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Post-Conflict Nation Building: A Case Study of Iraq

DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any other degree.

Signed.....

Date..... 10 September 2012

STATEMENT 1

This work is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Where correction services have been used, the extent and nature of the correction is clearly marked in a footnote(s). Other sources are acknowledged (e.g. by footnotes giving explicit references). A bibliography is appended.

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The word length of this dissertation is 13,714.

This dissertation is dedicated to my Welsh grandfather,
Royal Navy Lieutenant Commander Richard Kendrick Thomas,
for bringing this American gal back to her roots.

Acknowledgments are in order for the many people who have supported me through my academic journey. Firstly, to my parents who have provided me with an incredible support system, and encouraged me to pursue this degree. The countless hours of counsel and support throughout my academic career are deeply appreciated.

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Abstract

The disconnect between the rhetoric used by President Bush and his administration to describe the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and the actual outcome and events of the war is puzzling. More than just projecting misguided or misleading information about the presence of weapons of mass destruction and the connections between Saddam Hussein and al-Qu'ida, the invasion was largely framed in morally-infused language. Though the administration often described their endeavour in humanitarian terms, by promising Iraq democracy and freedom from tyranny, the planning and execution of the post-conflict nation building efforts suggest that these concerns were not as important as claimed. This case study will aid in answering the question, "Do states engage in strategic self-deception, and if so, why?" Mainstream International Relations theories typically approach state motivation from a physical security perspective. However, a growing body of literature argues that ontological security, or security of the self, also motivates state actions. This dissertation will begin by making the case for ontological security considerations within the international relations discipline, adapting an individual-level social psychology concept to the state-level. Next, a discursive analysis of pre-invasion presidential addresses and a contextualization of the trauma of the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001 will serve to justify an ontological security explanation for why a state would engage in strategic self-deception. Finally, the importance of identity politics in international relations as well as its influence in the agent-structure debate will be addressed.

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Chapter I: Introduction

“The advance of freedom is the calling of our time; it is the calling of our country. From the Fourteen Points to the Four Freedoms, to the Speech at Westminster, America has put our power at the service of principle. We believe that liberty is the design of nature; we believe that liberty is the direction of history. We believe that human fulfilment and excellence come in the responsible exercise of liberty. *And we believe that freedom — the freedom we prize — is not for us alone, it is the right and the capacity of all mankind*”.

- President George W. Bush, during an Address to the National Endowment for Democracy, 6 November 2003.¹

The post-conflict nation building efforts by the Bush Administration following the 2003 invasion of Iraq provides an interesting puzzle for international relations scholars. The emphasis on the post-conflict nation building efforts projected by President Bush and his advisors did not align with the strategic planning and allocation of resources provided by his administration to the people of Iraq. For an administration so articulate on the merits of its ventures *on behalf of* the Iraqi people, so confident in their ability to bring freedom and democracy to all corners of the globe, the actual implementation of humanitarian relief and democratization efforts appear to have been conducted almost as an after-thought.² Indeed, the overwhelmingly neoconservative administration used morally-infused language not only as justification for its invasion, but also to ease persistent national anxiety following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 (henceforth, 9/11).

Post-conflict nation building is “the deliberate attempt to establish a centralised organisation in a territory, able to predominate in terms of political

¹ Presidential Rhetoric, (2003) *Freedom in Iraq and Middle East: Address at the 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy*. Available from: <http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/speeches/11.06.03.html> [Accessed 13 August 2012].

² Diamond, L. ‘Forward’. In *Hope Is Not A Plan*, edited by Thomas Mowle, (London, Praeger Security International, 2007), p. iv.

authority, coercive ability and control of financial capital”.³ The term “nation building”, rather than “state-building”, is utilized because it is the term most often applied in the U.S. and is in keeping with the majority of the sources referenced within the case study. After the invasion of Iraq and the toppling of the authoritarian regime of Saddam Hussein, “the U.S. sought not simply to build a state, but to build a particular kind of state in a particular way”.⁴ The U.S. was consistent in the rhetoric it used to justify the occupation, citing democracy promotion and regional stability. The Bush Administration continually declared “their commitment to the creation of a strong sovereign and democratic Iraqi state” though never pursuing a consistent and effective state building policy.⁵ The context, by which this invasion was undertaken, by neoconservative policy makers during the early post-9/11, is largely significant and contributes to the reason why such morally infused language was used. However, historically, American presidents from across the political spectrum, from liberal Democrat Jimmy Carter to conservative Republican Ronald Reagan, have used similar rhetoric in projecting the values and ambitions of the America⁶. Even Benjamin Franklin, one of America’s “Founding Fathers”, used moral language when he asserted, “We fight not just for ourselves but for all mankind”⁷.

This dissertation argues that the disconnect between the rhetoric and actions taken by the Bush Administration is an example of a larger phenomenon in international relations. Principally, the need for ontological security, not merely physical security, prompted state leaders to use language strategically to build a self-

³ Herring and Rangwala. *Iraq in Fragments* (London, C. Hurst & Co., 2006), p. 1.

⁴ Herring and Rangwala, *Fragments*, p. 2.

⁵ Herring and Rangwala, *Fragments*, p. 2.

⁶ Beran, M.K. ‘Flawed Liberator’. *The National Review* (New York), 14 May 2007. Available at: <http://www.nationalreview.com/nrd/?q=MjAwNzA1MTQ=> (Accessed 4 September 2012).

⁷ Kagan, R. ‘A tougher War for the US is One of Legitimacy’. *New York Times*, 24 January, 2004.

affirming narrative of a consistent national identity. As will be discussed in greater detail below, ontological security in international relations takes into account “self-identity needs” as part of state behaviour.⁸ The growing body of ontological security research within constructivist approaches to international relations (IR) suggests that only approaching IR from a physical security perspective is problematic⁹ for “ontological security is security not of the body but of the self, the subjective sense of who one is, *which enables and motivates action and choice*”¹⁰.

Constructivism is considered an alternative approach to international relations theory largely because it is diametrically opposed to the permeating structural approaches to the discipline. Moreover, constructivism is the most recently developed theory or paradigm, and as such, there is still many questions relating to its methodology and its contribution to the discipline.¹¹ Opposed to Realism, Liberalism, and Marxism, Constructivism, a concept first applied to IR in the 1980’s, deals extensively with metaphysics, and is united by the two key concepts: “the social construction of knowledge” and “the construction of social reality”.¹² Essentially, constructivists understand core aspects of IR as constructed through social interaction. Hence the structure of the international system is not fixed, as argued particularly strongly by Neo-Realists, and is instead a product of how states interact. Though the IR theory has divisions (modernist, modernist linguistic and

⁸ Giddens, A. *Modernity and Self-Identity*. (Stanford, California University Press, 1991).

⁹ See e.g. Stelle, B. *Ontological Security in International Relations* (New York: Routledge, 2008); Huysmans, J. ‘Security! What Do You Mean? From Concepts to Thick Signifier’, *European Journal of International Relations*, 4(2) (1998) pp. 226-255.; Mitzen, J. ‘Ontological Security in World Politics’, *European Journal of International Relations*, 12(6) (2006), pp. 341-70; Kinnvall, C. ‘Globalization and Religious Nationalism: Self, Identity, and the Search for Ontological Security’, *Political Psychology*, 25(5), (2004) p. 741-767.

¹⁰ Mitzen, J. ‘Ontological security in World Politics’, *European Journal of International Relations*, 12 (2006b) p. 344.

¹¹ Schmidt, B.C. ‘On the History and Historiography of International Relations’, in *Handbook of International Relations*, edited by Walter Carlsneaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons, (London, SAGE Productions, 2002), p. 3.

¹² Adler, E. ‘Constructivism and International Relations’ in *Handbook of International Relations*, edited by Walter Carlsneaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons, p. 95-118.

critical), nearly all constructivists use ontology and epistemology to approach questions of identity and norms in the international system.¹³

Ontological security literature falls within this larger field, supporting the argument that the world is constructed through social interaction and that actions are not prescribed by a static international system structure. Alexander Wendt, perhaps the most recognizable constructivist, maintains that “constitutive theories are explanatory and not merely descriptive” by relying on other factors, not just structure, to understand behaviour.¹⁴ In this vein, an ontological security approach to understanding state actions, particularly while using empirical evidence, aims to do more than describe. Instead, state actions can be interpreted and even anticipated when a state is identified as actively seeking ontological security. Certain actions, especially routines and narration, become increasingly important coping methods for individuals *and states* with ontological insecurity. For states, these routines and narrations take place on the global stage and impact the international community.

The case study of the post-conflict nation building of Iraq is an important event in international politics and lends itself well to understanding ontological security. Since ontological insecurity is stimulated by trauma, the case study will begin from the argument that the internal processing of the 11 September 2001 terrorist bombings, led to the collective need of average Americans for a strong metanarrative in order to regain their sense of identity and situational understanding of the role the U.S. plays in the world. The actions taken following the terrorist attacks are still incredibly relevant in international politics. Though President Bush declared an “end to major combat missions” in Iraq on 1 May 2003,¹⁵ not until 18

¹³ Adler, ‘Constructivism’, p. 100.

¹⁴ Adler, ‘Constructivism’, p. 105.

¹⁵ Bensahel, N. ‘Mission Not Accomplished: What went wrong with Iraqi reconstruction’, *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 29(3) (2006) p. 456.

December 2011 did U.S. troops formally leave Iraq, ending an eight-year occupation¹⁶. Arguably, one could misjudge the length of the occupation as some how demonstrating a deep commitment the U.S. had to Iraq. Although the Americans have invested heavily in the war effort, both with lost lives and though incurring huge debt, the need to continue fighting post-war insurgency for so many years can be greatly attributed to the actions taken, or left untaken, following President Bush's "Mission Accomplished" speech in 2003. The administration was overly optimistic and failed to plan for worst-case scenarios, demonstrating a lack of genuine commitment to the process of nation building.¹⁷

The failure to adequately prepare for the post conflict nation building process, known as Phase IV operations for the military,¹⁸ suggests that bringing democracy and liberty to Iraq may not have been as important as the utility of the rhetoric projected by the Bush Administration leading up to the conflict. As a timely event, which could influence future occupations and democracy promotion efforts, examining motivational factors is crucial.

Additionally, ontological security, and the further anthropomorphising of the state in some IR discourse, provides interesting literature, which challenges mainstream IR theories. Moving beyond pure power politics can provide insight and grant a more accurate picture of world events. It is important to note that ontological security theories do not replace traditional security approaches, rather ontological security should be seen as a complimenting approach. A metaphysical approach to understanding world events seeks to find a more holistic or complete understanding of politics, not one that rejects traditional motives.

