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What Is Political Psychology?

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Although its ancestry in social philosophy can be traced back to ancient times, modern political psychology as an academic discipline was born in the decades between the First and Second World Wars. It is a child of political science and psychology, having been conceived in the ambivalent mood of optimism and despair that has characterized the scientific age. Rapidly expanding knowledge, the increasing confidence in scientific methods, and the ever quickening technological developments stimulated the awareness that scientific methods might be applied to the understanding of political behavior. The increasing political turmoil, the irrationality and destructiveness of the First World War, the development of modern totalitarian regimes with their barbarities, the emergence of the mass media and their systematic use by propagandists, suggested an urgent need for more systematic knowledge about the relationship between political and psychological processes.

The first notable link between psychology and political science in the United States developed at the University of Chicago under the encouragement of the political scientist Charles Merriam (Davies, 1973). Merriam (1925, 1934) explicitly called for a scientific political science that would draw on psychology. It was one of Merriam's students, Harold D. Lasswell, who responded to that call and, through his writings and his teachings, became the American founding father of political psychology as a new academic discipline.

Although Lasswell's prolific writings touched on almost every topic of interest to political psychologists, his special emphasis on psychological processes as they affect political processes has been influential in shaping the approach of most American social scientists to the field of political psychology. His early books — *Psychopathology and Politics* (1930), *World Politics and Personal Insecurity* (1935), *Politics: Who Gets What, When, and How* (1936), *Power and Personality* (1948) — helped to establish a distinctive psychological perspective for understanding political behavior, politics, and politicians. This perspective leads to a political psychology largely centering on individual and social psychological processes — such as motivation, conflict, perception, cognition, learning, socialization, attitude formation, and group dynamics — and on individual personality and psychopathology as the causal factors influencing political behavior.

The strong emphasis on psychological processes as determinants of political processes in American political psychology has led to a relative neglect of the study of the influence of political processes on psychological processes. European political psychology, although much influenced by American political psychology, has been less one-sided. The greater impact of the Marxist perspective in Europe has evoked more awareness of the role of political processes in shaping psychological processes and personality. Thus, Max Horkheimer, in his 1931 inaugural address as Director of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Frankfurt, insisted that institute members should explore the interconnection between the economic life of society, the psychic development of the individual, and transformations in the realm of culture (Held, 1980). Various members of the Frankfurt school and those associated with the development of "critical theory" — Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse, Fromm, and Habermas — have made important contributions to the integration of the political–economic orientations of Marxist theory with the psychological perspectives of Freudian theory.

How political, economic, and social processes are affecting individuals has also been the concern of a number of more recent European sociologists such as Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck. Giddens, in the development of his structuration theory (Giddens, 1979, 1984, 1990), depicts the view that agency and structure, or the individual and society, are mutually constituted and cannot be understood as separate entities. Similar to earlier sociologists such as Bourdieu (1977), Bauman (1973), and Berger and Luckmann (1966), Giddens is especially interested in those aspects of human agency that express the power of individuals to transform their social and political circumstances. The influence of sociology on political psychology has taken a number of expressions. Theorists concerned with political culture (Almond & Verba, 1963; Pye, 1986; Inglehart, 1990, 1996), political socialization (Renshon, 1977, 1989, 2000; Merelman, 1986;

Wilson, 1988), and learning (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988; Sigel, 1989; Bermeo, 1992; Levy, 1994), have all contributed to the understanding of how structures and cultures inform individual action and behavior.

In our view, the field of political psychology is the study of the interaction of political and psychological processes; this is a bidirectional interaction. Just as cognitive capabilities limit and affect the nature of the political and social world of political agents so, also, the structures and processes of politics affect cognitive capabilities. Thus, 5-year-olds and mature adults, partly as a result of their differences in cognitive capabilities, develop rather different sorts of political structures and processes; similarly, certain sorts of political structures and processes foster the development of the intelligent, autonomous, reflective, active characteristics of mature adults, whereas others encourage the development of immature, passive, dependent, uncritical cognitive capabilities resembling those of a submissive child.

The field of political psychology is defined not only by its subject-matter, the interrelationship between political and psychological processes, but also by its approach to its subject-matter. This approach has historically been in the scientific tradition. As Nagel (1961) pointed out: "It is the desire for explanations which are at once systematic and controllable by factual evidence that generates science" (p. 4). The scientifically oriented political psychologist seeks to develop explanatory hypotheses for the phenomena of interest that have logical consequences precise enough to be genuinely testable. The explanatory hypotheses, in other words, must be subject to the possibility of rejection through empirically verifiable and scientifically competent evidence that has been obtained by procedures employed with the intent of eliminating known sources of error. As Nagel (1961) indicated:

> The practice of scientific method is the persistent critique of arguments, in the light of tried canons for judging the reliability of the procedures by which evidential data are obtained, and for assessing the probative force of the evidence on which conclusions are based. (p. 13)

A scientifically oriented political psychology must, by necessity, be concerned with "methodology": It must be concerned with developing the "tried canons" for judging the reliability of procedures for collecting data and for assessing the validity of the evidence for testing explanatory hypotheses. It must also be concerned with developing the data collection procedures that will produce reliable and valid data.

