

The Origins of the Iraq War of 2003 from an International Historical Approach

Written by James Chisem

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JAMES CHISEM, MAR 31 2015

Assess the Strengths and Limits of Adopting an International Historical Approach to Understanding the Origins of the Iraq War of 2003

There is a famous scene in the popular television show *'Family Guy'* in which the main characters, Brian the dog and Peter Griffin, take time out of a road trip across America to visit Ground Zero in New York City. Since the significance of the location is obviously lost on Peter, Brian attempts to clear things up. "Peter", he says, "this is the site of the 9/11 terrorist attacks". Slightly less bewildered, Peter replies, "Oh, so Saddam Hussein did this?" Brian responds with a deadpan "no". "The Iraqi Army?" offers Peter. Once again, Brian answers in the negative. Peter's questions follow the Iraq route further until Brian finally loses patience and answers: "Peter, Iraq had nothing to do with this; it was a bunch of Saudi Arabians, Lebanese, and Egyptians, financed by a Saudi guy living in Afghanistan and sheltered by Pakistanis". Peter pauses for a moment and then tentatively enquires, "So, you're saying we need to invade Iran?"[1]

Though this exchange is clearly a satirical caricature, it does neatly capture the byzantine contours of the evolving debate regarding the context and content of the United States' foreign policy during the Bush-Cheney era. In particular, the Iraq War of 2003 has continued to generate a seemingly inexhaustible quantity of historiographical and conceptual controversies. George W. Bush may have declared that American forces entered Mesopotamia with the aim of disarming "Iraq of weapons of mass destruction", ending "Saddam's support of terrorism", and "[freeing] the Iraqi people", but most within the International Relations (IR) community chose not to take him at his word.[2] Some scholars have argued that the invasion should be viewed as a bold attempt to enhance US hegemony.[3] Others have cautiously murmured about the geopolitics of oil and the influence of the so-called 'Israel lobby'.[4] Still more have emphasised the decisive role played by neoconservative policymakers such as Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, and Scooter Libby.[5]

Whilst it is true that these diverse hypotheses are interesting and contentious in and of themselves, it is their implications for explanatory IR theory which has really put the cat among the pigeons.[6] There is little in the classical realist canon to suggest that rational states should go out of their way to embroil themselves in a war if their vital interests are not at stake.[7] In a similar fashion, liberal thinkers have expended a considerable amount of ink down the ages describing how mature democracies like the United States are consistently sensible and judicious when it comes to foreign policy decision-making.[8] Mainstream theorists, then, appear to have a hard time explaining or predicting supposedly atypical events such as the Iraq War. International historians, on the other hand, claim to have no such trouble. Whereas the abstraction and "mephitic unrealisms" associated with political science tend to bury nuance and irregularity, the detailed empirical analysis which is the bread and butter of historical enquiry is said to be well suited to the illumination of complex socio-political phenomena and multiple causal pathways.[9]

In this short paper, I will suggest that an international historical approach to understanding the origins of the 2003 Iraq War presents both challenges and opportunities. Although the historian's toolkit is uniquely suited to unpicking the interpenetrating threads of the Bush administration's decision to go to war, an empirical focus on contemporary events is fraught with methodological problems.

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The narrative will be divided into four constituent parts. I will begin by clearing up some definitional issues. In section two, I will look at the difficulties of applying deductive theoretical models to complicated events and subsequently put forward an international historical perspective on the Iraq War. In the third section, I will consider the pitfalls of 'doing' contemporary history. Finally, I will attempt to delineate a new research agenda for the Iraq War which combines the conceptual clarity of IR theory with the detailed analysis of International History.

1. What is International History?

If you were to ask a room full of academics what distinguishes International History from International Relations, you would most likely have to spend an hour or so listening to a room full of conflicting answers.

The traditional view holds that the difference between the two disciplines is roughly equivalent to that between nomothetic (*'proposition of the law'*) and idiographic (*'to describe a peculiarity'*) approaches to knowledge. Theorists of international politics, so the argument goes, are concerned purely with the 'big picture'. They engage with the world and the objects in it from a particular epistemological position—say, dialectical materialism, feminism or realism—with the expressed purpose of establishing *a priori* laws which explain and predict state behaviour. In contrast, historians are thought to be stick-in-the-mud empiricists, interested only in describing period-specific events through careful archival research. At worst, they are “a-theoretical storytellers” who shy away from drawing wider conclusions about their subject matter.[10]

This interpretation may be bureaucratically convenient, but it grossly distorts the character of each craft. Aside from a few Platonic philosophers labouring in isolation from the world outside, few scholars of IR ignore history or historiography. Likewise, only hardcore diplomatic historians fetishise detail for its own sake or refuse to acknowledge the conceptual developments of the past century.[11] Nevertheless, the overlap between the two fields is neither acute nor wilful. To be sure, Paul W. Schroeder—a thinker who has a background in both theory and history—contends that IR and International History diverge in three key areas.