¹⁶ Logan, J. 'Last U.S. troops leave Iraq, ending war'. *Reuters* (online), 18 December 2011. Available at <http://www.reuter.com/article/idUSTRE7BH0330111218?irpc=932> (Accessed 7 September 2012).

¹⁷ Bensahel, 'Mission not accomplished', p. 457.

¹⁸ This will be fully explained within the case study, but for a great description of Phase IV failures, see: Ricks, T. *Fiasco* (London, Penguin, 2006), p. 109-111.

The selection of the post-conflict nation building of Iraq is designed to demonstrate an example of state-level ontological security concerns, and as such, seeks to answer a specific, endemic question. Do states engage in strategic self-deception, and if so, why? The argument advanced here is that ontological security, principally the need for a biographical narrative, motivates state leadership to use rhetoric, which may not align with their actions. A false narrative and costly routinized actions may be used purposefully by states in order to maintain or reconstruct a sense of “self” and continuity within its internalized and projected identity. A false narrative may still be a powerful narrative, and dangerous routines may still avoid crippling anxiety, even at high cost – these are the lessons of ontological security.¹⁹

Ontological security literature seeks to principally understand the “motivations behind a decision-making situation”.²⁰ To establish this, chapter two will begin with an introduction to the ontological security literature originating at the individual-level conception. Jennifer Mitzen and Brent Steele will be used to frame the justification and utility of increasing the level of analysis to the state. Both Mitzen and Steele have produced some of the most extensive and widely cited literature on trending ontological security topics in international relations, and as such, are truly the authority on this topic.

Though prior literature of ontological security is initially relied on heavily, this dissertation takes the concept of self-narrative in a new direction through the case study in chapter three, providing an original contribution to the constructivist literature through a discourse analysis of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Ontological security has been used to explain the power of reflexive discourse, shame and the

¹⁹ Mitzen, ‘Ontological Security’, p. 347.

²⁰ Steele, B. *Ontological Security in International Relations* (New York, Routledge, 2008).

security dilemma. Here an ontological security interpretation of state behaviour is employed to evaluate the extent to which a deceptive biographical narrative can be strategically employed by a state to strengthen collective identity.

Finally, chapter four is a reassessment of ontological security discourse. It will draw upon the conclusions found in the case study, namely that reaffirming biographical narratives are important for overcoming anxiety from traumatic events. It also reasserts that the morally-infused language delivered in various 2003 pre-invasion speeches was not delivered in order to gain validation or approval from the international community. Instead, the case is made that the Bush Administration utilized moral rhetoric in order to pursue ontological security. The importance of identity politics in IR as well as its influence in the agent-structure debate will be addressed.

Chapter II: State Ontology and (in)Security

Ontological security literature by sociologist Anthony Giddens has found a “fine pedigree in IR Theory”.²¹ Often, security is thought of in a single sense, that of physical security. Some constructivist scholars have argued that there is another form of fundamental security, ontological security, which drives state actions. Ontology is “the branch of metaphysics dealing with the nature of being”.²² By extension, ontological security is the “security of one’s identity” which “has implications for international politics”.²³ Ontological security, borrowed from social psychology, is employed here to answer the questions, “Do states engage in strategic self-deception, and if so, why?” As argued below, ontological security may provide an interesting and provocative answer.

In order to understand the ontological security concerns of states, first we must understand the impact it has on individuals and then scale that understanding up to the corporate entity, where appropriate. After all, states do not have the same identity needs as individuals. However, many of the same preoccupations and concerns resonate at the state level.²⁴

Ontological Security of the Individual

Ontological security, also known as “security-as-being” and “identity security,” is first and foremost an individual-level concept within the disciplines of

²¹ Zarakol, A. ‘Ontological (In)Security and State Denial of Historical Crimes: Turkey and Japan’, *International Relations*, 24(3) (2010) p. 3.

²² Oxford Online Dictionary, *Ontology*. Available from: http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/american_english/ontology?region=us&q=ontology [Accessed 18 August 2012].

²³ Mitzen, ‘Anchoring Europe’, p. 344.

²⁴ Mitzen, ‘Anchoring Europe’.

psychology and sociology.²⁵ Psychologist R. D. Laing, the original architect of the term, asserted that achieving ontological security is the means to avoiding paralyzing fear as a result of living in a chaotic world.²⁶ For Laing, an ontologically secure individual has a “sense of his presence in the world as a real, alive, whole, and, in a temporal sense, a continuous person”.²⁷ Without ontological security, “the ordinary circumstances of everyday life constitute a continual and deadly threat”.²⁸

The discipline of sociology, particularly associated with Anthony Giddens, approaches ontological security in a slightly different way. For Giddens, ontological security is defined by “the confidence that most human beings have in the continuity of their self-identity and in the constancy of the surrounding social and material environments of action”.²⁹ Giddens’ approach rests on the psychological foundations presented by Laing, but introduced to the concept a relational aspect³⁰ based upon a “mutuality of experience”.³¹ Ontological security writing within IR largely begins from the position held by Giddens, that individual ontological security does not exist in a state of isolation, and rather is shaped and reinforced by the concept of “basic trust”. As such, the ontological security concept within this dissertation draws principally from this latter approach.

Drawing upon Giddens work, Jennifer Mitzen, a widely cited source in her own right, describes ontological security as “the subjective sense of who one is”.³² Ontological security rests on the idea that,

²⁵ Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 2.

²⁶ Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 2.

²⁷ Laing, R.D. *Self and Others* (London, Tavistock, 1969), p. 40.

²⁸ Laing, *Self and Others*, p. 40.

²⁹ Giddens, A. *The Consequences of Modernity* (Palo Alto, CA, Stanford University Press, 1990), p. 95.

³⁰ Zarakol, ‘Ontological (In)Security’, p. 6.

³¹ Giddens, *Consequences*, p. 95.

³² Mitzen, ‘Ontological Security’, 344.

Actors value their sense of agency, the ability to make choices and pursue favourable outcomes. That ability rests on knowing one's own preferences and interests. *In other words it rests on an identity, which means that actors need stable identities to be 'actors' or 'agents' at all.*³³

Ultimately, one's sense of self is derived from uncertainty.³⁴ The uncertainty recognized in ontological security studies is not the same type of uncertainty in rational choice theory; for the latter, uncertainty entails risks, which can be weighed in order to make an appropriate decision³⁵. Uncertainty in ontological security cannot be mitigated in this way because it begins from the proposition that "there are some outcomes, or relations between strategies and outcomes, that decision makers cannot know or even think they know".³⁶ Ontological security rests then on an underlying sense of chaos in the world, which no individual can escape. Seeking ontological security is an incredibly important part of every individual's life because without it, actors are left with a "deep, incapacitating fear of not being able to organize the threat environment, and thus not being able to get by in the world".³⁷

Most IR scholarship takes a state's capacity for rational action for granted, assuming that states in similar situations would necessarily make similar decisions. However, when an individual is in a state of ontological insecurity, focusing on immediate concerns to provide identarian or psychological stability, he or she "cannot relate ends systematically to means in the present, much less plan ahead".³⁸ A paralyzing anxiety will take hold during times of ontological insecurity. In order to

³³ Mitzen, J. 'Anchoring Europe's civilizing identity: habits, capabilities and ontological security', *European Journal of International Relations*, 12(6) (2006a) p. 271.

³⁴ Mitzen, 'Anchoring Europe', p. 272.

³⁵ Mitzen, 'Anchoring Europe', p. 272.

³⁶ Mitzen, 'Anchoring Europe', p. 272.

³⁷ Mitzen, 'Anchoring Europe', p. 273.

³⁸ Mitzen, 'Ontological Security', p. 345.

feel confident in their agency, or their ability to take meaningful and effective action in daily situations, individuals seek reproducible environmental scenarios.

Routinization is the means by which environmental uncertainty can be minimized³⁹. Routines here refer to habitual responses, sometimes relatively automatic, to the events and situations that confront us. Giddens refers to this habitual response as a sort of “cocoon” by which the cognitive world is reconstructed, insulating the individual from total chaos⁴⁰. By having preprogrammed responses to situations we confront daily, the list of “threats” we consciously face can be substantially narrowed. For instance, if an individual travels to work each day on the subway, leaving from the same platform at the same time, as long as normal conditions persist, determining transportation is one uncertainty removed from the grips of chaos that day. The morning commute is stabilized, and other, less basic concerns, can then be processed. Thus, routines aid in our ability to make sense of chaos by allowing us to make less effort in determining action by removing a possible question “out of [our] primary, discursive consciousness and moved into our practical consciousness”.⁴¹

Ultimately, for Giddens, our “basic trust system” is our routines⁴². Giddens describes the basic trust systems as fundamentally dependent on a deep trust in the “continuity of others and the object world”.⁴³ The basic trust systems allows for individuals to grow attached to their routines and find comfort in their application. Mitzen argues that this comfort is necessary because “individuals like to feel that

³⁹ Giddens, *Modernity*.

⁴⁰ Giddens, *Modernity*, p. 39.

⁴¹ Mitzen, ‘Anchoring Especially’, p. 273.

⁴² Giddens, *Modernity*, p. 38.

⁴³ Giddens, *Modernity*, p. 242.

they have agency, and become attached to practices that make them feel agentic... letting go of routines would amount to sacrificing our sense of agency”.⁴⁴

It should not be assumed, however, that all routines are necessarily safe. In fact, “ontological security is perfectly compatible with physical insecurity”⁴⁵. Consider the example given by Mitzen:

Think of the battered wife who resists efforts by social workers to make her leave her husband. One possible explanation for her reluctance is that powerful ontological forces induce her to stay. The identity of ‘wife’ means that at least she knows who she is and how to be herself through the couple’s routines. To break from those would cause great anxiety.⁴⁶

In this example, a battered wife’s ontological security needs override her concern for physical security. She draws stability from her identity, though the identity she has routinized may not take into account the full impact of her position. Interpersonal relationships can both harm and reinforce an individual’s sense of identity. While interaction with others plays an important role in development of the self, other people’s actions cannot be controlled, and may further cause significant amounts of anxiety.

Extending the battered wife example of Mitzen, if the abusive husband were to no longer be in the wife’s life, say if he were killed in a car accident, her sense of security may be reversed. Though her physical security may increase from being removed, albeit unintentionally, from the abusive environment, she may lose her sense of who she is. The insurmountable anxiety associated with deep ontological insecurity may be just as crippling to her sense of agency as the physical abuse she encountered. This is an example of what Giddens refers to as an unhealthy basic trust

⁴⁴ Mitzen, ‘Anchoring Europe’, p. 274

⁴⁵ Mitzen, ‘Ontological Security’, p. 347.

