Negotiating power: Examining the role of procedural elements in international peace talks



Michaela Coplen
Lincoln College
University of Oxford

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in International Relations

Hilary 2024
65,063 words

Abstract

Peace agreements don't write themselves. They are negotiated — in complex, iterative sessions with highly contingent results. Diplomats take pains to establish a negotiation's procedural elements (e.g., timing, venue, and rules of engagement) in advance; they often contest or adapt these elements throughout the negotiation process. This area of diplomatic practice is under-examined in International Relations (IR). Accordingly, this research explores the following questions: *Do the procedural elements of negotiation impact the dynamics and outcomes of international peace processes? If so, how?*

This thesis argues that procedural elements have meaningful effects on negotiation dynamics and subsequent foreign policy outcomes; understanding these mechanisms is key to understanding 'power' in the international system. After critically examining existing theories of power in IR and identifying a crucial area of underdevelopment in the field's construction of 'agenda-setting power,' this thesis advances the novel 'Cubist concept of power.' Inspired by the Cubist art movement, this conceptual framework highlights the multi-dimensionality, fragmentation, and perceptual relativity of power in negotiation contexts.

This article-based thesis presents three discrete studies of illustrative procedural elements, adopting a pragmatic approach to research aims and methodologies. The first article leverages historical sources to assess US mediators' use of time pressure tactics; the second uses a web-based survey to investigate the impact of 'virtual venue' selection during the COVID-19 pandemic; and the third draws on interviews with seasoned practitioners to explore the effects of notetaking practices. All three studies validate the influence of procedural elements in shaping negotiation dynamics and outcomes. Cross-cutting findings highlight the role of technological affordances, perceptions of procedural justice, and interpersonal relationship-building. This thesis complicates existing theories of power in IR while offering policy-relevant findings to support practitioners in designing more effective peace negotiations in the future.


outcomes
agenda-setting
elements
conflict
process
virtual
international
social
practitioners
tactics
research
diplomatic
sessions
survey
concept
approach
room
view
agreement
negotiation
effects
practices
use
notetaking
analysis
justice
influence
perceptions
way
dynamics
material
notes
Cubist
deadline
role
power
interview
peace
venues
time
pressure
parties

Contents

List of figures and tables **xi**

List of abbreviations **xii**

Preface **xiv**

1. Introduction **1**
1 Research questions and aims 3
2 Academic background 4
3 Theoretical framework 7
4 Outline 8
5 Methodologies and sources 11
6 Contributions 13
References 16

2. A review of peace negotiation literature: Advancing a Cubist concept of power **19**
1 Introduction 19
2 Outline: An abductive approach 21
2.1 Focusing on power 21
2.2 Organising a conceptual arsenal 22
2.3 Proposing a negotiation/power framework 23
2.4 Defining 'negotiation' 24
3 Perspectives on power 24
4 A conceptual arsenal for negotiating power 29
4.1 One-dimensional view 29
4.2 Two-dimensional view 34
4.3 Three-dimensional view 40
4.4 Cross-cutting critiques 45
5 Examining procedural elements of agenda-setting power: A pragmatic imperative 48

6 Advancing a Cubist concept of power 49
6.1 Multi-dimensional construction 51
6.2 Fragmentation and integration 52
6.3 Perceptual relativity and limitations 53
6.4 Engaging a Cubist concept of power 55
6.5 Methodological implications 56
7 Conclusion 57
References 59

3. Against the clock: Time pressure and power in US mediation 68
Abstract 68
1 Introduction 68
2 Understanding 'time pressure' 70
2.1 Time pressure in diplomatic studies and practitioner guides 70
2.2 Time pressure in social psychology 71
2.3 Time pressure in contemporary IR scholarship 72
3 Methodology and sources 74
3.1 Research questions 74
3.2 Conceptual framework 75
3.3 Case selection and sources 78
3.4 Analytical methodology 79
4 Case I: The Dayton Accords 80
4.1 Background 80
4.2 US Role 80
4.3 Narrative index of 'time' and 'time pressure' 81
4.4 Applying the conceptual framework 86
5 Case II: The Good Friday Agreement 88
5.1 Background 88
5.2 US Role 88
5.3 Narrative index of 'time' and 'time pressure' 89
5.4 Applying the conceptual framework 93
6 Case III: The Camp David Summit 95
6.1 Background 95
6.2 US Role 96
6.3 Narrative index of 'time' and 'time pressure' 97
6.4 Applying the conceptual framework 101
7 Discussion 103
7.1 Revisiting key concepts 103

7.2 Identifying compounding variables 107
7.3 Considering constructions of 'power' 109
8 Conclusion 111
References 114

4. Virtual venues and international negotiations: Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic 122
Abstract 123
Venue choices and international negotiations 126
Methods 130
Virtual negotiation arenas 132
Contextual features 132
Negotiation tactics 135
Discussion 139
Conclusion 144
References 146

5. Thirteen ways of looking at a black notebook: Examining notetaking practices and negotiation dynamics 148
Abstract 148
1 Introduction 148
2 Notes on 'notetaking' in IR scholarship 151
2.1 International Relations theory 152
2.2 Practices, actor-network theory, and the 'new materialism' 153
2.3 Technological 'affordances' 155
3 Methodology and limitations 157
4 Findings 160
4.1 Descriptive analysis 160
4.2 Instrumental functions of notetaking 165
4.3 Performative functions of notetaking 171
5 Discussion 177
5.1 Key findings 177
5.2 A 'Cubist' approach to procedural elements in negotiation 179
5.3 Affordances and constraint 181
6 Conclusion 182
References 184

6. Discussion and conclusions 189
1 Research impetus, questions, and aims 189

2 Academic context and interventions 190
3 Key findings 193
4 Cross-cutting themes 198
4.1 Technological 'affordances' 199
4.2 Perceptions of procedural justice 202
4.3 Relationship-building and agency 205
5 Prospective application: Russia/Ukraine negotiations 209
5.1 Multi-dimensionality 211
5.2 Fragmentation and integration 213
5.3 Perceptual relativity 215
6 Summarising contributions 217
7 Limitations and further research 219
References 223

Annexes **226**
A. Meeting note: The Oxford colloquium on international mediation and armed conflict 227
B. Review: *Soft power and the future of US foreign policy* 234

List of figures and tables

A review of peace negotiation literature: Advancing a Cubist concept of power

Figure 1 Initial table arrangement 19
Figure 2 Eventual table arrangement 20
Figure 3 Mapping 'conceptual households' against Lukes's 'dimensional views' 30
Figure 4 Pablo Picasso, *Femme Assisse*, 1960 50
Figure 5 A Cubist concept of power: three commitments 55

Against the clock: Time pressure and power in US mediation

Table 1 Dramatis personae: Dayton Accords 80
Table 2 Dramatis personae: Good Friday Agreement 88
Table 3 Dramatis personae: Camp David 96

Virtual venues and international negotiations: Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic

Figure 1 Purposes of virtual meetings by diplomatic rank 132
Table 1 Virtual conference skills by gender and age 133
Table 2 Perceptions of the effectiveness of virtual venues by the ability to read the room and diplomatic rank and gender 135
Figure 2 Impact of virtual venues on the use of persuasive tactics by gender 136
Figure 3 Impact of virtual venues on the use of coercive tactics by gender 138
Table 3 Perceptions of the influence of coercive and persuasive tactics on the effectiveness of virtual negotiations 139

Thirteen ways of looking at a black notebook: Examining notetaking practices and negotiation dynamics

Table 1 Participants respond: what a notetaker should note 162
Table 2 Participants respond: notetaking as circus performance 173
Table 3 Participants respond: notetaking as signalling attention 174

List of abbreviations

AI	Artificial intelligence
ANT	Actor network theory
BATNA	Best alternative to a negotiated agreement
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019 (SARS-CoV-2)
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
G7	Group of Seven
G8	Group of Eight
EU	European Union
IDF	Israeli Defence Force
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IR	International relations
IRA	Irish Republican Army
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PA	Palestinian Authority
PM	Prime Minister
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
STS	Science and technology studies
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USIP	United State Institute of Peace
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party
WTO	World Trade Organization
ZOPA	Zone of possible agreement

Preface

"HAK requires Lake to find some quiet place."

I came across this one-line memo in the Richard Nixon Presidential Library archives while researching US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger ("HAK") and his role in the Vietnam War. With this instruction to aide Anthony Lake, Kissinger began 'setting the stage' for secret negotiations. Four years later, this backchannel culminated in the Paris Peace Accords. I was immediately struck by the line's historical significance (and its wording — the brevity! the assonance!). But as I continued my studies, I kept returning to the puzzle Kissinger's memo presented. Kissinger routinely espoused the belief that US military force would ultimately compel Hanoi's capitulation. Yet in this and many subsequent directives, he agonised over the design of negotiation sessions — from the "quiet" of the venue, to agenda sequencing, to language interpretation methods. Why was this champion of 'realpolitik' grand strategy so concerned with the 'micro' details of diplomatic procedure? Do these elements make a difference?

I have written the articles in this thesis to advance these questions. In the years since I started this research, wars have kicked off and continued apace. Russia's invasion of Ukraine and ongoing violent conflict in Gaza exact their toll; efforts to negotiate have failed or stalled. Against this backdrop, the thesis aims to offer relevant insights for diplomats designing peace processes.

Peace agreements are always a collaborative endeavour, involving both the dialogue within negotiations and a proportionally more significant amount of diplomatic legwork 'outside the room.' This thesis is no different; although it bears my name, it reflects the contributions of many generous individuals and institutions. Richard Caplan supervised the project since its inception and has supported its development at every juncture. I am particularly grateful for his magnanimity in connecting me with other researchers and practitioners for this study; he helped me get a seat at the table while encouraging me to speak in my own voice.

Writing on the development of Cubism, the painter Georges Braque reflected: "The things that Picasso and I said to one another during those years will never be

said again… it was like being roped together on a mountain." I am deeply indebted to the conversation of my fellow mountain climbers. Corneliu Bjola was instrumental in helping me develop and refine my research design; working with him to co-author a chapter of this thesis and two subsequent articles has been an education. Many colleagues at Oxford and beyond have read and commented on pieces of this project. Todd Hall, Seila Panizzolo, Jordan Branch, John Alderdice, and Matt Waldman provided insights, recommendations, and encouragement.

I would not have been able to complete this DPhil without the institutional and financial support of the Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission, Lincoln College, the Margaret C. Peabody Fellowship in International Relations, the Women in Defense scholarship, the Funds for Women Graduates, the Humanitarian Trust, and the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers. I remain grateful for their confidence in me and the opportunity they afforded me to pursue my ideas.

My deepest thanks are to my friends and family: Annee, Jack, CJ, Ester, Phoebe, and Sam; my parents, Rick and Lorelei; and my sister, Jacqui. My grandmother, Alma Lydia Garcia Coplen, was a schoolteacher who believed that education is liberation — I am so thankful for the curiosity and courage she instilled in our family. Gracias, abuela, for everything we carry on.

Port Meadow, Oxford
March 31, 2024

1

Introduction

Bill Clinton, Ehud Barak, and Yasser Arafat walk down a wooded path, cameras clicking around them. After Clinton briefly addresses the press, they continue toward a cabin. A Clinton aide is waiting there, holding one door open. There's a moment of hesitation as they decide who will enter first. Clinton quickly plunges in, but Barak and Arafat remain — each performing deference as they offer each other the door. Arafat wags his finger; Barak grabs his arm and starts pushing him through. Clinton looks back, laughing, as the two men jostle each other, then opens the door wider so they can enter side by side (Associated Press 2000). This is one of the only times the three leaders will meet face-to-face in two weeks of negotiation at the failed Camp David summit. It's a moment that illustrates the strange and fraught procedures of international relations: so much depends on the jockeying men, the thresholds they cross, and what happens at the negotiating table once the doors swing closed.

Negotiation is the primary arena (and means) through which states engage each other to shape joint foreign policy outcomes. Although negotiation is a crucial aspect of international politics, scholars of international relations (IR) rarely study negotiation as an activity in itself. As O'Neill writes, "It is hard to name an instance of international progress that came about without a negotiation," but "most IR theories de-emphasise the subject, as if states that want an agreement can just go ahead and sign one" (2018, 516). Some IR scholars argue that negotiations and their outcomes are epiphenomenal of structural factors — agreements only formalise inevitabilities or rubber-stamp the status quo. Diplomatic practitioners generally take a different view, as evidenced by the proliferation of courses and texts on negotiation

theory and practice (see: Watkins and Rosegrant 2001; Fisher, Ury, and Patton 1983; Iklé 1964; Shapiro 2017; Voss and Raz 2016; Zartman 1978; Zartman and Berman 1982). They understand negotiations as crucibles of international cooperation, from which either 'breakthrough' or 'breakdown' may emerge in contingent chains. Some contemporary IR scholars have investigated negotiation cases in this light, examining how personalities, psychological factors, and diplomatic practices co-constitute social and discursive processes to influence outcomes. These studies, however, often overlook a critical aspect of negotiation: how institutional rules and procedures themselves shape sessions and condition their results.

Diplomats have long recognised the significance of these procedural 'elements' (e.g., negotiation timelines, venue selection, and modes of communication within sessions). The historical record is rife with examples of diplomats engaging in prolonged and sometimes contentious 'pre-negotiations' in order to "agree the [negotiation] agenda and the necessary procedures for tackling it" before actually negotiating (Berridge 2015, 27). Evidently, these diplomats believe that there is power in determining the procedural 'rules of play' ahead of the game; even agreed rules are often contested and re-litigated throughout the negotiation process (see: Gewurz 2000; Gastinger 2016; Doyle and Hegele 2021).

Why? An axiom of negotiation theory holds that "process matters… the process used affects the outcomes achieved" (Menkel-Meadow 2009, 416). If true, this suggests an urgent need for IR research to scope the impact of procedural elements and develop policy-relevant recommendations for future peace processes. If, for example, modifying certain procedural elements could have opened the door (both literally and figuratively) towards more cooperative dialogue between Barak and Arafat at Camp David, IR scholars and practitioners should articulate these elements' nature and influence. Research in this area also promises to add critical nuance to the understanding of 'power' in IR theory. When and where 'powerful' actors can navigate or manipulate the procedural elements of negotiation to serve their interests, examining these mechanisms is necessary to assess 'power in practice.'

1 Research questions and aims

This thesis adopts the hypothesis that negotiation processes can and do effect change in international relations — and, while not necessarily determinative, results are shaped by the procedures used. Taking this 'common-sense' diplomatic assumption as a starting point, the constituent articles explore the questions: *Do the procedural elements of negotiation impact the dynamics and outcomes of international peace processes? If so, how?*

The following literature review chapter defines these questions' terms in detail (see page 24). In short: 'negotiations' are understood as processes wherein two or more parties aim to resolve apparently incompatible goals; they are characterised by a sequence of actions where parties address demands and proposals to each other to reach an agreement or alter the behaviour of at least one actor. This thesis sharpens its focus to examine only negotiations conducted between states during international peace processes. Procedural 'elements' are understood as the logistical and operational aspects of negotiation sessions; this can include the organisation of time, space, and modes of communication, as well as the use of material, digital, and organisational technologies. 'Dynamics' can be roughly understood as the observable strategies, behaviours, and interactions of diplomats engaged in a negotiation. The achievements or agreements reached during the peace process (or lack thereof) constitute 'outcomes.' The respective articles in this thesis outline and define additional relevant terms.