The practice of scientific method in a field such as political psychology is difficult to achieve and to sustain. The inherent nature of its subject-matter makes it largely inappropriate to transfer uncritically the methodological canons of the well-established physical and biological sciences to political psychology. Yet there is the common temptation to use the natural sciences

as a model and also the opposite temptation to reject the possibility of a scientific approach because the appropriateness of the model is rejected. The scientific approach of the natural sciences has mainly reflected a technical cognitive interest (Habermas, 1971) that has been oriented toward developing knowledge for instrumental action toward defined goals under given conditions. To the extent that the social sciences, including political psychology, have uncritically imitated the methodologies appropriate to a technical cognitive interest, they have tended to neglect the fact that human action has to be understood with reference to the meanings that the action has for the actors and for its audience: Human action is rooted in intersubjective contexts of communication, in intersubjective practices and forms of life that have distinctive historical origins (Bernstein, 1976; Giddens, 1984, 1991). The uncritical imitation of the technical orientation of the natural sciences has also led many social scientists to ignore how their theoretical and empirical work—that is, their scientific activities—are influenced by the implicit assumptions, the value positions, ideological orientations, and political–economic viewpoints in the communities in which they participate.

Common as such imitation of an exalted, older idol is, it has had some ill-effects on the development of a scientific political psychology. It has led some to confuse "scientism" and science: namely, to consider techniques labeled "objective," "behavioristic," "value free," and "quantitative" as scientific even when critical reflection would have revealed how inappropriate the techniques (as well as the labels) were, and also how thoroughly value-laden they were. Others have reacted against the pseudo-objectivism of scientism by a retreat to an unbridled subjectivism, a subjectivism which, in effect, denies the possibility or value of an intersubjective methodology for the scientific study of political psychology. Present academic discourse tends to describe these in the juxtaposed terminology of rationalism versus postmodernism, where the former reflects a belief in active, rational, goal-oriented individuals with strong selves, whereas the latter sees individual subjectivity as a historical discursive construction lacking any such thing as a core-self. Both are, of course, simplified accounts of complex processes. Not only do they disregard the intersubjective nature of individuals, but they also fail to acknowledge the bidirectional interplay between psychological and political processes.

Fortunately, neither scientism nor subjectivism is the dominant trend in political psychology. Most political psychologists are practitioners of the well-tried art of "methodological opportunism." They employ research designs and established procedures—for example, content analysis, systematic interviewing, questionnaire methods, analysis of nonverbal behavior, small-group experiments, projective techniques, controlled observa-

tions, polling, analysis of recorded data—borrowed from any of the various behavioral and social science disciplines and adapted so as to be appropriate to the problem they are investigating. If the research design or procedures are poorly implemented by the researcher or inappropriate to the research problem, one can normally expect that the "persistent critique of arguments, in the light of tried canons" will reveal the deficiencies in the research (if the research is considered significant enough to warrant attention). Sometimes, of course, error goes unrecognized because everyone in a field of study is subject to the same incorrect assumption.

Much of the work being done in political psychology is exploratory and formulative, meant to stimulate insight and to develop hypotheses rather than to test them. There is considerable latitude in doing such research but inasmuch as there are no good rules for being creative, a good deal of exploratory research turns out to be unproductive. The latitudes for acceptable descriptive and hypothesis-testing kinds of studies are much smaller. The rules and procedures for conducting such studies are fairly well articulated. Nevertheless, many such studies, even when done well technically, are often of little value because not enough critical thought has preceded the formulation of the research problem. A common critique of small-group experiments and controlled observations, for instance, has to do with their sometimes irrelevant conclusions for understanding and predicting an outside world affected by cultural and structural constraints under whose influence individuals act. Another and more recent critique has to do with the methodological differences between political science and psychology which, according to Hermann (1989), may threaten to make the promise of a field of political psychology a mere fantasy. This divide is particularly evident in case study research (Tetlock, 1983), where political scientists and psychologists simply lack a common language for their investigations (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999).

Although much political psychology is in the scientific tradition, it is also concerned with being socially useful and with applying its knowledge and insights to improvement of political processes and to human betterment. Many of the "applications" are speculative in the sense that there are numerous important gaps in our relevant theoretical and empirical knowledge and we must take a speculative leap to make specific recommendations from the shaky foundations of currently existing knowledge. However, the major social value of intellectual work in political psychology resides not in its specific recommendations but rather in its providing organizing frameworks, clarifying ideas and systematic concepts for helping those who are engaged in practical political work to think about their activities in a more comprehensive way, more analytically, and with more concern for the empirical soundness of their working assumptions.

THE CONTENT OF POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Political psychologists have investigated a wide range of topics. To get some personal feeling for the variety of topics that have fallen under the rubric of *political psychology*, we reviewed the contents of the programs of the annual scientific meetings of the International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP). ISPP was founded in January 1978 as an international and interdisciplinary scholarly society. Its international membership includes psychologists, political scientists, psychiatrists, sociologists, historians, anthropologists, and people in government or public life who have a scholarly interest in political psychology. It can be considered the focal point of scholarly activity in the field of political psychology. We have reviewed the contents of the ISPP's journal, *Political Psychology*, since its first year of publication and have also examined the contents of a number of books devoted to political psychology (Knutson, 1973; Di Renzo, 1974; Renshon, 1974; Elms, 1976; Dawson, Prewitt, & Dawson, 1977; Barner-Barry & Rosenwein 1985; Hermann, 1986; Lau & Sears, 1986; Stone & Schaffner, 1988; Iyengar & McGuire, 1993; and Le Doux, 1996, among others).

At first sight, a listing of the titles of articles, chapters, papers, and symposia produced a bewildering diversity of topics, giving a sense of chaos in political psychology. Fortunately, after reflecting on the diversity, a reasonably clear structure emerged from the surface chaos. Not only did it become relatively clear how political psychology as a field has developed, but it also gave some indication of where political psychology may be heading. Next we identify a number of key areas that have preoccupied political psychologists for the last 30 years or so. In most cases we have indicated one or more references that provide the reader with a guide to important work that has been done in the relevant area. This is followed by a brief summary of some illustrative studies of the field.