⁴⁶ Mitzen, ‘Ontological Security’, p. 347.

system, since physical security is compromised for ontological security, that individual is engaging in a “blind commitment to established routines”.⁴⁷

Ontological insecurity, resulting in paralyzing anxiety, is a rare event, typically brought on by an overwhelming trauma⁴⁸. An individual who has suffered a great injustice or survived when another perished, may start to ask themselves difficult questions: “Why did this happen to me?”, “How am I alive when my partner is not?”, “How can I return to my normal life?”. Routinized basic trust systems serve as a means to regaining stability in one’s life, and further demonstrate how important a continuous sense of self is for an individual’s ability to function in their environment.

Ontological Security of States

Many of the concerns in individual-level ontological security literature are applicable to the nation-state level. As Zarakol contends, “ontological security is about having a consistent sense of ‘self’, and that means that states perform actions in order to underwrite their notions of ‘who they are’”.⁴⁹ Regarding the justification of further personifying state actions and motivation in international relations theories, Wendt remarked, that at least on some level, “... In a field in which almost everything is contested, this seems to be one thing on which almost all of us agrees”.⁵⁰ When describing even physical security, he contends, the ability to be harmed is essentially “state as person” conception. How could a state’s physical security be harmed or endangered? A population may be susceptible to danger, but

⁴⁷ Giddens, *Modernity*, p. 40.

⁴⁸ Mitzen, ‘Ontological Security’, p. 347.

⁴⁹ Zarakol, ‘Ontological (In)Security’, p.3.

⁵⁰ Wendt, A. “The State as Person in International Theory,” *Review of International Studies*, 30(2) (2004) p. 289, cited in Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 15.

then again, at what level would constitute a “death” to a state? Ten percent of its population? One hundred percent?

Since even the most basic idea of international relations, anarchy and state security, involve a certain amount of “person as state” extensions, suspending one’s suspicion of ontological security justifications until the case study, would serve the reader well. Within the larger body of IR constructivism, ontological security also follows many of the same assumptions, “that states are social actors, that interests and identities are mutually constitutive, that international structures are deeply embedded because they are inter-subjectively shared”.⁵¹ Other theoretical approaches, especially feminist security studies and The English School, take some personification of states into account with their respective interpretations of IR. What is utilized here with ontological security is simply an extension of this notion.

Moving from the individual level to state level analysis, there are three reasons why ontological security is relevant for international relations.⁵² Firstly, as mentioned above, IR scholars already use individual level security concerns to articulate the concerns of states. Physical security, upon closer inspection, “assumes that states have something like ‘bodies’ that can die”.⁵³ Anthropomorphic qualities are routinely attributed to state actions, and as such, ontological security should not be considered a stretch. As Mitzen contends, just because physical security concerns essentially go unquestioned, that does not mean that ontological security should proceed unquestioned.⁵⁴

A second reason ontological security concerns are applicable for states is that the ontological security of individuals (citizens) is dependent on the stable

⁵¹ Schmidt, ‘On the History’, p. 12.

⁵² Mitzen, ‘Ontological Security’, p. 351.

⁵³ Mitzen, ‘Ontological Security’, p. 351.

⁵⁴ Mitzen, ‘Ontological Security’, p. 351.

environments states can produce. In this sense, “states are motivated to preserve the national group identity and not simply the national ‘body’”.⁵⁵ State institutions would want to have a consistent self-image in order to preserve a platform for ontologically secure intra-societal relationships. States can greatly affect the ability for members to see themselves a part of a larger community, which in turn brings stability.

Finally, if states are seen as consisting of more than a mere aggregates of individual concerns, then a state can seek ontological security through maintaining its own state-to-state relationships. In this way, “micro-foundational assumptions help us explain certain macro-level patterns, organizing anomalies in current theory into an overarching analytical framework”.⁵⁶ Take for instance how across multiple political identifications and personalities, U.S. Presidents from Kennedy to Reagan had a very similar sense of distrust and anxiety towards the Soviet Union. Though this could be seen as evidence of the international system shaping state action, Richard Hermann speculated that the similarity of the different reactions implies a casual link between ideations and policy, not just a correlation⁵⁷. Thus, employing ontological security approaches in order to understand consistent decision-making outcomes by *different* actors from *different* ideologies within a *single* state may be particularly helpful in explaining such occurrences.

Taken collectively, these reasons suggest that taking into account ontological security concerns is just as plausible as considering physical security needs of states within the IR discipline. Additionally, the dynamics of the state are important when considering the viability of ontological security needs which may or may not

⁵⁵ Mitzen, ‘Ontological Security’, p. 351.

⁵⁶ Mitzen, ‘Ontological Security’, p. 351.

⁵⁷ Hermann, R.K. *Perceptions and Behavior in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburg Press, 1985), p. 842-844.

permeate through a society. Epistemic communities, those communities in which “the ideas advocated... are persuasive for both community members and for policy makers,” necessitate “shared casual beliefs, shared notions of validity,” and “a set of common practices associated with a set of problems”.⁵⁸ In order to obtain an effective sense ontological security, a state must have an open dialogue with its people as be seen as a credible spokesperson for their cause.

How would ontological security concerns manifest themselves at the state level? Steele’s asserts that “states, like humans, are driven by self-identity needs, and that in order to secure their sense of ‘who they are’ states perform actions which satisfy their ontological security – ‘a sense of continuity and order in events’ – through time”.⁵⁹ Those actions are routinized, just as they are for individuals.

Agent-Structure Debate

Throughout the discussion of ontological security, a split within the discipline is nearly always lurking. This is the same distinction introduced in the difference between sociological and psychological approaches to ontological security. The agent-structure problem in ontological security is captured by the following question: “Are interactions and the international environment the main source of ontological anxiety for a state, or are the insecure interactions merely a consequence of the state’s own uncertainty about its own identity?”⁶⁰ Mitzen, Steele, and Kinnvall have different answers to this question, and are emblematic of the arguments within the larger IR literature, including the agent-structure division

⁵⁸ Yee, A.S. ‘The Casual Effect of Ideas on Policies’, *International Organization*, 50(1) (1996) p. 87.

⁵⁹ Steele, B. ‘Making Words Matter: The Asian Tsunami, Darfur, and “Reflexive Discourse” in International Politics’, *International Studies Quarterly*, 51 (2007) p. 903.

⁶⁰ Zarakol, ‘Ontological Security’, p. 6.

within constructivism as a whole. Hedrik Spruyt describes the issue in the following way:

Agent-structure problems permeate all levels of politics. It depends on what one takes to be the agent and what the structure. The individual can be embedded in the structure of a bureaucratic organization. That organization, taken as an agent with a particular corporate identity, is in turn embedded in a larger political structure, and so on.⁶¹

The question for IR is then if explanations should revolve around actors, structure or both. As noted in the beginning of this chapter, ontological security literature within IR tends to follow from Giddens' position that the environment and other actors influence self-identity construction. However, the extent to which identity is inherent or externally derived is strongly debated. This debate largely began with Wendt's criticism of Kenneth Waltz's structural theory in 1987⁶². Wendt charged Waltz with theorizing an international structure in which agency was constrained. To Wendt, Waltz was "not at all the structuralist he claimed, but, to the contrary, an ontological individualist".⁶³ Alternatively, Wendt criticized Immanuel Wallerstein's "world systems" for producing an "all structure and no agency" scenario so that states had no "productive powers".⁶⁴

The relevancy of this debate is the way in which Wendt sought a middle ground though conceptualizing a reinforcing relationship between agency and structure was possible. The solution for the problem he recognized for IR was to use Giddens social structuration theory paired with the critical realist theory of

⁶¹ Spruyt, H. *The Sovereign State and Its competitors* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 14.

⁶² Adler, 'Constructivism', p. 104.

⁶³ Gould, H. 'What Is at Stake in the Agent-Structure Debate?', in *International Relations in a Constructed World*, edited by Vendulka Kubalkova, Nicholas Onuf and Paul Kowert (New York, AE Sharpe, 1998), p. 84, cited Adler, 'Constructivism', p. 105.

⁶⁴ Adler, 'Constructivism', p. 105.

Bhaskar.⁶⁵ Wendt supported this approach in the following way: “as social structures are ontologically dependent upon and therefore constituted by the practices and self-understandings of agents, the casual powers and interests of those agents, in their own turn, are constituted and therefore explained by structures”.⁶⁶

Throughout the 1990’s, Wendt, and Martin Hollis and Steve Smith continually debated the agent-structure question.⁶⁷ This debate, over the epistemology of the agent-structure relationship, is still not settled. While Adler does “doubt” that the debate will ever be settled, he finds the discussions are incredibly important for constructivism:

Because of the debate, however, we now have a much better understanding of the metaphysical and social-theory foundations of the relationship between agents and structure. While constructivists have disagreed markedly about agent-structure, there is much more in common in their work than they are aware of or care to acknowledge. The agent-structure debate can thus profit from some ‘consolidation’, but which I mean concentrating on the consensus already achieved and that still can be achieved, and then turning our efforts to translate the agent-structure metaphysical and social theory positions into theoretical and empirical propositions.

Perhaps in response to the apparent void in consolidation articulated by Adler and others, Steele has taken the agent-structure debate directly into the theoretical underpinnings of ontological security literature. He breaks apart what he sees as the difference between his and Mitzen’s approaches to ontological security⁶⁸. Mitzen’s ontological security is far more “dependent upon the social context”⁶⁹. Since ontological security studies typically require some social contextualization for understanding states needs, her dependency on societal context is not unique. Take

⁶⁵ Adler, ‘Constructivism’, p. 105.

⁶⁶ Adler, ‘Constructivism’, p. 105.

⁶⁷ Adler, ‘Constructivism’, p. 105.

⁶⁸ Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 58-63.

⁶⁹ Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 58

for instance her position that “a state cannot ‘be’ or sustain its type without its strategic partner acting in a certain way (recognizing it)”.⁷⁰ This would suggest for Mitzen, a state’s identity is dependent on external recognition.

For Steele, however, Mitzen overstates the roles others play in a state’s sense of ontological security. This constrains the agency a state has since its actions are tied to others. Steele asserts, “Mitzen’s account profoundly obscures the varying actions which follow in turn from the different possible Selves of agents and it thus ignores the transformational possibilities that exist within the self of States, and the fact that when agents are swamped by social dependences they are actually sacrificing their agency”⁷¹. Steele draws parallels between his position and that of Wendt, through dismissing that the structure of the system dictates the agency of states.

Ultimately, for Steele, states create their own identity, which in turn, dictates how they interact with others. Mitzen argues that state identity is “constituted and sustained by social relationships rather than being intrinsic properties of states themselves”⁷². This difference of approach is emblematic of the agent-structure debate within constructivism.