This thesis walks a fine line. It acknowledges that, while procedural elements are not necessarily 'causal,' it is nevertheless a mistake to underestimate their influence on negotiation dynamics and outcomes. The research framing can best be understood in terms of an existing 'impossibility theorem' in game theory. Myerson and Satterthwaite's impossibility theorem holds that *no procedural formula can guarantee an optimal settlement* — it is impossible to design a 'perfect process' in which parties will always recognise and achieve the available gains (1983). On the other hand, this thesis proposes a 'horrifying possibility theorem': the suggestion that

procedural elements can negatively impact otherwise productive negotiation dynamics, resulting in missed opportunities for peace and leading to continued destruction of life and livelihoods (see page 218). The articles that comprise this thesis operate in this space: between the impossibility of a perfect process and the horrifying possibility of loss resulting from an avoidably imperfect one.

This is both a pragmatic concern and a theoretical puzzle for the field of IR. By the time states consider negotiating an end to conflict, many aspects of the negotiation context are beyond any diplomat's scope of control. Aspects such as conflict 'triggers,' material realities, political ideologies, and key participants are unlikely to change in the short term. This thesis argues, however, that diplomats can still influence outcomes by adjusting the architecture of the negotiation process itself — and that this influence amounts to a source of power in the international system. As such, the thesis's aims are twofold: firstly, it aims to contribute to the broader IR theoretical development by exploring the impact of procedural elements (as an extension of 'agenda-setting power') in shaping negotiation dynamics and outcomes. Secondly, it aims to shed light on a few essential elements of negotiations. In so doing, it seeks to provide practical recommendations, grounded in rigorous analysis, for improving peace negotiation practice.

2 Academic background

Exploring the research question above situates the thesis in an ongoing theoretical debate in IR. This debate concerns the nature and exercise of power within the most high-profile, high-stakes spaces of international diplomacy. How IR scholars understand 'power' often colours their analysis of 'what's really going on' in international negotiations; similarly, diplomats who are well-versed in IR concepts often refer to and reify these constructions of power in their negotiation practice. In this way, the concept of power is co-constitutive of the discipline itself.

Realist constructions of power generally privilege the material features of state actors in the international system (e.g., military strength, economic resources,

strategic geography) as determinative (see: Morgenthau 1949; Waltz 1979; Mearsheimer 1990). They understand 'compulsory power' in a negotiation as an actor's capacity to leverage material assets and thereby compel concessions. As Krasner articulates, 'compulsory power' amounts to the "direct control of one actor over the existence or behaviour of another actor" (2011, 21303). Other scholars have examined how power manifests in international institutions, where factors such as a state's reputation or adherence to shared norms can compound or complicate their exercise of 'compulsory power' (see: Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986; Chayes and Chayes 1993; Koremenos, Lipson, and Snidal 2001). Work in this area advances the concept of 'agenda-setting power' to describe how negotiating parties can elevate or suppress salient issues according to their interests and influence. Further analyses by critical and constructivist scholars explore 'ideational power' to explain how global hegemonic systems interact with cultural forces and individual psychology to frame parties' understanding of 'what is possible' within a negotiation context (see: Cox 1987; Strange 1996). While valuable starting points, this thesis finds these existing constructions of power wanting.

As assessed in the literature review chapter, these perspectives often tend toward intrinsic, static understandings of power that are inadequate to capture the dynamic, relational nature of power in negotiation settings (see page 28). Steven Lukes's 'radical view' of power, however, productively synthesises the mainstream dimensions outlined above (roughly categorised as 'compulsory,' 'agenda-setting,' and 'ideational' power). Lukes proposes that these are additive rather than mutually exclusive 'dimensional views' of power. In doing so, Lukes stresses the extrinsic, multi-dimensional, and dynamic nature of 'power in practice' (2005). Reviewing the broad theoretical scholarship on power in IR, this thesis identifies Lukes's framework as aligning most closely with the phenomena it aims to study, as validated by the experiences of the diplomat-negotiators engaged in the thesis's research process.

As such, the subsequent chapter adopts Lukes's framework as an organising schema to map negotiation paradigms in the relevant literature (see Figure 3, page 30). This mapping exercise identifies a critical area for further theoretical

development. While there is a wealth of 'rational choice' and constructivist analyses focusing on one- and three-dimensional power perspectives, respectively, less research adopts the two-dimensional view, i.e., centring 'agenda-setting power.' Even less scholarship examines the exercise and influence of the procedural elements at the core of the research questions.

Accordingly, this thesis advocates for a broader exploration of agenda-setting power. Much of the literature on agenda-setting, particularly in the foreign policy analysis sub-discipline, frames this dimension of power as the ability of actors to determine the framework and terms of a discussion in international politics (see: Keohane 1989). This is generally understood as framing a 'policy agenda' that elaborates and orders key issues for debate and resolution. Several scholars have discussed how state and non-state actors (Rosenau 1990), information technologies and globalised media networks (Wilson 2004), international organisations and non-governmental organisations (Slaughter 2004), other corporate transnational actors (Risse 2012), and multinational epistemic communities and interest groups (Keck and Sikkink 1998) play a role in shaping the priorities and issues that are considered important in the international system. These factors similarly play a role, to varying degrees in different cases, in agenda-setting within a negotiation session.

These analyses, while helpful in understanding how actors frame 'what gets discussed,' stop short of articulating how 'agenda-setting power' may also be manifest in determining 'how it gets discussed.' Once issues are identified and elevated within an international institution — and a 'policy agenda' is clear — who decides what form the negotiation will take? And how might these parameters condition the outcomes of the discussion?

Some scholars of international institutions have approached these questions more directly. Allen and Yuen, for example, argue that "if you want to understand why the policy looks the way it does, [you] should examine how the institution shapes that policy based on institutional rules" (2022, 5). In their case studies of UN Security Council resolutions, they trace how Council rules (e.g., parliamentary procedure, whether a meeting is private or public) often have a meaningful impact on resolution

outcomes. They argue that understanding and navigating these rules allows less 'powerful' members to influence the content of a resolution without jeopardising its passage (Allen and Yuen 2022). Situated in this area of IR scholarship, the thesis adopts a definition of agenda-setting power that includes the procedural elements governing agenda management, arguing that the procedural elements of negotiation warrant examination as a feature of the international system in their own right. As the subsequent articles demonstrate, negotiation rules are not necessarily attributable to individuals and exert effects that are not reducible to 'material' or 'ideational' power explanations.

3 Theoretical framework

To pursue research in this area, the thesis introduces a novel theoretical framework: the 'Cubist concept of power,' inspired by the Cubist art movement's innovations (see page 50). Building on Lukes's taxonomy, this framework comprises three core commitments: 1) acknowledgment of power's multi-dimensionality; 2) employment of an analytical process of 'fragmentation' and 'integration,' which entails breaking down negotiation scenarios into their fundamental components in order to grasp parties' perspectives on each 'element' before synthesising insights; and 3) embrace of the principle of perceptual relativity, which acknowledges the subjective nature of 'power' as influenced by the context and by the parties/researchers participating in the signification process (see Figure 5, page 55).

To operationalise the 'Cubist concept of power,' this thesis also adopts the methodological ethos of Cubism. Cubism's emphasis on the canvas's two-dimensional nature — avoiding 'forced perspective' and the illusion of depth — guides the data collection approach. Echoing Picasso's caution against 'painting the unpaintable' (Baxandall 1985), this thesis triangulates empirical data to trace observable realities. This methodological diversity is mirrored in the thesis's chapters, which employ varied data collection techniques tailored to their respective inquiries. The subsequent articles discuss their respective methodologies in greater detail.

The 'Cubist concept of power' underpins the research within this article-based thesis, guiding the selection of topics relating to essential elements of peace negotiation architecture. While not exhaustive, the chosen subjects cover the critical aspects of time, space, and modes of communication. They also offer 'points of entry' on key issues for contemporary negotiators, notably: interpersonal relationship building, perceptions of procedural justice, and the role of technology in negotiation processes. The following section outlines the thesis's constituent articles and their interrelation before summarising its original contributions.

4 Outline

This article-based thesis is organised across five further chapters, outlined in turn.[1]

4.1 A review of peace negotiation literature: Advancing a Cubist concept of power

The initial review chapter provides an in-depth examination of the research questions and their terms, scopes the relevant literature, and introduces essential concepts, elaborating on the academic background and theoretical framework sections above. It maps this broad and interdisciplinary field by adopting a concept-driven, pragmatic research strategy for organising and comparatively assessing key ideas about negotiation processes. This article provides the theoretical backdrop for the thesis's proposed 'Cubist' framework. The Cubist approach advanced here highlights the need to 'break out' various procedural elements of negotiations for independent study. The thesis's subsequent studies tackle elements related to the principal axes of negotiation procedure: time, space, and modes of communication. These articles, prepared for publication in different academic journals (each adhering to its own style and catering to its own audience), make varying use of the exact terminology in the

[1] A note on organisation: in accordance with the thesis's article-based structure, all chapters have their own appendices/references; general annexes to the thesis follow the sixth ("Discussion and conclusions") chapter.

theoretical framework outlined in the review. They are motivated, however, by the same overarching questions, and the 'Cubist concept of power' underpins the research design and analytical method of each. The synthesis of these discrete articles is further articulated in the "Discussion and conclusions" chapter (see page 189).

4.2 Against the clock: Time pressure and power in US mediation

The first article examines the consequential effects of applying time pressure in negotiation. When negotiation procedures pit parties together 'against the clock,' does this pressure lead to more creative and collaborative solutions, or does it derail dialogue and increase intransigence? This article triangulates a 'most similar' and 'least similar' case comparison across three instances of third-party mediation during the US Clinton administration: the 1995 Dayton Accords, the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, and the 2000 Camp David Summit. Practitioner accounts and historical sources reveal the influence of several compounding variables complicating time pressure effects, such as perceptions of 'procedural justice' and mediator partiality. This study validates the thesis's core hypothesis, illustrating the impact of this procedural element in each case study. It further suggests that the exercise of 'agenda-setting power' through time pressure tactics is not a neutral procedural element. As a result, time pressure is most effective when a mediator engages it with the co-design and consent of all negotiating parties.

4.3 Virtual venues and international negotiations: Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic

The second article examines how venue selection influences negotiations. Given the research context of the COVID-19 pandemic, this study specifically investigated the shift to virtual venues such as Zoom. Are virtual venues neutral spaces, and how do the characteristics of these venues impact negotiators' ability to collaborate in pursuit of peace? Drawing on a survey of diplomats with experience in virtual venue

negotiation, this study analyses tactical adaptations and perceptions of efficacy in these venues. Validating the thesis's hypothesis about the impact of this element, diplomats unanimously agreed that virtual venue selection significantly affected their ability to build interpersonal connections, communicate effectively, and reach agreements. The study also identified novel negotiation tactics, revealing that the 'affordances' of virtual venues tend to favour coercive over persuasive negotiation styles. As such, it suggests that exercising 'agenda-setting power' by selecting a virtual venue may advantage parties with greater compulsory leverage or less incentive to make concessions. This underscores the conclusion that venue selection constitutes a strategic exercise of 'agenda-setting power,' warranting careful consideration for its potential to influence negotiation dynamics and outcomes.

4.4 Thirteen ways of looking at a black notebook: Examining notetaking practices and negotiation dynamics

The third article in this series explores how different modes of communication impact negotiation processes by examining notetaking practices as a procedural element. Does the act of inscribing verbal exchanges in text aid in streamlining negotiation processes, or alternately lead parties to be more rigid or reticent in their communications? Interviews with thirteen practitioners, including senior diplomats and mediators with extensive experience in international negotiation, formed the empirical basis for this study. These interviews indicate that while notetaking is considered a 'default' or 'background' activity in most negotiations, there is a wide range of notetaking practices. This variance is partly explained by contextual factors such as parties' concerns about transparency but is also largely a matter of practitioners' individual preferences. The study finds that notetaking serves both instrumental functions (as a means of record-keeping and information-sharing) and performative functions (as a means of signalling attention and building interpersonal trust). It is evident, however, that parties' views on these performative aspects are not universal. Opposing interpretations can adversely affect the negotiation process and

its outcomes. These practitioner interviews offer a rich qualitative validation of the thesis's hypothesis regarding the influence of procedural elements. It highlights the complexities and potential trade-offs involved in exercising 'agenda-setting power,' illustrating how something as seemingly innocuous as notetaking can indeed be an exercise of 'power in practice.'

4.5 Discussion and conclusions

The sixth chapter synthesises findings and identifies emergent cross-cutting themes. This includes articulating the interplay of technological affordances, perceptions of procedural justice, and interpersonal relationships in the implementation of procedural elements. Technological affordances shape the negotiation process by enabling or constraining certain actions, while perceptions of procedural justice influence parties' engagement and commitment to resulting agreements. Practitioner accounts in each of these studies highlight how intangible interpersonal relationships are a significant factor in negotiation dynamics as they are crucial for establishing trust and understanding. Taken together, these themes emphasise the thesis's broader argument about the multi-dimensionality of power, articulating how the exercise of agenda-setting power interacts with both material and ideational elements in negotiations. This chapter culminates in a discussion of the implications of these findings for diplomatic practice. The chapter concludes by suggesting how the 'Cubist concept of power' might guide future research.

5 Methodologies and sources

This thesis employs a pragmatic research strategy to gather insights directly from practitioners. Its constituent articles use empirical data to ground their analysis in observable evidence, enhancing the reliability and applicability of conclusions. The three primary means of data collection include historical archives, web-based surveys, and live interviews.

1. *Introduction*

The first article combines historical methodology with a dual 'most-similar' and 'least-similar' case study comparison design. Most-similar cases (Dayton and Camp David) share key features (i.e., they were both episodes of summit-style negotiations between heads of state, with a similar time pressure mediation strategy) but with different results (an agreement and no agreement, respectively). Least-similar cases (Dayton and the Good Friday process) differ significantly in their essential features (e.g., conflict context and mediator role) but share a similar outcome (a sustained peace agreement). This design puts the thesis's core hypothesis under pressure: if similar processes yield different results, while different processes yield similar results, one might argue that procedural elements have little effect on ultimate outcomes. Triangulating historical data from practitioner accounts, contemporary interviews, and archival research, however, this study reveals patterns of 'compounding variables' that modulate the effects of the time pressure element across these cases.

The second article in this series employs survey methods with both quantitative and qualitative components. This study used a web-based questionnaire to solicit voluntary respondents with experience in virtual venue negotiations. As a result, it drew on a diverse sample of diplomatic practitioners across global geographies and levels of seniority. While multiple-choice and sliding-scale questions allow for standardisation and comparison of responses through statistical analysis, open-ended qualitative questions mitigate researcher bias by allowing participants to respond in their own terms. The survey's digital recruitment and dissemination strategy, combined with a targeted question frame, present research questions in a structured and accessible format to facilitate respondent engagement. These rapid responses from practitioners 'in the field' allow for real-time investigation of an evolving aspect of diplomatic practice.

The third article adopts a semi-structured interview method, engaging diplomats directly with questions about their experience over decades of negotiation practice. Similar to the benefits of the mixed survey question frame in the second article, this semi-structured approach allows for cross-participant comparison on a

few key questions. At the same time, it provides the flexibility to adapt questions based on the flow of conversation and practitioners' own perspectives. Participants were encouraged to cite examples from first-hand experience, adding authenticity and depth to the resulting data. Interviews frequently exceeded their scheduled time, serving as a testament to the method's effectiveness in engaging participants and uncovering unanticipated insights.