First, they prioritise the study of different phenomenon. Historians, for instance, are preoccupied primarily with explaining the vicissitude and dynamism of human societies. History, as Herbert Butterfield would have it, is “the study of the changes of things that change”. Theorists, on the contrary, look for patterns, permanence, and regularity. Second, they have discrete conceptions of this phenomenon. Even supposing that a historian devotes his or her entire life to the study of the external factors which shape and constrain human beings, he or she will still insist that individual or group agency, whether active or reactive, is the *sine qua non* of social relations. Theorists are more liable to stress the explanatory importance of structure and behaviour. Third, they differ significantly on methodology. While political scientists are in the business of making generalisations and testing them against intersubjectively verifiable materials (*hypothesis – examination – replicable law*), historians usually begin by identifying a phenomenon which has been overlooked or inadequately accounted for, before assembling appropriate evidence to outline a new “synoptic judgement” (*problem – analysis – judgement*). The upshot of this is that most IR theorists are willing to downplay the particularities of individual cases for the sake of systematic parsimony, as opposed to historians, who are by and large reluctant to walk the causal tightrope from contingent to one-size-fits-all.[12]

2. Theorists and their Facts: Seeing Baghdad, Thinking Everywhere Else

Given the ostensibly peculiar nature of the Iraq War, it is perhaps not surprising to learn that the more traditional theories of international politics, with their emphasis on continuity and tendency towards model building, have struggled to digest and rationalise the invasion.[13] There is, however, always an exception to the rule, and in this case the exception is neorealism.

According to neorealists, the distinctive flavour of the international sphere is determined not by human biology or the interplay of disparate domestic cultures, but rather by the absence of an overarching central authority. “The requirements of state action”, observes Kenneth Waltz, “are imposed by the circumstances in which all states exist”. [14] Under anarchy, it is impossible for decision-makers to deduce with absolute certainty the intentions of others. Hence each state must rely on its own devices to pursue what it perceives to be in its rational self-interest,

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generally understood to be survival and a favourable balance of power. An important corollary of this is that unit-level variations, as Waltz dryly puts it, have little or no impact on the interaction between states—the distribution of capabilities within the system is what counts.[15]

From this starting point, it is relatively straightforward to construct a coherent account of the United States' decision to invade Iraq. Neorealists argue that in an anarchical system power speaks unto power. In other words, the ambitions of one state can only really be contained by the power of another state or the combined power of a balancing alliance. If a state's power is left unchecked, its definition of its own interests is likely to widen, as is its conception of what constitutes a threat. The exigencies of existential security can thus rapidly give way to a desire for freedom of action vis-à-vis other states. Since the United States is the sole hegemon in a unipolar world, there is nothing (or rather no-one) to stop it from acting unilaterally in a manner which it sees fit.[16] In this sense, America's adventure in Iraq can be seen as the result of a world out of balance, no different from the Kingdom of Macedon's conquest of Persia in the fourth century BC or the untrammelled expansion of the Mongolian Empire in the thirteenth century. Writing just after the end of the Cold War, Waltz summed up this view with customary lucidity:

“With benign intent, the United States has behaved, and until its power is brought into a semblance of balance, will behave in ways that annoy and frighten others”.[17]

There is an alluring catch-all quality to this logic, but there are several reasons why we should doubt its usefulness. To begin with, if we take neorealist assumptions as writ, then the United States should not have been in a position to invade Iraq in the first place. As Waltz himself points out, in international politics “overwhelming power repels and leads others to try to balance against it”.[18] If a theory claims that unipolarity should not persist (or even exist), to explain a war solely with reference to unipolarity is akin to having one's cake and eating it too. In a world governed by neorealist laws, nations such as Spain, Poland, the United Kingdom, and Australia, should have applied countervailing pressure on the US. Instead, they did the opposite, forsaking the structural benefits of a balancing strategy for the payoffs offered by a policy of ‘bandwagoning’. What is more, the neorealist version of the Iraq War implies that countries attack one another simply because they can. This seems to be a deeply circumspect supposition, for the obvious question arises: why not North Korea, Syria, or Iran?[19] It does not make sense to argue that Iraq's specific capabilities were to blame. Even if Saddam's regime was close to possessing weapons of mass destruction (WMD), the principles of deterrence should have still applied, especially in light of Waltz's claim that the internal make-up of states makes no difference to the conduct of statecraft.[20]