The Individual as Political Actor

This area is at the center of a cluster of studies concerned with the determinants and consequences of the individual's political behavior. Studies of political socialization, the formation of political attitudes, political participation, political alienation, voting behavior, the social backgrounds of political terrorists, the relationship between personality and political attitudes, group membership and political attitudes/behavior, situational factors influencing political behavior, the influence of the mass media, etc., are some of the many studies in political psychology that could be identified under this heading. This is by far the largest area of research in political psychology as it constitutes the basis for most other research within the field.

The individual as a political actor is at the heart of the debate on how political psychology differs from rational choice models as it seeks to explain behavior that is outside the Hobbesian world of individuals as instrumentalist rational creatures. Instead, political psychology insists that individuals may reason differently in different circumstances and that emotional aspects guide interaction and action in the social world. How we define the individual as a political actor also has implications for how we understand collective identity formation and collective action. Instrumentalist explanations have difficulties in explaining circumstances when people identify themselves with the group for reasons other than those that are purely instrumental. Emotional aspects of belonging, or other needs for identification and bonding, are often overlooked and so is the desire for mutual recognition and community building. As noted by Marcus (this volume), works on the psychology of emotion and on emotion in politics are starting to have a serious impact on the field of political psychology. Collective identity, whether based on ethnicity, class, gender, race, religion, nation, or the state must, in other words, be understood within the framework of how individuals constitute political actors. The focus, and problem, of aggregating from the individual level to the group level is thus at the forefront of political psychology.

Political Movements

Studies of political movements make up the nexus of investigations of such social formations, groups, organizations, and communities in which the political actor is not an individual but rather a social unit composed of interacting individuals and groups. Both social identity theory and its derivative, self-categorization theory, have been attempts to create a nonreductionist cognitive social psychological model of group processes (Monroe, Hankin, & Bukovchik VanVechten, 1999). Proceeding from and developing Tajfel's (1982) "minimal group paradigm," a number of political psychologists have applied social identity theory to understand political movements and other social formations (Abrams, 1994; Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994). As early as 1982, Helmut Moser for instance, in a review of political psychology in the Federal Republic of Germany, identified studies of the "youth movement" and studies of action groups of citizens as two of the major topics that had been studied extensively by political psychologists in that country. Similarly, there have been studies of the women's movement (Carroll, 1989; Clayton & Crosby, 1992), of terrorist groups (Crenshaw, 1986, 1990 and this volume; Reich, 1990), of religious sects (Robins & Post, 1997), of the development of ethnic and/or national movements (Staub, 1989; Druckman, 1994; Volkan, 1997), and of intergroup relations and group conflict more generally (Duckitt, 1992; Snider-

man, Brody, & Tetlock, 1993). However, as noted by Crenshaw, Bar-Tal, and Stein (this volume), among others, political psychology is not only concerned with explaining group conflict and violence but also with conflict resolution and concrete policy prescriptions. See, for example, Deutsch and Coleman (2000), where the implications for the practice of negotiation and mediation in various social contexts are drawn from specific social psychological theories having relevance to the process involved in conflict resolution.

The Politician or Political Leader

This area is closely related to the first one except that the research here deals with a special category of political actors, those who are identifiable as playing or having played a particularly significant role in the political process. Studies of political leaders and political leadership, the personalities of politicians, psychobiography, and psychohistory fall under this heading. Analyses of political leaders have been concerned with a number of issues, such as decision making in general and foreign policy making in particular, crisis behavior, national and international negotiation behavior, group dynamics, and charismatic leadership. Political psychologists have analyzed how attribution and inference guide interpretation of political events and how signaling, misperceptions, groupthink, self-images, and images of the other have consequences for negotiation tactics and the escalation of violence and war (Janis, 1982; Jervis, Lebow, & Stein, 1985; Larson, 1985; Tetlock, 1993; Jervis, 1997).

Many studies of political leaders have been done because of the inherent interest in personalities that have loomed large in history. Recent attempts to explain differences in leadership style, from Roosevelt via Nixon to Clinton, using a psychobiographic approach are evidence of this trend (Farnham, 1997; Volkan, Itzkowitz, & Dod, 1997; George & George, 1998; Greenstein, 2000). Most leadership analyses include the personality component of leadership, although a minority of scholars study the interrelation between personality and environment. Personality trait analyses are at the heart of those interested in the relationship between images of the political leader and voting behavior. Studies have shown that judgments about the personality traits of political leaders affect both overall evaluations of those leaders and individual vote decisions (Stewart & Clarke, 1992; Jones & Hudson, 1996; Pancer, Brown, & Widdis Barr, 1999).

Political Alignments and Structures

This area is similar to "political movements" except that the research here is concerned with the social formations, groupings, and organizations that

develop among politicians. The focus is on such questions as how coalitions are formed, what leads to splintering of groups, what gives rise to particular leader-follower relations, and what initiates cooperative rather than competitive relations. More generally, here the interest is in the "sociometric" structures and interactions that occur among the politicians in a given political unit, what has given rise to them, and what are their consequences. As demonstrated by Jackman and Sniderman (this volume), recent studies have focused on the role of political parties in large-scale representative democracies, the extent to which partisan elites maintain and organize coalitions along ideological lines, and the way in which party ideologies constrain the opportunities for candidates to raise questions (Poole & Rosenthal, 1993; Aldrich, 1995; Sniderman, 2000).

