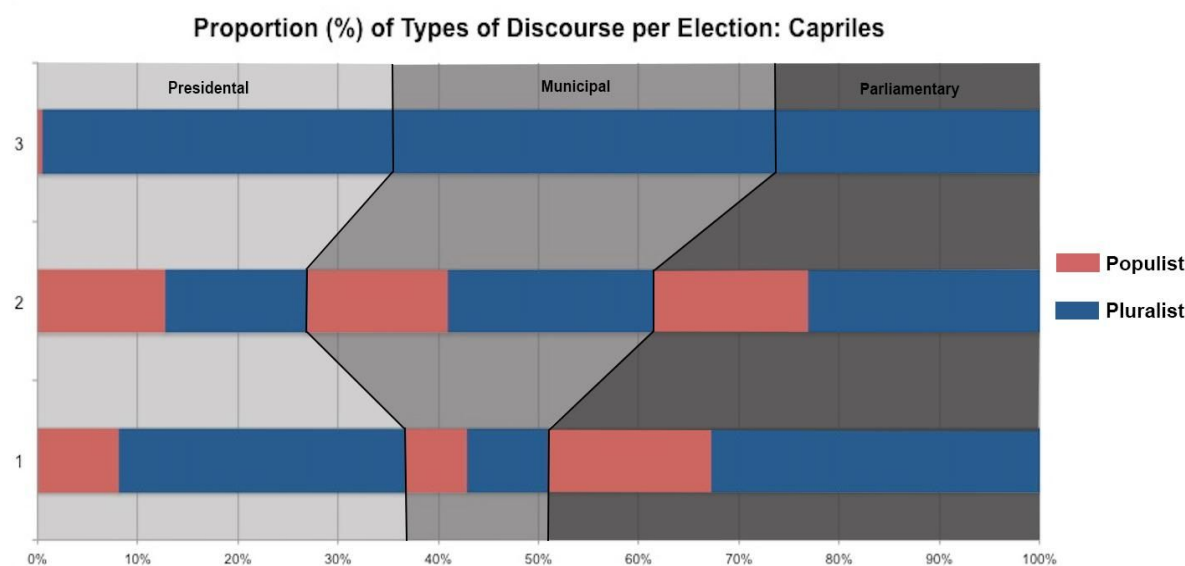


Figure C: Proportion of Types of Discourse per Election at Each Dimension for Capriles' Tweets.

The findings show that the communications of the opposition vary across the first and second dimension. However, it is clear that the opposition's communications contain almost all pluralist themes across the third dimension, which demonstrates their commitment to democratic competition. The opposition's communications constantly look to denounce authoritarian abuses and question the legitimacy of Maduro's presidency after fraud claims in the 2013 Presidential election were never resolved, but without undermining the significance of electoral competition.

Both López and Capriles’ managed to communicate in their tweets that the playing field was stacked against them, but that they should still play. The words “election”, “democracy”, and “vote” were more frequent in the opposition’s tweets. Moreover, close to the electoral moment, the opposition’s tweets also looked to communicate logistical information to voters. Ultimately, this content analysis reveals the opposition’s commitment to electoral competition during the period studied here. Although a period of tension surrounded the opposition’s decision to call the 2013 presidential elections a fraud, which Maduro claimed to have won with 1.8% difference (Cannon 2014, 62), that same year the opposition decided to redeem the electoral route by participating in the municipal elections. Both López and Capriles travelled around the country to campaign with the opposition’s municipal candidates. This indicates cohesion among the opposition leadership and a willingness of different sectors of the opposition to share a cohesive message under the flag of democracy.

It is important to note that the study found a predominance of populist discourse for López in the first two dimensions during the 2015 municipal election. This may have to do with the fact that his wife Lilian Tintori – also a political activist – began to manage his account (Forelle et al. 2015), which explains a drop in his activity after the 2013 municipal election. Tintori and the team that handled López account starting in 2014 may have biased the discourse that characterized him for the previous elections. Still 60% of the discursive themes were found in the third dimension and were all pluralist, which shows that López’s Twitter account during this electoral period was still used for logistical efforts and to mobilize voters. Ultimately, confirming the notion that regardless of the actual speaker, the opposition communications showcase a concerted effort to challenge the incumbent through electoral means.

With a prevalence of pluralist themes across the first dimension in Capriles’ communications, this research argues that his discourse looks to contrast the incumbent’s dualistic notion with the idea of society as a collection of heterogeneous interests. For the second dimension, the study also found a larger proportion of pluralist discursive themes relative to populist ones. With the luring economic crisis, the opposition framed the elections as a plebiscite against Maduro’s economic mismanagement. Both Capriles and López brought attention to the state of the economy, using indicators and making assessments of policy decisions in their communications on. Here, the opposition’s communications favoured a programmatic pluralist discourse while still including populist themes in the way the incumbent was antagonized and villainized for his performance in office.

Can Challengers Disprove the Populist Myth?

Based on the content analysis, this research argues that the opposition’s discourse demonstrates a strategy of competition that could be summed up as an effort to “unite and vote”. When playing on an uneven playing field, the opposition has looked to build an electoral force with an inclusive discourse that counters the incumbent’s intolerance, exposes his abuse of power, and hopes to defeat an undemocratic opponent through electoral means. While the opposition’s electoral success in the 2015 parliamentary election cannot be attributed to Twitter, it is safe to say that their decision to participate in an unfair election, with a communication strategy focused on the economic crisis gave the opposition a significant increase in their electoral legitimacy, domestically and internationally.

The study of the Twitter communications of López and Capriles show how they manage the inherent tension of acquiring power through electoral means in an unfair system. That is,

López and Capriles actively mobilized voters into an election that they openly admit that the incumbent rigged in his favour (See Figure 3). Even the more radical sectors of the opposition to which López belongs, have ultimately supported the democratic route across the three elections. Therefore, the findings suggest that the discourse of the opposition calls for the re-establishment of democratic competition by participating in unfair elections, which coincides with the opposition gaining electoral legitimacy. Although the opposition's discourse remained pluralist, and their strategies electoral, the 2013 losses show how the absence of tangible payoffs introduces conflict over the effectiveness of an electoral strategy (Hawkins 2016; Zariski 1986). However, the opposition stuck to their pluralist discourse with a programmatic agenda for the 2015 parliamentary election and consolidated an electoral victory, which illustrates the way the opposition manages the tension between effectiveness and democratic legitimacy (See Figure 4).

¹²



Figure 3: “If history will say anything about you @NicolasMaduro, will be of your cowardice. Of your fear to lose power. A power, which I affirm, you stole!”

¹² The results of the elections mentioned here provide an a posteriori control to test the correlation between the type of discourse, strategies for political competition, and institutional changes.



Figure 4: “Our Venezuela will close 2015 with almost 80% income poverty, the most important reason to vote for a change”.

So, do tweets matter?

This study argues that paying attention to the discourse of the top leadership on social media reveals the worldview that frames their strategies for contesting power, which in turn, influences the legitimacy of institutions. The findings of this study point to an authoritarian incumbent that articulates a moralistic discourse under a Manichean logic in an effort to legitimize the use of any means to stay in power. Meanwhile, the opposition’s pluralist discourse shows the willingness to compete under the existing unfair system, at the same time that it looks to compete over the rules of the game by denouncing the incumbent’s abuses. In this sense, Twitter communications clearly illustrate the dynamics that shape competition in hybrid systems. According to Schedler’s (2006), elections in hybrid systems are comprised of two meta-games: the incumbent’s game of authoritarian manipulation in which the opposition chooses to compete, and the game of institutional reform, in which the opposition seeks to dismantle nondemocratic restrictions that choke their struggle for votes (13). These two meta-games are evident in the tweets of Maduro, López, and Capriles, as they look to reify their interpretation of the power dynamics, and mobilize support around their perceived best strategy for contesting power.

The findings from the three elections suggest that, in terms of their view towards the system (coded under the third discursive dimension), the opposition leadership maintained a pluralist discourse while the incumbent’s populist discourse intensified with each election. Considering that Maduro’s authoritarian abuses intensified while the opposition gained some electoral legitimacy, these discursive trends reveal that a populist discourse is coherent with authoritarian practices and a pluralist discourse encourages democratic competition. Furthermore, it shows the way in which two opposite worldviews defend different political realities and therefore look to mobilize support for different institutional frameworks. Essentially, this study shows that Tweets do matter because they manifest the normative view of decision-makers who influence the rules of competition. Considering the reach that Twitter has,

these official communications give political elites the power to influence, prompt, and legitimize institutions.

This research also emphasizes the extent to which Twitter offers a unique platform to study discursive strategies because, even if fragmented, tweets are a manifestation of the speaker's worldview. Broader inferences can be made from the findings in Twitter communications since online communicational patterns have been found to reflect similar patterns to offline communication models. Finally, this study redeems the informational liberalization aspect of social media, especially when it affords already established politicians an outlet to influence public opinion that has been otherwise denied through censorship.