There is, of course, a more general point to be made here about the flaws of a ‘hard’ theoretical approach to the study of historical phenomena. As the above example highlights, theoreticians are often guilty of cherry-picking certain aspects or vectors of an event which serve to underline the correctness of their chosen philosophy, whilst discounting or avoiding any inconvenient facts which do not. With a theory in hand, they know exactly what to look for in the archives and exactly how to find it. As Schroeder notes, this can encourage scholars to come at history

“like a looter at an archaeological site, indifferent to context and deeper meaning, concerned only with taking what can be immediately used or sold”.[21]

Bearing in mind these well-rehearsed criticisms, international historians who have studied the origins of the Iraq War have taken care to avoid drawing deterministic or holistic conclusions. Indeed, the renowned American scholar Robert Jervis, who has written extensively on the topic, has repeatedly cautioned against undue abstraction. In his brief article, *‘Explaining the War in Iraq’*, Jervis once again breaks from the realist tradition of which he is a part, arguing that a historical reading of the Iraq story promises to yield the best results. For this reason, it is worth going over his account in more detail.[22]

The main thrust of Jervis' argument is that in order to get a full picture of the Iraq debacle, we must focus our attention on the intellectual idiosyncrasies of Bush and the key figures in his administration. As he makes clear:

“...a large part of the explanation for the war is that [the Bush administration was] in power. We have here an example of the ‘butterfly effect’—i.e. were it not for the infamous butterfly ballot in Palm Beach county, Al Gore would have

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been president and even if his greater concern with terrorism had not prevented the attacks of 9/11, I think it is unlikely that he would have decided to invade Iraq".[23]

To this end, Jervis maintains that the 9/11 terror attacks exacerbated the pre-existing fears and psychological biases of neoconservative policymakers and thus propelled the United States toward war. Long-held beliefs about the efficacy of force and the limits of deterrence, as well as (mis)perceptions which grew out of the first Gulf War about Saddam's nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons programmes, no doubt gave the administration pause for concern in their first few months in office. However, it was not until 9/11 that the supposed threat from Iraq became *intolerable*. [24] Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld confirmed this during one of his regular briefings at the Pentagon:

"The United States did not act in Iraq because we had discovered dramatic new evidence of Iraq's pursuit of weapons of mass murder. We acted because we saw existing evidence in a new light, through the prism of our experience of 9/11".[25]

Having dealt with the reasons *why* the Bush administration chose to intervene in Iraq, Jervis goes on to outline three factors which made the invasion possible. First, economic sanctions had essentially gutted the Iraqi army. In tandem with the considerable size and robust health of the United States armed forces, this meant that policymakers were relatively confident that the Ba'athist government could be overthrown with minimal fuss. Second, a number of Gulf states shared the Bush administration's fear of Iraqi capabilities and intentions. Without the symbolic and strategic cooperation of nations like Kuwait, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia, it is debatable as to whether the invasion would have been feasible. Last but not least, almost all countries, regardless of their appraisal of the implications, "shared the general American assessment of the state of Iraq's WMD programme". Not only did this help Secretary of State Colin Powell secure a UN resolution on weapons inspections, but it also brought the British onboard and bought the support of the Democrats.[26]

To me, this richly detailed interpretation is testament to the strengths of a historical take on the origins of the Iraq War. Like all good history, it depicts the "sequence of actions leading up to an outcome", provides a meticulous "reconstruction of the actual process and contingencies", and touches upon the "roads not taken".[27] Rather than piling all our eggs into one basket, then, it seems sensible to conclude that a confluence of factors made the invasion of Iraq appealing and viable in the eyes of top American decision-makers.

3. International History and its Limits: the Present as the Past

Then again, for all its benefits, a historical understanding of the Iraq War is not without drawbacks and limitations. It is common knowledge that the most vexing concern for ancient historians is that the distant past is a foreign country.[28] It is perhaps less widely recognised that historians who study contemporary issues are faced with the exact opposite problem—that is, the immediate past is all too familiar. Indeed, historians have to navigate tricky methodological territory when writing about recent events.