Political Intergroup Relations

This area is similar to the preceding one but is centered on investigations dealing with the structures and interactions existing among political units and not on those among individual politicians. The political units may be local governments, nations, alliances, international organizations, and so on. The study of hostile interrelations such as are involved in threat, war, deterrence, etc., as well as the study of cooperative interrelations such as mutual aid, scientific and cultural exchanges, and trade are included under this rubric (Jervis, 1989; Woshinsky, 1994; Axelrod, 1997; Reich, 1990). Under this and the preceding heading, as well as the one following, the distinctive orientation of political psychology is concerned with the role of individual and group psychological processes in affecting, as well as being affected by, the natural development of political structures, political interactions, and political processes. Here, so to speak, political psychology contributes a distinctive emphasis to the understanding of the subject matters of political science and international relations; it does not provide a substitute for these disciplines.

Political Processes

Perhaps the most central area in political psychology concerns the various individual and group processes that are involved in, and affect as well as are affected by, the behavior of political entities. The study of political processes is at the heart of all previously mentioned areas, but a number of these processes have been studied fairly extensively and warrant distinctive and major subareas. These include: perception and cognition (Jervis, 1976, 1997; Lebow, 1981; Hopf, 1994), decision-making (Janis & Mann, 1977; George, 1969, 1980; Stein, 1989; Moscovici & Doise, 1994), persuasion (Doob, 1948; Nimmo, 1970; Petty & Cacioppo, 1996; Pratkanis &

Aronson, 1991; Taylor, 1998), learning (Dawson et al., 1977; Levy, 1994; Stein, 1994), conflict (Deutsch, 1973; Deutsch, 1983; Deutsch & Coleman, 2000; Snyder & Diesing, 1977; Walter & Snyder, 1999), and mobilization (Etzioni, 1968; Alford, 1994; Bar-Tal & Staub, 1997).

Case Studies

Cross-cutting the structure of political psychology organized around relatively abstract areas is an organization around particular "cases"—for example, understanding the voting or nonvoting behavior of individuals in particular localities; studying particular political leaders such as Churchill, Roosevelt, Hitler, Gorbachev, or Saddam Hussein; investigating conflict in the Middle East, Afghanistan, or Rwanda; studying the images and perceptions of opposing parties in conflict; investigating decision making in specific situations such as the Cuban missile crisis, the Gulf War, or Indian nuclear testing. Such case studies are primarily meant to describe in a meaningful way a historically significant person or episode. However, a well conceptualized case study will not only have relevance to the particular individual or episode being characterized, it will also have relevance for general, theoretical ideas; it should not only provide understanding of the case that was studied but also help us to understand other cases. The literature of political psychology and other social science disciplines is dotted with many case studies: Some of them have considerable general import but many, by themselves, go no further than providing interesting descriptions of the object of study.

Human Development and the Political Economy

The first area of interest focused on the individual as someone whose actions have political consequences; the present area centers on the consequences for the individual (for his or her personal development, self-esteem, cognitive development, and so forth) of living in a society that has a political economy with given characteristics. Here, the focus is on how politico–economic structures and processes affect sociopsychological processes and structures rather than the reverse. Marxist theorists (Venable, 1945; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Giddens & Held, 1982; Giddens, 1990, 1991) have written extensively on these matters. So have such theorists as Weber (1930), Merton (1957), Berger and Luckmann (1966), Lane (1982, 1991, 2000), Baumeister (1986), Kristeva (1991), and Cash (1996). There is much of relevance to this area in a good deal of the research in psychological anthropology (Le Vine, 1974; Casson, 1981; Bock, 1988; Renshon, 2000); in the research on the effects of class, caste, race and sex on personal development (Deutsch, Katz, & Jensen, 1968; Unger, 1979; Scarr, 1981;

Flax, 1990; Sowell, 1994; Sainsbury, 1996); in the research on the psychological effects of unemployment, inflation, an expanding economy (Brenner, 1973; Hayes & Nutman, 1981; Whelan, Hannan, & Creighton, 1991; Gallie, Marsch, & Vogler, 1994); in the studies of the effects of democratic versus authoritarian groups (e.g., Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939; Altemeyer, 1996; Milburn & Conrad, 1996); and in the investigations of the social psychological consequences of different systems of distributive justice (e.g., Deutsch, 1985; Lane, 1982, 1991).

ILLUSTRATIVE STUDIES OF POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY

In this section, we summarize briefly some studies in the field of political psychology, which provide a more specific picture of work being done in this field.

How Voters Decide

Empirical works on how voters decide generally take one of two theoretical approaches. Either the belief is that people choose the party that will improve their overall economic benefits (Downs, 1957; Erikson, 1990; Page & Shapiro, 1992; Miller & Shanks, 1996), or it is argued that people prefer parties that take an ideological, economic, and political stand on certain issues, such as social welfare, foreign policy, or employment issues (Furnham, 1982; Heaven, 1990). The former belief is grounded in self-interest theory, which suggests that individuals choose alternatives that maximize expected utilities, whereas the latter is founded on the belief that people are socialized into a particular ideological system that molds their values and attitudes. Some of the earliest research in political psychology supported the ideological approach by pointing to certain predispositions of the voter, such as party identification, affecting the electoral choice (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1948; Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1960). However, these studies also found that income and socioeconomic status were associated with voting preference and thus concluded that self-interested motivation may play a role in forming political party preference.

Empirical studies of how voters decide provide a mixed pattern. Himmelweit, Humphreys, Jaeger, and Katz (1981), whose work in the field of political psychology greatly strengthened the understanding of human decision making by voters, conducted a longitudinal study of voting behavior in the United Kingdom over a period of six elections, extending from 1959 to 1974. They used a consumer model of voting that is an application of multiple-attribute utility theory (MAUT; Von Winterfeld & Fischer, 1975; Humphreys, 1977). MAUT assumes that a person chooses the alternative with the highest total subjective or expected utility among the possible

objects of choice. Based on their MAUT analysis, Himmelweit et al. predicted the vote of 80% of their sample correctly for the 1974 elections, whereas predictions based on the voter's prior voting history were correct only for 67% of the sample. These results are clearly consistent with the thesis that British voters mostly make their voting decisions so as to increase their perceived chances that the policy issues they favor will be implemented: that is, voting behavior is rational. They also reported that the voters they studied had clearly structured, interrelated attitudes or "ideologies" which persisted over time and which were closely related to their voting. This finding runs counter to Bell's claim (1962) about the demise of ideology in advanced Western societies and to Converse's (1964) early conclusion that, apart from a small elite, the mass public had no coherent set of political beliefs that could be construed as a political ideology.