Catarina Kinnvall, who occupies a more middle-ground approach to the agent-structure debate, provides a third answer, which considers both the structure and agent as mutually reinforcing. For Kinnvall, “ontological security is essentially a quest for a stable narrative about the group self”⁷³. However, Kinnvall takes great lengths to situate identity within a larger social context. She uses the concept of a

⁷⁰ Mitzen, ‘Ontological Security’, p. 358.

⁷¹ Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 59.

⁷² Mitzen, ‘Ontological Security’, p. 354.

⁷³ Zarakol, ‘Ontological In(Security)’, p. 7.

thick signifier when analysing ontological security in order to use the notions of a social context and inherent Self in a reinforcing manner. For Kinnvall,

Analysing security as a thick signifier means analysing what goes into this story or narrative about the self, about ourselves. It means investigating the structural reasons for why individuals experience insecurity as well as the emotional responses to these feelings of ontological insecurity and existential anxiety.... As their ontological insecurity increases, they attempt to *securitize subjectivity*, which means an intensified search for *one* stable identity (regardless of its actual existence)⁷⁴

For Kinnvall, Ontological security highlights “the inter-subjective ordering of relations – that is, how individuals define themselves in relations to others according to their structural basis of power”.⁷⁵ She draws upon Ian Craib, Vamik D. Volkan and Julia Kristeva to form her middle-ground approach. She uses Craib’s psychoanalytical account of identity when she charges, “too strong an emphasis on social context tends to ignore the emotional dimension of subjectivity”, thus ignoring the need for a stable self-narrative.⁷⁶ However, using Volkan’s and Kristeva’s literature on the emotional dimensions of psychoanalytics, argues that a psychoanalytical focus “*cannot replace that of a more structural approach, only compliment it*”.⁷⁷ Inter-personal (or inter-state) relations are thus important for ontological security, but at least for Kinnvall, must take into account internalized self-identity.

When answering the question, “Do states engage in strategic self deception, and, if so, why?”, the position taken here is that biographical narratives are internally generated. Kinnvall and Steele provide a more compelling argument. State-constructed biographical narratives can only be utilized by states when ontological

⁷⁴ Kinnvall, C. ‘Globalization and Religious Nationalism: Self, identity and the search for Ontological Security’, *Political Psychology*, 25(4) (2004) p.749.

⁷⁵ Kinnvall, ‘Globalization’, p. 749.

⁷⁶ Kinnvall, ‘Globalization’, p. 752.

⁷⁷ Kinnvall, ‘Globalization’, p. 752. (Emphasis added)

security theory prioritizes the agent. Though Kinnvall and Steele apply different weight to the role of the international system, states are still the generator of identity. Mitzen's take on the agent-structure problem by prioritizing structure, which critically omits the importance of narrative for constructing self-identity.⁷⁸

Steele asserts that a historical narrative serves to "motivate nation-states to organize their Selves first and foremost, getting that Self in order in order to interact with the "others" of international politics".⁷⁹ This assertion better identifies the processes through which states seek ontological security. For instance, Zarakol uses ontological security to theorize how states understand and apologize for past crimes.⁸⁰ For Zarakol, accepting responsibility for past crimes is "not a simple verbal act"; instead, it marks the "reformulation of state identity from representing a group of people who are not capable of such an act, to representing a group of people who are both capable *and* apologetic".⁸¹ This is a transformation, which challenges state ontological security. Zarakol resists the notion that ontological security is based upon a fully inter-subjective approach, unlike Mitzen, because then states like Turkey and Japan would not be reluctant to apologize for crimes that occurred generations earlier.

There are significant incentives for the Turks to apologize for the Armenian genocide, and for the Japanese to apologize for crimes committed during World War II. Both have had immense pressure applied to them, especially from Western states, but for decades have resisted, prompting a major hurdle for Turkey's bid for EU membership, and tension within Japanese-American relations following a 2007 U.S. House of Representatives' condemnation of the lack of acknowledgement from the

⁷⁸ Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 58.

⁷⁹ Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 58.

⁸⁰ Zarakol, 'Ontological In(Security)', p. 7.

⁸¹ Zarakol, 'Ontological In(Security)', p. 7.

Japanese government for the sexual exploitation crimes which occurred some 63 years earlier.⁸² The reason, for Zarakol, is that “the state’s own narrative of self is trumping the demands from the international community, ultimately undercutting the kind of respectful treatment the states desire to obtain from its partners”.⁸³

Importantly, Zarakol writes that it would be “misleading” to dismiss inter-subjective ontological security pressures. Both states are “hyper-aware” of their identarian role in the international system, and thus, care deeply about their place in the international system. This observation provides valuable insight into the role narrative plays in state identity, irrespective of the pressure applied by external actors. Zarakol’s work is particularly important for understanding state ontological security, emphasises that states primarily construct their own identities.

Biographical Narratives of States

Departing from the assertion that narratives inform state identity, what exactly are biographical narratives? For Giddens, biographical narratives are the “narratives of the self”.⁸⁴ Biographical narration is the means by which states talk about their actions and policies in identarian terms. Moreover, “those specific “tellings” which link by implication a policy with a description or understanding of a state “self”, constitute a state’s biographical narrative”.⁸⁵

As previously established, routines serve a critical function; they facilitate confidence in one’s self-identity, and importantly for the argument advanced here, the biographical narrative of states. Self-identity and biographical narratives fall

⁸² Zarakol, ‘Ontological In(Security)’, p. 7.

⁸³ Zarakol, ‘Ontological In(Security)’, p. 7.

⁸⁴ Giddens, *Modernity*, p. 243.

⁸⁵ Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 10.

within Giddens conception of reflexivity.⁸⁶ Language is the “medium through which the social identity of the subject is made possible” because process of social discourse “systematically form social subjects and the objects of which they speak”.⁸⁷ Thus, routinely asserting an effective narrative may increase ontological security.

Self-identity, the articulation of “who states believe they are”, relates to their actions and sense of agency. This understanding suggests that states’ physical survival needs are not the only motivation for action. Steele argues that:

Reflexive monitoring, specifically, relates to the (auto) biographical narrative that agents set up to explain their actions, and thus reflexive monitoring is implicated in the process of self-identity... state agents make sense of their actions to others through this narrative – specifically using it to justify those actions to the international community⁸⁸

Giddens, importantly, notes that self-identity is not found in a state’s actions or in other state’s reactions to their actions, a clear distinction between his approach and that of Mitzen. Instead, self-identity is found in the “capacity [of a state] *to keep a particular narrative going*”.⁸⁹ Therefore, the “story” is continually reproduced through an internalized interpretation of events.

A biographical narrative must be plausible enough to engage the external realities, yet must be consistent in order to produce, or reproduce, a basic trust system. This is critical for international relations, “for only in telling of the event does it acquire meaning, the meaning that makes such events politically relevant”.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Giddens, A. *The Constitution of Society* (Berkley, University of California Press, 1984) p. 3.

⁸⁷ George and Campbell. ‘Patterns of Dissent and the Celebration of Difference: Critical social theory and international relations’, *International Studies Quarterly* 34 (1990) p. 285.

⁸⁸ Steele, ‘Tsunami’, p. 904.

⁸⁹ Giddens, *Modernity*, p. 54.

⁹⁰ Lang, A. *Agency and Ethics: The politics of military intervention* (Albany, SUNY Press, 2002) p. 13.

The biographical narrative must then be strong enough to absorb behaviour, which may be inconsistent with its rhetoric in order to serve its ontological security providing purpose. Or, alternatively, the narrative must adapt, though a gradual process, which could weaken a state's sense of ontological security because the narrative would be inconsistent with previous articulations of identity. Importantly for the argument put forth in the following case studies, another alternative may exist which necessitates that a state articulate events in such a way as to be consistent with an already established narrative, even if that narrative is then false. Self-narratives thus have a "reality production" capacity, but must be limited to stories that are capable of being believed and internalized.

According to Yee, language has significant strength, so much so that specific language could affect behaviour. This is because "languages or vocabularies authorize or restrict, as well as *prioritize and distribute*, the ideas and beliefs that policy makers can think of and in so doing partly delimit the policies they can pursue"⁹¹. Moreover, language can even be a function in and of itself. Yee contends, "Speech acts produce perlocutionary effects (i.e., the effects of utterances on listeners) only within the structure of the discursive interaction".⁹² For the correct audience, from an appropriately authoritative speaker, speech can reproduce and maintain a critical self-identity narrative. As mentioned above, epistemic communities are not communities with a "homogenized" population.⁹³ However, creating a national biographical narrative allows the state to shape a particular self-conception and serve to bring community members together through shared national history and purpose.

Steele identifies four interconnected processes that take place within a

⁹¹ Yee, 'Casual Effect', p. 95. (Emphasis added)

⁹² Yee, 'Casual Effect', p. 95.

⁹³ Steele, 'Tsunami', p. 906.

biographical narrative.⁹⁴ Firstly, the actor (state) identifies an understanding of the “causes” and “drives” behind an event. Secondly, a biographical narrative illuminates how an event relates to the self-identity, or ontological security of a state. Thirdly, biographical narratives demonstrate the relationship an event will have with the interests of the state, or rather “how interests are derived from the self-identity of an actor in relation to the event”.⁹⁵ Finally, biographical narratives must include what actions or policies will be pursued in order to make those interests actionable. Even if a state decides to abstain from pursuing a specific policy, that is still a decision in regards to how to handle an event.

Importantly, biographical narratives reinforce the notion that identity and interests are far from static. The ability to adapt one’s self-identity to events, those causes and drives, demonstrates how robust a system states can have. This does not mean that all states are capable of accurately internalizing events. Some states handle “critical situations” better than others, and this adaptability drives the agency states have within a given situation.

Although somewhat implied throughout this discussion, it is important to recognize that anxiety, a major aspect of ontological insecurity, is never completely expunged. In fact, a state with no anxiety complex, apart from being unachievable, would also lack a desire for progress. Reflexive routines, and specifically autobiographical narration, provide an opportunity for states to reflect on their actions and their values. This reflection can render a healthy amount of anxiety, enough to motivate without crippling agency, and push states to “go forward”.⁹⁶ The following chapter will demonstrate how rhetoric is used strategically, and deceptively, to purposely a state towards ontological security.

⁹⁴ Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 72.

⁹⁵ Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 72.

⁹⁶ Giddens, *Modernity*, p. 224.

Chapter III: Case Study

This case study will demonstrate how a state would use strategic self-deception in order to satisfy an ontological security concern. The rhetoric-action disconnect of the 2003 Operation Iraqi Freedom is an example of when a trauma prompts a state, here principally through the outlet of President George W. Bush, to use biographical narration to ease ontological insecurity, even when the narrative is a false narrative. It also serves as an example of a persuasive agent-before-structure argument.