Further details of the studies' constituent methodologies, their limitations, and the measures taken to mitigate these limitations are outlined in the articles themselves and synthesised in the final chapter. Given the thesis's pragmatic research aims, acknowledged limitations are not critical; although the research does provide recommendations and considerations for 'best practice,' it refrains from asserting universal generalisability or making causal claims. Considering the standard of evidence accordingly, this thesis suggests that if a majority of practitioners indicate that a procedural element is influential in negotiation processes, this is sufficient evidence of its influence.

Despite the diverse methodologies applied in this series of articles, all research findings converge to validate the thesis's core hypothesis. This consensus across varied approaches bolsters the validity of the conclusion that procedural elements do indeed have a meaningful impact on the dynamics of negotiation processes and their subsequent results.

6 Contributions

This thesis makes several pragmatic and academic contributions to an urgent area of IR research. Studying negotiation as an activity itself is a vital yet underdeveloped area of IR scholarship that promises to provide insights into the underlying principles, strategies, and power dynamics that drive successful conflict resolution at the highest levels. Research for this thesis began in 2020. Since then, Russia's further invasion of Ukraine (and several abortive attempts at negotiating peace) has only emphasised the timeliness and significance of this research. In 2022, fatalities from armed conflict

increased by 97% compared to the previous year, owing in large part to the onset of state-based wars; trends in the past decade suggest an increase in conflict between states, including cases where major powers support opposite parties in internationalised intrastate conflicts (Davies, Pettersson et al. 2022, Davies, Pettersson et al. 2023). In light of these developments, this thesis offers three relevant contributions to the field: original data, an innovative conceptual approach, and policy-relevant recommendations.

Each study collects data relevant to designing more effective peace negotiation processes. The first study applies a new research lens to existing historical data — analysing archival sources and practitioner accounts and compiling a comprehensive narrative index of references to 'time' and 'time pressure' across three cases. The second study represents a 'first wave' study of virtual venues — using a replicable question frame to collect original data on an emerging area of diplomatic practice. Published in *International Negotiation* and adapted as a chapter in *The Palgrave Handbook of Diplomatic Reform and Innovation* (see: Bjola and Coplen 2023), this article has contributed to a burgeoning area of 'digital diplomacy' scholarship. The third study generated original data in a 'first of its kind' line of inquiry, comprising over thirteen hours of interviews with international negotiation experts. Drawing directly from practitioner accounts, the thesis's original data collection offerings bridge a critical gap between diplomatic practice and academic research.

The conceptual framework underpinning the thesis also makes a valuable contribution to IR theory. Most notably, this thesis expands the definition of 'agenda-setting power' to encompass not only actors' ability to determine which issues gain prominence or are suppressed in negotiation contexts, but also how seemingly apolitical procedural elements influence how the agenda can be discussed. The 'Cubist concept of power' offers an innovative framework for understanding the multi-dimensionality of power in negotiation contexts. It also suggests an analytical schema for future negotiation research, dissecting procedural elements and integrating views on these fragments to form a more comprehensive understanding of the negotiation context. It additionally highlights the relational and extrinsic

nature of power, emphasising the need for critical assessments of perceptual relativity and positionality in the study and practice of negotiation. Finally, these studies offer recommendations and considerations for practitioners looking to design more efficacious peace processes. These are further detailed in the articles themselves and synthesised in the final chapter.

References

Allen, Susan, and Amy Yuen. 2022. *Bargaining in the UN Security Council: Setting the Global Agenda*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Associated Press. 2000. "USA: Camp David Summit: Photo Op." Video archive. Associated Press Newsroom. 2000. https://newsroom.ap.org/editorial-photos-videos/detail?itemid=faf687477e42e11038d143ce57af0b8c.

Baxandall, Michael. 1985. "Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures." New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Berridge, G. R. 2015. *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*. 5th ed. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK : Imprint: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bjola, Corneliu, and Michaela Coplen. 2023. "Digital Diplomacy in the Time of the Coronavirus Pandemic: Lessons and Recommendations." In *The Palgrave Handbook of Diplomatic Reform and Innovation*, 323–42. Studies in Diplomacy and International Relations. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Chayes, Abram, and Antonia Handler Chayes. 1993. "On Compliance." *International Organization*.

Cox, Robert W. 1987. *Production, Power and World Order: Social Forces in the Making of History. Cox, Robert W., 1926-2018. Power and Production ; v. 1*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Doyle, Lindsey, and Lukas Hegele. 2021. "Talks before the Talks: Effects of Pre-Negotiation on Reaching Peace Agreements in Intrastate Armed Conflicts, 2005–15." *Journal of Peace Research*.

Fisher, Roger, William Ury, and Bruce Patton. 1983. *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In*. London: Hutchinson.

Gastinger, Markus. 2016. "The Tables Have Turned on the European Commission: The Changing Nature of the Pre-Negotiation Phase in EU Bilateral Trade Agreements." *Journal of European Public Policy*.

Gewurz, Ilan G. 2000. "Transition from Conflict: The Importance of Pre-Negotiations in the Oslo Peace Process." *Israel Affairs*.

Iklé, Fred Charles. 1964. *How Nations Negotiate: Written under the Auspices of the Center for International Affairs, Harvard University*. 1st ed. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Keck, Margaret E., and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Free Online Access: Knowledge Unlatched. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Keohane, Robert O. 1989. *Power and Interdependence*. 2nd ed. New York: HarperCollins.

Koremenos, Barbara, Charles Lipson, and Duncan Snidal. 2001. "The Rational Design of International Institutions." *International Organization*.

Krasner, Stephen D. 2011. "Changing State Structures: Outside In." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 108 (4): 21302–7.

Kratochwil, Friedrich, and John Gerard Ruggie. 1986. "International Organization: A State of the Art on an Art of the State." *International Organization*.

Lukes, Steven. 2005. *Power: A Radical View*. 2nd ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mearsheimer, John J. 1990. "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War." *International Security*.

Menkel-Meadow, Carrie. 2009. "Chronicling the Complexification of Negotiation Theory and Practice." *Negotiation Journal*.

Morgenthau, Hans J. 1949. *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York, NY: Knopf.

Myerson, Roger B., and Mark A. Satterthwaite. 1983. "Efficient Mechanisms for Bilateral Trading." *Journal of Economic Theory*.

O'Neill, Barry. 2018. "International Negotiation: Some Conceptual Developments." *Annual Review of Political Science*.

Risse, Thomas. 2012. "Transnational Actors and World Politics." In *Handbook of International Relations*, edited by Walter Carlsnaes, Beth A. Simmons, and Risse, Thomas. London: Sage Publications.

Rosenau, James N. 1990. *Turbulence in World Politics: A Theory of Change and Continuity*. New York, NY: Harverster Wheatsheaf.

Shapiro, Daniel. 2017. *Negotiating the Nonnegotiable: How to Resolve Your Most Emotionally Charged Conflicts*. [Expanded edition]. New York, NY: Penguin Books.

Slaughter, Anne-Marie. 2004. *A New World Order*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Strange, Susan. 1996. *The Retreat of the State: The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy*. *Cambridge Studies in International Relations ; 49*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Voss, Christopher, and Tahl Raz. 2016. *Never Split the Difference: Negotiating as If Your Life Depended on It*. London: Random House Business.

Waltz, Kenneth N. 1979. *Theory of International Politics*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Watkins, Michael, and Susan Rosegrant. 2001. *Breakthrough International Negotiation: How Great Negotiators Transformed the World's Toughest Post-Cold War Conflicts*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Wilson, Ernest J., III. 2004. *The Information Revolution and Developing Countries*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Zartman, I. William. 1978. *The Negotiation Process: Theories and Applications*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Zartman, I. William, and Maureen R. Berman. 1982. *The Practical Negotiator*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

2

A review of peace negotiation literature: Advancing a Cubist concept of power

1 Introduction

Three delegations walk into a negotiating room. The tables look like this (Figure 1):

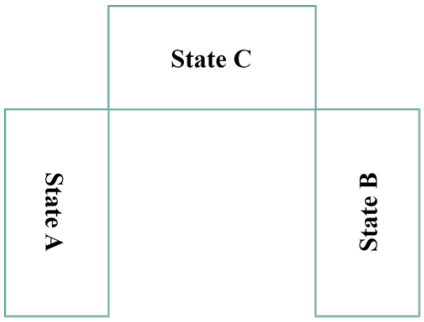


Figure 1: Initial table arrangement

Things are already tense. Six months ago, State A invaded State B. Now State B is hosting a conference to kick off peace negotiations. They've asked State C to mediate. The U-shaped table arrangement reflects a political consideration: State B's delegation doesn't want to speak directly with State A's. They worry their constituents and regional allies will see their bilateral engagement as capitulation, tacitly legitimising State A and its occupying force. They would prefer to keep their distance, emphasising State C's role as broker (and primary scapegoat or guarantor of whatever the process yields). States A and C are having none of it. Argument ensues. Journalists invited to cover the conference are waiting, impatient, outside. With an ear to the wall, they can hear raised voices and furniture being dragged. When the diplomats finally open the door, the tables look like this (Figure 2):

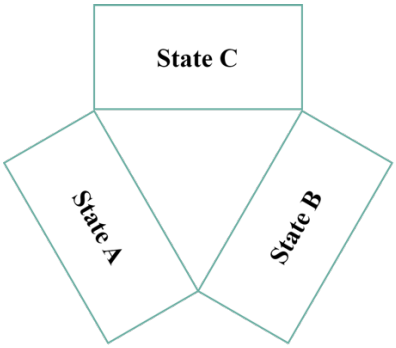


Figure 2: Eventual table arrangement

A compromise, reached by each side tilting 45 degrees. The outcome is more than optical; there's a subtle but substantive shift as State B concedes to more direct dialogue and co-ownership of the peace process. In a few months, the two states will complete and sign an agreement to end the state of war.[2]

On one level, this episode is patently absurd. Shouldn't these negotiators be more concerned with the disposition of armed forces than the furniture arrangement? As troops kill citizens on city streets, why waste time arguing about the corner where tables touch? And yet, the historical record is rife with similar stories. States in conflict often take pains to 'set the stage' for peace talks, with 'pre-negotiation' dialogues establishing the 'rules of play' they will follow. Arguments over these procedural elements — such as venue, agenda, and rules of engagement — are often protracted and sometimes continue throughout the negotiation process itself (Berridge 2015, 27). Evidently, diplomats believe these elements can be consequential.

This phenomenon raises questions core to the field of International Relations (IR): Do negotiation processes effect change in foreign policy outcomes? Does *how* states negotiate affect the results they achieve? Or, from a different angle: Do the procedural elements of negotiation impact the dynamics and outcomes of international peace processes? If so, how?

[2] The case outlined here draws on the 'table arrangement battle' at the outset of the 1983 Israel-Lebanon peace talks, mediated by the United States (Singer 2021, 410–13).

2 Outline: An abductive approach

This literature review approaches these questions by adopting the pragmatic research strategy of 'abduction.' Initially formulated by Peirce as an approach to knowledge production in the sciences (1965, 2: 619–44), an abductive approach can be understood as a 'middle way' operating between deductive and inductive reasoning (and combining aspects of both).[3] As elaborated by Friedrichs and Kratochwil, abduction is a particularly appropriate strategy when a researcher "[becomes] aware of a certain class of phenomena… for which we lack applicable theories" and intuits that "the observed class of phenomena is not random" (2009, 709). The abductive researcher subsequently "[starts] collecting pertinent observations and, at the same time, applying concepts from existing fields of our knowledge," ultimately "[leading] to a framework of analysis (or set of propositions, or even theory) to grasp the class of phenomena as it evolves in the process of our inquiry" (Ibid).

Starting from the observation that squabbling over the procedural elements of negotiation is a common feature of most peace processes — and trusting that this "class of phenomena" is too consistent to be random or inconsequential — this review proceeds in three stages. First, it assembles a conceptual arsenal from existing stockpiles: scholarship in international relations (IR) theory, diplomatic studies on negotiation, and political psychology.

2.1 Focusing on power

Foremost among the concepts examined in this first stage is 'power.' Why? To start with, diplomats often reference constructions of power in their accounts of negotiation (e.g., 'hard power' and 'soft power'; 'bargaining power'; 'great power' and 'small power'; 'balance of power'), adopting some fundamental assumptions about 'what power is' and 'what power does' even as they critique these terms and suggest

[3] Several other prominent IR scholars have also discussed 'abduction' (see: Wendt 1999, 63; Ruggie, 94; Checkel 2001, 567; Finnemore 2003, 14; Pouliot 2007, 375).

alternatives. A focus on power, therefore, not only follows the pragmatic injunction to take consensus and 'common-sense' in communities of practice seriously (Bicchi 2022), but also offers a window into understanding how diplomats reify and respond to perceptions of power in a negotiation context — and the consequences of this interaction.

Thinking in terms of power also reflects the orientation and aims of this research. As Guzzini argues, the concept of power is linked to a sense of politics as 'the art of the possible.' "'Power' implies an idea of counterfactuals," he writes, "i.e., it could also have been otherwise" (Guzzini 2007, 24). In this way, focusing on power stresses the contingency of — and scope for agency within — peace processes. Rather than framing the procedural elements of negotiation as apolitical or as inevitable constraints, a 'power lens' highlights diplomats' capacity to design and disrupt the architecture of negotiation sessions and thereby shape existential foreign policy outcomes.

Finally, 'power' is a concept that is co-constitutive of IR as a discipline (Connolly 1974). Debates on the nature and exercise of power are often cited as dividing IR theory into competing camps, resulting in an "(un)discipline" (Mattern 2008). In the first stage of this review, then, an overview of IR theory constructions of power situates the research questions in a broader disciplinary context, investigating points of divergence as well as synthesis and agreement. Lukes's 'radical view of power' is identified as a particularly apt integrative framework for understanding power in negotiation contexts, given its emphasis on power as dynamic and relational and its assertion that 'dimensions' of power are additive rather than mutually exclusive (2005).

2.2 Organising a conceptual arsenal

The second stage of this review assesses existing concepts across the literatures that constitute its multidisciplinary 'field of knowledge' (e.g., IR theory, diplomatic studies, and political psychology). These concepts were selected over an iterative (and

yearslong) process according to their historic predominance in the field, recurrence in contemporary negotiation accounts, or their relevance for the motivating research questions. Following the abductive approach, in this stage, the review identifies "patterns of similarity and difference" across these bodies of work (Friedrichs and Kratochwil 2009, 717). Lukes's 'dimensional views' of power provide an organising framework for sorting concepts into categories of 'family resemblance.'

In this way, the review echoes existing scholarship that "loosely [associates]" Lukes's 'compulsory,' 'agenda-setting,' and 'ideational' dimensions of power with "the familiar IR tripartite of realism, institutionalism/regime theory and constructivism/postmodernism" (Berenskoetter and Williams 2007, 3). Crucially, rather than framing these conceptual groups as 'feuding families,' this review understands them as related (nested, generational) 'households' of ideas. As such, it follows Kornprobst's enjoinder that IR paradigms need not be considered exhaustive and incommensurable. "It is much more plausible to understand [IR] as a constellation of overlapping horizons," he writes, "than a field dotted with hermetically sealed paradigms" (Kornprobst 2009, 88). Mapping these 'overlapping horizons' enables this review to identify critical areas of saturation (verging on redundancy) as well as areas for further theoretical development. In particular, this review notes an underdeveloped 'gap' in research that understands the procedural elements of negotiation as a form of 'agenda-setting power.'