The importance of ideology and/or symbolic dispositions has also been the concern of Sears and his colleagues in a number of studies. Sears and Funk (1991) argued, for instance, that in cases when proximal measures of self-interest are used and the effects of ideology or symbolic predispositions on party references are statistically controlled, self-interest rarely has a significant effect. In later research, using the Terman longitudinal study following a number of individuals for approximately 40 years, the same authors concluded that basic political predispositions tend to be stable over time and that significant political events are likely to polarize attitudes around predispositions (Sears & Funk, 1999; Sears, this volume). Sears and Funk (1991) did suggest, however, that there may be times when a large and unambiguous stake in a certain outcome can increase the role of self-interest in forming political party preference. Recent studies of voting behavior in New Zealand confirm this mixed pattern by suggesting that voters who have the most to gain or lose from the parties' proposed economic policies make their choices more on economic interests, whereas the remainder form party preference from ideological compatibility (Wilson, 1998; Allen & Ng, 2000).

The continuous emphasis on ideological and symbolic predispositions points to the fact that political issues have a life history. As Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee suggested as early as 1954, an issue goes through certain stages which have bearing on its relevance to the vote from initial rejection to hesitant acceptance to being taken as a given in the society. The salience and importance of an issue to voting or to an individual's ideology depends on where the issue is in its life history.

Foreign Policy Analyses

Since the mid-1950s, the psychological aspects of international relations have become an increasingly important area of research, and a number of

significant empirical studies have been published. Among the more influential are Janis' (1972, 1982, 1983) studies of group dynamics, or so-called *groupthink;* Larson's (1985) application of ideas taken from cognitive psychology to the origins of American Cold War policies; George's (1969, 1980) development of operational codes and other cognitive limits on rational decision making; Jervis' (1976, 1997) systematic analyses of signaling and perception in international politics; and Hermann's (1977, 1980) work on the psychological dimensions of leadership and foreign policy. Although most of these works belong to what Hudson (1995) named the first generation of foreign policy analysis, they still play a vital role and have been revisited in various empirical and theoretical works. A few of these are outlined next, followed by a discussion of their impact on more current research.

Janis' (1972, 1982) work on groupthink launched a new research tradition. Drawing on social psychology, Janis explored the unique dynamics of small group decision making in foreign policy settings. He did six case studies of historic fiascoes to identify the sources of defective decision making in governmental policy-making groups concerned with foreign policy decisions. The case studies included: (a) Neville Chamberlain's inner circle, (b) Admiral Kimmel's ingroup of naval commanders in the autumn of 1941; (c) President Truman's advisory group on the Korean War; (d) President Kennedy's advisory group concerning the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba; (e) President Johnson's "Tuesday Luncheon Group" regarding the war in Vietnam; and (f) President Nixon's inner circle and the way they handled the Watergate cover-up. One major source of defective decision making running through these diverse fiascoes was a concurrence-seeking tendency (referred to as *groupthink*). Janis showed how the incentive to maintain group consensus and personal acceptance by the group impacted negatively on the quality of the decisions.

Janis' work was extended in the empirical research of Tetlock (1979), Semmel (1982), and others using experimental data as well as case studies, and groupthink became an important psychological dimension of later works on foreign policy decision making (Hudson, 1995). Janis' concept of groupthink has been revisited, refined, and critiqued in a number of recent studies (Herek, Janis, & Huth, 1987; t'Hart, 1990; Purkitt, 1992). Purkitt (1992) showed, for instance, how the closure of options is a much more tentative and fluid process than was previously understood. In this he points to the Cuban Missile Crisis, where options that had previously been ruled out resurfaced time and again throughout the crisis (Hudson, 1995).

Larson's (1985) study of how Harriman, Truman, Byrnes, and Acheson contributed to the development of cold war policies also constituted a novel approach. She was among the first to explore in some detail the extent to which attitude change was likely to occur among political leaders.

Using historical documents such as policy memoranda, diaries, and letters, Larson tried to establish what information policy makers were exposed to, how they interpreted it, and its effects on their beliefs. By comparing different theoretical interpretations of individual cognitive processes, such as the Hovland approach, cognitive dissonance theory, and self-perception theory, Larson was able to detail the shifts in attitudes at the end of the Second World War. This use of different explanatory frameworks for understanding the same leader has been utilized in a number of recent studies (Jones & Hudson, 1996), and has allowed for the inspection of each framework's relative strengths and weaknesses (Hudson, 1995). Larson herself has continued to study how different cognitive frameworks offer several explanations to a common phenomenon, such as the persistence of negative images (1988), or how mistrust may cause partisans to exaggerate the extent to which their interests are in conflict (1997).