The first difficulty which comes to mind is the sheer amount of sources which the contemporary historian has to contend with. As A.J.P. Taylor noted, "history gets thicker as it approaches more recent times: more people, more events, and more books written about them. More evidence is preserved, often, one is tempted to say, too much".[29] In his seminal monograph, *What is History?*, E.H. Carr also draws attention to this inescapable nuisance:

"The modern historian has none of the advantages of [a medieval historian's] built in ignorance. He must cultivate this necessary ignorance for himself – the more so the nearer he comes to his own times. He has the dual task of discovering the few significant facts and turning them into facts of history, and of discarding the many insignificant facts as unhistorical." [30]

For those historians attempting to make sense of the Bush administration's national security policy, Carr's words will no doubt strike a familiar chord. In 2006, the main talking point amongst scholars of the Iraq War was the influence of neoconservative ideas and advisors on US grand strategy. As of 2012, the neoconservative narrative has taken a

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backseat to discussions about the opinions and motivations of top decision-makers such as Bush, Rumsfeld, and Richard Cheney.[31]

Now, a number of factors will have produced this transmutation, from the increased availability of official documentary evidence to the changing nature of the war itself. Nonetheless, the shifting personal biases of scholars will also have played a major part. Without access to an extensive body of peer-reviewed literature, contemporary historians have little choice but to make value judgements based on intuition. It is worth quoting Martin Johnes at length on this point:

“At the very outset of research decisions need to be taken on where to look for evidence. Our prior knowledge of a topic, which is often based not just on past research but also on popular mythology or even our own memories, thus becomes a key decider in the approach that is initially chosen”.[32]

Of course, this is not exactly a new or controversial revelation. Ever since Carr decided to dismantle history in order to see what makes it tick, critical self-reflection has been part and parcel of the historian's trade. Yet there is a stark difference in practical terms between studying, say, the Battle of Hastings, and the Iraq War. For a start, contemporary historians have to work very hard to detach themselves from their subject matter, especially if it remains contentious and divisive. If I were fortunate enough to be given an advance from a publisher to hold forth on Iraq, for instance, the end product would naturally be coloured by the progression and outcome of the invasion, as well as my own 'lived experience' of its compound fallout. If I am being honest, I would find it hard—though not impossible—to stay 'objective' for the simple reason that the Iraq War continues to affect my life and the lives of those around me in profound ways.[33]

Aficionados of 1066 do not have to worry about how King Harold II or the Duchy of Normandy might react to their latest article, nor will they lose sleep over the opinions of their peers. This might seem like a tangential point to make but it is actually of great consequence. In 2006, two well-respected realist scholars, John Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, co-authored a book which alleged that a powerful 'Israel Lobby' had successfully pressed the US government to overthrow Saddam Hussein's regime.[34] After being pilloried from all sides, they correctly predicted that, even though they had received private support for their thesis, none of their colleagues would come out and back them as they were frightened of being accused of anti-Semitism. At around the same time, Jane K. Cramer and A. Trevor Thrall anonymously canvassed a variety of experts for their opinions on why the United States invaded Iraq. They found that oil and “defending Israeli interests” both placed high on the list despite the fact that these issues were largely absent from the academy. As they elaborate:

“Informal discussions with many of our colleagues who study IR indicated that there were many...significant hypotheses experts would not raise for fear of damaging their professional reputations and being labelled conspiracy theorists.”[35]

Such a worrying disconnect between the dynamic dialogue going on behind closed doors and the conservative conversation occurring in the public realm is a timely reminder that the current debates on Iraq are components in an ongoing process, rather than a final product. Ultimately, considered historical analysis is not a panacea for the shortcomings of IR theory.

4. Filling in the Gaps

In view of this potentially awkward impasse, it is vital that historians and theorists alike take Ian Clark's advice and do more than just “agree to join hands and sing songs around the campfire”.[36]

When dealing with the recent past, historians must be aware of the restrictions of their discipline. This means being more explicit about their politics, social background, and relationship with the subject being studied. In addition, it means that historians must be more systematic, even theoretical, in the way that they approach a topic. IR theories can help historians figure out what aspects of a historical phenomenon are important and why. It goes without saying that history and neorealism do not go together well: however, IR is a broad church and it includes historically aware