2.3 Proposing a negotiation/power framework

After mapping existing concepts of power against negotiation paradigms across a multidisciplinary 'field of knowledge,' in its third and final stage, this review proposes a 'Cubist concept of power' for application in future negotiation theory and practice. In keeping with an abductive research strategy, this flexible framework aims to "[map] a class of phenomena" to "increase cognitive understanding and/or practical manipulability" rather than for the purposes of causal theorising (Friedrichs and Kratochwil 2009, 716). Inspired by the Cubist art movement, this framework involves:

an appreciation of the multi-dimensionality of power in negotiation contexts, employment of an analytical process of 'fragmentation' and 'integration,' and a degree of humility and reflexivity in acknowledging perceptual relativity. This review concludes by exploring the potential application of a 'Cubist concept of power' and its relevance for IR scholars and practitioners alike.

2.4 Defining 'negotiation'

Although "negotiations between state representatives are one of the most frequently occurring and consequential practices of international relations," and "interstate negotiations are the primary means by which international conflicts are resolved" (Naurin, Naurin, and Alexander 2019), negotiation itself remains an under-examined area of diplomatic practice. What does 'negotiation' mean in this context? According to Pruitt and Carnevale's widely referenced definition, negotiation is "a discussion between two or more parties aimed at resolving incompatible goals" (1993). Similarly, Odell defines negotiation as "a sequence of actions in which [parties] address demands and proposals to each other for the ostensible purposes of reaching an agreement and changing the behaviour of at least one actor" (2000). Barley describes a negotiation process as the "bounded encounters into which actors knowingly enter and during which they employ behaviours calculated for those situations alone" (1991; as quoted in: Kramer and Messick 1995). This review adopts the above definitions but sharpens its focus to examine *negotiations conducted during international peace processes*. These are negotiations *between states*, aimed at *resolving armed conflicts*, representing a distinct subset of diplomatic negotiations where stakes are at their highest (life-or-death).

3 Perspectives on power

An abductive research strategy constructs a 'field of research' around the phenomena it aims to study. It does this by examining the intersection of a few core concepts. Accordingly, the initial stage of this review establishes its first axis of inquiry: power.

Early work on 'power' in IR theory, advanced by realists, offers an essentially materialist understanding (Morgenthau 1949; Waltz 1979; Mearsheimer 1990). Realist accounts tend to frame power as an intrinsic quality of states, resulting from tangible elements of the international system (e.g., military strength, economic resources, and strategic geography). Accordingly, the 'stuff' of power constitutes a causal force itself; states with comparative material advantages can enact a tangible reward or exact a tangible loss. That is, they can "alter the material costs and benefits of compliance" and thereby influence other states' foreign policy decisions (Guzzini 2005). In this way, power is understood as a state's ability to compel the actions of other states. As Baldwin describes, it is a "type of causation," wherein 'actor A' induces 'actor B' to "do what it would otherwise not do" (Baldwin 2000). From this perspective, power in a negotiation is the ability to levy the 'consequence' in the 'logic of consequences' — military and economic manoeuvring eventually bring parties to agreement. In this view, dynamics internal to the negotiation process are mostly immaterial, as outcomes are epiphenomenal of these external, material factors.

Alongside this realist tradition, institutionalist scholars develop another construction of power that is decoupled from overt conflict and material consequences. This perspective draws out the distinction between 'actual' and 'potential' power, where an actor's potential power — whether understood as 'threat,' 'coercion,' or 'persuasion'— precedes and is often indistinguishable from 'actual' power in its effects on foreign policy decisions (Mattern 2008). Bachrach and Baratz articulate the concept of a 'second face' of power to explain how materially powerful states can exert potential power through international institutions (Bachrach and Baratz 1962). In negotiation processes convened by the powerful or within the organisations they design, states exploit their influence or position to compel agreement and silence dissent. Other areas of institutionalist literature, particularly Chayes and Chayes, echo this idea, arguing that power is also manifest in 'non-events' (1993). For instance, states' failure to agree on, or even discuss, a mutually beneficial ceasefire due to one party's actual or anticipated objections may evidence that party's power within the institution. Scholars of international society have further elaborated

how potential power relates to intangible variables (e.g., states' identities, relationships, and shared norms) to influence joint foreign policy outcomes (Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986).

The concept of 'structural power' extends beyond material and institutional factors to examine how power co-constitutes global economic and social systems. Drawing on Gramsci's concept of hegemony, theorists adopting structural perspectives on power examine how 'powerful' actors co-opt the less powerful into complying with their own domination (Chase-Dunn 1989). This construction of power has different foundations than those articulated above — power operates at the level of individual and collective psychology to shape ideas of 'what is possible' in the international system. To draw out the previous example: if a 'powerful' actor is unlikely to agree to a ceasefire, not only would the issue not be raised, but the very idea of a ceasefire might be unimaginable to the parties who would most benefit from it. Relatedly, Marxist scholars suggest that the actors who enjoy structural power are not states but the global capitalist elites and interest groups operating within and among them (Strange 1996). Theorists like Foucault similarly point to knowledge production as a source of power, 'stacking the deck' in terms of what outcomes are conceivable within a given institution (Shani and Chandler 2010). These scholars argue that considering material resources and institutional positionality provides only a partial view of power — global relationships between market and class are also influential.

Several IR scholars have proposed integrative frameworks to reconcile these perspectives. Joseph Nye's taxonomy of 'hard' versus 'soft' power is a seminal contribution in this area. Nye contrasts 'hard power,' grounded in military and economic capabilities, with 'soft power,' emanating from cultural influence, political values, and policies (2021). While this construction has gained influence across the academia/practice divide, some scholars argue that 'hard' and 'soft' "may have "outlasted their utility as distinct analytical categories in an age where international

relations increasingly elide binaries" (Coplen 2023).[4] These descriptive shortcomings are particularly pronounced in examining peace processes — a 'soft power' activity set in motion by, and ultimately accountable to, the exercise of 'hard power.' Barnett and Duvall similarly advance a taxonomy of power in four parts: compulsory, institutional, structural, and productive power (2005). The first three categories generally correspond to the three approaches to power outlined in the preceding three paragraphs respectively. Crucially, Barnett and Duvall advance a fourth, 'productive power' category to differentiate between the structural effects of hegemonic economic systems and more subtle, socially constructed forms of power. Barnett and Duvall's concept of 'productive power' aligns with constructivist IR analyses that emphasise how social processes and discursive practices can shape identities, interests, and outcomes. These integrative frameworks are a helpful starting point for understanding the coexistence of various forms of power, but they share significant challenges when applied to negotiations.

The existing concepts of power outlined above span a spectrum, with some locating power as an intrinsic attribute and others viewing it as an extrinsic dynamic.[5] Lukes criticises existing perspectives, arguing that they tend toward intrinsic explanations that frame power as a capacity rather than as a relation (2005). This argument chimes with similar critiques that suggest a concept of power in IR should not be inert or static but fluid and outcome-oriented. O'Neill compares the concept of power to the defunct scientific concept of 'phlogiston' to highlight the shortcomings of intrinsic-leaning definitions. "[Saying] a party succeeds because it has power," he argues, is akin to arguing that an object combusts because it 'has phlogiston,' and "just as empty. It sounds like a theory but does not help us explain observable regularities" (O'Neill 2018). As Guzzini writes, it is perhaps less useful to define what power *is* than to examine what it *does* (2005). Investigating power in

[4] This author summarises this view in a piece in *International Affairs*, see Annex B, page 234.
[5] 'Intrinsic' means an inherent property of an entity, deriving from its capabilities or resource. 'Extrinsic' means relational, dependent on the context and the interactions between entities.

negotiation processes, then, should not only comprise an understanding of parties' relative material, institutional, structural, and social dis/advantages but also examine how these and other factors influence internal dynamics to produce outcomes — in short, it should track the application of power in practice.

In this manner, Lukes offers a 'three-dimensional' taxonomy for understanding how power operates in political systems (2005). While Lukes doesn't explicitly approach the topic of international negotiation, this review finds Lukes's framework is particularly useful as applied to negotiation contexts for three reasons: it frames power dimensions as additive rather than mutually exclusive; it identifies power sources as extrinsic as well as intrinsic; and it understands power relations as dynamic rather than static.

Briefly: Lukes's 'one-dimensional view' of power focuses on observable behaviour in decision-making processes, where the ability of one actor to influence policy outcomes despite an explicit conflict of interests is evidence of that actor's power. His 'two-dimensional view' reveals how power extends to control over the policy agenda and the ability to prevent certain conflicts or grievances from ever reaching the decision-making table. It emphasises the power to suppress and manage issues, thereby shaping policy debates without overt conflict. Lastly, Lukes's 'three-dimensional view' goes further, delving into the subtle ways power can shape and determine actors' interests and behaviours, sometimes through social forces and institutional practices, and often without their conscious knowledge. It examines the power to shape perceptions, cognitions, and preferences such that actors accept their role in the existing order of things — either because they can imagine no alternative or because they see it as immutable.

Crucially, these dimensions are not 'level based' — individual, state-level, and systemic factors alike can exert or be subject to forms of compulsory, agenda-setting, and ideational power.[6] This provides a useful integrative framework for organising an

[6] The 'levels of analysis' analytical approach provides a tripartite framework for understanding global politics (Singer 1961). It includes the individual level, focusing on personal attributes and actions of leaders; the state level, examining national

arsenal of relevant negotiation scholarship in the review's subsequent stage. Following an abductive approach, this review proceeds by overlaying Lukes's dimensional views of power with existing concepts relevant to the research question (*Does how states negotiate affect the results they achieve?*). As Brulé notes, the intellectual history of any field is "the story of the rise and decline of theories in the marketplace of ideas" (2008). The genealogy of peace negotiation studies has always been diverse, drawing on literature from IR theory, diplomatic studies, and political psychology; many paradigms have risen and fallen in this marketplace.[7] Charting negotiation paradigms against Lukes's dimensions (as represented in Figure 3), this review provides a comparative view of this interdisciplinary conceptual arsenal — clarifying areas of saturation and 'gaps' for further development.

4 A conceptual arsenal for negotiating power

4.1 One-dimensional view

Lukes's 'one-dimensional view' of power focuses on 'compulsory' manifestations, framing power as the capacity of an actor to shape joint policy outcomes by leveraging their material power and institutional position toward their desired solution despite a conflict of interests with other actors. This view emphasises the observable outcomes of negotiation processes (e.g., concessions, agreements, stalemates) as indicators of power dynamics therein. In answer to the question motivating this literature review — *does how states negotiate affect the results they can achieve?* — concepts associated with this dimension offer a qualified 'no.' They suggest negotiation processes and outcomes are epiphenomenal of exogenous factors. Rooted in a rationalist framework, these paradigms propose that parties enter

characteristics and policies; and the systemic level, considering the dynamics of the international system.

[7] While Kornprobst observes that the term 'paradigm' carries some associative baggage in IR, generally understood as connoting incommensurable bodies of work (2009), the use of the 'paradigm' in this review more closely aligns with Kornprobst's 'overlapping horizons,' or Kuhn's original definition of the term: "a set of concepts" or "thought patterns" (1996).

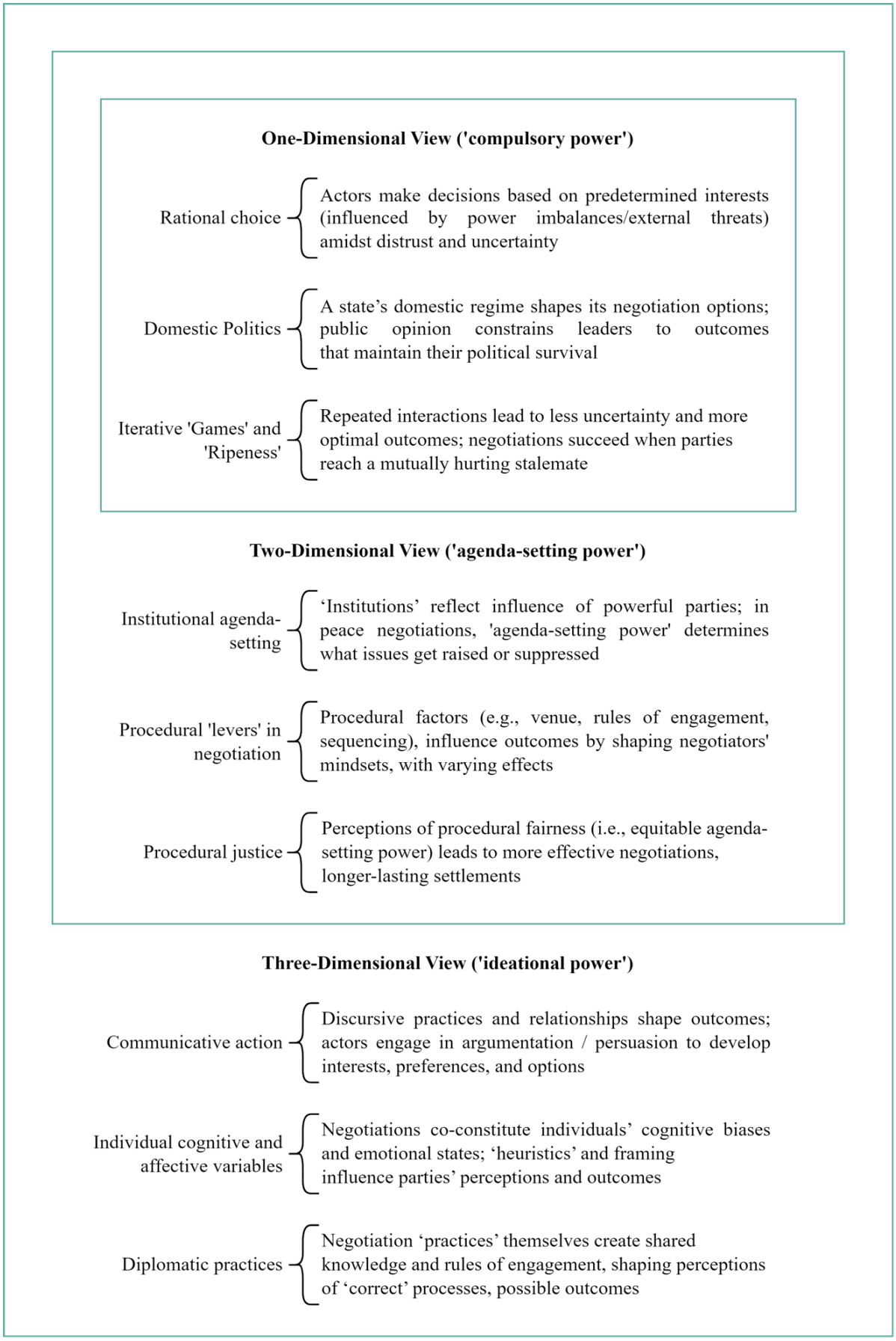


Figure 3: Mapping 'conceptual households' against Lukes's 'dimensional views'

negotiations with a predetermined and generally unchanging 'solution set,' underpinned by their relative power dis/advantages, inherently limiting the range of possible outcomes.

4.1.1 Rational choice

Recognising that "rational choice is not one theory" (Quackenbush 2004), general similarities in work under this paradigm can nevertheless be identified. With origins in Hume's account of agency — "an agent has beliefs and preferences… and acts so as to satisfy his or her preferences in accordance with his or her beliefs" (Hume 1739; as quoted in: Dietrich and List 2013) — a rational choice analysis generally takes parties' positions and interests in a negotiation as exogenous. Negotiation is, then, viewed as a "rational, strategic, and calculative activity" wherein actors make deliberate choices and trade-offs between predetermined interests and opportunities (Jönsson 2015).