The study of perceptions and images, especially as they are related to war and deterrence, thus continues to be an important area of research. The works of Jervis (1976) deserve special mention in this respect. In his studies of superpower behavior, he unraveled the severe consequences of preconceived images and misperceptions in foreign policy situations by exploring the roots of such conceptions. In these and later works (Jervis, 1997), he also provided evidence of how leaders may learn from previous encounters and how sometimes such lessons are overextended. Jervis supplied not only warnings, however, but also advice and suggestions for improved policy making. The influence of Jervis and others (Jervis, Lebow, & Stein, 1985; Lebow & Stein, 1990; Hermann, 1993), resulted in a number of more recent studies of how perceptions become linked to the formation of images and to the development of various types of image theory. One such type has been concerned with national role conceptions which serve to bridge the conceptual gap between the general beliefs held in a society and the beliefs of foreign policy decision makers (Le Prestre, 1997). National role conceptions are viewed as social phenomena that can be shared among most of the individuals within a state (Mercer, 1995; Wendt, 1992, 1994), and even in cases when such role conceptions are not shared, the individuals who make foreign policy in the name of the states do so on the basis of their ideas about the role of their states in the world and which roles will be acceptable to their constituents (Putnam, 1988; Chafetz, Abramson, & Grillot, 1996). As a result, there has been a renewed interest in empirical studies of the relationship between culture and foreign policy (Wilkening, 1999; Hudson, 1997) as well as in the topic of comparative political socialization and political learning (Voss & Dorsey, 1992; Duckitt, 1992; Renshon & Duckitt, 2000). However, as noted by both Stein and Renshon (this volume), political psychology as a field is still in need of more empirical research on these issues.

Government and Self-Esteem

In a number of studies, Lane made significant contributions to the study of government and self-esteem (1982) and to how the market affects social well-being and human development (1991, 2000, this volume). In a very evocative theoretical paper (1982), Lane drew on his deep knowledge of political science, moral philosophy, and psychology to present an analysis of the effect of government on individual self-esteem. He rejected the view advanced by Rawls (1971) that political equity is central to self-esteem. Instead Lane (1982) asserted that "political life is simply not important enough to bear this burden" (p. 7). Public opinion surveys indicate that the national government or political organizations are rarely mentioned as sources of life satisfaction, and people spend relatively few minutes a week engaging in political activities. There also appears to be little correlation between rankings of satisfactions with one's own life and national life. Work, family life, leisure-time activities, and standard of living are, in Lane's view, much more likely to be the "dimensions" along which people measure themselves and their worth. Lane (1982) pointed out that:

> People who value themselves are more likely to value others; low self-esteem makes people deeply unhappy, and high self-esteem offers the condition for life happiness or life satisfaction; and high self-esteem serves as the psychological basis for learning, and hence, for growth. This generative power of self-esteem makes it of crucial importance to government. (p. 26)

All governments engage in the distribution and redistribution of the conditions that facilitate self-esteem. Government actions give significance, power, honor, opportunities, and wealth to some, but not to others. These actions also indicate that certain dimensions for self-evaluation (money, education, ethnicity, experience, sex) are better than others. Thus, there is no point in saying that esteem is not the business of government; the government is inevitably engaged in that business. Based on philosophical as well as psychological considerations, Lane (1982) set forth a set of rules for governmental promotion of self-esteem. In his elaboration of these rules, Lane suggested that since achievement is so central to self-esteem, "The first right is the right to work" (p. 27). He also stressed the importance of participation in self-direction at work: "The second basic right, therefore, is the right to participate in decisions affecting one's work." Compared with many other theorists, he placed much less emphasis on the importance of the political rights of participation in the political sphere than on the rights of participation in the sphere of work as an influence on self-esteem.

Lane developed this line of reasoning in his later works. Discussing the relationship between democracy and happiness, he proceeded from Veenhoven's (1993) recent analysis of 23 countries which argued that across

nations it is the level of income, not democracy, that has increased subjective well-being (SWB; Lane, this volume). However, it is not money itself that buys happiness. Instead social well-being has to do with the less easily defined issues of work satisfaction and good family relations (Lane, 2000). To promote social well-being and facilitate the pursuit of happiness, the most emancipating idea for a government is an understanding of the *economistic fallacy*, which says that beyond the poverty level in advanced economies, increased income is irrelevant. In concrete terms, Lane argued (1991, this volume), that governments can do more to promote SWB by relieving poverty, which has a demonstrable effect on SWB, than by promoting equality, which does not. Also, to promote work satisfaction and good family relations in advanced economies, governments can subsidize firms to give maternity and paternity leave for employees with new family responsibilities even at the cost of some loss of productivity.

Identity and Group Conflict

Empirical studies that fall under this heading can be found at both the national and the international level. Identity, as a more general term, has commonly been used to signify broad social categories based on such factors as ethnicity, culture, class, race, gender, or nationality, among others. The emphasis has been on identity formation in the form of collective identities, and the attempt has been to show (in various ways) how different categories of people come to share a sense of collective identity that can serve to explain collective action. Examples range from Marxist theory to political culture theories, to contemporary feminism, to Foucault's discourse theories, as well as to present-day rational choice theories. This approach, which is common in political science and macro-sociology, differs from the way identity is conceptualized in psychology and micro-sociology, where a more subjective version of some kind of unique self is put into focus (Lemert, 1994; Mennell, 1994). Here the construction of self is commonly viewed as a social process that most human beings pass through, and self-identity is predominantly seen as a universal human property. Central here are the writings of George Herbert Mead as developed through the tradition of symbolic interactionism and psychoanalytic theories of identification.