In order to make this claim, Steele's framework for ontological security analysis, which uses of a "case-narrative" approach, will be employed. The case-narrative aims to "resurrect, within each case, meaning as it relates to agents' understanding of an event".⁹⁷ According to Friedrich Kratochwil, "a single (historical) case study... focuses right from the beginning on the issue of delimiting the case by providing a narrative "plot" and examining its coherence and "followability" critically".⁹⁸ Thus, this case study will begin with understanding the trauma, which spurred a deep sense of uncertainty for the American people. Next, a discourse analysis will elucidate the language employed and reveal how the biographical narrative aimed to relieve anxiety and reinforce the national sense of self. Finally, the planning and execution effort of Phase IV of the invasion will confirm the disconnect of rhetoric and action.

⁹⁷ Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 11.

⁹⁸ Kratochwil, F. V. *Rules, Norms and Decisions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 22-23 (as cited in Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 11).

American Ontological Insecurity

Before the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, there was already a sense of ontological insecurity stemming from a fear of the “dark side” of Globalisation.⁹⁹ According to Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen, “globalization has become a late-modern, sociological name for the ‘civilizing process’, which according to the Western mind gradually improves the human condition, civilization, by transcending its own achievements in favour of something increasingly better”.¹⁰⁰ Thus, there emerged in the late 1990’s a sense that globalisation would change the world order, which contributed in itself to ontological insecurity, for having “firm knowledge of what one might expect”¹⁰¹ from one’s environment is critically important for agency. Prime Minister Tony Blair asserted in 1999 that “globalization is not just economic, it is also a political and security phenomenon”.¹⁰² This is significant because the terrorist attacks, more than catching the American people off guard, was a “*realization of the fears*” which had persisted since the 1990s.¹⁰³ An example of a fear presented to the American people came from the 1999 Hart-Rudman bipartisan commission issued a report: “States, terrorists, and other disaffected groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction and disruption, and some will use them. Americans will likely die on American soil, possibly in large numbers”.¹⁰⁴

Ontologically, the U.S. was already less secure than it had been during the Cold War. Since an aspect of ontological security requires a “firm knowledge of

⁹⁹ Rasmussen, M. V. ‘A Parallel Globalization of Terror: 9-11, Security and Globalization’, *Cooperation and Conflict*, 37(3) (2002) p. 331.

¹⁰⁰ Rasmussen, ‘Parallel Globalization’, p. 342.

¹⁰¹ Rasmussen, ‘Parallel Globalization’, p. 342.

¹⁰² Quoted in, Rasmussen, ‘Parallel Globalization’, p. 331.

¹⁰³ Rasmussen, ‘Parallel Globalization’, p. 331.

¹⁰⁴ The United States Commission on National Security/21st Century, ‘New World Coming: American Security in the 21st Century, Phase iReport on the Emerging Global Security Environment for the First Quarter of the 21st Century’ (Washington, DC.: Congress, 1999), cited in Rasmussen, ‘Parallel Globalization’, p. 331.

what one might expect”¹⁰⁵ from their environment, The Cold War, with the prospect of mutually assured destruction, provided, ironically, for a certain level of security. Moreover, “the nuclear threat... was material and the logic of the balance of terror ensured that it was extremely calculable”.¹⁰⁶ The threats were clearly stated, often dealt with through diplomatic means, and could be combated by calculated responses to threats. Thus, in the post-Cold War era, ontological security would be even more difficult to achieve, since America’s unchecked hegemony radically changed the international system’s structure. In particular, the U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defence, Paul Wolfowitz, felt that “ontological security could not exist in a time of globalization because of the transcendental nature of the process”.¹⁰⁷ A threat of a less stable environment already had the American people on edge.

Once the terrorist attacks transpired, ontological insecurity spiked across the nation. This can be measured in different ways. For instance, in the months following 9/11, “4% of Americans were suffering from 9/11-related posttraumatic stress disorder, including a whopping 11.2% of New Yorkers”.¹⁰⁸ This statistic provides a quantifiable way to understand the trauma inflicted upon the country.

An *intrinsic* calculation of ontological insecurity considers that the U.S.’s sense of exceptionalism was harmed. It is important to remember that the terrorist attacks were an unprecedented event in U.S. history. Though the bombing of Pearl Harbour, Hawaii in 1941 took the lives of 2,335 servicemen, 68 American civilians and 65 Japanese bombers¹⁰⁹, the 9/11 attacks were still unparalleled. Pearl Harbour

¹⁰⁵ Rasmussen, ‘Parallel Globalization’, p. 331.

¹⁰⁶ Rasmussen, ‘Parallel Globalization’, p. 331.

¹⁰⁷ Rasmussen, ‘Parallel Globalization’, p. 331.

¹⁰⁸ Kluger, J ‘Charting the Emotions of 9/11’. *TIME Science* (online), 3 September 2010. Available at: <http://www.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,2015528,00.html> (Accessed 25 August 2012).

¹⁰⁹ Miles, D. ‘Pearl Harbour Parallels 9-11’. *Today in the Military* (online) 7 December 2006. Available at: <http://www.military.com/NewsContent/0,13319,120133,00.html> (Accessed 1 September 2012).

was an act of conventional war – though there was no clear warning, the target was a U.S. naval base during the WWII, prior to direct U.S. involvement. The terrorist attacks were waged with the intent to kill civilians. This attack operated outside of the Westphalian order, since al-Qa’ida waged “war” as a non-state actor.

The young republic had a “grandiose [fantasy] of invulnerability”, which was quickly broken down by al-Qu’ida.¹¹⁰ This perception was clearly documented in the news reports on 12 September 2001. The front cover of the Chicago Tribune had an article entitled, “The Nation Reacts: Feelings of invincibility suddenly shatter”¹¹¹ while the USA Today’s featured article was entitled, “Minute by minute, fear envelops the country as jetliners strike U.S. landmarks, America’s sense of security is shattered”. In even stronger language, particularly telling for ontological security, the Boston Globe’s cover read, “In unfathomable way, we now know terror and vulnerability”.¹¹²

Ontological insecurity leads to questioning of one’s environment and distrust of daily routines. For a state, this manifests in a damaged basic trust system, questioning the lessons of the Westphalian order and the role they occupy in it. Since the attack, “security has become an ever-present worry for America, a fact that, in some sense, reflects al-Qu’ida’s success in restricting their freedom”.¹¹³ This fear is clearly present in the national addresses by President George W. Bush, from 2001-2003. However, a restatement of Americans was nearly always given along side. This was critically important in order to get Americans back into their routines. The economic toll was great; Wall Street shut down, airline travel sharply decreased and people

¹¹⁰ Epstein, N. (2007), ‘Explaining the War on Terrorism from an Ontological-Security Perspective’. In *MIT International Review*, Spring 2007, p. 16.

¹¹¹ ABC News (2011). *9/11 Remembered: Ten Years On*. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-09-05/september-11-newspaper-front-pages/2870784>> [Accessed 4 September 2012].

¹¹² Epstein, ‘Explaining’, p. 16.

¹¹³ Epstein, ‘Explaining’, p. 16.

were afraid to go back to work. All in all, The New York Times estimates that the economic impact of the attacks, excluding the cost of the ensuing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, cost upwards of \$123 billion dollars (£ 76.8 billion).¹¹⁴ In order to stem the loss to national productivity, ontological insecurity, thus crippling anxiety, had to be addressed and alleviated.

Discursive Analysis

A discursive analysis will demonstrate a deliberate attempt by the Bush Administration to regain ontological security, and is ultimately the process through which the American self-narrative will be evaluated. This process “uncovers how state agents justify a policy by reasoning what such a policy means or would mean about their state’s respective sense of self-identity”.¹¹⁵ Discourse analysis also takes into account change in rhetoric over time, better identifying the decision-making process.

Giddens himself cautions that the analysis must avoid certain inaccuracies by narrowing what constitutes as “motivational language”¹¹⁶. Giddens warns that it is all too easy to “read *too much* into actor language”¹¹⁷. Slips of the tongue, for instance, should not be understood as overly significant. Dismissing Freud’s theory of verbal parapraxes, Giddens argues that “most slips of the tongue cannot be traced to unconscious motivation”¹¹⁸. Instead well-ordered speech, defined as “speech geared to the overall motivational involvements which speakers have in the course of

¹¹⁴ New York Times (2011). *9/11: The Reckoning*. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2011/09/08/us/sept-11-reckoning/cost-graphic.html> [Accessed 2 September 2012].

¹¹⁵ Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 12.

¹¹⁶ Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 11.

¹¹⁷ Steele, *Ontological Security*, p. 11.

¹¹⁸ Giddens, *Constitution*, p. 104.

pursuing their practical activities,” is suitable for discourse analysis¹¹⁹. This is because the information portrayed in this form of conversation, specifically though the speeches and addresses of international actors, is designed to be purposeful and “exactly right”¹²⁰.

Though multiple members of a cabinet, parliament or administration could speak to a national audience with authority, typically the head of state has the greatest influence. Campbell and Jamieson contend, “The identities of the presidents as spokespersons, fulfilling their constitutional roles and exercising their executive power, gives the discourse a distinctive character. In turn, the identity and character of the presidency arise out of such discourse”.¹²¹ Moreover, this form of speech, especially though the medium of national addresses, would be considered “well-ordered speech” and meet Giddens’ standards for appropriate analysis.

The biographical narrative, or what Giddens refers to as the “narrative of the self”, is particularly apparent in the Bush Administration’s rhetoric. President Bush sought to regain confidence in the American self-identity and to find a place for its vision within the larger international system. Instead of shying away from the causes the terrorists deplored, namely the merits of globalization, his speeches reinforced the message of spreading American values, particularly in the Middle East. This reinforced an affirmative biographical narrative familiar to the American people.

The Americans framed the invasion of Iraq in two ways. Firstly, the invasion was projected through the lens of a military occupation. The war in Iraq was principally framed as a measure to stop the Iraqi’s hostile production of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and to end a regime, which bred hatred of America and

¹¹⁹ Giddens, *Constitution*, p. 104.

¹²⁰ Giddens, *Constitution*, p. 104.

¹²¹ Campbell and Jamieson. *Presidents Creating the Presidency* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 7.

harboured terrorists. Granted, no WMDs were ever found, nor was al-Qa'ida in any way connected to the secular leader, but these were the justifications given to the international community and to rally the support of the American people. This was a direct effort put forth in order to gain international support, both for alliances and UN backing. Allies were in initially abundant, though UN Security Council support was never achieved.