The perception of a power imbalance between states significantly influences the decision-making process, with external threats leading to greater rigidity as it "constrains the options decision makers can seriously consider pursuing" in a negotiation (Herrmann et al. 1997).[8] In rational choice models, negotiation processes are fraught with distrust and ambiguity about others' intentions and capabilities. This uncertainty results in an unreliable system wherein actors "have to infer, often imperfectly or at high cost, from the behaviour of others" (Hafner-Burton et al. 2017). Communication cannot remedy these informational gaps; "Due to fear and mistrust, diplomats rely on their relative power — rather than what others claim — as a proxy for intentions" (Wong 2016; paraphrasing Press 2005). Commitment problems stemming from this uncertainty can either compel agreement or spiral into further conflict (see: Jervis 1976). In short, a rational choice framework assumes that the volatility of the international system and uncertainty regarding other parties' intent

[8] This relates to the 'threat rigidity hypothesis': external threats lead to increased rigidity in decision-making, narrowing actors' perceptivity and reliance on existing decision-making procedures (Renshon and Renshon 2008).

and capabilities shape not only actors' framing of power and threat but also the possible 'solution set' they will consider.

4.1.2 Domestic politics

Beyond the balance of resources and forces, several scholars have suggested other factors that influence negotiation parties' rational choice calculations — i.e., what shapes their 'solution set' within a negotiation. Scholars in this area suggest that "domestic rationality may produce international irrationality" (Goldgeier and Tetlock 2001). Work examining the influence of domestic politics acknowledges that international actors represent diverse forms of domestic governmental organisation and it explores how this variation affects negotiation processes and outcomes. Early work under this umbrella argues that "the relatively objective attributes of the nations" (e.g., their sociocultural background, economic development, regional affiliation) are strong predictors of negotiation outcomes; that is, "what nations are" determines "what nations do" (Druckman and Mahoney 1977). Among these attributes, regime type has received considerable academic attention. 'Democratic peace theory' is one example of work in this vein, which argues that domestic institutions with constitutional checks meaningfully constrain the foreign policy options of democratic leaders engaged in a negotiation (Cuhadar et al. 2017).

Likewise, some work in this area contends that domestic public opinion can influence negotiation processes and outcomes, depending on a state's regime type and stability. Putnam's two-level game concept articulates this constraint: leaders must find solutions to foreign policy problems at the intersection of international and domestic win-sets (Putnam 1988; see also: Kaarbo 2015). Work in this area suggests that "leaders choose policy alternatives that promote their maintenance of office, or domestic political survival;" leaders "must provide policies that satisfy a subset… of the group with the authority to remove the leader from office — the *selectorate*" (which may, in some regimes, be a small segment of the population) (Brulé 2008). This 'selectorate,' or 'winning coalition,' can shape the 'solution set' a leader deems viable.

In this way, the domestic audience holds leaders accountable for what they say and do in international negotiations. Authoritarian regimes are often assumed to be less susceptible to domestic political constraints within a negotiation process, though recently, this has been more widely contested (see: Houghton 2007).

4.1.3 Iterative 'games' and 'ripeness'

Taken together, scholarship in the conceptual 'household' outlined above offers partial accounts for how factors outside the negotiation room predetermine what is achievable therein. As negotiation practitioners and game theorists might put it: the disposition of material power within the conflict context, alongside domestic factors, shapes parties' rational BATNAs ('best alternative to a negotiated agreement'). The resulting ZOPA ('zone of possible agreement') can be understood as the overlapping set of outcomes that both parties value at least as highly as their BATNAs (Raiffa, Richardson, and Metcalfe 2002). Essentially, then, the negotiation process involves assessing the contours of this ZOPA; agency within a negotiation is limited to actors' ability to optimise matches between their interests and policy options within these established parameters.

While game theory posits that negotiation outcomes may not always be optimal due to uncertainties or imperfect information (O'Neill 2018), studies on 'iterated play,' such as those by Krebs and Rapport, suggest that repeated interactions between states can mitigate this issue. As states recognise that they must engage each other repeatedly, they "lengthen the shadow of the future" — providing more opportunities to increase confidence and move stepwise toward mutually beneficial solutions (Krebs and Rapport 2012). Negotiation processes, ideally, constitute such 'iterative games.' They provide mechanisms of accountability, transparency, and verification within which actors can rationally trust one another and mitigate commitment problems (Pursiainen and Matveeva 2016; Renshon, Lee, and Tingley 2017).

The final concept relevant under Lukes's one-dimensional view of power is the concept of conflict 'ripeness.' Zartman's seminal paradigm of negotiation efficacy posits that conflicts reach 'ripeness for resolution' when parties enter a 'mutually hurting stalemate' (Zartman 2007). This stalemate exists only when all parties perceive that continued unilateral action is a 'dead end,' or an existential threat. They must also perceive a viable path to resolution, either through a new negotiation process or renewed optimism in an existing one. Work that considers the concept of 'ripeness' generally understands that 'ripeness' itself is an insufficient, but perhaps necessary, condition for parties to reach an agreement (O'Neill 2018). Elements of compulsory power bring each side to the point of needing an agreement to end conflict; successful negotiations capitalise on this moment.

In short: work operating under the one-dimensional view of power in a negotiation (A compels B to accede toward A's position) affords dynamics within negotiation sessions themselves little influence on negotiation outcomes. Parties reach the 'negotiating room' with their interests and policy options already determined by exogenous factors. Where one party can influence these factors — either materially (e.g., rolling out a bombing campaign) or in terms of domestic political stability (e.g., sanctioning the 'selectorate' or pushing a public diplomacy campaign) — they can degrade their counterpart's BATNA and/or expand the ZOPA. The negotiation process is only consequential in that it *is* a process – i.e., an opportunity for repeated 'games' that may reduce uncertainty and commitment costs. The most decisive causal factor in this view, then, is whether the negotiation happens at the right (or the 'ripe') time.

4.2 Two-dimensional view

Concepts that align with Lukes's 'two-dimensional view' of power offer another perspective, wherein factors endogenous to the negotiation process are afforded more explanatory value. In this view, non-decisions and non-events are also understood as potential imprints of power; 'agenda-setting power' may manifest without overt conflict. This view highlights how parties to a conflict are embedded in and

influenced by the architecture of the peace process. Actors are not autonomous, and elements of the institutional environment may dis/advantage one side compared to the other (Berenskoetter and Williams 2007). To the question, *Does how states negotiate affect the results they can achieve?*, researchers who adopt this view suggest: "yes" — "the process used affects the outcomes achieved" (Menkel-Meadow 2009). Scholarship in this area identifies several ways in which the procedural elements of negotiation may impact the course and consequence of peace processes — with or without diplomats' awareness and intent.

4.2.1 Agenda-setting within the 'institution' of negotiation

In IR theory, the concept of an international 'institution' suffers familiar definitional bloat and ambiguity. While often used to refer to formal international organisations, here the term institution means a "system of constitutive and regulative rules" for governing international affairs (Midgaard 1983). This definition allows for fruitful application of concepts in the institutionalist literature to research on peace negotiation processes.

Work in this area contends that institutional design reflects the relative material power of institutional members; more 'powerful' members have more sway in the re/production of an institution (Keohane 1984). Some scholars suggest that institutions also reflect prevailing cultural templates and the thought-leadership of influential interest groups and individuals (Goldgeier and Tetlock 2001; Waltz 2002). Keohane and Nye identify the ability to de/construct international institutions as both a source and evidence of power (1977). Hafner-Burton et al. expand on this concept, explicating how the 'stickiness' of institutional status quo becomes self-reinforcing. Once established, institutions are resistant to change, even when new rules might be more efficient (2017). Over time, these institutions solidify into 'institutional facts,' internalised and replicated by successive actors (Searle 1969). In this way, institutions exert a kind of power themselves, independent of the actors that re/produce them.

In an institution like a peace negotiation process, agenda-setting is generally understood as the practice of raising or suppressing salient issues for discussion and dis/agreement. Political theory scholars have long recognised the importance of agenda-setting power (see: Bachrach and Baratz 1962; Cobb, Ross, and Ross 1976; Kingdon 1984; Livingston 1992). Several studies in foreign policy analysis similarly examine forces shaping the policy agenda within an institution, i.e., which issues are "[organised] into politics while others are [organised] out" (Schattschneider 1960). These forces, equally relevant in studying negotiation, include: the interests and actions of state and non-state actors (Rosenau 1990), information technologies and globalised media networks (Wilson 2004), international organisations and non-governmental organisations (Slaughter 2004), other corporate transnational actors (Risse 2012), and multinational epistemic communities and interest groups (Keck and Sikkink 1998). Actors' exercise of agenda-setting power might be inferable if not observable in a negotiation. Agenda-setting power might manifest as one party elevating an issue of particular significance to themselves (e.g., a hostage exchange) such that parties negotiate that issue before or at the expense of other vital issues (e.g., a ceasefire).

Subsequent scholars have explored how agenda-setting power in an institution can go beyond determining 'what gets discussed' to include determining 'how it gets discussed.' "If you want to understand why the policy looks the way it does," argue Allen and Yuen, "[you] should examine how the institution shapes that policy based on institutional rules (Allen and Yuen 2022, 5). Work in this area examines how negotiation 'rules of play' enable or constrain certain actions within sessions. These rules may be deliberately enforced (e.g., standards of participation that exclude certain conflict actors, such as non-state armed groups) or unconsciously adopted (e.g., social norms around calling a counterpart by their preferred name/form of address). As Berkensoetter writes, "Power is exercised by actors who can mobilise the system-inherent bias ('rules of the game') built into institutions to their advantage" (2007, 7). Despite some initial work in this area, these dichotomies — how procedural elements can be intentionally designed or adopted as unquestioned institutional fact,

how they can exert both intended and unintended consequences, how agenda-setting power in this way muddles the line between 'agency' and 'structure' — remain under-examined in the institutionalist literature.

4.2.2 Procedural elements as 'levers'

Practitioner accounts of negotiation, on the other hand, recognise that myriad procedural elements throughout the negotiation process — from pre-talks, to venue selection, to rules of conduct — can influence outcomes. Accordingly, some practitioners have developed guidelines and 'best practices' to mitigate or manipulate this influence.

Work in this area often discusses 'procedural levers' as part of prescriptive guidance on shifting negotiators' mindsets from a 'bargaining perspective' to a 'problem-solving perspective' (Hopmann 1996). There is an assumption that elements of the negotiation process are co-constitutive of said mindsets. Bargaining is associated with 'claiming value' and maximising one's own utility; as such, it is often framed as involving manipulative tactics, threats, and a 'zero-sum' attitude. Problem-solving, on the other hand, involves 'creating value' or 'expanding the pie,' and is often characterised by information-sharing, identifying common interests, and a 'win-win' attitude (Raiffa 1982; Lax and Sebenius 1986). Importantly, while actors may enter a negotiation operating with one mindset or another, practitioners argue that procedural interventions can transform bargaining mindsets into problem-solving mindsets and vice versa. Much work in this paradigm argues that exercising agenda-setting power by changing the 'rules of play' can move negotiators toward more collaborative, beneficial outcomes (Fisher, Ury, and Patton 1983; Pruitt 2002; Niemann 2006).

While many procedural levers feature in practitioner handbooks, the most frequently mentioned topics include issue linkage, time pressure, and confidentiality. While largely contingent on conflict context, each of these is found to have disparate effects on negotiation efficacy and outcomes. 'Linkage' is understood to mean

"settling issues together, when they could be separated" — a feature of the negotiation agenda that allows for 'logrolling' (where parties trade concessions across different issue areas)(O'Neill 2018). While effective linkages may yield more mutually beneficial long-term outcomes, the information-gathering and position-advancing process is often more protracted and can slow negotiation momentum. Sometimes, one party's insistence on 'linked' agenda items may amount to 'stalling' on time-sensitive issues they are reticent to address (e.g., again, a ceasefire)(Davis 2004; McKibben and Western 2014). Related 'time pressure' applied to specific agenda items, or agreement more broadly, is another procedural lever frequently discussed by practitioners. Time pressure may be operationalised through actual or symbolic 'deadlines' or in the gradual degradation of a party's position throughout a conflict. Time costs may incentivise parties to reach a compromise, but they can also lead to greater intransigence (Pinfari 2013). Finally, confidentiality — considerations regarding the audience for the negotiation, and whether sessions will be open to the press or closed — is another procedural mechanism often cited by practitioners. While 'black box' negotiations may promote candour and compromise, some parties insist on open sessions for the sake of transparency and accountability in implementation (Colson 2008; Wanis-St. John 2011).

In short, practitioner accounts understand that differences in negotiation 'rules of play' can influence not only how the game is played, but also the final score.

4.2.3 Procedural justice

Acknowledging the role of sundry procedural levers in shaping the course and outcomes of negotiations, scholars have advanced the concept of 'procedural justice' to describe the impact of perceived fairness (or lack thereof) on negotiation dynamics and outcomes. Relevant to the research questions, a negotiation is understood to be 'procedurally just' when all parties, regardless of power status, have a voice in setting the agenda. This is crucial because, as discussed, powerful actors often tend to dominate the agenda-setting process, which practitioners believe can lead to biased

outcomes and potentially undermine the legitimacy and sustainability of the peace process itself.

Albin and Druckman define procedural justice in four principles: fair representation of all affected parties; fair treatment (i.e., fair rules of engagement); absence of coercion; and transparency (an "open and accessible" process)(2014). They argue that adherence to these principles of procedural justice engenders a more balanced and inclusive agenda that not only addresses the concerns of all parties but fosters a sense of fairness within the process. In this way, procedural justice might counterbalance inequitable exercises of agenda-setting power, ensuring that negotiation processes are a consensual, collaborative effort. Relating procedural fairness to an index of negotiation effectiveness, Albin and Druckman find that fairness correlates positively with the number of issues settled, arguing that 'procedural justice' leads to more efficient and lasting agreements (Ibid). Other procedural factors, such as equity of participation, have also been found to correlate with negotiation efficacy (Cecilia Albin and Young 2012; McKibben 2013; McKibben and Western 2014).

Concepts categorised in the two-dimensional view 'household' emphasise that negotiation dynamics and outcomes are shaped not only by overt forces and actions but also by the more covert dynamics of agenda-setting and procedural design. Work in this area reveals how manipulating procedural levers within a peace process may constitute intentional moves, conditioning what forms of action are possible within a negotiation session and thereby shaping available outcomes. Beyond the intentional exercise of agenda-setting power, this review suggests that taken-for-granted institutional facts of negotiation practice may also exert unintended influence — further complicating the interplay of 'structure' and 'agency' in a peace process. Appearing regularly in practitioner accounts, this class of phenomena warrants further explication in IR scholarship.

4.3 Three-dimensional view

Lukes's three-dimensional view of power draws on critical political theory to explore how certain forms of power, operationalised through social processes and institutional practices, can shape actors' interests without their conscious knowledge. By definition, ideational power operating in this dimension is the most difficult to observe or ascertain (though, Lukes argues, not impossible) — particularly because researchers themselves may be implicated in, or similarly unaware of, the exercise of power themselves. In response to the question *Does how states negotiate affect the results they can achieve?*, concepts adopting the 'three-dimensional view' answer: "yes, and." They suggest that negotiation processes comprise a chaotic system of forces that influence outcomes, including but not limited to: group social dynamics, individual-level cognitive and affective variables, and diplomatic practices. While parties may enter a peace negotiation with a 'solution set' in mind — and exogenous forces might constrain their actions — researchers in this 'household' suggest that actors nevertheless change and are changed by negotiation processes in consequential and unpredictable ways.