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paradigms such as constructivism, normative theory, and classical realism, which are not nearly as rigid.[37] On the flip-side, theorists of all stripes should be more flexible when applying their theories to 'real world' events. It would be beneficial if they saw their theories as general orientations that guide, rather than research programmes that pre-guess causes and outcomes. Adam Humphreys has written an eloquent paper on this entitled, '*The Heuristic Application of Explanatory Theories in International Relations*', which calls for the nomothetic-ideographic distinction to be discarded.[38]

That is not to say that International History and International Relations should call it a day and adopt some common frame of reference. All I am proposing is that they should be more sensitive to their own weaknesses and more attuned to the each other's strengths. It will not be easy to abandon deeply-entrenched tribal leanings and intra-disciplinary suspicions, but, in the end, closer cooperation could help unpick the complexities of the Iraq War and events like it.

Conclusion

It may seem counter-intuitive, but adopting an international historical approach to the study of the 2003 Iraq War is simultaneously rewarding and frustrating. On the one hand, Iraq does not fit easily into the grand narrative constructed by conventional theories of international relations. The intricately interweaved events, processes, and ideas which motivated and influenced American policymakers thus lend themselves nicely to historical analysis. However, there are significant problems associated with the empirical examination of contemporary issues and events. In essence, our ability to understand the Iraq War is limited by our proximity to it. As academics, we cannot disentangle ourselves from personal biases, nor can we paint an accurate picture of actors' intentions without access to classified or as yet uncategorised documentary materials. As such, theorists and historians should endeavour to fill in the gaps left by one another.

In the meantime, it would be wise for scholars to spend a moment or two contemplating the words of the late Fred Halliday:

"Everyone who explains the US action [in invading Iraq]...is sure that his analysis is the correct one; more modest answers—such as that great powers usually take major decisions for several reasons, or that, lacking reliable documentary or autobiographical evidence, we remain ignorant—cut little ice in discussions".[39]

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[1] MacFarlane S (Dir) 'Baby Not on Board' *Family Guy* DVD (20th Century Fox Television, 2008).

[2] The fact the 'Coalition of the Willing' found neither weapons of mass destruction nor a link between the Ba'athist regime and international terrorism most likely has something to do with this scepticism. Bush G 'President Discusses Beginning of Operation Iraq Freedom' *White House Press Release* March 22nd 2003, available at <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030322.html> (accessed 30th October 2012).

[3] Kaplan F *Daydream Believers: How a Few Grand Ideas Wrecked American Power* (John Wiley and Sons Ltd, New York, 2008).

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[5] Halper S and J Clarke *America Alone: the Neo-Conservatives and the Global Order* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005).

[6] According to Steve Smith, explanatory theory incorporates neo-realism, neo-liberalism, and 'soft' constructivism. It is undergirded by positivist assumptions, and dedicated to the notion that "the social world is amenable to the same kinds of analysis as the...natural world", to a "separation between facts and values", to "uncovering patterns and regularities" and to "empiricism as the arbiter of what counts as knowledge". Smith S 'The Discipline of International Relations: Still an American Social Science?' pp.374-402 in *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* Vol.2, No.3, 2000 p.380-383.

[7] In September 2002 thirty-three prominent IR scholars, most of them realists or neo-realists, took out an advertisement in the *New York Times* criticising the Bush administration's rationale for war. See Art RJ et.al 'War with Iraq is Not in America's National Interest' in *The New York Times* 26th September 2002, available at <http://mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/P0012.pdf> (accessed 29th October 2012).

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[8] Kauffman C 'Threat Inflation and the Failure of the Marketplace of Ideas' pp.5-48 in *International Security* Vol.29, No.1, Summer 2004 p.5.

[9] *Quote at* Watt DC *What About the People? Abstraction and Reality in History and the Social Sciences* (London School of Economics, London, 1983) p.19.

[10] Elman MF 'International Relations Theories and Methods' pp.136-160 in *Palgrave Advances in International History* (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2005) p.137-138.

[11] Constructivists, for instance, focus on identity and socially contingent norms. As such, they are naturally interested in the history of states and the states-system. On the other side of the coin, entire sub-fields of International History and historiography are devoted to the study of structures rather than agency. The Annales School in France and the Wisconsin School in the United States are classic examples of such research agendas. *For constructivism see* Wendt A *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999) p.108-109. *With regards to the Annales School, refer to* Burke P *The French Historical Revolution: the Annales School, 1929-1989* (Stanford University Press, Palo Alto, 1990). *As for the Wisconsin School, look at* Perkins B 'The Tragedy of American Diplomacy: Twenty-Five Years After' pp.1-18 in *Reviews in American History* Vol.12, No.1, March 1984.