Conclusion

This study has looked at the discourses of incumbent and opposition leaders around election time in order to shed light on the overall dynamics of competition in hybrid systems. The findings suggest that Twitter communications can reflect the worldviews and stances on the legitimacy of the system of the political elite. This contestation over the rules of the game among the top political leadership reflects the democratic fragility in hybrid systems. The Venezuelan case studied here has demonstrated how a polarizing rhetoric affects democratic governance, suggesting that discourse has an impact on the legitimacy of institutions. Thus, exploring how the opposition articulates an electoral alternative contributes to the debate over the sustainability of hybrid systems, as it shows how opposition groups concretely challenge a polarizing rhetoric that solidifies authoritarian turns, and looks to restore democratic values.

The study shows that much like Chávez, the incumbent's discourse was predominantly populist, reflecting an understanding of politics as a zero-sum game that is part of a global struggle between a conspiring elite and moral people. With this, Maduro's populist discourse looks to problematize previous structures of power to legitimize his authoritarian practices. Because his discourse brands opponents as the historical enemies of the people that are to be discriminated against, his discourse erodes the democratic process. Moreover, such dualistic logic fuels resentment and raises society's tolerance for the incumbent's abuses of power. In addition to demonstrating the institutional legacy of Chávez's populist rhetoric, this study shows how democratizing agents in undemocratic settings contest hegemonic truth claims. In addition to exploring the dynamics of political competition in hybrid systems, the case of the Venezuelan opposition also informs on potential responses to populist discourses: while Maduro has increased its authoritarian practices to tilt the playing field in its favour, electoral support has shifted in favour of the opposition, which suggests that the incumbent's populist discourse is compatible with authoritarian practices and the opposition pluralist discourse is compatible with electoral strategies. Given the electoral success of the opposition in Venezuela, this may be an example of how a united opposition coalition may significantly challenge the inertia of populism towards authoritarian practices, precisely by articulating a competing worldview that manages to mobilize electors to the polls while denouncing abuses of power.

All in all, this study exposes the importance that Twitter has in conveying worldviews that have a real impact in the institutional development of hybrid system. Therefore, tweets have the power to prompt, justify, and respond to a particular strategy for political competition that defends an interpretation of power structures. As Twitter provides a direct connection between the speaker and mass audiences, it gives politicians a platform to mobilize support to materialize

their interpretation of the power dynamics and as such, influence the development of institutions. Given the global reach of Twitter communications, these findings also beg the question of the extent to which a political elite's tweets can affect the legitimacy of institutions beyond the physical borders to which the authority of political elites is bound.

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Refugee Crises:*Germany's Response to the Bosnian Refugee Crisis: Pluralism, Institutionalism, and Lessons for the Syrian Refugee Crisis*

By Nicholas Phin

Abstract: With an influx of asylum seekers in the midst of the Syrian civil war, Germany is left with the question of how it will handle the Syrian refugee crisis. For observers wondering how the country will respond to these pressures, including Germany's decision to accept over one million refugees in 2015 and the backlash that has followed, this echoes previous refugee crises in Germany. To better understand the pressures that Germany faces, this paper will examine Germany's response to the Bosnian refugee crisis, and the subsequent reforms to asylum policy. Following World War 2, Germany adopted an open asylum policy, creating policies that curtailed the power of the executive to refuse asylum following the abuses of the Nazi state. During the Bosnian civil war, Germany was the primary destination for Bosnian refugees seeking asylum from the threat of ethnic cleansing. While welcoming at first, after accepting 300,000 refugees Germany chose to constrict their asylum policies, shortly thereafter expelling the majority of Bosnian refugees. This raises the question, why did Germany reform their asylum policy following a recent history of openly accepting refugees? To better understand this phenomenon, and its broader implications for German public policy, I will examine changes to asylum policy through the lens of pluralism and historical institutionalism. This will allow the paper to examine whether policy changes in this area have been the result of domestic political pressure, or as the result of EU level policy change. This paper will argue that historical institutionalism provides a more encompassing explanation for changes to German asylum policy during the Bosnian refugee crisis and more applicable lessons for the future of asylum seekers in Germany. This is, in large part, due to the fact that historical institutionalism helps explain changes at the supranational level that both influence and constrain domestic politics.

Introduction:

With an influx of asylum seekers in the midst of the Syrian civil war, Germany is left with the question of how it will handle the Syrian refugee crisis. For observers wondering how the country will respond to these pressures, including Germany's decision to accept over one million refugees in 2015 and the backlash that has followed, this echoes previous refugee crises in Germany (Noack 2016). To better understand asylum policy in Germany, and the pressures that Germany faces as a result, this paper will examine Germany's response to the Bosnian refugee crisis, and the subsequent reforms to asylum policy. Following World War 2, Germany adopted an open asylum policy, creating policies that curtailed the power of the executive to refuse

asylum following the abuses of the Nazi state. During the Bosnian civil war, Germany was the primary destination for Bosnian refugees seeking asylum from the threat of ethnic cleansing. While welcoming at first, after accepting 300,000 refugees Germany chose to constrict their asylum policies, shortly thereafter expelling the majority of Bosnian refugees. This raises the question, why did Germany reform their asylum policy following a recent history of openly accepting refugees? To better understand this phenomenon, and its broader implications for German public policy, this paper will examine changes to asylum policy through the lens of pluralism and historical institutionalism. This paper will begin with an overview of each theory, then move on to give a brief history of German asylum policy prior to 1992. From there, Germany's response to the Bosnian refugee crisis, including asylum reform, will be examined before finally testing the case study against our theories. This paper will end by briefly considering the implications of the Bosnian refugee crisis on Germany's response to the Syrian refugee crisis. This paper will ultimately argue that historical institutionalism provides a more encompassing explanation for changes to German asylum policy during the Bosnian refugee crisis, and provides more applicable lessons for the future of asylum seekers in Germany.

Pluralism

Pluralism, for the purposes of this paper, identifies the role of interest groups and group behaviour as determining which policies are enacted by the state, and posits that the power that the state exercises is constrained by the pressures put on it by the public, and public interest groups (Jordan 1990, 286; Cudworth, Hall, and McGovern 2007, 45). As the theory posits that there are a multitude of different people, groups, and organizations, it similarly recognizes that many different values and political opinions exist in society. Pluralism argues that these values compete for acceptance and control of the policy making process in countries which have competitive elections (Dryzek and Dunleavy 2009, 39-40). In a system of competing views, pluralism explains how new ideas are developed through competition, and how the inform governance (Ibid). The preferences of government, for pluralists, are defined by the preferences of the groups that influence government (Dryzek and Dunleavy 2009, 50). The state under pluralism is a 'black box', having no innate preferences, in which the interests of society are filtered to become public policy (Dryzek and Dunleavy 2009, 50-51). The pluralist conception of the state is the sum total of the offices of government, whose interests are determined through public pressure, and interest group mobilization (Cudworth, Hall, and McGovern 2007, 45). Elected politicians make policy decisions with a focus on their outcomes and how their outcomes will be perceived by organized groups, attempting to make decisions that will minimize organized opposition towards them (Dryzek and Dunleavy 2009, 48).

For pluralism, interest groups are "multiple, voluntary, competitive, non-hierarchically ordered and self-determinate", allowing them to take a variety of forms (Schmitter 1974, 96). Under pluralism, we should expect to see public policy that is responsive to informal group behaviour and public opinion at large. In the case of the Bosnian refugees, we would anticipate that change in policy would be a function of interest group behaviour and electoral pressures. While pluralism acknowledges that while change typically occurs incrementally, this this is not a

necessary condition, as pluralist scholars such as David Truman support the idea that policy change can be dramatic under the right electoral circumstances (Dryzek and Dunleavy 2009, 51). As the anticipated response is determined by public pressure and interest groups, we should not expect to see the state as an active player or any form of institutional preferences determining the outcome.

Historical Institutionalism

Unlike pluralism, institutionalism posits that the state, and in particular the institutions of the state, is not a neutral actor and has preferences that are independent of the public and public pressures (Steinmo 2001, 6). Historical institutionalism looks at how the construction and preferences of state institutions affects policy over time (Skocpol 1995, 103). This method of understanding political and policy outputs looks at the state structure in its entirety, instead of just one aspect in isolation, and how the interconnections between different aspects of the state apparatus determine outcomes (Skocpol 1995, 103-104). Historical institutionalism argues for path-dependency, meaning that institutions have a self-reinforcing dynamic in which positive-feedback mechanisms cause a particular pattern to continually recur into the future (Pearson and Skocpol 2002, 695). Institutions, in the broadest sense, are the rules that states and state actors must follow (Steinmo 2001, 1). These rules form the structure of political life comprising the formal structure of states, including their constitutions and government structures (Steinmo 2001, 1;5). This is not to say that historical institutionalism is deterministic however, as it posits that critical junctures exist in which external pressures can create significant changes to institutional behaviour (Steinmo 2001, 8). Institutions are intervening variables in which social pressures are filtered through, allowing critical junctures to exist as opportunities for social and institutional pressures to create institutional change (Ibid).