Psychological explanations of identity construction and identity conflicts have seen an upsurge in contemporary literature in combination with a renewed (albeit limited) focus on culture and learning. In a recent publication, Monroe et al. (1999) outlined a number of social psychological explanations to issues of prejudice, racism, genocide, and ethnic violence. Apart from social identity theory and self-categorization theory mentioned earlier, some of these include: psychodynamic approaches; works on symbolic racism; social dominance theory; and realist group conflict theory. Works

taking a psychodynamic approach (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Fromm, 1965; Cash, 1989) attribute discriminatory and racist behavior to the psychological structures of the unconscious. Ross's (1995) work on ethnic conflict, for instance, privileged object relations theory in favor of the older drive-based theories of psychodynamic functioning. Works on symbolic racism, in contrast, draws on attitudinal research to explain prejudice. Kinder and Sears (1981; see also Sears, 1988, 1993) argued, for example, that White racism against African-Americans is based on symbolic dispositions learned early in life. In comparison, social dominance theory views symbolic predispositions not as the cause but rather as the legitimizing myths that mediate more basic individual and group motivations into individual or institutional acts of discrimination (Sidanius, 1993). Another attempt to explain these phenomena can be found in realist (instrumentalist) group conflict theory, where identification with the in-group and prejudice against the out-group is based on group members' perceptions of group competition for resources (Sherif, 1966; Monroe et al., 1999). Empirical studies taking social identity theory and social categorization as their point of departure have, however, consistently shown that individuals will identify with the in-group, support group norms and, in a competitive social context, derogate outgroup members along stereotypical lines, even when there is no individual gain at stake (Gagnon & Bourhis, 1996; cf. Monroe et al., 1999).

Both social-psychological and psychoanalytical approaches offer means to understand the relationship between "self" and "other" as it affects intergroup conflict. At an international level, issues of self, other, and identity conflict have been studied by, among others, Volkan (1988, 1997) and Kristeva (1982, 1991). Volkan conducted a number of studies of group conflict in the post–Cold War world of former Yugoslavia, Cyprus, Latvia, Estonia, and elsewhere. As a psychological phenomenon, the essentialization of self and others within these processes has been explained by Volkan (1988), using object relations theory, as the externalization and projection of our unwanted elements onto enemies. He argued, for instance, that the closer the resemblance between self and other, the more likely the other is to become a suitable target for projection. However, by viewing the other as an object, he also implied that the enemy-other *already* exists and *is* different from the self, which comes close to an essentialist view of identity construction. Kristeva's treatment of these phenomena differs in that she sees the creation of self as an internal psychological process. The other, she says, can exist in individuals' minds even when they are not physically present, such as the Jews in Poland despite the fact that there are few Jews actually living there (Kristeva, 1982; Murer, 1999). This phenomenon is what Kristeva (1991) referred to as the "strangers within ourselves." The important point here is that the enemy-other is not only created by the self, but has previously been part of the self. It becomes the *abject* (Kristeva, 1982), which

differs from Volkan's object. What causes abjection is that which disturbs identity, system, or order, such as traumatic changes. Abject becomes a major ingredient of collective identity formation when the familiar "stranger" is suddenly recognized as a threat.

Within this process, hate and dehumanization construct a link between the present, the future, and a recreated past and may serve as a social chain for successive generations as a particular event or trauma is mythologized and intertwined with a group's sense of self (Murer, 1999). This is what Volkan (1997) referred to as a "Chosen Trauma." A chosen trauma is often used to interpret new traumas. Thus it relies on previously experienced (real or imagined) rage and humiliation associated with victimization in the case of the Chosen Trauma, which is validated in a new context. A recent comparative study (Kinnvall, 2001) of the Hindu–Muslim conflict in northern India and the Sikh–Hindu conflict in Punjab seem to confirm such tendencies. Although a subjective perception of discrimination existed among the Sikhs of Punjab in the 1980s, there was no clear Chosen Trauma to rely on for generating and sustaining xenophobic hostility toward the Hindus. Partition could not, as has been the case for Hindu–Muslim antagonism, work as a source of reference (a Chosen Trauma) for the Sikhs of Punjab experiencing the traumatic effects of modernization and party polarization.

What Kristeva and Volkan show in their different interpretations is how feelings of "ancient hatred" are constructed and maintained. These are not, as today's mass media often make them out to be, primordial feelings of hatred or entrenched animosities waiting to break out in a largely chaotic world. Instead, as Volkan's and Kristeva's texts show, they are structural and psychological make-ups that manifest themselves in Chosen Traumas. By emphasizing the other as a mental image, an intra-psychic abject-other, onto which the self projects its (or the group's) unwanted (constructed) traits, we may escape the tendency to describe conflicts in essentialized terms. The emphasis on traumatic events, shared anxiety, regression, stressful conditions, and/or disturbances also brings attention to the emotional aspects of human relatedness. As such, it points to the need for ontological and existential security, which is an important topic for current and future research in political psychology.

IN CONCLUSION

In the edited volume of *Political Psychology* (1986), Margaret Hermann suggested five tenets of political psychology that had helped to define the field in the years that had elapsed since *Handbook of Political Psychology* was published in 1973. By using the same tenets 15 years later, we hope to continue

Hermann's discussion of how the field of political psychology has evolved to date.

Focus Is on the Interaction of Political and Psychological Phenomena

The bidirectional interaction of politics and psychology is still at the heart of political psychology. Perceptions, beliefs, motives, and values influence political behavior at the same time as cultural and structural factors have an impact on who we are. However, as noted in a number of contributions to this volume, works focusing on how the political system influences individual behavior remain a clear minority, and those examining interactions are even fewer (Dana Ward). And Stanley Renshon argues that there has been a gradual, but steady erosion of the connection between the field's early foundations and its subsequent development where the undertheorization of culture has been particularly evident. In a similar vein, Janice Gross Stein emphasizes how political psychologists have made a major contribution to the analyses of political socialization and mass attitude formation and change, whereas they have paid less attention to how individuals and groups learn from their historical and personal experience. These chapters show that a more even theoretical and empirical balance needs to be reached if we are to more fully understand the bidirectional interaction of political and psychological phenomena. This is particularly important in a world where individuals experience increasing demands and pressures from a rapidly changing environment. Martha Crenshaw's (this volume) argument that the development of cross-cultural psychology will be critical in a world of globalization and interdependence should thus be taken seriously.