4.3.1 'Communicative action' and interpersonal relationships

The concept of 'communicative action,' characteristic of a constructivist approach, frames discursive practices as the primary means and arena for states exercising ideational power. Based on Habermas's concept of communicative action, scholars in this area hold that when parties engage in negotiation, their behaviour follows not only a 'logic of consequence' or a 'logic of appropriateness,' but also the "logic of arguing"(Wong 2020). Diplomats submit 'validity claims' to the group, advocating for their preferred course of action; through a process of argumentation and persuasion, parties come to agree on intersubjectively constituted terms ("shared definitions of the situation") and arrive at a satisfactory solution on that basis (Ibid). These dynamic processes shape the realisation of both preferences and a negotiation's possible

'solution set.' As Checkel writes, actors "decide by deliberating with others… Individuals do not come to the table knowing what they want; the whole point of arguing is to discover what they want" (2008). In short, the concept of 'communicative action' frames negotiation outcomes as dependent on the course of the negotiation process itself. By agreeing to "constitutive and regulative rules in discursive interaction," individual actors "jointly create common knowledge and manage shared understandings of reality" (Bayram and Ta 2020).

A similar insight, predominant in practitioner accounts, argues that person-to-person relationships are vital in creating the 'common definitions' and 'shared realities' necessary to reach a peace agreement. Procedural elements of negotiation can be critical in developing these interpersonal connections. Some practitioners argue that negotiation processes that include "informal settings, off-the-record conversations, and a walk in the woods" can facilitate meaningful relationship-building and catalyse breakthroughs (Stein 1988). As Druckman and Mahoney write (in an earlier era), "It is important to 'know the man' with whom you are negotiating" (1977). Features of the negotiation process, such as unstructured 'free time,' can provide opportunities for actors to learn about each other in social contexts. This accords with long-standing diplomatic wisdom that "the really critical link in the international communications chain is the last three feet, which is best bridged by personal contact — one person talking to another" (Burns 2014). The development of 'political friendships' is, at least in practitioner and historians' accounts, instrumental to problem-solving in negotiations (Costigliola 2012). These concepts stress how interpersonal interaction is a means of exercising ideational power, as diplomats develop perceptions and preferences through socialisation with their counterparts.

4.3.2 Individual cognitive and affective variables

Perhaps the most saturated area of the literature examines how individual-level cognitive and affective variables shape assessments and decisions within a

negotiation process. Foremost among these are studies that critique rational choice models by exploring common examples of irrationality or 'systematic biases.'

Kahneman and Tversky approach these biases through their concept of 'prospect theory' (1979). This model advanced a three-step process of decision-making. In the first step: an actor's framing of a negotiation problem and the possible 'solution set' determines whether the consequences of a decision are perceived as a loss or a gain. Changes in actors' "preference ordering" depends on this "framing of prospects" (Kahler 1998). In the second step: the actor evaluates potential choices and their consequences against a salient 'reference point' in their cognition or environment, such as the status quo, a historical referent or "past condition regarded as normal," or an aspirational goal (Berejikian 2002). In the last step: actors evaluate the probabilities that a proposed policy option (e.g., advancing a compromise position) will result in their expected loss or gain. Generally, parties' choices are not purely 'rational,' but disproportionately influenced by fear of loss over the prospect of equivalent gain (Ibid). In this paradigm, ideational power may be evident or exercised in shifting: parties' framing of prospects, their salient reference points, or their assessment of the 'risk' of respective policy options.

Additional work on individual-level cognitive and affective variables can be loosely grouped under the term 'poliheuristic theory.' Work in this area suggests that, in the high-stakes and often high-speed context of peace negotiations, diplomats simplify decision-making by using cognitive 'shortcuts' — 'heuristics' — that betray systematic biases. This is sometimes also formulated as a distinction between 'system I' and 'system II' cognitive processes.[9] Using these shortcuts, actors begin by rejecting possible solutions that are unacceptable on one or more critical vectors (e.g., domestic political feasibility), regardless of these options' attractiveness on other decision-making criteria (Keller and Yang 2016). This reduced 'solution set'

[9] The system I/system II framework distinguishes essentially between an initial phase of intuitive, automatic response to stimuli, and a secondary phase of deliberative information processing, analysis, and decision-making (Kaufmann 1994).

diminishes mental effort in the second stage of decision-making, where remaining alternatives are compared across other relevant considerations.

The 'poliheuristic theory'/'systematic bias' label comprises a laundry list of cognitive shortcuts that negotiators may employ. This ranges from 'processing biases' that lead negotiators to misjudge the relevance or reliability of new information (Geva, Mayhar, and Skorick 2000) to 'decision biases' that lead them to favour status quo outcomes (Gsottbauer and den Bergh 2013). Some biases studied in this literature are particularly relevant to negotiation analyses; these include 'attribution bias' (in which a diplomat attributes a counterpart's negative behaviours to their nature/character, while positive behaviours are explained away as the result of external factors) and 'analogy bias' (wherein a diplomat relies on past situations when making decisions or formulating strategies, without fully considering the unique aspects of the current context)(Goldgeier and Tetlock 2001). Scholars examining these heuristics/biases suggest that developing mechanisms to anticipate and counter the effects of these individual-level cognitive constraints is a key means for influencing negotiation processes and outcomes.

Beyond these cognitive limitations, several scholars examine how affect/emotion[10] may influence negotiators' decision-making processes. In other words, they suggest that "emotion and affect are not only important variables against which to understand both individual and shared interpretations of reality," but also "important determinants of agency" (Naudé 2016). The 'affect heuristic' or concept of 'affective intelligence' holds that, essentially, "feelings influence what one wants, what one believes, and what one does" (Mercer 2010; as quoted in: Keys and Yorke 2019). Emotions can be understood, in this framework, as 'affective labels' that 'tag' stimuli in a negotiation process; emotions "[bestow] meaning on a piece of information" (Sasley 2010). Scholars in this area suggest that emotion is an influential force across all aspects of the negotiation process — from problem definition, to developing a 'solution set,' to ordering and selecting policy options. As such,

[10] While there is a definitional distinction between 'emotion' and 'affect,' they are often used interchangeably in this literature; 'affect' is used here to convey both (Holmes 2015).

influencing a negotiation counterpart's emotional state is another means of exerting ideational power and influencing the outcomes they can imagine and accept.

4.3.3 Diplomatic practices

Work within the 'practice turn' of contemporary IR examines sources of ideational power in negotiation that transcend the individual level. Taking 'practices' as the central unit of analysis, work in this paradigm suggests that the quotidian procedures of everyday diplomatic interaction are the building blocks of world politics. Practices (e.g., using specific diplomatic language and protocols), evolving over time, re/produce the international system (Bueger and Gadinger 2015; Pursiainen and Matveeva 2016). As applied to the subject of negotiation, a practice approach views 'negotiation' as a bundle of interrelated practices that allow negotiating parties "to play the international politics game according to similar rules" (Bayram and Ta 2020). Adopting Bourdieu's vocabulary: when these 'rules of play' become so automatic/internalised that they are taken for granted, they can be considered 'doxa' in a field of practice (Bourdieu and Nice 1977). Doxa shapes negotiation dynamics and outcomes by enabling/constraining certain forms of action within a session and by conditioning actors' imaginations of possible alternative procedures and results (Pouliot 2008; Holmes 2015). Work in the 'practice turn' provides helpful theoretical backing to examine how negotiation practices may exert a kind of constitutive power in international institutions over time. However, it sometimes struggles to articulate how practices influence outcomes within the more limited timeline of a negotiation session.

Concepts that adopt Lukes's three-dimensional view of power afford negotiation processes, and a range of forces therein, varying degrees of influence in shaping foreign policy outcomes. Although work in these paradigms chafes at generalisation — stressing context and contingency, approaching negotiations on a case-by-case basis — there are a few commonalities in their accounts of ideational power. Scholars

in this conceptual 'household' argue that negotiators' preferences and decisions are continually shaped by social interaction, whether through the communicative action of discourse itself, the framing of individual negotiators' cognitive and affective processes, or even the co-constitutive performance of diplomatic practices. These influences may register consciously, or they may be background/internalised assumptions, but they shape parties' assessments of 'what is possible' in a peace negotiation and the subsequent agreements they reach.

4.4 Cross-cutting critiques

Having mapped critical concepts in the negotiation literature against the three dimensions of Lukes's 'radical view' of power (see Figure 3), it is evident that research in each conceptual 'household' offers different, but not necessarily incompatible, answers to the question *Does how states negotiate affect the outcomes they can achieve?* Common critiques also cut across this field of research — particularly those related to questions of methodological rigour as well as the theoretical dilemma of the so-called 'aggregation problem.'

4.4.1 Methodological challenges

Research on international negotiations faces several fundamental methodological challenges. Primarily, it is difficult to get 'inside' diplomats' decision-making processes, not least because it is impossible to "get into the minds" of these individuals (Herrmann et al. 1997). Participant observation over substantial periods and in sensitive, high-profile negotiations is impractical, often limiting researchers to interviewing participants after-the-fact or observing open sessions (and, as a result, missing crucial 'behind the scenes' activities). Historical methods also face limitations due to the subjective nature of text interpretation and restricted access to comprehensive, often classified records (Young and Schafer 1998). Historical sources are not always reliable, as even accessible documents can have contested

authenticity/authorship (Axelrod 2015), and the language used within them may be instrumental or performative rather than illustrative (Stein 1988).

On the other hand, quantitative 'experimental' studies on negotiation face criticisms related to external validity. Controlled, artificial settings and subject pools are not representative of the high-stakes, fast-paced, and ambiguous reality of international negotiations. Experimental tasks and treatments often "bear only a faint likeness" to those faced by foreign policy decision-makers, "especially when they are faced with awesome crisis decisions" (Holsti 1976). These challenges underscore the inherent subjectivity and difficulty in accessing and analysing reliable data on negotiation processes, complicating cross-study comparisons in this field.

Given these limitations, it is tempting to make methodological choices based on practicality, "using the method that is most appropriate to our research question and the type of material that is available" (Young and Schafer 1998). But methodological expediency narrows the practical utility of research in this area. Wong reminds IR researchers that it is best to avoid 'searching for one's wallet under the streetlight,' as "what is important may be precisely where it is the most difficult to see" (Wong 2016). For this reason, many scholars call for mixing methods and methodological plurality in the study of negotiation. This push toward 'triangulation across multiple methods' acknowledges that all methodologies are "fallible, but fallible in different ways" (Kinder and Palfrey 1993). Combining methods with different strengths and weaknesses and providing detailed, replicable accounts of methodologies helps researchers ensure that their findings are not "artefacts of the method used" (Erisen 2012).

Of course, methodological commitments are also related to the researcher's orientation and objectives. Positivist, causal theorising requires a standard of evidence that might be unrealistic in this research area. A pragmatic research strategy that instead balances methodological shortcomings through a mixed-methods design (and transparently reflects on limitations therein) can nevertheless identify "patterns of similarity and difference" and orient academics and practitioners to useful insights in this field of research (Friedrichs and Kratochwil 2009).

4.4.2 The 'aggregation problem'

The 'aggregation problem' refers to a theoretical dilemma in IR. In short: how do things add up? How do micro-foundations such as individual psychology, or micro-practices such as person-to-person communication, aggregate to become causal forces influencing collective or global outcomes? To call back to the vignette at the outset of this review: how could a slight shift in the angles of a table arrangement possibly influence negotiation dynamics to shift parties toward or away from a peace agreement? While adding more 'dimensions' to the initial 'one-dimensional' view of compulsory power may add more visual interest to the overall picture, do these shades of nuance 'really matter'?

The practical relevance of the 'aggregation problem' in IR, however, is up for debate. Holsti reminds us that "integration across levels is not an end in itself" (1976). Gildea similarly argues that "aggregation may be an overstated problem" in IR, one not shared by other disciplines examining political decision-making: "A disciplinary preoccupation with [aggregation] may hinder rather than pave the way for interdisciplinary theorising" (2020). IR's contemporary positivist mainstream, with its penchant for parsimonious and generalisable theories, often follows Waltz's assertion that scholarship should seek to identify causal forces akin to the "the law of gravity," as opposed to explaining the "wayward path of a falling leaf," in all its contingent causation (1979, 121). Adopting a pragmatic research strategy, as discussed, acknowledges that even when law-like generalisations can't be scientifically established, there are nevertheless (to stretch Waltz's metaphor) valuable insights 'below the canopy' to explain why some leaves fall farther or faster than others.

While it may be impossible to 'prove' how the 'nitty gritty' details of negotiation procedure aggregate to existential outcomes, this literature review finds sufficient consensus among practitioners to suggest that they do matter.

5 Examining procedural elements of agenda-setting power: A pragmatic imperative

The mapping exercise undertaken in this review is illustrative rather than exhaustive. Nevertheless, it illuminates areas of saturation and areas for further development. It finds that a wealth of scholarship adopts the one-dimensional view of power (rooted in rational choice and neorealist frameworks). Likewise, a wide range of studies explore three-dimensional perspectives (underpinned by constructivist and critical approaches). The two-dimensional view of agenda-setting power, however, warrants a closer look.

Scholars in this area have mainly examined agenda-setting power in terms of issue selection and advocacy. Some institutionalist researchers expand their view of agenda-setting power to consider how, beyond controlling 'what is discussed,' states can intentionally influence decision-making processes by setting parameters for 'how it is discussed' (e.g., managing information flows, determining membership and modes of participation)(Krasner 1985; Keohane 1989). Still others explore how institutions take on 'a life of their own,' with effects unintended by their creators (Barnett and Finnemore 1999). "The second dimension," writes Berenskoetter, "invites taking into account a number of ways humans influence their environment that may, eventually, affect them" (2007). Accepting this invitation, this research adopts an expansive understanding of 'agenda-setting power' to further examine the un/intended effects that elements of procedural design exert in peace negotiations.

This formulation is in keeping with the broader pragmatic aims of this research. In practical terms: by the time states are at war, the inputs of any potential peace process are already largely set. These inputs may include: the material qualities that led to and were operationalised in the conflict; the international system's laws, norms, and institutions; the character of states' domestic political regimes and ideologies; the identities of state leaders and negotiation delegations, and the features and failures of their personalities; ad nauseam. While these inputs may shift over time, either through continued conflict (at the cost of lives and livelihoods) or in

protracted social processes (which, to a large extent, are beyond actors' scope of control), they are unlikely to change in short order. Given these existing constraints, how can diplomats create more efficient and efficacious peace processes? When approaching a negotiation, what remains that they *can* change? Essentially: only the architecture of the process itself. Exploring the procedural elements of agenda-setting power therefore promises to provide implementable insights.