For historical institutionalism, changes to asylum policy should be determined as a byproduct of institutional pressures and previous public policy. This is not to say that there is not room public pressure on institutions, as historical institutionalism leaves room for critical junctures in which state actors can respond to these pressures, but changes to asylum policy should largely be driven as a response to previous state policy and institutional structure. In the case of Germany, this includes pressures through domestic structures, including the states (Länder), the Reichstag, and previous immigration policies, as well as supra-national pressure emanating from the European community, which later became the European Union (EU).

Background on Germany's Asylum Laws

Following the end of World War Two, Germany implemented a new constitution, the Basic Law. Following the abuses of the Nazi state, this included provision 16(2), which stated that "Persons persecuted for political reasons enjoy the right of asylum" (Bosswick 2000, 44). This was in an

attempt to curtail the power of the executive and to ensure that the ability of the border police to refuse asylum, a factor of Germany's experience in the war, was constitutionally curtailed (Ibid). Expanding on provision 16(2), under the Basic Law ethnic Germans were entitled to return to Germany, as Germany attempted to allow for the resettlement of Germans that had been expelled either before the rise of national socialism or during World War II (Kanstroom 1993, 165). This policy came at a time when there was a massive influx of war refugees attempting to return to Germany, as the country was left to determine how it would process applicants (Bosswick 2000, 44). In 1951, Germany became a signatory to the Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, stating that "all those that have a non-founded fear of persecution on grounds of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group" were to be considered refugees, a definition that was broader than the provisions laid out under the Basic Law (Nueman 1992, 509-510). Following, German courts interpreted provision 16(2) as encompassing the scope of the Geneva Conventions definition of refugee (Kanstroom 1993, 194). After the initial post-war settlement, asylum claimants decreased to an average of 5,000 per year during the 1950's and 60's, with the majority of claimants coming from eastern Europe and Soviet controlled countries (Bosswick 2000, 45).

Asylum seeker trends began to change in the late 70s and 80s as a military coup in Turkey led to over 92,000 asylum seekers pursuing claims in Germany by 1980 (Bosswick 2000, 45). During this time, the status of refugees in Germany had entered mainstream political discourse, culminating in a backlash towards asylum seekers in the 1980 Länder elections and 1981 federal elections (Ibid). As violence against asylum seekers began to increase, the German government moved to restrict welfare benefits for refugees and began restricting appeals and expelling failed applicants (Bosswick 2000, 45). In 1987, asylum reform to the Basic Law was proposed by conservative and liberal leaning members of the German parliament, but was ultimately not passed due to the opposition of the Social Democrats and the need for changes to the Constitution to have two thirds support in the Bundestag (Bosswick 2000, 47). During this period, Germany became a signatory to the 1985 Schengen agreement, which aimed to eliminate internal border controls in order to facilitate political and market integration in Europe (Hellmann et al. 2005, 151). As the Soviet Bloc began to collapse, a new wave of asylum seekers entered Germany, exacerbating the backlash amongst German citizens and German politicians (Nueman 1992, 514). This culminated in Germany having the highest number of asylum seekers in Europe in both relative and absolute numbers (Bosswick 2000, 48). Of these, a significant portion of them were ethnic Germans that had been displaced as a result of the Cold War that were attempting to leave former Soviet states, and were entering under Germany's provision for the re-return of ethnic Germans (Kanstroom 1993, 166).

The Bosnian Refugee Crisis and Asylum Reform

As migration resulting from the end of the Cold War was continued, the Bosnian civil war began

to push Bosnian asylum seekers into Germany (Bosswick 2000, 48; Kamm 1992). As ethnic minorities fled from the former Yugoslavia in fear of ethnic cleansing by Serbian nationalists, Germany accepted the largest number of refugees in Europe, numbering over 200,000 by 1992 (Kamm 1992). As a result, this period saw an increase in violent crime against resident foreigner nationals increasing from 1,255 incidents in 1991 to 2,277 incidents by 1992, increasing pressures on the German government to address the refugee crisis (Nueman 1992, 512). In particular, these attacks were concentrated in eastern Germany, where high unemployment following reunification resulted in increased nationalism and neo-nazi sympathies amongst young Germans (Ibid). These attacks culminated in the murder of a Turkish guest worker and his family in 1993, sparking a series of anti-racist demonstrations in Germany and increasingly pro-immigrant sentiments (Bosswick 2000, 49). Despite these protests, asylum reform and immigration remained contentious in Germany, with both strong support and strong opposition to accepting asylum seekers (Ibid). In addition to these pressures from the public, the Länder came to pressure the federal government to reduce asylum numbers as well, as asylum seekers in Germany received financial support from the Länder, which found themselves increasingly financially strained (Nueman 1992, 515; Post and Niemann 2007, 27). Responding to these pressures, the German parliament immediately passed a provision allowing Germany to grant refugees temporary protection. This provision immediately applied to Bosnian asylum seekers (Nueman 1992, 517). It allowed the German government to grant refugees fleeing from a war zone *de facto* refugee status, which would simultaneously allow them protection in the country but would prevent them from applying for asylum status (Ibid).

During this time, Germany began negotiations for the Maastricht treaty and the London Resolutions, attempting to complete the European Union (Hellmann et al. 2005, 151; Post and Niemann 2007, 11). During this process, the German government was successfully able to pressure the supranational level to adopt an asylum policy, making refugee policy a matter of EU common interest (Hellmann et al. 2005, 152). In doing this, the EU established that the development of asylum policy would be made through formal and informal cooperation with the objective of policy harmonization between member states (van Selm-Thorburn 1998, 630). During the London Resolutions, the EU set standardized limits on the right of asylum, including the safe third country concept in which the first safe country that an asylum seeker arrived in would be responsible for providing asylum, allowing the refugee to be sent back to that country without violating the concept of non-refoulement (Post and Niemann 2007, 11). As the Länder “shares competences” with the federal government in the area of asylum and immigration policy, a representative of the Bundesrat, the upper chamber of German parliament which draws representation from the Länder, was present during EU negotiations to represent the Länder’s interests (Post and Niemann 2007, 27). In the case of Maastricht, the Bundesrat resisted any agreement that would require Germany to adopt more stringent protection standards for asylum seekers supporting their domestic position (Ibid).

Following the Maastricht agreement and the London Resolutions, German lawmakers passed reforms to the Basic Law, aimed to curtail the rights of asylum seekers, and effectively harmonizing asylum policy between Germany and the European Union (Bosswick 2000, 49; Post and Niemann 2007, 15). These reforms removed the right of asylum for refugees who arrived from a state that would provide asylum or asylum seekers who came from states that Germany had listed as “non-persecuting”, and the reforms allowed those who were denied asylum to be deported even during appeals (Nueman 1992, 517). It is important to note that under German law, all of its neighbouring states are considered *de facto* “non-persecuting” states, allowing Germany to consider any asylum seeker travelling by land as coming from a non-persecuting state for the purpose of asylum (Ibid). This acted as an expansion of the safe third country policy that was institutionalized at the supranational level through the London Resolutions (Post and Niemann 2007, 12). In addition, these reforms restricted the amount of ethnic Germans that could immigrate into Germany through the process of return to 1991/1992 levels annually (Ibid). The Social Democratic Party, which had previously opposed asylum reform, ultimately supported the amendments (Nueman 1992, 516; Bosswick 2000, 49). While the party had resisted asylum reform for over a decade, the pressure that they faced, in part from communities and Länder that had inadequate resources to process and provide support for the asylum seekers, resulted in the party changing its position and supporting reform (Nueman 1992, 516). In part, this was seen as a pro-active attempt to remove the saliency of the asylum issue, so as to stop it from being a predominant issue in the 1994 federal elections (Ibid).

In addition to asylum reform, Germany introduced special procedures in airports, in which undocumented travellers were detained in ‘international zones’ that the German government did not acknowledge as being on German soil for the purposes of asylum claims (Bosswick 2000, 51). Due to these international zones, any future asylum seeker that arrived by land was automatically considered to have arrived via safe third country (Ibid). Despite having cross party support however, these reforms were controversial and faced strong public opposition and protests with opponents of asylum reform framing it as a debate on the basic values of the German Republic (Bosswick 2000, 56; Kanstroom 1993, 156). Despite this, these protests were unable to stymie reform (Nueman 1992, 516). Unlike Germany’s original asylum policies, which were designed to be measures against executive abuse, these reforms put more power into “law-and-order” officials, giving them a prominent role in the policy making process (Post Niemann 2007, 10).