Research Is Responsive and Relevant to Societal Problems

As Hermann (1986) noted, a number of people become interested in political psychology because they believe they can make a difference in response to issues they feel strongly about, such as the environment, inequality, violence and war, dissatisfaction with the government, populism and political leadership, etc. The "political" side of political psychology is very much manifest in this current volume and is perhaps especially evident among those interested in conflict, identity, and power politics. David Winter argues, for instance, that political psychology is uniquely poised to understand how power, sex, and violence are related and maintains that it is important to explore ways for people and societies to live "beyond" power and difference. Fred Alford's discussion of moral psychology and the need for more empirical research within the field also underlines how attachment and empathy towards "others" can have real political conse-

quences. Kristen Monroe's call for a paradigm shift in which political action is understood in intersubjective terms, as a product of how we see ourselves in relation to others, is yet another reflection of how conflict and identity can be explained, understood, and (in the case of conflict) hopefully prevented.

In this, it is important to reemphasize the claim by Crenshaw, Bar-Tal, and Stein that political psychology is not only concerned with explaining group conflict and violence but also with conflict resolution and concrete policy prescriptions. An example of actual policy description is Robert Lane's suggestion that governments may benefit from policy changes which increase individuals' subjective well-being, such as expanded parental benefits. Thus it is clear that a number of researchers within this field remain political in their responses to current social and political problems and in relation to concrete policy prescriptions and solutions.

Context Can Make a Difference

This tenet is concerned with how a researcher defines time, situation, political system, and culture as such definitions have implications for both what he or she perceives is an important societal problem and how psychological and political phenomena are viewed as interacting (Hermann, 1986). The case studies previously described show how some empirical work is very context-specific where a specific problem is located at a given point in time, such as the analysis by Himmelweit et al. of the 1974 British election, whereas others work from a more general empirical perspective, such as Jervis' studies of signaling and images or Volkan's discussion of Chosen Traumas. That both are relevant for the field of political psychology as such becomes clear when reading Daniel Bar-Tal's (this volume) discussion of the particular versus the universal. The discovery of universal processes is important for explaining and predicting political behavior, whereas content-bound research aims to describe the political behavior of specific individuals or groups functioning in a specific time and place (Bar-Tal).

Emphasis Is on Process as Well as Outcome

Political psychologists continue to be interested in how political behavior evolves (process) as well as in the actual behavior itself (product). The extent to which decisions are affected by groupthink, how stereotypes and images of the other are created, the way voters decide, the fashion in which policy decisions affect social well-being, and the means by which we can better understand the construction of identity and group conflict, are all examples of how a particular outcome is related to process. David Sears' chapter (this volume) on long-term psychological consequences of political

events provides a convincing example of how different processes may produce novel and more complex outcomes than are commonly assumed in much public opinion research. Comparative works of how political and psychological processes interrelate in various ways dependent on contexts are essential both for gaining particular understandings about a certain outcome and for increasing the possibility of generalizing across contexts. As argued by Hermann (1986), "Once delineated in one political setting, descriptions of processes offer the possibility of generalization to other political contexts with somewhat similar characteristics" (p. 3).

There Is a Tolerance of Multiple Methods for Gathering Data

As noted earlier, there is still little dogmatism in preferred method in political psychology. Instead, research design and methodology demonstrate a variety of established procedures taking their respective cues from a number of disciplines. The fact that political psychology at its outset was interdisciplinary in character has, of course, influenced the openness and tolerance for various methods. However, as noted in a number of chapters of this current volume, there has been a propensity to neglect previously important fields in political psychology, such as anthropology, microsociology, and cultural studies. To provide a more dynamic and complex picture of political action, it is important that this omission is rectified, that we balance the scales between the individual and society.

As this brief outline shows, Hermann's five tenets still remain important for understanding how the field of political psychology has developed and in which direction it may be heading. Here it is yet to be explored how the bidirectional study of politics and psychology can become more even. As argued earlier, human action can only be understood with reference to the meanings that the action has for the actors and for its audience as it is rooted in intersubjective contexts of communication and in intersubjective practices and forms of life that have distinctive historical origins. The call for a paradigm shift, for cross-cultural research, for multidisciplinary work and method, and for studies that take emotions and human relatedness seriously, can hopefully provide more insightful and satisfactory accounts of human action, thought, and understanding and may even lay the foundation for new political theory.

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2

Political Psychology as a Perspective in the Study of Politics

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In the past two decades, political psychology has become of increasing interest to scholars engaged in the study of politics. As a result, we now have an International Society of Political Psychology, a section in the American Political Science Association devoted to political psychology, and numerous smaller formal and informal organizations both within the United States and abroad that bring scholars together to talk about how political and psychological phenomena interrelate. The journal *Political Psychology* is now recognized as an important outlet for research and leading American and European journals in political science across the spectrum of specializations contain a growing number of articles using a political psychological perspective. Indeed, there are currently numerous articles in mainstream psychology journals that focus on political issues. And, each year new political psychology courses are added at the undergraduate and graduate levels in colleges and universities around the United States and elsewhere in the world.

However, because political psychology draws researchers and practitioners from a variety of disciplines and covers topics ranging, for example, from voting behavior to ethnic conflict to norm creation to leaders' decisions to use force, it has been difficult to arrive at a consensus about the nature of the field and how to train its future professionals. Those in leadership positions have preferred to "let 100 flowers bloom" rather than to seek closure too quickly, although recent meetings of both international

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Psychology

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