6 Advancing a Cubist concept of power

Matching pragmatic objectives with a pragmatic research strategy, this literature review has adopted an abductive approach to the question: *Does how states negotiate affect the results they achieve?* (i.e., *do the procedural elements of negotiation impact the dynamics and outcomes of international peace processes? And if so, how?*). Following the observation that diplomats routinely reference power in their accounts of negotiation (and recognising that 'thinking about power' has historically co-constituted the discipline), the first stage of this review explored existing constructions of power in IR theory. It found that Lukes's 'radical view of power' is best suited for application in negotiation contexts, as it emphasises the multi-dimensional and relational nature of power in decision-making processes. Accordingly, the second phase of the review adopted Lukes's 'dimensional views' of power as an organising schema to compare concepts across multidisciplinary literatures (including work in IR, diplomatic studies, and political psychology, as well as negotiation practitioner handbooks). Laying out a conceptual arsenal in this way provides several key terms and tools for examining the 'class of phenomena' in question; it also reveals areas of overlap within existing conceptual 'households' and highlights the need for further research at the intersection of 'agenda-setting power' and 'procedural elements of negotiation.' The third and final stage of this literature review sketches "a framework of analysis," or "set of propositions," to guide this future research (Friedrichs and Kratochwil 2009): the 'Cubist concept of power.'



Figure 4: Pablo Picasso, *Femme Assise*, 1960

Its core proposition: to approach power in a negotiation in the way that Cubist artists approach their paintings' subjects. Cubism, a revolutionary 20th-century art movement led by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, introduced a radical departure from the single-point perspective that dominated Western art since the Renaissance (Apollinaire, Eimert, and Podoksik 2012). Rather than seeking to create the illusion of three-dimensional space on a flat canvas (mimicking the natural world with accurate proportions and linear perspective), Cubists simultaneously present their subject from multiple perspectives, fragmenting and integrating components of each view onto the same canvas. Instead of obscuring the medium's limitations, they make these

limitations a feature of the work, inviting viewers to engage more collaboratively in the process of meaning-making. This is a philosophical turn as well as a technical one: in Cubism, the emphasis shifts from depicting the world as it appears to expressing it as it is understood and experienced — troubling the boundary between 'representation' and 'abstraction.' Applying these aesthetic innovations to the idea of 'power' in IR results in three critical conceptual propositions: 1) multi-dimensional construction; 2) fragmentation and integration; and 3) perceptual relativity. (These are discussed in turn and represented visually in Figure 5.)

6.1 Multi-dimensional construction

Following Lukes's 'dimensional view' construction, the Cubist concept of power considers the dimensions of power (e.g., compulsory, agenda-setting, and ideational) as additive, not mutually exclusive. In so doing, it more accurately reflects the reality of practitioners preparing for and navigating peace processes. As diplomats generally acknowledge, it would be foolish to exclude considerations of material or compulsory power and it would be short-sighted to dismiss sources of agenda-setting and ideational power in any given conflict.

The negotiations between Eritrea and Ethiopia that culminated in the 2018 Jeddah agreement provide an example of this multi-dimensionality (Stigant and Phelan 2019). The dispute was primarily territorial, concerning the status of the Badme border region; economic underdevelopment and international sanctions were the main areas of material concern. But undoubtedly, it was a domestic political shift in Ethiopia, wherein a new Prime Minister (Abiy Ahmed) was elected with a broader peace-making mandate, that cleared the way for negotiation to begin in earnest. Similarly, it would be unwise to overlook the role of international institutions (e.g., in this case, the platform-building work of the African Union's Peace and Security Council as well as the controversial earlier role of the UN-backed Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission) in setting agendas and defining issue scope, thereby establishing expectations about possible outcomes. Sociocultural processes also

played a role in shaping outcomes — with diaspora and grassroots communities lobbying to influence negotiators' positions throughout the process.

A Cubist approach to this negotiation would include analyses across all of Lukes's 'dimensional views of power' to explain how various forces constrained and enabled the outcome, refraining from assigning hierarchical causality to any one of these dimensions. No single 'face' of power is seen as the most predominant view — they are all overlaid, a part of the same picture.

6.2 Fragmentation and integration

Cubist art is characterised by fragmentation and integration; particularly striking views of the subject are deconstructed and overlaid in parts. This fragmentation, paradoxically, lends a sense of dynamism to the integrated composition — as the eye moves over its constituent elements, 'still life' comes to life. The Cubist concept of power advanced here adopts this approach in examining different procedural elements of peace negotiations. It defines an 'element' as anything that 'makes up the picture' of a negotiation session, e.g., a physical fact of the space, an organisational or social reality, the participation of a particular individual, or a rhetorical turn. This approach to power recognises that every party in a negotiation will have its own 'view' on any given element. By identifying and 'breaking out' discrete elements, scholars and practitioners can better analyse a cross-section of the different views on this element held by different parties.

One particularly salient example is the aptly named "PowerScene" technology used in the Dayton negotiations (the US's mediation ending the Bosnian War in 1995). Developed by the US Defense Mapping Agency, this proto-virtual reality mapping system allowed negotiators to 'fly' over territory while discussing it. This was particularly relevant when negotiating a transit corridor between a Muslim enclave and the rest of the Muslim-Croat federation. While each party appreciated the technology's instrumental function in facilitating realistic, real-time visualisation of the territorial question at hand, there were also more interpretive views. The US

delegation saw PowerScene as a symbol of American technological and military might and imagined that this assertion of the US's capacity to enforce a peace agreement (via airstrike) would make a meaningful impression (Johnson 1999). For the parties, however, PowerScene also constituted a form of entertainment. Tellingly, the territorial corridor was ultimately dubbed "the scotch road," a nod to the amount of whiskey negotiators consumed during an all-night session in the PowerScene room (Branch 2017). For parties, this procedural element was an important means of inter-delegation recreation and social bonding. Studying PowerScene as one 'element' — a fragment of the negotiation picture, but with multiple intersecting interpretations of what it represented — allows for a more well-rounded understanding of the negotiation process and the role of US power and influence therein.

The Cubist concept of power, alive to these fragmented perspectives, deconstructs them to offer valuable insights into the positions and dispositions of negotiating parties. For practitioners, this is crucial in identifying potential entry points or pressure points that could lead to novel solutions. Integration, the counterpart of fragmentation, involves synthesising these disparate perspectives into a cohesive understanding of the negotiation context. Like an art critic or scholar analysing a Cubist painting, the effective negotiator draws attention to overlooked features and suggests alternate views, facilitating a collective process of meaning-making. This approach enables all parties to appreciate each other's perspectives on both the fragmented elements and the integrated whole, potentially leading to more collaborative dynamics and optimal outcomes.

6.3 Perceptual relativity and limitations

Challenging the notion of 'absolute perspective' in art, Cubism highlights the subjectivity and relativity of perception. This philosophical tenet translates seamlessly into the Cubist concept of power, where 'power' is understood not as an absolute, fixed entity but as an extrinsic relation — dynamic and perceived differently by different actors at different times. At the 2000 Camp David Summit, for example,

US President Bill Clinton attempted one final gambit to leverage the power of his office (and his personality) to pressure Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat into making further concessions. He threatened to leave the summit and engage in punitive public diplomacy narratives if Arafat failed to meet his conditions. Arafat's flippant rebuff — "Bon voyage!" — highlights that 'power,' indeed, lies in the eyes of the beholder (Hanieh 2001).

Another key theoretical commitment in Cubism is acknowledging (indeed, foregrounding) the limitations of the medium — painting self-consciously flat paintings that emphasise the two-dimensionality of their canvas. Extending this idea, this conceptual framework proposes that researchers and practitioners recognise their role as active participants in the construction of power narratives. As the poet Reverdy notes, Cubism is "an art of creation, not of reproduction" (as quoted in: Fitzgerald 1996) — researchers' methods and means of representation necessarily flatten the reality they seek to reproduce. Acknowledging that peace negotiation research is only ever 'an impression of an impression,' a Cubist approach entails a degree of scholarly humility.

Cubism also marked a shift in the relationship between the artist and their audience. Cubist painters challenged viewers to interpret and reassemble disjointed forms, becoming active partners in the process of meaning-making. A viewer approaching a Cubist painting may be guided by external signifiers (e.g., the title of the piece, its context in the artist's oeuvre, its presentation/curation in a gallery space), but their experience and interpretation of the piece will be unavoidably individual. This tenet also informs the Cubist concept of power. As Lukes argues, power as a concept is "ineradicably value-dependent" (2005), echoing Cox's axiom that "theory is always for someone and for some purpose" (Cox 1981). Scholars and practitioners are themselves situated (and implicated) in the power structures they seek to understand; external signifiers guide them, and this will colour their interpretation. Nevertheless, their conclusions are also reflections of their own personality and positionality. As such, claiming a unified, authoritative view on these

dynamics is not only impractical but antithetical to the nature of power as understood through a Cubist approach.

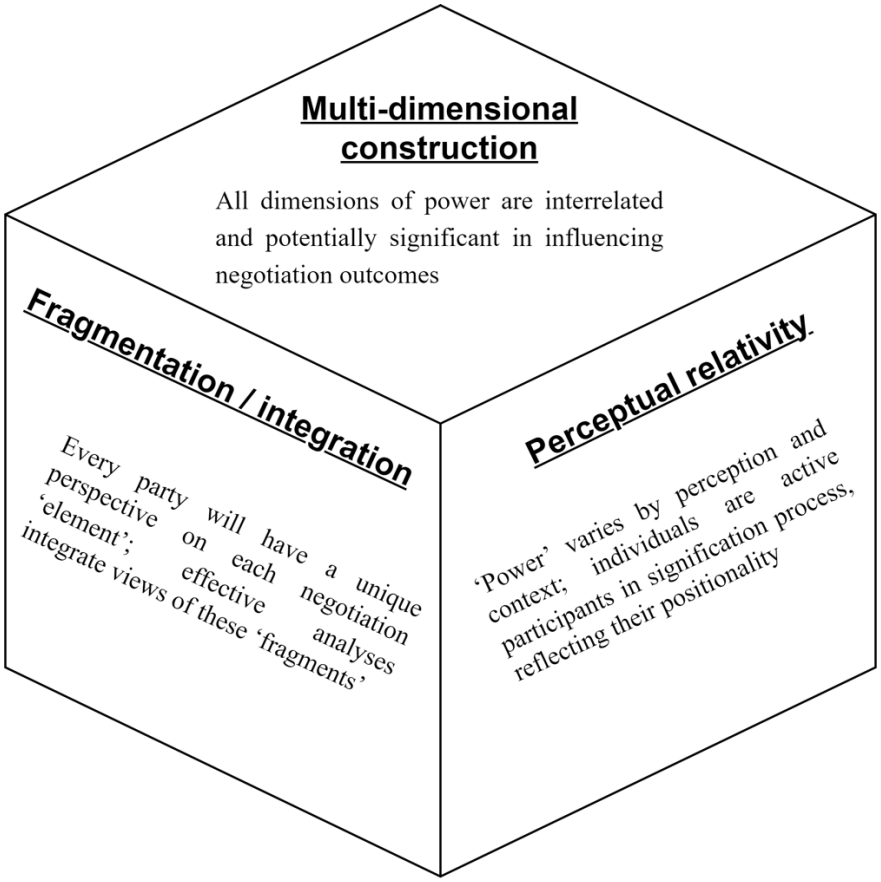


Figure 5. A Cubist concept of power: three commitments

6.4 Engaging a Cubist concept of power

What might the propositions that comprise a 'Cubist concept of power' look like when applied to real-world cases? Consider the historical basis of the vignette that opened this review: the 1983 negotiations between Israel, Lebanon, and the US.

Adopting a Cubist approach, the US mediator preparing for these sessions might first analyse all the 'dimensions' of power influencing parties' interests, positions, and mindsets. Beyond mere conflict analysis, this would include a practical assessment of procedural elements that have been or could be designed or implemented, as well as forecasting social dynamics within the negotiation group.

Particularly salient elements might warrant closer cross-section consideration — the question of staging and table arrangement would fall under this category. The seemingly trivial yet symbolically potent element of table arrangement in the negotiation room offers a rich analytical and practical entry point. Breaking out this fragment for closer examination can provide insight into how each party views the negotiation, their engagement strategies, and the image they wish to project to external observers such as the media. Scoping out such elements in advance, as a result, can offer valuable insights for a mediator attempting to anticipate and integrate these divergent views.

Finally, a Cubist approach would encourage a mediator to remain sensitive to changes in perception and the relative nature of power dynamics as the sessions progress. Understanding how the Lebanese delegation responds to the newly angled tables, recognising potential perceptions of procedural injustice, and reflecting on their own positionality in influencing these dynamics are all critical.

6.5 Methodological implications

The propositions that comprise a Cubist concept of power are not only useful for parties navigating real-world negotiations, but also serve as an analytical framework for scholars retrospectively examining negotiation processes and outcomes. The practical implications of adopting a Cubist approach extend to data collection and analysis. At its core, this approach begins with empirical observation and uses an abductive process to apply existing concepts and reach conclusions. As Picasso's motto goes: "I do not seek; I find" (Baxandall 1985). Picasso later elaborated: "When I paint, my object is to show what I have found and not what I am looking for;" he bemoaned how "the spirit of research" misled his contemporaries, "poisoning" them into "[attempting] to paint the invisible and, therefore, the unpaintable" (Ibid). While there are indeed many variables of interest in this context that are invisible or unobservable, acknowledging the limitations of the medium means not making or relying on speculation about these variables in the absence of observable evidence.

Happily, the Cubist concept outlined here affords validity to a wide range of data collection methods, spanning quantitative and qualitative approaches, provided their respective limitations are acknowledged and balanced. Archival research and text analysis, for example, can complement participant observation, subject interviews, and surveys. In short, the Cubist concept of power proposes pragmatic methodological triangulation, where multiple sources and types of data are used to build a comprehensive understanding of negotiation processes. This enriches the analysis and ensures that the conclusions drawn are robust and grounded in a range of empirical evidence.

This Cubist concept of power proposes an epistemological stance where generalisability is not an end in itself. Every peace process is unique and contingent; distorting these realities to fit a single analytical framework and set of conclusions is impractical. Nonetheless, this approach emphasises the importance of identifying and examining patterns and commonalities where they exist. While not universally applicable, understanding shared shapes and contours across negotiation contexts can provide helpful guidance to inform the design of future peace processes.

7 Conclusion

Generations of IR scholars and diplomatic practitioners have considered the question motivating this research: *Does how states negotiate affect the results they can achieve?*

Adopting a pragmatic, abductive approach to mapping this field of research, this review began by surveying predominant perspectives on power in IR and explicating their relevance for peace negotiations. After evaluating several integrative typologies of power, the review ultimately adopted Lukes's dimensional taxonomy as an organising framework. Sorting 'conceptual households' across a multidisciplinary body of literature, the review developed an arsenal of terms and tools related to how the exercise of compulsory, agenda-setting, and ideational dimensions of power in peace negotiations influences foreign policy outcomes. In doing so, it identified areas of saturation as well as a critical area for further research.

While one-dimensional, 'rational choice'-based paradigms are well-represented in the literature, and three-dimensional constructivist and political psychology paradigms have also received significant treatment, the two-dimensional view of agenda-setting power remains underexplored. This review advanced an expanded definition of agenda-setting power to include the procedural levers governing *how* the agenda within a negotiation will be discussed; a renewed focus on these procedural elements promises to yield policy-relevant insights.