Following the 1995 Dayton Peace Accord which ended the Bosnian war, Germany began the process of expelling Bosnian refugees that had settled within its borders (Martinovic 2016). As Bosnian refugees had been protected as *de facto* refugees, they were unable to gain protection under the previous iteration of the Basic Law’s asylum provisions (Valenta and Strabac 2013, 14). This expulsion was supported by an agreement signed between Germany and Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1996, which ultimately saw 250,000 of the 350,000 Bosnian refugees in

Germany expelled by 1998 (Ibid). Several of the asylum seekers in question did not return to Bosnia-Herzegovina, but settled in third countries, including the US and Canada (Ibid). As a result of asylum reform, the only applicants for asylum following 1993 that were eligible were those who arrived via airport with 98 percent of applicants arriving illegally in order to bypass Germany's international zone procedures (Bosswick 2000, 51). By 1998, the number of asylum seekers entering Germany had decreased by 78 percent of 1993 claimants (Post and Niemann 2007, 27).

Discussion

At first glance, there appears to be a good argument for a pluralist approach, and the role of informal interest groups and public opinion, in understanding changes to German asylum policy. The pressure that Germany was facing from asylum seekers had been building since the 1980's, changing how the German public saw immigration. As anti-refugee sentiment began to develop, public opposition to immigration began to manifest itself through the 1980 Länder elections and the 1981 federal elections, supporting the pluralist argument of government decision making through competing public pressures. These pressures were successful in changing elements of asylum policy in 1987, as the conflict between those who supported asylum seekers and those who supported reform began to strengthen in the public discourse. Later changes to the Basic Law and the creation of de facto refugee status are consistent with changing public pressures, as polls in 1993 suggested that the Christian Democratic coalition government would have been threatened by the emergence of far right anti-immigrant parties if they did not pursue asylum reform (Neuman 1993, 513). This is true for the Social Democrats as well, whose support for the 1993 reforms came after receiving internal pressures from the party, and out of concerns that opposing reform would cost them support in the 1994 elections as well. For both the Social Democrats and the Christian Democrats, this is in keeping with pluralism's conception of government attempting to minimize organized options.

Similarly, with the pluralist notion of the 'black box' of government, we can see how the interests of the German government can be seen to have been influenced by conflicting public pressures (Dryzek and Dunleavy 2009, 50-51). As the pluralist state is the sum of government offices, and the pressures exerted on them, the Länder governments would be subsumed by the same pressures facing the federal government, taking a position towards reform that reflects these pressures (Cudworth, Hall, and McGovern 2007, 45). This has been consistent with the experience of German asylum reform, as opposition came both from the federal parties and the governments of the Länder (in particular Länder in the eastern Germany) which were facing the strongest anti-immigrant pressures (Neuman 1992, 516; Post and Niemann 2007, 27). In terms of the rate of change, there is a pluralist argument as well. While initial changes to asylum, including reducing welfare benefits, were incremental and cautious, the changes that resulted in broad reform to the Basic Law in 1993 are consistent with the pluralist consideration that

dramatic policy change can emerge during contentious electoral conditions (Dryzek and Dunleavy 2009, 51).

However, the pluralist theory for asylum reform leaves out important factors that contributed to the policy outcome, mostly notably Germany's position in the European Community as a signatory to the Schengen agreement in pursuit of completing the single market. While pluralism adequately explains the competing public pressures that occurred domestically during the asylum debates, it is inadequate for explaining the supranational institutional pressures that Germany was facing at the time of reform. As being apart of the Schengen agreement signalled the intent for free movement within the European community, this would also allow for the movement of immigrants and asylum seekers, creating the conditions for 'asylum shopping' in which asylum seekers moved within the Schengen region to find a country that had the most favourable asylum policies (Post and Niemann 2007, 7). This posed a particular problem for Germany, as members of the European community had begun to implement more restrictive asylum policies during the 80's and 90's as a response to post-Soviet immigration, leaving Germany as the country in the European community with the most welcoming asylum policies (Post and Niemann 2007, 14). Indeed, these transnational pressures influenced the public mood towards immigration, tying German policy to the interdependencies of being a member of the European community (Post and Niemann 2007, 6-7). In addition, while pluralism is able to adequately explain why the Länder would be opposed to more asylum seekers as a function of public pressure, this excludes the institutional function of the Länder as the level of government that provides asylum seekers with financial support, a policy which informs institutional preferences.

By looking at the constitutionality of Germany's asylum policy as an institution, we see how it contributes to Germany's overall institutional structure, and the pressures that this creates on Germany's institutional structure (Pierson and Skocpol 2002, 694; Bosswick 2000, 49). We can see how previously established institutions, including previous iterations of German asylum policy, the constitutional division of powers between the federal government and the Länder, as well as Germany's membership in transnational institutions, developed into a positive feedback loop to propagate open asylum. Looking at the institutional changes to asylum policy that took place following the Bosnian refugee crisis, it is evident that the crisis served as a critical juncture, creating a new positive feedback loop to propagate restrictive asylum policies into the future (Pierson and Skocpol 2002, 699).

As we look at Germany's history of asylum with a focus on institutional pressures and positive feedback mechanisms, we can see why earlier attempts at reform were unsuccessful, despite public pressure and opposition from the Länder, as the German institutions that had been developed to welcome asylum seekers persisted (Bosswick 2000, 45). As Pierson, 2000 points out, the cost of deviating from commitments made through existing institutions is high, and in the German case, we can see how the "status quo bias" prevented the proposed 1987

constitutional reforms from coming to fruition (Pierson 2000, 259; 262; Bosswick 2000, 47). Despite minor changes to asylum policy in the 80's, including restricting welfare benefits, the German government was unable to make changes at the institutional level resulting in the maintenance of the institution of asylum and continuing the open flow of asylum seekers into the 90's (Bosswick 2000, 47). Institutions are, by their very structure, designed with high barriers against change, as the durability of the institution of German asylum policy demonstrates, and the high amount of support that is needed in the German parliament to make constitutional changes (Pierson 2000, 262).

Unlike pluralism, historical institutionalism accounts for the pressures that Germany faced following entry into the Schengen agreement and through the European community. As other countries in Europe began to restrict their asylum policies, Schengen created the conditions that allowed for asylum shopping, creating the potential for an increased flow of refugees entering Germany (Post and Niemann 2007, 7). In keeping with historical institutionalisms focused on institutional interaction, the conjunction of the Schengen agreement and the institution of asylum laid out in article 16(2) contributed to the unfolding of the Bosnian crisis, as the two institutions simultaneously reduced barriers for entering Germany while obligating Germany to provide asylum (Pierson and Skocpol 2002, 708). As historical institutionalism posits the role of time in determining how institutions create policy outcomes, we can see how the establishment of the Basic Law, the increased pressures from immigration in the 80's, and the agreement to establish the Schengen region, contributed sequentially to the Bosnian refugee crisis, and the reforms that followed (Pierson and Skocpol 2002, 695). The German state was not acting as a black box, but was exerting pressures on policy development, constraining the choices of policy makers up until the critical juncture.

Having established the positive-feedback loop that had been created through German and European institutions, it is possible to establish how the Bosnian refugee crisis served as a critical juncture towards policy reform. In keeping with Pierson and Skocpol's analysis of historical institutionalism, critical junctures are events that establish the feedback mechanism that are propagated into the future (Pierson and Skocpol 2002, 699). As a formative moment for German institutions, the refugee crisis resulted in widespread reforms that altered the institutional construction of both Germany and the nascent European Union (Post and Niemann 2007, 28). Unlike earlier restrictions to welfare benefits for asylum seekers, these reforms created institutional change in Germany's constitutional obligations towards asylum seekers and placed new restrictions and limits on the right of asylum, even for returning ethnic Germans (Post and Niemann 2007, 27). Given the scale of reforms, with Germany pressing for changes to asylum policy at both the domestic and supranational level, this served as the catalyst in establishing new feedback mechanisms. This was demonstrated during the Kosovo refugee crisis following 1999, as Germany was able to bring in refugees by voluntarily offering asylum in keeping with the safe third party principle, with the expectation that Kosovar Albanian refugees

would return to their home countries once it was safe to do so, in keeping with Germany's new asylum institutions (Van Selm 2000, 31).

While pluralism offers a detailed understanding of how the public responded to the Bosnian refugee crisis and how social pressures influenced the choices of political parties in how to respond to the crisis, pluralism leaves out the institutional pressures that are necessary for understanding the series of events that led to reform. While historical institutionalism does not take public pressures into account directly, by viewing institutions as the intervening variables we can see how public pressures are filtered through institutional pressures (Steinmo 2001, 8). By assuming, as Steinmo 2001 has highlighted, that institutions have set preferences as a result of their construction, we can see why the institutions of German asylum policy persisted for as long as they did, why the Bosnian refugee crisis served as a critical juncture for changes to asylum policy, and why the scope of the institutional changes were as wide ranging as they were in creating a new feedback loop (Steinmo 2001, 6).