[12] A synoptic judgement does not have to exclude previous or parallel judgements – it can incorporate or subsume them. Making a synoptic judgement is thus different from positing a replicable law or generalisation. Schroeder PW 'History and International Relations Theory: Not Use or Abuse, but Fit or Misfit' pp.64-74 in *International Security* Vol.22, No.1, Summer 1997 p.67-69. *Quote at* p.68. *For Herbert Butterfield, see* Butterfield H *History and Human Relations* (Collins, London, 1951).

[13] I am referring here to the various strands of liberal thinking on international relations as well as classical and neoclassical realism.

[14] Waltz KN *Man, the State, and War: a Theoretical Analysis* (Columbia University Press, New York, 2001) p.160.

[15] Waltz KN *Theory of International Politics* (McGraw Hill, London, 1979) p.100-128. *Also see* Mearsheimer J *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (WW Norton & Co, London, 2001).

[16] Jervis R *American Foreign Policy in a New Era* (Routledge, London, 2005) p.92-96.

[17] Waltz KN 'America as a Model for the World? A Foreign Policy Perspective' pp.667-670 in *PS: Political Science and Politics* Vol.24, No.1, December 1991 p.669.

[18] *ibid.*

[19] Waltz actually warns that "theory will not predict the outbreak of particular wars". There are many problems with this stance, not least the fact that neorealists stress the superior predictive power of their approach. *See* Waltz KN *Theory of International Politics* p.69.

[20] *With regards to deterrence see* Sagan SD and KN Waltz *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: a Debate* (WW Norton and Company, New York, 1995).

[21] Schroeder PW 'Historical Reality vs Neo-Realist Reality' pp.108-148 in *International Security* Vol.19, No.1, Summer 1994 p.146-148. *Quote at* p.148.

[22] Jervis R 'Explaining the War in Iraq' pp.25-48 in *Why did the United States Invade Iraq?* edited by JK Cramer and AT Thrall (Routledge, London, 2012).

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[23] *ibid.* p.28.

[24] *ibid.* p.29-35.

[25] *ibid.* p.31.

[26] *ibid.* p.36-38. For a more detailed look at the intelligence side of things, see Jervis R *Why Intelligence Fails: Lessons from the Iranian Revolution and the Iraq War* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2010) p.123-1255.

[27] Elman MF 'International Relations Theories' p.144-145.

[28] In the opening line of *'The Go-Between'*, the novelist L.P. Hartley proclaims: "The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there". Hartley LP *The Go-Between* (New York Review Books, New York, 2002) p.1.

[29] Taylor AJP *English History, 1914-1945* (Pelican Books, London, 1975) p.729.

[30] Carr EH *What is History?* (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2001) p.9.

[31] Cramer JK and AT Thrall 'Introduction: Why did the United States Invade Iraq?' pp.1-24 in *Why did the United States Invade Iraq?* edited by JK Cramer and AT Thrall (Routledge, London, 2012).

[32] Johnes M 'On Writing Contemporary History' pp.20-31 in *North American Journal of Welsh Studies* Vol.6, No.1, Winter 2011 p.22.

[33] *ibid.* p.23-24. For an interesting discussion on the 'postmodern turn' in history, see Evans RJ In *Defence of History* (Granta Books, London, 2000) p.1-14.

[34] The book in question is *'The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy'*. Refer to footnote 4.

[35] Cramer JK and AT Thrall 'Introduction' p.2.

[36] Clark I 'International Relations: Divided by a Common Language?' pp.271-279 in *Government and Opposition* Vol.37, No.2, April 2002 p.277.

[37] For constructivism look at Reus-Smit C 'Reading History through Constructivist Eyes' pp.395-414 in *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* Vol.37, No.2, 2008. For normative theory refer to Bull H *The Anarchical Society: a Study of Order in World Politics* (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2002). With regards to classical realism, see Carr EH *The Twenty Years Crisis, 1919-1939: an Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2001).

[38] Humphreys ARC 'The Heuristic Application of Explanatory Theories in International relations' pp.257-277 in *European Journal of International Relations* Vol.17, No.1, 2011.

[39] Halliday F 'The Study of US Foreign Policy in the Middle East' pp.827-837 in *International History Review* Vol.31, No.4, 2009 P.827.

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