The second framing of the war in Iraq was as a humanitarian intervention. This framing was not for the benefit of the international community, nor was it really about the Iraqi people. Instead, framing this venture in a self-affirming way sought to secure ontological security. Take for instances the following passage from the “Future of Iraq” speech given by President Bush at the American Enterprise Institute, 26 February 2003:

The first to benefit from a free Iraq would be the Iraqi people, themselves. Today they live in scarcity and fear, under a dictator who has brought them nothing but war, and misery, and torture. Their lives and their freedom matter little to Saddam Hussein -- *but Iraqi lives and freedom matter greatly to us.*¹²²

Anthony Lang has persuasively argued that humanitarian interventions are often more about telling a story of a western state's morals than about actually helping others.¹²³ He writes that an “intervention, an action undertaken by a state becomes an attempt to display publically the moral and historical presence of a political community”.¹²⁴ When Bush remarked, “Iraqi lives and freedom matter greatly to us,” he was renewing a story within the larger autobiographical narrative of a nation,

¹²² Presidential Rhetoric (2003). *American Enterprise Institute (The Future of Iraq)*. [Online] Available at: <<http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/speeches/02.26.03.html>>. [Accessed 17 August 2012]. Appendix 1 has key sections of the speech transcript.

¹²³ Lang, *Agency*.

¹²⁴ Lang, *Agency*, p. 194.

which values democracy even when others seek to change their course. Thus reinforcing the goals of democratization and freedom through military intervention was a way to make the world hospitable to globalization. Instead of giving into the terrorist demands of ending globalist expansion, the Bush Administration sought to reinforce the vision of a more democratic world, and renew confidence in their greater ideological mission.

This biographical narrative spans generations of Americans. Recall in chapter two the observation that different American presidents, from Kennedy to Reagan, demonstrated similar reactions to the Soviets during the Cold War. Although it is true that President Bush was a part of the largely neoconservative, evangelical movement in American politics, his rhetoric is largely in keeping with a greater national tradition. American presidents as diverse as Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan were all motivated by a belief in democratic institutions.¹²⁵ Americans take comfort in this metanarrative, which reinforces American values and seeks to incorporate those values into foreign policy.

As previously asserted, the events of 11 September 2001 contributed to a feeling of vulnerability and weakness for the American people. Below is an example of President Bush seeking to reaffirm a national strength through the “War Message” of 19 March 2003:

To all of the men and women of the United States armed forces now in the Middle East, the peace of a troubled world and the hopes of an oppressed people now depend on you. That trust is well placed. *The enemies you confront will come to know your skill and bravery.* The people *you liberate* will witness the honourable and decent spirit of the American military.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ Beran, ‘Flawed Liberator’, p.1.

¹²⁶ Presidential Rhetoric (2003). *War Message*. [Online] Available at: <<http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/speeches/03.19.03.html>>. [Accessed 17 August 2012]. Appendix 2 has key sections of the speech transcript.

Though this quote is directed at the men and women serving in the military, it is also a statement about the American people as a whole. His message here, and indeed the rest of that address, continually pursues a narrative, which confirms that the United States is “the greatest nation on earth”. However, more than just a statement about who Americans are as a nation, it is also, at least how its portrayed, *a commitment to the Iraqi people*. The act of making the commitment reconfirms the role Americans see the nation plays in the international system. However, as will be demonstrated next, this commitment was far more powerful rhetorically than in actuality.

Phase IV Operations

Perhaps it is true that “political language” *is* “political reality,”¹²⁷ at least for the US, but this is hardly the case for the people of Iraq. While President Bush and his advisors stated publicly that the “political element” of the Iraq war was to create a democracy,¹²⁸ in reality, the post-conflict nation building efforts suggest that the government was strategically deceiving its own people in order to feed a need for ontological security.

In his book *Fiasco*, Thomas E. Ricks chronicles the decisions leading up to and well into Operation Iraqi Freedom.¹²⁹ Phase IV, the part of the military plan dedicated to rebuilding Iraq after formal combat ended, also known as “post hostility operations”, was shockingly incomplete. Ricks quotes Maj. Isaiah Wilson, the official Army historian during the 2003 invasion, as saying, “There was no phase IV plan for Iraq... no single plan as of 1 May 2004 that described an *executable*

¹²⁷ Edelman, M. ‘Political Language and Political Reality’, *Political Science*, 18(1) (1985) p. 11.

¹²⁸ Presidential Rhetoric (2005). *The Struggle for Democracy in Iraq: Speech to the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia*. [Online] Available at: <
<http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/speeches/12.12.05.html>>. [Accessed 17 August 2012].

¹²⁹ Ricks, *Fiasco*.

approach to achieving the stated strategic end-state for the war”.¹³⁰ Additionally, a 2005 Rand Corporation study concluded, “Post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction were addressed only very generally, largely because of the prevailing view that such a task would not be difficult”.¹³¹

If the “*lives and freedom*” of Iraqi citizens mattered so “greatly” to the American people, surely an actual plan would have been put forth to insure their realization. Army Colonel Gregory Gardner, who served on the Joint Staff, is quoted as saying, “Politically, we’d made the decision that we’d turn it over to the Iraqis in June [of 2003]... so why have a phase IV plan?”¹³² Indeed, the planning for IV was far less extensive and rigorous than the planning for the initial invasion. For instance, military planning for the Iraq invasion began 27 November 2001.¹³³ The war plan was a collaborative effort, taking several months to shape, and involving both senior military and civilian experts¹³⁴. Although President Bush did require that the military to create a humanitarian relief plan, it was not outlined until 24 February 2003, well over a year after the war plan was started¹³⁵. What is particularly important about the planning efforts for the post-conflict nation building is not the time line, but more so the content, which was “not nearly as robust” since significantly less resources and time went into its construction.¹³⁶

¹³⁰ Ricks, *Fiasco*, p. 110.

¹³¹ Ricks, *Fiasco*, p. 110.

¹³² Ricks, *Fiasco*, p. 110.

¹³³ Bensahel, ‘Mission not accomplished’, p. 454.

¹³⁴ Bensahel, ‘Mission not accomplished’, p. 454.

¹³⁵ Bensahel, ‘Mission not accomplished’, p. 456.

¹³⁶ Bensahel, ‘Mission not accomplished’, p. 456.

In a particularly interesting address on 17 March 2003, President Bush spoke as if he was directly reaching the most oppressed people of Iraq. He began,

Many Iraqis can hear me tonight in a translated radio broadcast, and I have a message for them: If we must begin a military campaign, it will be directed against the lawless men who rule your country and not against you. As our coalition takes away their power, we will deliver the food and medicine you need. We will tear down the apparatus of terror and we will help you to build a new Iraq that is prosperous and free. In free Iraq there will be no more wars of aggression against your neighbours, no more poison factories, no more executions of dissidents, no more torture chambers and rape rooms. The tyrant will soon be gone. *The day of your liberation is near.*¹³⁷

President Bush was correct in claiming the regime would “soon be gone”, evidenced by President Saddam’s capture on 13 December 2003, just nine months after this speech was given. However, as of mid-2012, Iraq falls into the category of a “weak democracy”, one that “show[s] some elements of democracy but fail[s], as yet, to achieve the full flowering of political liberalism”.¹³⁸

When Saddam’s regime collapsed, “in its place a power vacuum opened – one that U.S. soldiers were neither prepared, directed, or numerically capable to fill”.¹³⁹ Moreover the planning for the post-conflict nation building has been described as “unfocused, shallow, and too dependent on optimistic scenarios”.¹⁴⁰ Democracies are difficult to construct, and even more difficult to sustain, a lesson the U.S. knows well.

¹³⁷ Presidential Rhetoric (2003). *Message to Saddam*. [Online] Available at: <<http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/speeches/03.17.03.html>>. [Accessed 17 August 2012]. Appendix 3 has key section of the speech transcript. (Emphasis added)

¹³⁸ Enterline and Grieg. ‘Against All Odds? The History of Imposed Democracy & the Future of Iraq & Afghanistan’. *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 4 (2008) p. 15.

¹³⁹ Donnelly, T. *Operation Iraqi Freedom: A strategic Assessment* (Washington, D.C., The AEI Press, 2004) p. 87.

¹⁴⁰ O’Hanlon, M. ‘Iraq without a plan’, *Stanford Policy Review*, 128 (2004). [Online] Available at: <http://www.policyreview.org/dec04/ohanlon_print.htm>. [Access 2 September 2012].

Many sources have concluded that although the post-conflict nation building is nearly always a difficult, expensive and time-consuming process, the lack of follow through may set Iraq on an even more difficult path to democracy.¹⁴¹ Mansfield and Snyder argue, “Ill-prepared attempts to democratize weak states – such as the recent cases of Yugoslavia, Pakistan, Rwanda, and Burundi – may lead to costly warfare in the short run, and may delay or prevent real progress toward democracy over the long term”.¹⁴² Moreover, there is abundant analysis available on how to prepare and execute democratic instillations in order to have the best possible chances for success.¹⁴³ Since 1945, 44% of imposed democracies have failed after less than ten years and as such, the U.S., if truly committed to bringing democracy to Iraq, would have full committed to seeing its realization.¹⁴⁴

Formally, the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) was tasked with producing and implementing post-conflict nation building plans. ORHA was created almost as an after-thought, in early 2003, under the purview of the Department of Defence. Led by retired Lieutenant General Jay Garner, ORHA quickly began planning for post-conflict realities, however, “ORHA was too little, too late”.¹⁴⁵ Lt. General Garner’s vision was, in his own words, to “work their way out of a job within 90 days” beginning immediately after the fall of Saddam’s regime, though their presence.¹⁴⁶

As Andrew Rathmell concludes, “The injection into the planning process at this late stage of a new body, which had to spend much of its time in the spring of

¹⁴¹ O’Hanlon, ‘Iraq’.

¹⁴² Mansfield and Snyder, *Electing to Fight: Why emerging democracies go to war* (Cambridge. Harvard University Press, 2005), p. 3.

¹⁴³ Mansfield and Snyder, *Electing to Fight*; Enterline and Grieg, ‘Against All Odds’.

¹⁴⁴ Enterline and Grieg, ‘Against All Odds’, p.17.

¹⁴⁵ Bensahel, ‘Mission not accomplished’, p. 461.

¹⁴⁶ Reel, M., ‘Garner Arrives in Iraq to Begin Reconstruction’, *The Washington Post*, (Washington, D.C.) 22 April 2003, cited in Bensahel, ‘Mission not accomplished’, p. 461

2003 simply establishing itself in Washington and Kuwait, had only a marginal impact on the coalition planning effort at theatre level”.¹⁴⁷ Thus, ORHA lacked the means to stop looting, provide adequate protection for civilians, rebuild infrastructure, and provide much needed food and medical assistance.¹⁴⁸ The lack of means should also be read as a *lack of commitment* from the Bush Administration.