Implications for the Syrian Refugee Crisis

Having established the role of institutions, both domestic and supranational, in determining German asylum policy and how Germany has previously responded to asylum seekers, what implications does this have for Germany's response to the Syrian refugee crisis? With an expected 300,000 refugees arriving in 2016, following the 1.1 million that arrived in 2015, Germany is facing unprecedented pressures in processing and settling these refugees ("Germany Expects Up to 300,000 Refugees"). Far exceeding the amount of asylum seekers that entered Germany's borders during the Bosnian crisis, this decision has proven to be extremely contentious in Germany, with public opinion heavily divided (Ibid). Following the historical institutionalist approach outlined in the Bosnian case, significant policy changes should be anticipated if there are significant institutional pressures from the Länder and from the EU. If neighbouring states restrict the flow of refugees, it will put pressure on Germany to follow suit, as they become the primary recipient of Syrian refugees in the EU. Likewise, the ability of Germany's current asylum policy to retain a positive feedback loop will depend on the ability of the Länder to absorb the asylum seekers and the costs that are associated with this. We have already seen the first iteration of this, as while the first wave of Syrian refugees were offered full asylum, refugees arriving in 2015 were only offered limited asylum of one year in the country as Germany has struggled to process applicants (German Court Approves Second-tier Asylum for Syrian Refugees" 2016).

While Syrian refugees may be contentious, the Bosnian case has demonstrated that these pressures will not result in significant changes in party support without increased institutional pressures. If other member of the EU restrict the flow of refugees, and pressures from the Länder is sufficient, then the Syrian refugee crisis could serve as another critical juncture in German

asylum policy, causing Germany to either restrict the flow of asylum seekers, or make further restrictions to asylum policy.

Conclusion

Having examined the Bosnian refugee crisis through the lens of both pluralism and historical institutionalism, we can see how historical institutionalism provides for a more encompassing understanding of changes to asylum policy. Facing ongoing pressures from the European community and the Länder, the Bosnian refugee crisis served as a critical juncture for constitutional reforms. Through this lens, we can better understand why German lawmakers did not change asylum policy a decade earlier, despite growing public pressure. While pluralism helps to explain the actions of the political parties at the time of reform, it is insufficient to explain the pressures that Germany was facing from the supranational level. In order to fully understand how Germany will respond to asylum immigration, we cannot assume that the state is a black box. In applying this to the Syrian refugee crisis, we can see that the future of Germany's asylum policy, and how they handle the crisis, will be determined not just by domestic support or opposition, but by how EU countries handle this crisis as well.

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Polarity Transitions:

The Instability of a Post-Unipolar World

By Nathan Sears

Abstract: This paper asks if and how different types of structural transitions matter for international peace and security during a period of transition to a post-unipolar world: does it make a difference if the world becomes bipolar or multipolar? The paper develops a typology of six ideal types of structural transitions: multipolarity to unipolarity, multipolarity to bipolarity, bipolarity to unipolarity, bipolarity to multipolarity, unipolarity to bipolarity, and unipolarity to multipolarity. It then considers the theoretical logic of the sources of stability and instability in the two types of structural transition to a post-unipolar world, and finds that each type of structural change poses distinct dangers that could lead to great power conflict.

Introduction

Ever since Charles Krauthammer (1990) declared a “unipolar moment,” claiming that “the center of world power is the unchallenged superpower, the United States,” International Relations (IR) scholars have debated the “durability” of the unipolar world.¹³ For instance, Christopher Layne (1993; 2006), representing the “declinist” position, argued that “systemic constraints” in a unipolar world would compel eligible states to become great powers and to counterbalance against the United States. As a result, unipolarity is no more than “a geopolitical interlude” that should soon give way to multipolarity. Conversely, William Wohlforth (1999; 2008), representing the “primacy” perspective, argued that the relative power gap between the United States and other countries was too great to be counterbalanced, and therefore “no one tries” (p. 18). He concluded that, “Unipolarity is not a ‘moment.’ It is a deeply embedded material condition of world politics that has the potential to last for many decades” (Wohlforth 1999, p. 37).

The scholarly debate about unipolarity has emphasized its “durability” over its “peacefulness.”¹⁴ The question of the end of unipolarity tends to ask when rather than how: Will the structural transition to a post-unipolar world be peaceful? How will the rise and fall of the great powers in the twenty-first century affect international peace and security? Will a post-unipolar world become bipolar or multipolar? Does it matter for the prospect of great power conflict? This paper interrogates the sources of stability and instability during a period of structural transition to a post-unipolar world. In particular, it considers two ideal types of structural change—unipolarity to bipolarity, and unipolarity to multipolarity—in order to develop a structural explanation of the threat of great power war. The central argument is that the type of structural transition is relevant to international peace and security, since a shift to bipolarity and multipolarity possess distinct dangers of great power conflict. The rest of the

¹³ For examples of the “declinist” position, see Kennedy (1989); Layne (1993; 2006; 2009); Zakarai (2008); Mahbubani (2008); Kupchan (2012); Montgomery (2014); and Wright (2015). For the “primacy” perspective, see Wohlforth (1999; 2008), Ikenberry (2002); Lieber and Alexander (2005); Brooks and Wohlforth (2008; 2015/16); Beckley (2011/12); Joffe (2013).

¹⁴ For some important theoretical contributions to the question of the (non) “peacefulness” of unipolarity, see Wohlforth (1999); Jervis (2009); and Monteiro (2011/12; 2014).

paper explores the structural dynamics that exacerbate and ameliorate the threat of great power conflict in a shift from unipolarity to either bipolarity or multipolarity.

Structure and Change in International Politics

The question of international peace and security in structural change to a post-unipolar world can draw on the theoretical insights of two broad literatures in IR theory. The first of these is the “power transition” literature, which includes A. F. K. Organski’s (1958) power transition theory, George Modelski’s (1978) long cycles theory, and Robert Gilpin’s (1981) hegemonic stability/war theory. Arguably the core proposition of this power transition literature is that international politics is subject to cyclical patterns of stability and instability, the basic driver of which are the changes in the relative power of states that precipitate the rise and decline of great powers.¹⁵ The existence of a single “hegemonic” state lends itself to a stable international hierarchy, but inevitably changes in relative power generate hegemonic decline and the rise of new great powers, undermine the international hierarchy, and ultimately lead to conflict—a “general” or “hegemonic war”—between the declining hegemon and the rising great powers, the result of which determines the future structure of the international system.¹⁶ This power transition literature has been highly influential for understanding stability and change in international politics, and the concept of “hegemonic decline” is relevant for understanding the end of unipolarity. For our current purposes, the main limitation of this literature is that it treats all such structural changes equally—in other words, it does not consider different *types* of structural transitions to a post-unipolar world.

The second literature focuses on the “polarity” of the international system, which includes the structural theories of multipolarity (Morgenthau 1948; Deutsch and Singer 1964), bipolarity (Waltz 1964), and unipolarity (Wohlforth 1999; Monteiro 2011/12). The main premise of this literature is that system polarity (i.e., the number of great powers) affects international stability—although there is considerable, especially amongst realist scholars, about which of these systems are more or less stable.¹⁷ For example, Wohlforth (1999) argued that unipolar systems should be stable, because they eliminate both the threats of hegemonic rivalry and balance-of-power politics, since there is only one great power. Nuno Monteiro (2011/12) counters that while unipolarity eliminates (tautologically) the threat of great power war, and may even reduce the threat of a war between the great and major powers, it does not eliminate all types of war, and can actually increase the risk of a war involving the system’s only great power. For our present purposes, the main value of this literature is the structural insight that states faces different sorts of systemic constraints and pressures based on the polarity of the international system. The principal limitation is that it considers only established systems, not international systems undergoing structural change. In summary, power transition theories consider structural change but not different types of systems, while polarity theories consider different types of systems but not structural change. These gaps in the literature provide the theoretical backdrop for the rest of the discussion, which develops a neorealist approach to explaining how different types of structural transitions to a post-unipolar world may affect international peace and

¹⁵ For an excellent empirical history of the “rise and fall of the great powers,” see Kennedy (1989).

¹⁶ For a useful review of this power transition literature, see Levy (1985). For other relevant contributions to power transition theory, Kugler and Organski (1989), and Diccio and Levy (1999); for long cycles theory, see Thompson (1986); and for hegemonic stability/war theory, see Gilpin (1987; 1988).

¹⁷ For a literature review of this debate, see Rosecrance (1966).

security.

A Typology of Structural Transitions

In *Theory of International Politics*, Kenneth Waltz distinguishes between two approaches to theories of international politics: the “reductionist” approach that aims to explain state behavior and international outcomes by reference to the “unit level” attributes of states and the interactions between them (what he calls a “theory of foreign policy”), and the “systemic” approach that makes reference to “structural level” properties that act as a set of pressures and constraints on state behavior and keep international outcomes within certain ranges.¹⁸ Waltz’s neorealist theory takes a systemic approach to explaining broad continuities and patterns of outcomes in international politics by reference to three structural properties of the international system, including the “ordering principle” of international anarchy (i.e., “self help”), the “character of the units” as functionally undifferentiated actors seeking minimally to survive as sovereign states (i.e., “like units”), and the distribution of capabilities across the states in a system (i.e., “polarity”). Since Waltz assumes that the first two structural properties of the international system remain constant, they cannot by definition explain variation and change in international politics. This leaves the third factor to explain change: the distribution of capabilities determines which states are “great powers”, and the number of great powers defines the structure of the international system. For Waltz, only changes in polarity constitute structural changes in international politics.¹⁹

While Waltz was principally interested in comparing the structural dynamics of established international systems, his neorealist theory lends itself to an explanation of how international peace and security may be influenced by periods of structural change, including transition to a post-unipolar world. In particular, it can help to explain the sorts of pressures and constraints that states face when confronted by an international system undergoing structural change—that is, an increase or decrease in the number of great powers. Based on the three common classifications of system polarity (i.e., unipolarity, bipolarity, and multipolarity), this yields a typology of six possible ideal types of structural transitions: unipolarity to bipolarity, unipolarity to multipolarity, bipolarity to unipolarity, bipolarity to multipolarity, multipolarity to unipolarity, and multipolarity to bipolarity. Here we consider only two of these ideal types of structural change—unipolarity to bipolarity, and unipolarity to multipolarity—in order to interrogate the sources of stability and instability in a structural transition to a post-unipolar world.²⁰ What sorts of pressures and constraints do states face in each type of structural change? What are the major factors that aggravate and ameliorate the threat of great power conflict?

¹⁸ See especially chapter four on “reductionist and systemic theories” in Waltz (1979, pp. 60-78).

¹⁹ In Waltz’s (1979, pp. 80-81) words: “A structure is defined by the arrangement of its parts. Only changes of arrangement are structural changes... The concept of structure is based on the fact that units differently juxtaposed and combined behave differently and in interacting produce different outcomes”. However, other scholars, such as John G. Ruggie (1985) and David Lake (2007), have pointed out that based on Waltz’s own three-part definition of structure, either a change in the ordering principle to “hierarchy” or a change in the character of the units to “functional differentiation” should also constitute a change in the structure of the international system.

²⁰ Interestingly, Waltz’s (1993; 2000) own thinking on the subject of unipolarity assumed that a transition to multipolarity would be the “all-but-inevitable” outcome of the end of unipolarity.

Table 1: Ideal Types of Structural Change

Type of Structural Change	Examples
Unipolarity → Bipolarity	The Peloponnesian War
Unipolarity → Multipolarity	The decline of Pax Britannica
Bipolarity → Unipolarity	The end of the Cold War
Bipolarity → Multipolarity	The end of the Nine Years' War
Multipolarity → Unipolarity	The emergence of Pax Britannica
Multipolarity → Bipolarity	The Second World War

Unipolarity to Bipolarity

The first type of structural change to consider is the transition from unipolarity to bipolarity. What sorts of risks exist during a period of power transition from an international system with only one great power to a system of two great powers? This is the type of structural transition that comes closest to Thucydides' history of the Peloponnesian War, in which the relative decline of the existing hegemon, Sparta, and the rising challenger, Athens, led to a fundamental conflict of interests between them, the polarization of the system, and an unstable "zero-sum situation", in which "a small event can trigger a crisis and precipitate a major conflict" (Gilpin 1988, pp. 596-7). Thucydides explains the Peloponnesian War as a result of the rising power of Athens and the "fear" that this inspired in Sparta as a declining hegemon. From the structural perspective, it can be explained as a consequence of the particular type of structural change from unipolarity to bipolarity.

The relevant question for theory is whether or not the sources of stability that exist in unipolar and bipolar systems are also present in structural transitions from unipolarity to bipolarity. The first conclusion is that Wohlforth's argument about the stability of unipolar systems does not apply here, since we can no longer assume the absence of hegemonic rivalry or balance-of-power politics (Wohlforth 1999, p. 23). Instead, hegemonic rivalry and balance-of-power politics should reemerge as important patterns of state behavior and interactions. In particular, one should expect hegemonic rivalry to characterize the political relationship between the two great powers, based on the fundamental conflict between their respective interests: the declining great power will seek to preserve the status quo, while the rising great power will seek to revise the international order to reflect its growing power. This conflict of interests between the two great powers is the essential structural logic of a transition from unipolarity to bipolarity, which will shape and constrain the behavior and interactions of states in the changing international system.

For instance, both internal and external balancing are likely to take on increased significance (Waltz 1979, p. 118). Internally, the declining great power will hope to maintain its military advantage, and so one can expect it to prioritize military spending and invest in new military technologies. The rising power will aspire to possess the first-class military of a great power, and should be expected to dramatically increase its military spending in order to close the budget gap and attain the technological and operational capabilities of a great power military.

Therefore, the structural transition from unipolarity to bipolarity will put significant pressure on both the declining and emerging great powers to increase their military capabilities, leading to the renewed threat of security dilemma dynamics and an arms race between the great powers (Jervis 1978; Buzan and Herring 1998, p. 92).

Externally, the great powers will focus their attention on strategic interests and alliance diplomacy. The declining great power will come to depend more heavily on its alliance system, and pressure its allies to focus their security policies on the rising power, and to increase their military spending in order to make up for any relative losses. The rising great power will aspire to develop its own alliance system by organizing a coalition of other dissatisfied states with revisionist interests. As a result, the dangers of alliance politics—and especially system polarization between status quo and revisionist alliance blocs—should return to international politics.

Similarly, the four stabilizing factors that Waltz (1964, p. 882-7) attributes to established bipolar systems do not exist in periods of structural transition from unipolarity to bipolarity. For Waltz, the “absence of peripheries” in a bipolar system means that each great power should possess the concentrated enmity of the other, which implies clarity about the sources of threats and dangers. As Waltz (1964, p. 882) argued during the Cold War, “the United States is the obsessing danger for the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union for us, each can damage the other to an extent that no other state can match.” This is not true of structural transition from unipolarity to bipolarity, since during the period of transition the declining great power should possess the unequal capacity to harm the rising great power, and hence the “obsessing danger” of the former is not the established power but the growing power of its rival. Consequently, the logic of “preventive war” is likely to dominate the strategic calculations of the declining great power during a period of structural transition (Levy 1987; Fearon 1995), rather than the deterrence logic of balanced power and the equal capability of punishment (Waltz 1964; 1988).

Second, in established bipolar systems the “range and intensity of competition” means that “few changes in the national realm or in the world at large are likely to be thought irrelevant”, and so changes by one great power will elicit “imitation” and proportionate reactions from the other (Waltz 1964, p. 883). Conversely, in periods of transition from unipolarity to bipolarity, the declining great power is likely to experience general uncertainty about the range and intensity of the threat that the rising power poses to its interests. This may lead it to ignore certain minor changes to the status quo while forcefully opposing others, implying a generally mercurial foreign policy. The rising great power may therefore miscalculate the probability of a military response, which may incline it towards a more adventurous and assertive foreign policy in order to challenge and “outflank” the declining great power. Additionally, ideological polarization—which is rigid in an established bipolar system—will be more fluid during a period of structural change, creating additional uncertainty about the appropriate international norms of state behavior.

Third, in an established bipolar system, Waltz asserts that the “persistence of pressure and crisis” should lead the great powers to value “caution, moderation, and the management of crisis” (p. 884). But in a period of structural change from unipolarity to bipolarity, neither the declining hegemon nor the rising power is likely to act with caution or moderation. Instead, the foreign policy of the rising great power will be characterized by assertiveness in pursuit of revisionist aims, while the foreign policy of the declining great power will be of a protean character in defense of status quo interests. Thus, the period of structural change sees the

dangerous interaction between brinkmanship on the part of the rising great power, overreaction by the declining great power, and the risk of miscalculation by one or both of them, with little way to determine which crises may escalate beyond the means of diplomacy.

Fourthly, in bipolar system the “preponderant power” of the two great powers leads to their “remarkable ability to comprehend and absorb” relative changes in the balance-of-power (Waltz 1964, p. 886). Conversely, structural change from unipolarity to bipolarity implies, by definition, that relative changes in the balance-of-power are not absorbed, but rather that they tend towards the erosion of the strategic advantage of the declining great power to the benefit of the rising great power. The declining great power therefore faces intense structural pressures to impede and prevent any changes to its relative power, including through a policy of preventive war while the military situation remains comparatively favorable (Levy 1987). For its part, the rising power will have no credible way to assuage the fear of the declining great power about its growing capabilities (Fearon 1995, pp. 404-8).