Self-Deception

The rhetoric projected by the Bush Administration was strategically self-deceptive. In a time of unparalleled ontological insecurity, average Americans sought comfort. The morally infused language used by President Bush, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, among others, sought to reaffirm the role the U.S. plays in the world. Two relatively important factors contributed to this opportunity: first, there had to be a persuasive outlet and captive audience, and the public had to connect foreign policy with their own ideology.

The War in Iraq was not fought in order to achieve ontological security. The invasion, however, provided an excellent opportunity to reassure the American people that the values they had held in the 1990’s, principally that of the merits of globalisation, were still worthwhile. The national leadership sought to reaffirm, not change, the internalized self-identity. Routines, which provide stability and mitigate anxiety, were sought through projecting a well-known biographical narrative. Reasserting a self-fulfilling narrative of champions of democracy and liberator would have been far less effective had the U.S. not had a direct outlet to which those values could be (at least rhetorically) applied. Additionally, the American public eagerly looked to the administration for guidance and reassurance. President Bush

¹⁴⁷ Rathmell, A. ‘Planning post-conflict reconstruction in Iraq: what can we learn?’, *International Affairs*, 81(5) (2005) p. 1023.

¹⁴⁸ Rathmell, ‘Planning’, p. 1023.

had a captive audience for his 28 January 2003 State of The Union Address, the annual speech given by the President to Congress and the nation.¹⁴⁹ More than 41.4 million households watched the President give an impassioned speech, which implicated Iraq as housing WMDs and Saddam Hussein as a brutal dictator.¹⁵⁰

Secondly, the connection between foreign policy and ontological security could not have been made if the American people did not associate themselves with their nation's actions. Steele contends, for "ordinary Americans, the foreign policy their country produces is an expression of who they are as Americans".¹⁵¹ Concurrently, Robert Kagan wrote, "Every profound foreign policy debate in America's history has ultimately been a debate about the nation's identity and has posed for Americans the primal question 'Who are we?'"¹⁵² Though the reality of events may not align with the perception, foreign policy is a deeply personal thing for many American and is a reassuring message about the (perceived) values that they and their nation hold.

The above case was intended to stand as an example of the reasoning for why a state would use strategic self-deception. America used it in an attempt regain ontological security following the traumatic events of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks. The rhetoric was self-affirming; the United States could see itself as a proud advocate for globalisation, through sponsoring democracy and liberation for an oppressed people. This case could also serve as another example of when a state's actions were motivated by agent rather than purely structural actions. Take for instance the fact that the rhetoric used by the U.S., specifically characterizing their

¹⁴⁹ Murse, T. (2012) *State of the Union Ratings*. [Online]. Available at: <http://uspolitics.about.com/od/stateoftheunion/tp/State-Of-The-Union-Ratings.htm>. [Accessed 4 September 2012].

¹⁵⁰ Murse, 'State of the Union Ratings', p. 1.

¹⁵¹ Steele, 'Tsunami', p. 921

¹⁵² Kagan, 'A tougher War', p.1.

mission in "empire" though not "unilateralist" terminology, which characterized "multilateral institutions and coalitions are thus means, rather than ends, in themselves"¹⁵³. By using this rhetoric, allies grew resentful of the way they were characterized. The U.S. knew that virtually by definition, approaching an invasion in an age of globalisation would be necessarily transnational and would need additional support. Thus, the U.S. was both keenly aware of their place within the international system, yet demonstrated that their state identity was internally constructed and reinforced through their biographical narrative.

¹⁵³ Rasmussen, 'Parallel Globalization', p. 340.

Chapter IV: Conclusion

Do states engage in strategic self-deception, and if so, why? The case study's analysis of pre-invasion rhetoric by the Bush Administration has advanced one possible reason why states would purposely mislead their citizens: in order to obtain ontological security. Admittedly, other factors contributed to the decision to invade Iraq and using humanitarian-infused language may have been used as a statement to international actors of U.S. intentions.

In a recent publication, *Why Leaders Lie: The Truth About Lying in International Politics*, John Mearsheimer argues that democracies lie to their own people more than dictatorships, because dictators' fates are less directly related to public opinion¹⁵⁴. Dictators then do not need to curry support in order to survive re-election. What has been termed in this dissertation, "biographical narrative," is more or less what Mearsheimer refers to as "national mythmaking".¹⁵⁵ He asserts, "There are sometimes good strategic reasons for leaders to lie".¹⁵⁶ These can include protecting the safety of citizens, intentionally misleading the press in order to ensure a military attack is executed in secrecy, or garnishing support for a dubious war.

What Mearsheimer over looked was why "national mythmaking" is important to *the public*. Mearsheimer detailed how "national mythmaking" is important to political *leaders* in order to rally support for a cause and hone patriotism, in order to achieve their policy goals. He suggests that presenting situations within moral terms is a form of corrosion by the leaders. Dissenters are backed into a preverbal corner, having to either follow along the leader's vision, or possibly face criticism for taking an immoral stance.

¹⁵⁴ Mearsheimer, J. *Why States Lie* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011).

¹⁵⁵ Mearsheimer, *Lie*, p. 95-97.

¹⁵⁶ Mearsheimer, *Lie*, p. viii.

Biographical narratives are more than stories told to garnish short-term support; they are the articulation of *who states believe they are* which has serious psychological and sociological implications. When a state lacks a continuous and replicable narrative to reinforce self-identity, often as a result of self-questioning after a traumatic event, anxiety can take hold of the public. That anxiety, part of a state of realized ontological insecurity, leads to decreased economic production, low moral, and could possibly cause individuals to lose faith in the government.¹⁵⁷

This dissertation used the Iraq case study for multiple reasons. First, there was a clear disconnect between rhetoric and action, which warranted investigation. Secondly, the invasion of Iraq is important to international politics. As the first major combat mission against a recognized government¹⁵⁸ in the new century by the world's largest military, understanding regime motivations is important for international relations scholars.

After evaluating the different approaches to reflexive studies within constructivism, Steele's emphasis on self-created identity is most persuasive for answering this research question. The case study suggests, as well, that the way President Bush described the invasion in humanitarian terms was not ultimately dependent on the dictates of the international structure. This seeks to humbly contribute to the agent-structure debate by processing the case study. Chapter three affirms that the arguments put forth of the presence of weapons of mass destruction and ties to Osama bin Laden certainly took in to account an international audience,

¹⁵⁷ Though I have not come across this argument as such, it is plausible that when a state, especially a democratically elected government, does not articulate the values widely held by the public, they would not survive reelection. This would be an interesting question to pursue in further research.

¹⁵⁸ Differentiating from Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, the U.S. holds that the Taliban in Afghanistan were not in control of formal government. See Aldrich, G. H. (2002) "The Taliban, Al Qaeda, and the Determination of Illegal Combatants" in *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 96, No. 4 pp. 891-898.

and were in deed the justification given to gain support. However, the self-affirming narrative using “empire” language only irritated many in the international system. The American people were largely sold on invading for the security reasons – so why would the rhetoric be used? It sought to reassure the American people of their subjective identity. It was a message more about the American people in general, than about the war or the terrorist attack.

The difficulty with the state-as-person application is in making the case that a leader is more than one person, and that his or her actions and words are part of larger state identity. With more time, perhaps within a PhD dissertation, the merits of further anthropomorphising the state with in the IR discipline could be investigated. Additionally, further case studies could advance and strengthen the argument made here. Specifically, it would be interesting to test the ontological security element of satellite communist nations towards the end of the Cold War and their efforts to convince their people that their socialist values remained part of who they were as a nation and important for their future. Mearsheimer discusses the strategic deception by Premier Nikita Khrushchev with regards to the number of missiles in the Soviet arsenal as an example of “inter-state lies”.¹⁵⁹ Perhaps a discourse analysis and theory application could illuminate what impact, if any, this had on national ontological security.

Understanding why states deceive their people, and what role ontological security could play in that decision, further pushes the boundaries of what international relations theories are capable of explaining. More than just pure power politics, constructivism advances the notion that history and social relations are

¹⁵⁹ Mearsheimer, *Lie*, p. 25.

important for the discipline. Thus, this dissertation has sought to explain an element of this theory and provide insight into an emerging field.

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Appendix 1: Presidential Address Transcript 26 February 2003

Selected portions of the transcript from the "Future of Iraq" speech given by President Bush at the American Enterprise Institute, 26 February 2003.

.... We meet here during a crucial period in the history of our nation, and of the civilized world. Part of that history was written by others; the rest will be written by us. On a September morning, threats that had gathered for years, in secret and far away, led to murder in our country on a massive scale. As a result, we must look at security in a new way, because our country is a battlefield in the first war of the 21st century.

We learned a lesson: The dangers of our time must be confronted actively and forcefully, before we see them again in our skies and in our cities. And we set a goal: we will not allow the triumph of hatred and violence in the affairs of men. . .

....In Iraq, a dictator is building and hiding weapons that could enable him to dominate the Middle East and intimidate the civilized world -- and we will not allow it. This same tyrant has close ties to terrorist organizations, and could supply them with the terrible means to strike this country -- and America will not permit it. The danger posed by Saddam Hussein and his weapons cannot be ignored or wished away. The danger must be confronted. We hope that the Iraqi regime will meet the demands of the United Nations and disarm, fully and peacefully. If it does not, we are prepared to disarm Iraq by force. Either way, this danger will be removed.

The safety of the American people depends on ending this direct and growing threat. Acting against the danger will also contribute greatly to the long-term safety and stability of our world. The current Iraqi regime has shown the power of tyranny to spread discord and violence in the Middle East. A liberated Iraq can show the power of freedom to transform that vital region, by bringing hope and progress into the lives of millions. America's interests in security, and America's belief in liberty, both lead in the same direction: to a free and peaceful Iraq.

The first to benefit from a free Iraq would be the Iraqi people, themselves. Today they live in scarcity and fear, under a dictator who has brought them nothing but war, and misery, and torture. Their lives and their freedom matter little to Saddam Hussein -- but Iraqi lives and freedom matter greatly to us.

Bringing stability and unity to a free Iraq will not be easy. Yet that is no excuse to leave the Iraqi regime's torture chambers and poison labs in operation. Any future the Iraqi people choose for themselves will be better than the nightmare world that Saddam Hussein has chosen for them.

If we must use force, the United States and our coalition stand ready to help the citizens of a liberated Iraq. We will deliver medicine to the sick, and we are now moving into place nearly 3 million emergency rations to feed the hungry.

We'll make sure that Iraq's 55,000 food distribution sites, operating under the Oil For Food program, are stocked and open as soon as possible. The United States and Great Britain are providing tens of millions of dollars to the U.N. High Commission on Refugees, and to such groups as the World Food Program and UNICEF, to provide emergency aid to the Iraqi people.