In summary, in an established bipolar system, the existence of only two great powers means that the power and security concerns of each are defined relative to the other, creating a “stable and solid bipolar balance”. As Waltz (1988, p. 624) concludes, “Self-dependence of parties, clarity of dangers, certainty about who has to face them: These are the characteristics of great-power politics in a bipolar world.” On the other hand, an international system experiencing structural change from unipolarity to bipolarity will be characterized by the fundamental antagonism between the declining and rising great powers. Conflict of interests, immoderation of foreign policy, and a strategic advantage to strike before it is too late: these are the characteristics of great power politics in a transition from a unipolar to a bipolar world.

Nevertheless, there are reasons for optimism about the possibilities of peace. One factor that mitigates the declining great power’s incentive to wage a preventive war against the rising great power is the prospect that the former will maintain its preeminent position in the international system—through the resilience of its military advantage, the solidarity of its alliances, or the entrenchment of norms and institutions that favor its leadership (Keohane 1984). The material condition of bipolarity does not necessarily imply political parity between the two great powers, and the declining great power may choose to peacefully acquiesce to the relative decline in its material capabilities if it believes that it will still possess the lead position in a two-party race. However, such an outcome is not an inherent feature of structural change from unipolarity to bipolarity, which could conceivably be merely a transitory period to a new hegemon (Modelske 1978; Gilpin 1981). Rather, it depends on the idiosyncrasies of a particular structural change from unipolarity to bipolarity that continues to favor the preeminent position of the declining great power.

Other factors that may contribute to peace and stability are international interdependence, institutions, and norms. In a structural change from unipolarity to bipolarity, a high degree of economic interdependence might be expected between the declining great power and the rising great power, which would probably be two of the leading economies in the international system (Keohane and Nye 1987). The prospect of economic losses increase the costs and lowers the probability of conflict between the two great powers. Both states are also likely to be deeply embedded in the existing international institutions, which provide peaceful mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution (Keohane 1984; Axelrod and Keohane 1985). International norms against the use of force as a legitimate instrument of foreign policy may constrain state

behavior in a period of structural change (Wendt 1999).²¹ Yet all of these potential sources of stability—interdependence, institutions, and norms—will come under intense strain during a period of structural transition from unipolarity to bipolarity, since economic gains may be viewed in relative rather than absolute terms (Grieco 1988), and international institutions and norms may be tied to the existing structure of the international order, and so may decay along with that order (Gilpin 1981; Mearsheimer 1994/95, pp. 13-14).

Nuclear weapons may be the main source of strategic stability in a period of structural transition from unipolarity to bipolarity. While the declining great power will face structural pressures to engage in preventive war against its rising great power rival, nuclear deterrence should dampen these effects of power transition enormously, especially if the rising power already possesses a secure second-strike capability (Gilpin 1988; Waltz 1988; 1990). Overall, the declining great power would have to weigh the political costs of relative decline against the security threat of preventive war, especially a war that carries substantial risk of nuclear escalation. Deterrence is probably the greatest source of stability in a period of transition from unipolarity to bipolarity, but one that will come under serious structural pressure—and where deterrence failure contains the risk of mutually assured destruction.

Unipolarity to Multipolarity

The second type of structural transition is from unipolarity to multipolarity. The question is what kinds of threats to international peace and stability exist during a period of transition from a system of one great power to a system of three or more? Perhaps the modern case that most closely resembles this ideal type of structural change is the relative decline of Great Britain in the late nineteenth century. In the period following the Napoleonic Wars, Europe's great power system was characterized by a formalized balance-of-power system, known as the "Concert of Europe" (1815-1853), which maintained stability between the European great powers until outbreak of the Crimean War. Yet, the Concert of Europe concealed the deeper structural reality of unipolarity, with the *Pax Britannica* referring to the period of peace and stability under British hegemony, which reached its height in the 1860s on the material foundation of Great Britain's commercial and naval preponderance (Kennedy 1989, pp. 151-8; Layne 1993, pp. 21-25). The last decades of the nineteenth century represent a period of British hegemonic decline and a structural transition from unipolarity to multipolarity, with both the re-emergence of traditional powers, like France and Russia, and the rise of new great powers, such as Germany and the United States. The First World War is sometimes described as a hegemonic war between the declining hegemon, Great Britain, and the rising challenger, Germany (Gilpin 1988, pp. 609-10); but this ignores the structural reality that, by the time of the outbreak of the war, Europe's great power system had long become multipolar. As Modelski (1978, p. 223) notes, "By 1900 it had become clear to many that *Pax Britannica* was well past its prime." The First World War occurred in an established multipolar system, and not as the consequence of the structural change from unipolarity to multipolarity, which had already occurred *peacefully* during the preceding decades.

The initial question for theory is how the sources of stability and instability that exist in unipolar and multipolar systems apply to a period of structural transition from unipolarity to multipolarity. Again Wohlforth's (1999) argument about the stability of unipolarity, which

²¹ See especially chapter seven on the "three cultures of anarchy" in Wendt (1999, pp. 246-312).

removes the threats of hegemonic rivalry and balance-of-power politics, does not hold for a period of structural transition to multipolarity. These patterns of great power politics should be expected to return along with the reemergence of multiple great powers. However, unlike the hegemonic rivalry that characterizes a structural transition from unipolarity to bipolarity, balance-of-power politics should be the characteristic pattern of behavior and interactions between the great powers in a structural transition from unipolarity to multipolarity. This is because the emergence of multiple great powers reduces the probability that any single great power can gain or maintain preponderance over the others, and so the competition between two great powers for hegemony should be replaced by the balancing behavior of two or more against the leading great power.

Will the balance-of-power in a period of structural change from unipolarity to multipolarity be stable or unstable? Classical realists, like Hans Morgenthau (1948, p. 125), considered the balance-of-power to be “an essential stabilizing factor in a society of sovereign nations,” in which the power required by any single state to overcome and dominate any other state—or the system as a whole—should be balanced or outweighed by the possible combination of other states.²² This is no less true of an international system that is experiencing structural change than a well-established system: the balance-of-power tends towards an equilibrium between states in spite of the “continuous change” in relative power and the “dynamic character” of the political relations between them (Morgenthau 1948, p. 131). According to Waltz (1979, p. 118), a balance-of-power should emerge wherever “two or more states coexist in a self-help system”—that is, wherever states seek survival under the condition of international anarchy.

What this implies is that there no need to assume that the balance-of-power should be particularly unstable during a period of structural change from unipolarity to multipolarity; rather, it ought to function much in the same way that it does in an established multipolar system: through the balancing of opposing forces. A rapid transition from unipolarity to multipolarity may even ameliorate the threat of preventive war. In a structural transition from unipolarity to bipolarity, the declining great power has both the strategic incentive and the military capability to attack the rising great power—what Jack Levy (1987) calls the “preventive motivation for war”. On the other hand, in a transition to multipolarity the declining great power not only lacks an obvious target, since it faces multiple emerging great power rivals, but also lacks the military wherewithal to win a preventive war against a combination of them. The balance-of-power has the strategic effect of dampening the threat of preventive war.

A final source of stability is that the period of structural change to multipolarity should mitigate that principal cause of instability in a unipolar world: the threat of impunity by the sole great power (Waltz 1993; Jervis 2009; Monteiro 2011/12). As Thucydides affirmed long ago in the *Melian Dialogue*, “the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must.” In a unipolar world, only one state is strong while the rest must suffer. In 2011, Nuno Monteiro pointed out that “the first two decades of the unipolar era have been anything but peaceful... the United States has been at war for thirteen of the twenty-two years since the end of the Cold War” (p. 11). Monteiro argues that both a strategy of “offensive” and “defensive dominance” may provoke a war between the great power and another state: defensive dominance may lead the great power to fight preventive wars against revisionist minor powers (e.g., the First Gulf War),

²² As Morgenthau (1948, p. 184) explains, “The power of A necessary to dominate C in the face of B’ opposition is balanced, if not outweighed, by B’s power, while, in turn, B’s power to gain dominion over C is balanced, if not outweighed, by the power of A.”

while offensive dominance may lead the great power to wage revisionist wars against recalcitrant minor powers (e.g., the Second Gulf War). In general, the essential explanation for war in unipolarity is the impunity of the system's sole great power—an impunity that a structural transition to multipolarity mitigates through the limitations and constraints imposed on it by the balance-of-power.