We will also lead in carrying out the urgent and dangerous work of destroying chemical and biological weapons. We will provide security against those who try to spread chaos, or settle scores, or threaten the territorial integrity of Iraq. We will seek to protect Iraq's natural resources from sabotage by a dying regime, and ensure those resources are used for the benefit of the owners -- the Iraqi people.

The United States has no intention of determining the precise form of Iraq's new government. That choice belongs to the Iraqi people. Yet, we will ensure that one brutal dictator is not replaced by another. All Iraqis must have a voice in the new government, and all citizens must have their rights protected.

Rebuilding Iraq will require a sustained commitment from many nations, including our own: we will remain in Iraq as long as necessary, and not a day more. America has made and kept this kind of commitment before -- in the peace that followed a world war. After defeating enemies, we did not leave behind occupying armies, we left constitutions and parliaments. We established an atmosphere of safety, in which responsible, reform-minded local leaders could build lasting institutions of freedom. In societies that once bred fascism and militarism, liberty found a permanent home.

There was a time when many said that the cultures of Japan and Germany were incapable of sustaining democratic values. Well, they were wrong. Some say the same of Iraq today. They are mistaken. The nation of Iraq -- with its proud heritage, abundant resources and skilled and educated people -- is fully capable of moving toward democracy and living in freedom.

The world has a clear interest in the spread of democratic values, because stable and free nations do not breed the ideologies of murder. They encourage the peaceful pursuit of a better life. And there are hopeful signs of a desire for freedom in the Middle East. Arab intellectuals have called on Arab governments to address the "freedom gap" so their peoples can fully share in the progress of our times. Leaders in the region speak of a new Arab charter that champions internal reform, greater politics participation, economic openness, and free trade. And from Morocco to Bahrain and beyond, nations are taking genuine steps toward politics reform. A new regime in Iraq would serve as a dramatic and inspiring example of freedom for other nations in the region.

It is presumptuous and insulting to suggest that a whole region of the world -- or the one-fifth of humanity that is Muslim -- is somehow untouched by the most basic aspirations of life. Human cultures can be vastly different. Yet the human heart desires the same good things, everywhere on Earth. In our desire to be safe from brutal and bullying oppression, human beings are the same. In our desire to care for our children and give them a better life, we are the same. For these fundamental reasons, freedom and democracy will always and everywhere have greater appeal than the slogans of hatred and the tactics of terror.

Without this outside support for terrorism, Palestinians who are working for reform and long for democracy will be in a better position to choose new leaders. True leaders who strive for peace; true leaders who faithfully serve the people. A Palestinian state must be a reformed and peaceful state that abandons forever the use of terror. ...

Members of our Armed Forces also understand why they may be called to fight. They know that retreat before a dictator guarantees even greater sacrifices in the future. They know that America's cause is right and just: liberty for an oppressed people, and security for the American people. And I know something about these men and women who wear our uniform: they will complete every mission they are given with skill, and honor, and courage.

Much is asked of America in this year 2003. The work ahead is demanding. It will be difficult to help freedom take hold in a country that has known three decades of dictatorship, secret police, internal divisions, and war. It will be difficult to cultivate liberty and peace in the Middle East, after so many generations of strife. Yet, the security of our nation and the hope of millions depend on us, and Americans do not turn away from duties because they are hard. We have met great tests in other times, and we will meet the tests of our time.

We go forward with confidence, because we trust in the power of human freedom to change lives and nations. By the resolve and purpose of America, and of our friends and allies, we will make this an age of progress and liberty. Free people will set the course of history, and free people will keep the peace of the world.... --

Source: Presidential Rhetoric (2003). *American Enterprise Institute (The Future of Iraq)*. [Online] Available at: <<http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/speeches/02.26.03.html>>. [Accessed 17 August 2012].

Appendix 2: *Presidential Address Transcript 19 March 2003*

Transcript from the "War Speech" given President Bush in Washington DC, 19 March 2003

My fellow citizens, at this hour American and coalition forces are in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger.

On my orders, coalition forces have begun striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war. These are opening stages of what will be a broad and concerted campaign.

More than 35 countries are giving crucial support, from the use of naval and air bases, to help with intelligence and logistics, to the deployment of combat units. Every nation in this coalition has chosen to bear the duty and share the honor of serving in our common defense.

To all of the men and women of the United States armed forces now in the Middle East, the peace of a troubled world and the hopes of an oppressed people now depend on you. That trust is well placed. The enemies you confront will come to know your skill and bravery. The people you liberate will witness the honorable and decent spirit of the American military.

In this conflict, America faces an enemy who has no regard for conventions of war or rules of morality. Saddam Hussein has placed Iraqi troops and equipment in civilian areas, attempting to use innocent men, women and children as shields for his own military; a final atrocity against his people.

I want Americans and all the world to know that coalition forces will make every effort to spare innocent civilians from harm. A campaign on the harsh terrain of a nation as large as California could be longer and more difficult than some predict. And helping Iraqis achieve a united, stable and free country will require our sustained commitment.

We come to Iraq with respect for its citizens, for their great civilization and for the religious faiths they practice. We have no ambition in Iraq, except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people.

I know that the families of our military are praying that all those who serve will return safely and soon. Million of Americans are praying with you for the safety of your loved ones and for the protection of the innocent. For your sacrifice, you have the gratitude and respect of the American people and you can know that our forces will be coming home as soon as their work is done.

Our nation enters this conflict reluctantly, yet our purpose is sure. The people of the United States and our friends and allies will not live at the mercy of an outlaw regime that threatens the peace with weapons of mass murder.

We will meet that threat now with our Army, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard and Marines, so that we do not have to meet it later with armies of fire fighters and police and doctors on the streets of our cities.

Now that conflict has come, the only way to limit its duration is to apply decisive force. And I assure you, this will not be a campaign of half measures and we will accept no outcome but victory.

My fellow citizens, the dangers to our country and the world will be overcome. We will pass through this time of peril and carry on the work of peace. We will defend our freedom. We will bring freedom to others. And we will prevail. May God bless our country and all who defend her.--

Source: Presidential Rhetoric (2003). *War Message*. [Online] Available at:
<<http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/speeches/03.19.03.html>>. [Accessed 17 August 2012].

Appendix 3: Presidential Address Transcript 17 March 2003

Selected portions of the transcript from the “48-Hr Ultimatum” national address given by President Bush on 17 March 2003.

For more than a decade, the United States and other nations have pursued patient and honorable efforts to disarm the Iraqi regime without war. That regime pledged to reveal and destroy all of its weapons of mass destruction as a condition for ending the Persian Gulf War in 1991. Since then, the world has engaged in 12 years of diplomacy. We have passed more than a dozen resolutions in the United Nations Security Council. We have sent hundreds of weapons inspectors to oversee the disarmament of Iraq.

Our good faith has not been returned. The Iraqi regime has used diplomacy as a ploy to gain time and advantage. It has uniformly defied Security Council resolutions demanding full disarmament. . . . The United States and other nations did nothing to deserve or invite this threat, but we will do everything to defeat it. Instead of drifting along toward tragedy, we will set a course toward safety. Before the day of horror can come, before it is too late to act, this danger will be removed. . .

~~Many Iraqis can hear me tonight in a translated radio broadcast, and I have a message for them: If we must begin a military campaign, it will be directed against the lawless men who rule your country and not against you. As our coalition takes away their power, we will deliver the food and medicine you need. We will tear down the apparatus of terror and we will help you to build a new Iraq that is prosperous and free.~~

In free Iraq there will be no more wars of aggression against your neighbors, no more poison factories, no more executions of dissidents, no more torture chambers and rape rooms. The tyrant will soon be gone. The day of your liberation is near.

It is too late for Saddam Hussein to remain in power. It is not too late for the Iraq military to act with honor and protect your country, by permitting the peaceful entry of coalition forces to eliminate weapons of mass destruction. Our forces will give Iraqi military units clear instructions on actions they can take to avoid being attacked and destroyed.

I urge every member of the Iraqi military and intelligence services: If war comes, do not fight for a dying regime that is not worth your own life.

And all Iraqi military and civilian personnel should listen carefully to this warning: In any conflict, your fate will depend on your actions. Do not destroy oil wells, a source of wealth that belongs to the Iraqi people. Do not obey any command to use weapons of mass destruction against anyone, including the Iraqi people. War crimes will be prosecuted, war criminals will be punished and it will be no defense to say, "I was just following orders".

Should Saddam Hussein choose confrontation, the American people can know that every measure has been taken to avoid war and every measure will be taken to win it....

...In desperation, he and terrorist groups might try to conduct terrorist operations against the American people and our friends. These attacks are not inevitable. They are, however, possible.. .

. . . No act of theirs can alter the course or shake the resolve of this country. We are a peaceful people, yet we are not a fragile people. And we will not be intimidated by thugs and killers.

If our enemies dare to strike us, they and all who have aided them will face fearful consequences.

We are now acting because the risks of inaction would be far greater. In one year, or five years, the power of Iraq to inflict harm on all free nations would be multiplied many times over.

With these capabilities, Saddam Hussein and his terrorist allies could choose the moment of deadly conflict when they are strongest. We choose to meet that threat now where it arises, before it can appear suddenly in our skies and cities.

The cause of peace requires all free nations to recognize new and undeniable realities. In the 20th century, some chose to appease murderous dictators whose threats were allowed to grow into genocide and global war.

In this century, when evil men plot chemical, biological and nuclear terror, a policy of appeasement could bring destruction of a kind never before seen on this earth. Terrorists and terrorist states do not reveal these threats with fair notice in formal declarations.

And responding to such enemies only after they have struck first is not self-defense. It is suicide. The security of the world requires disarming Saddam Hussein now.

As we enforce the just demands of the world, we will also honor the deepest commitments of our country.

Unlike Saddam Hussein, we believe the Iraqi people are deserving and capable of human liberty, and when the dictator has departed, they can set an example to all the Middle East of a vital and peaceful and self-governing nation.

The United States with other countries will work to advance liberty and peace in that region. Our goal will not be achieved overnight, but it can come over time. The power and appeal of human liberty is felt in every life and every land, and the greatest power of freedom is to overcome hatred and violence, and turn the creative gifts of men and women to the pursuits of peace. That is the future we choose.

Free nations have a duty to defend our people by uniting against the violent, and tonight, as we have done before, America and our allies accept that responsibility.

Good night, and may God continue to bless America. --

Source: Presidential Rhetoric (2003). *Message to Saddam*. [Online] Available at:
<<http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/speeches/03.17.03.html>>. [Accessed 17 August 2012].