There are still many dangers during a period of structural transition from unipolarity to multipolarity. Some of these dangers the period of structural transition shares with established multipolar systems, especially the risks of uncertainty and miscalculation. As Waltz (1979; 1988) argues, multipolarity both permits the flexibility of alignment and raises the stakes of alliances. A system of three great powers is particularly unstable, since it is the easiest for two great powers to combine against the third and divide the spoils (Schweller 1994). A system of five or more great powers is also unstable, since the defection of an ally can upset the overall balance and threaten the security of others (Waltz 1988, p. 621). In general, multipolarity heightens uncertainty about the intentions and alignments of other states, and produces a “diffusion of dangers” and an incentive to free-ride or “pass-the-buck” (Waltz 1988; Mearsheimer 2001).

Miscalculation by one or more great powers is a danger in multipolar systems—and one that is also likely to characterize the shift from unipolarity to multipolarity. As new great powers emerge, alliance diplomacy will gain in importance, but a general uncertainty will hinge on whether states bandwagon with or balance against the declining great power. Structural change could permit either revisionist alliances, whereby multiple states gang-up on the declining great power, which may be seen as exploitative and imperialistic; or status quo alliances, in which the declining hegemon rallies states against the rising great powers, which are cast as the enemies of peace and stability. In general, the threat of unbalanced alliances may be particularly high in a structural transition from unipolarity to multipolarity.²³

A final source of instability are the “power vacuums” left by the declining great power, which may be worsened by the possibility strategic “retrenchment” or “disengagement” (Monteiro 2011/12). The existence of a hegemonic state can bring political stability and predictability, while hegemonic decline may produce a political vacuum that rising great powers seek to fill (Modelski 1978; Gilpin 1981). Occasionally this can be accomplished peacefully, as demonstrated by the example of Great Britain's strategic disengagement from the Western Hemisphere during the decline of the *Pax Britannica*. What is more likely is that the rise and decline of great powers will cause a number of destabilizing regional security dynamics, including security dilemmas, arms races, and nuclear proliferation. The global shift from unipolarity to multipolarity will produce a ripple effect of structural changes across regions, which could become unipolar, bipolar, or multipolar.²⁴ States may join with the declining great power in order to maintain the status quo and their security, or they may pursue revisionist aims to increase their power (Schweller 1994); they may balance against a rising great power in order to prevent the threat of regional hegemony, or they bandwagon with the rising power if they are left alone and isolated from allies, including the declining great power (Walt 1985). Global instability may produce regional instability, and regional instability may further undermine global stability (Jervis 1997). In the instability of a post-unipolar world, the struggle for power

²³ For the concept of “balanced” and “unbalanced” multipolarity, see Mearsheimer (2001).

²⁴ These regional systems could undergo any of the six ideal types of structural changes identified in this paper: unipolarity to bipolarity, unipolarity to multipolarity, bipolarity to unipolarity, bipolarity to multipolarity, multipolarity to unipolarity, or multipolarity to bipolarity.

and security brings back the specter of war between the great powers.

The Structural Transition to a Post-Unipolar World

The structural transition to a post-unipolar world brings with it the threat to international peace and security of great power conflict, which resurfaces in international politics along with the rise of new great powers. However, the different types of structural changes to bipolarity and multipolarity entail distinct dangers—they shape and constrain the behavior and interactions of the great powers in unique ways, some of which aggravate while others ameliorate the risk of great power conflict.

The pattern of behavior and interactions that best characterizes a structural transition from unipolarity to bipolarity is hegemonic rivalry, which can be explained by the fundamental conflict of interests between the declining and rising great power. This competition between the two great powers will play out through both the means of internal (e.g., arms competition) and external balancing (e.g., alliance diplomacy). The principal structural explanation of great power conflict is the logic of preventive war, whereby the declining great power possesses both the strategic incentive and military capabilities to attack the rising great power as long as it continues to possess the advantage in its relative power. The risk of preventive war will be exacerbated by the tendency of the rising great power to adopt a more assertive and adventurous foreign policy in order to increase its relative power, and the declining great power's uncertainty about the range and intensity of its relative decline will lead to a mercurial foreign policy of sometimes accepting and other times resisting changes to the status quo. The shift from unipolarity to bipolarity therefore leads to the dangerous combination of brinkmanship and overreaction in the foreign policies of the great powers.

There are comparatively few sources of peace and stability in an international system characterized by the shift from one to two great powers. Interdependence, institutions, and norms are all likely to come under stress as a result of the rise and decline of great powers, and so are at once more important and less helpful in a period of structural transition from unipolarity to bipolarity. Nevertheless, a peaceful accommodation to the structural change may be reachable, especially if the declining great power believes that it will be able to maintain its political preeminence in the future international order. This may be because the declining great power believes that it will maintain the material advantage in its military and/or economic capabilities, or because it is able to preserve the institutions and alliances that it created as a hegemonic power. Lastly, the threat of great power conflict, driven at the structural level by the strategic logic of preventive war, is dampened by the existence of nuclear weapons, particularly if the rising great power possesses the credible deterrent of a robust second-strike capability. Of course, any stability bought by nuclear weapons comes at the high cost of the *possibility* of mutual assured destruction—and just because the world survived the Cold War does not necessarily imply that nuclear deterrence can endure the structural pressures and risks of a shift from unipolarity to bipolarity, which after all presents a distinct structural logic from an established bipolar system.

Conversely, balance-of-power politics is the characteristic pattern of behavior and interactions between the great powers in a structural transition from unipolarity to multipolarity. Here too internal and external balancing will become increasingly important, but the stakes and dangers of alliances will be even greater than in a shift to bipolarity. In general, structural transition to multipolarity shares many of the same features and risks as established multipolar

systems. The main structural explanation of great power conflict is the flexibility of alignment and uncertainty of intentions, which can lead to unbalanced alliances and/or miscalculations by one or more of the great powers. Perhaps the most serious threat—one that does not exist in established multipolarity—is the structural phenomenon of power vacuums, which have their origins in hegemonic decline and are likely to have destabilizing effects on regional security environments, potentially generating problems from security dilemmas to nuclear proliferation. Indeed, the greatest threat of a global structural change from unipolarity to multipolarity may be its effects on the struggle for power and security between states at the regional level.

However, the balance-of-power also provides an essential source of stability in an international system undergoing structural change from unipolarity to multipolarity. In particular, the emergence of multiple great powers reduces the risk of preventive war, since the declining great power may lack an obvious great power rival, as well as the capabilities for a general war against a combination of them. The balance-of-power therefore mitigates the threat of hegemonic rivalry and war, which is usually understood as a consequence of hegemonic decline, but which may be a more specific structural effect of the transition from unipolarity to bipolarity, and not necessarily to multipolarity. Finally, the rise of new great powers, and the reemergence of balance-of-power politics, will mitigate the threat of impunity—that characteristic source of instability in a unipolar world.

Table 2: Structural Transitions to a Post-Unipolar World

Transition Type	Structural Pattern	Sources of Stability	Sources of Instability
Unipolarity to bipolarity	Hegemonic rivalry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possibility of peaceful accommodation, if declining great power maintains relative power advantage - Nuclear deterrence dampens incentive for preventive war 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Declining power creates structural pressure for preventive war - Military competition between declining and rising great powers - Polarization of status quo and revisionist alliances - Mercurial and adventurous foreign policies interact to produce overreaction and brinkmanship
Unipolarity to multipolarity	Balance-of-power politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Balance-of-power politics reduces the probability of preventive (and hegemonic) war - Balance-of-power mitigates threat of impunity by a single great power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexibility of alliances increases uncertainty and miscalculation - Possibility of unbalanced alliance systems - Power vacuums generate regional security problems (e.g., arms races, security dilemmas, and nuclear proliferation)

Conclusion

This paper has sketched out some of the most important sources of stability and instability in the structural transition to a post-unipolar world. The discussion draws heavily on neorealist theory, both in terms of its “unit-level” assumptions about states and its “structural-level” approach to theorizing about how changes in the number of great powers—i.e., polarity—influence the behavior and interactions between them. As Kenneth Waltz (1979, pp. 79-81) argues, such a structural approach must abstract above the level of the attributes and differences of states (e.g., national interests and identities), in order to describe and explain the sorts of systemic pressures and constraints that they face as a consequence of forming part of the international system.

Thus, the paper contributes to neorealist theory by developing a typology of structural transitions—based on the ideal types of unipolarity, bipolarity, and multipolarity—and exploring the distinct sources of stability and instability that exist during a period of structural change from unipolarity to either bipolarity or multipolarity. While these theoretical aims are inspired by questions about the relative decline of the United States, the rise of China, and even the resurgence of Russia, the scope of the paper has explicitly endeavored to turn away from an empirical examination of contemporary international politics, in order to think theoretically about the end of unipolarity and its consequences for international peace and security, especially the risk of great power conflict. Only time will tell if the world is on its way to bipolarity or multipolarity, and whether or not such a transition will be peaceful.

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