This review proposes the 'Cubist concept of power' as an analytical framework for conducting this research (and potentially guiding practitioners). Borrowing from the philosophical and aesthetic innovations that characterised the Cubist movement in modern art, this conceptual lens encourages scholars and practitioners of peace negotiations to combine multiple views of power into their analyses. This concept comprises three theoretical interventions. Firstly, it advocates for a multi-dimensional construction of power, where different forms of power, such as compulsory, agenda-setting, and ideational power, are painted as interrelated and overlapping. Secondly, it emphasises the importance of fragmentation and integration, recognising that intersecting views on each procedural element can provide meaningful insights to an integrated whole. Finally, it acknowledges perceptual relativity, highlighting that power is not fixed, but perceived differently by different actors, as influenced by their positionality. Additionally, adopting a Cubist concept of power in IR research promotes a pragmatic approach to data collection and analysis, encourages methodological triangulation, and prioritises understanding unique contexts over generalisability, while still recognising the value of identifying common patterns.

References

Albin, Cecilia, and Daniel Druckman. 2014. "Bargaining over Weapons: Justice and Effectiveness in Arms Control Negotiations." *International Negotiation* 19 (3): 426–58.

Albin, Cecilia, and Ariel Young. 2012. "Setting the Table for Success - or Failure? Agenda Management in the WTO." *International Negotiation* 17 (1): 37–64.

Allen, Susan, and Amy Yuen. 2022. *Bargaining in the UN Security Council: Setting the Global Agenda*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Apollinaire, Guillaume, Dorothea Eimert, and Anatoli Podoksik. 2012. *Cubism*. *Collection Art of Century*. New York, NY: Parkstone International.

Axelrod, Robert. 2015. *Structure of Decision: The Cognitive Maps of Political Elites*. *Princeton Legacy Library ; 1707*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Bachrach, Peter, and Morton S. Baratz. 1962. "Two Faces of Power." *The American Political Science Review*.

Baldwin, D. 2000. "Power and International Relations." Edited by Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth A. Simmons. *Handbook of International Relations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Limited.

Barley, S. R. 1991. "Contextualizing Conflict: Notes on the Anthropology of Disputes and Negotiations." In *Research on Negotiation in Organizations*, edited by M. H. Bazerman, R. J. Lewicki, and B. H. Sheppard. Vol. 3. Greenwich, CT: JAI.

Barnett, Michael N., and Raymond Duvall. 2005. *Power in Global Governance*. *Cambridge Studies in International Relations ; 98*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Barnett, Michael N., and Martha Finnemore. 1999. "The Politics, Power, and Pathologies of International Organizations." *International Organization*.

Baxandall, Michael. 1985. "Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures." New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Bayram, A. Burcu, and Vivian Ta. 2020. "Measuring Common Knowledge: Latent Semantic Analysis, Linguistic Synchrony, and Common Knowledge in International Relations." *International Relations*.

Berejikian, Jeffrey D. 2002. "Model Building With Prospect Theory: A Cognitive Approach to International Relations." *Political Psychology*.

Berenskoetter, Felix, and Michael J. Williams. 2007. *Power in World Politics*. London: Taylor & Francis Group.

Berridge, G. R. 2015. *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*. 5th ed. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK : Imprint: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bicchi, Federica. 2022. "Communities of Practice and What They Can Do for International Relations." *Review of International Studies* 48 (1): 24–43.

Bourdieu, Pierre, and Richard Nice. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. *Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology ; 16*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Branch, Jordan. 2017. "Territorial Conflict in the Digital Age: Mapping Technologies and Negotiation." *International Studies Quarterly*.

Brulé, David J. 2008. "The Poliheuristic Research Program: An Assessment and Suggestions for Further Progress." *International Studies Review*.

Bueger, Christian, and Frank Gadinger. 2015. "The Play of International Practice." *International Studies Quarterly*.

Burns, William J. 2014. "10 Parting Thoughts for America's Diplomats." *Foreign Policy*, 2014.

Chase-Dunn, Christopher K. 1989. *Global Formation: Structures of the World-Economy*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Chayes, Abram, and Antonia Handler Chayes. 1993. "On Compliance." *International Organization*.

Checkel, Jeffrey T. 2001. "Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change." *International Organization* 55 (3).

———. 2008. "Constructivism and Foreign Policy." In *Foreign Policy*, edited by Amelia Hadfield Steve Smith. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cobb, Roger, Jennie-Keith Ross, and Marc Howard Ross. 1976. "Agenda Building as a Comparative Political Process." *The American Political Science Review*.

Colson, Aurélien. 2008. "The Ambassador Between Light and Shade: The Emergence of Secrecy as the Norm for International Negotiation." *International Negotiation*.

Connolly, William E. 1974. *The Terms of Political Discourse*. Lexington, MA: Heath.

Coplen, Michaela. 2023. "Soft Power and the Future of US Foreign Policy." *International Affairs*.

Costigliola, Frank. 2012. *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances: How Personal Politics Helped Start the Cold War*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Cox, Robert W. 1981. "Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory." *Millennium*.

Cuhadar, Esra, Juliet Kaarbo, Baris Kesgin, and Binnur Ozkececi-Taner. 2017. "Examining Leaders' Orientations to Structural Constraints: Turkey's 1991 and 2003 Iraq War Decisions." *Journal of International Relations and Development*.

Davis, Christina L. 2004. "International Institutions and Issue Linkage: Building Support for Agricultural Trade Liberalization." *The American Political Science Review*.

Dietrich, Franz, and Christian List. 2013. "Where Do Preferences Come From?" *International Journal of Game Theory*.

Druckman, Daniel, and Robert Mahoney. 1977. "Processes and Consequences of International Negotiations." *Journal of Social Issues*.

Erisen, Elif. 2012. "An Introduction to Political Psychology for International Relations Scholars." *Perceptions* 17 (3): 9–28.

Finnemore, Martha. 2003. *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force*. Cornell Studies in Security Affairs. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Fisher, Roger, William Ury, and Bruce Patton. 1983. *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In*. London: Hutchinson.

Fitzgerald, M. 1996. "The Modernists' Dilemma." In *Picasso and Portraiture: Representation and Transformation (Exhibition Catalogue)*. New York, NY: Museum of Modern Art.

Friedrichs, Jörg, and Friedrich Kratochwil. 2009. "On Acting and Knowing: How Pragmatism Can Advance International Relations Research and Methodology." *International Organization* 63 (4): 701–31.

Geva, Nehemia, James Mayhar, and J. Mark Skorick. 2000. "The Cognitive Calculus of Foreign Policy Decision Making: An Experimental Assessment." *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

Gildea, Ross James. 2020. "Psychology and Aggregation in International Relations." *European Journal of International Relations*.

Goldgeier, J. M., and P. E. Tetlock. 2001. "Psychology and International Relations Theory." *Annual Review of Political Science*.

Gsottbauer, Elisabeth, and Jeroen den Bergh. 2013. "Bounded Rationality and Social Interaction in Negotiating a Climate Agreement." *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics*.

Guzzini, Stefano. 2005. "The Concept of Power: A Constructivist Analysis." *Millennium*.

———. 2007. "The Concept of Power: A Constructivist Analysis." In *Power in World Politics*, edited by Felix Berenskoetter. London: Taylor & Francis Group.

Hafner-Burton, Emilie M., Stephan Haggard, David A. Lake, and David G. Victor. 2017. "The Behavioral Revolution and International Relations."

Hanieh, Akram. 2001. "The Camp David Papers." *Journal of Palestine Studies*.

Herrmann, Richard K., James F. Voss, Tonya Y. E. Schooler, and Joseph Ciarrochi. 1997. "Images in International Relations: An Experimental Test of Cognitive Schemata." *International Studies Quarterly*.

Holmes, Marcus. 2015. "Believing This and Alieving That: Theorizing Affect and Intuitions in International Politics." *International Studies Quarterly*.

Holmes, Marcus, and David Traven. 2015. "Acting Rationally Without Really Thinking: The Logic of Rational Intuitionism for International Relations Theory." *International Studies Review*.

Holsti, Ole R. 1976. "Cognitive Process Approaches to Decision-Making: Foreign Policy Actors Viewed Psychologically." *The American Behavioral Scientist*.

Hopmann, P. Terrence. 1996. *The Negotiation Process and the Resolution of International Conflicts*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press.

Houghton, David Patrick. 2007. "Reinvigorating the Study of Foreign Policy Decision Making: Toward a Constructivist Approach." *Foreign Policy Analysis*.

Hume, David. 1739. *A Treatise of Human Nature: Being an Attempt to Introduce the Experimental Method of Reasoning into Moral Subjects*. London: printed for John Noon.

Jervis, Robert. 1976. *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Johnson, Richard G. 1999. "Negotiating the Dayton Peace Accords through Digital Maps." *USIP Virtual Diplomacy Report*.

Jönsson, Christer. 2015. "Relationships between Negotiators: A Neglected Topic in the Study of Negotiation." *International Negotiation*.

Kaarbo, Juliet. 2015. "A Foreign Policy Analysis Perspective on the Domestic Politics Turn in IR Theory." *International Studies Review*.

Kahler, Miles. 1998. "Rationality in International Relations." *International Organization* 52 (4): 919–41.

Kahneman, Daniel, and Amos Tversky. 1979. "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk." *Econometrica*.

Kaufmann, C. D. 1994. "Out of the Lab and into the Archives: A Method for Testing Psychological Explanations of Political Decision-Making." *International Studies Quarterly*.

Keck, Margaret E., and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Free Online Access: Knowledge Unlatched. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Keller, Jonathan, and Yi Edward Yang. 2016. "Problem Representation, Option Generation, and Poliheuristic Theory: An Experimental Analysis." *Political Psychology*.

Keohane, Robert O. 1984. *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*. *Princeton Paperbacks*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

———. 1989. *Power and Interdependence*. 2nd ed. New York: HarperCollins.

Keohane, Robert O., and Joseph S. Nye. 1977. *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown.

Keys, Barbara, and Claire Yorke. 2019. "Personal and Political Emotions in the Mind of the Diplomat." *Political Psychology*.

Kinder, Donald R., and Thomas R. Palfrey. 1993. *Experimental Foundations of Political Science*. *Michigan Studies in Political Analysis*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Kingdon, John W. 1984. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown.

Kornprobst, Markus. 2009. "International Relations as Rhetorical Discipline: Toward (Re-)Newing Horizons." *International Studies Review* 11 (1): 87–108.

Kramer, Roderick M., and David Messick. 1995. "Negotiation As a Social Process." Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Incorporated.

Krasner, Stephen D. 1985. *Structural Conflict: The Third World Against Global Liberalism*. University of California Press.

Kratochwil, Friedrich, and John Gerard Ruggie. 1986. "International Organization: A State of the Art on an Art of the State." *International Organization*.

Krebs, Ronald R., and Aaron Rapport. 2012. "International Relations and the Psychology of Time Horizons." *International Studies Quarterly*.

Kuhn, Thomas S. 1996. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. 3rd ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Lax, David A., and James K. Sebenius. 1986. *The Manager as Negotiator: Bargaining for Cooperation and Competitive Gain*. New York, NY: Free Press; Collier Macmillan.

Livingston, Steven G. 1992. "The Politics of International Agenda-Setting: Reagan and North-South Relations." *International Studies Quarterly*.

Lukes, Steven. 2005. *Power: A Radical View*. 2nd ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mattern, Janice Bially. 2008. "The Concept of Power and the (Un)Discipline of International Relations." *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*. Oxford University Press.

McKibben, Heather Elko. 2013. "The Effects of Structures and Power on State Bargaining Strategies." *American Journal of Political Science*.

McKibben, Heather Elko, and Shaina D. Western. 2014. "Levels of Linkage: Across-Agreement versus Within-Agreement Explanations of Consensus Formation among States." *International Studies Quarterly*.

Mearsheimer, John J. 1990. "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War." *International Security*.

Menkel-Meadow, Carrie. 2009. "Chronicling the Complexification of Negotiation Theory and Practice." *Negotiation Journal*.

Mercer, Jonathan. 2010. "Emotional Beliefs." *International Organization*.

Midgaard, Knut. 1983. "Rules and Strategy in Negotiations: Notes on an Institutionalist and Intentionalist Approach." *European Journal of Political Research*.

Morgenthau, Hans J. 1949. *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York, NY: Knopf.

Naudé, B. 2016. "'States Have Emotions Too': An Affect-Centred Approach to South African Foreign Relations." *South African Journal of International Affairs*.

Naurin, Nils Daniel, Elin Naurin, and Amy Alexander. 2019. "Gender Stereotyping and Chivalry in International Negotiations: A Survey Experiment in the Council of the European Union." *International Organization*.

Niemann, Arne. 2006. "Beyond Problem-Solving and Bargaining: Genuine Debate in EU External Trade Negotiations." *International Negotiation*.

Nye, Joseph S. 2021. "Soft Power: The Evolution of a Concept." *Journal of Political Power*.

Odell, John S. 2000. *Negotiating the World Economy*. *Cornell Studies in Political Economy*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

O'Neill, Barry. 2018. "International Negotiation: Some Conceptual Developments." *Annual Review of Political Science*.

Peirce, Charles. 1965. *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*. Vol. 2. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Pinfari, Marco. 2013. *Peace Negotiations and Time: Deadline Diplomacy in Territorial Disputes*. *Routledge Studies in Peace and Conflict Resolution*. London: Routledge.

Pouliot, Vincent. 2007. "'Sobjectivism': Toward a Constructivist Methodology." *International Studies Quarterly* 51 (2): 359–84.

———. 2008. "The Logic of Practicality: A Theory of Practice of Security Communities." *International Organization*.

Press, Daryl Grayson. 2005. *Calculating Credibility: How Leaders Assess Military Threats*. *Cornell Studies in Security Affairs*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Pruitt, Dean G. 2002. "Mediator Behavior and Success in Mediation." In *Studies in International Mediation*, edited by Jacob Bercovitch, 41–54. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Pruitt, Dean G., and Peter J. Carnevale. 1993. *Negotiation in Social Conflict*. *Mapping Social Psychology*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Pursiainen, Christer Henrik, and Angelica Matveeva. 2016. "Initiating Trust in High Politics: The Gorbachev-Reagan Summit in Geneva 1985." *International Negotiation*.

Putnam, Robert D. 1988. "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games." *International Organization*.

Quackenbush, Stephen. 2004. "The Rationality of Rational Choice Theory." *International Interactions*.

Raiffa, Howard. 1982. *The Art and Science of Negotiation*. *Art & Science of Negotiation*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Raiffa, Howard, John Richardson, and David Metcalfe. 2002. *Negotiation Analysis: The Science and Art of Collaborative Decision Making*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Renshon, J., J. Lee, and D. Tingley. 2017. "Emotions and the Micro-Foundations of Commitment Problems." *International Organization*.

Renshon, Jonathan, and Stanley A. Renshon. 2008. "The Theory and Practice of Foreign Policy Decision Making." *Political Psychology*.

Risse, Thomas. 2012. "Transnational Actors and World Politics." In *Handbook of International Relations*, edited by Walter Carlsnaes, Beth A. Simmons, and Risse, Thomas. London: Sage Publications.

Rosenau, James N. 1990. *Turbulence in World Politics: A Theory of Change and Continuity*. New York, NY: Harverster Wheatsheaf.

Ruggie, John Gerard. n.d. *Constructing the World Polity: Essays on International Institutionalisation*. London: Routledge. Accessed March 19, 2024.

Sasley, Brent E. 2010. "Affective Attachments and Foreign Policy: Israel and the 1993 Oslo Accords." *European Journal of International Relations*.

Schattschneider, E. E. 1960. *The Semi-Sovereign People*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Searle, John R. 1969. *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. *Cambridge Books Online*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Shani, Giorgio, and David Chandler. 2010. "Assessing the Impact of Foucault on International Relations." *International Political Sociology*.

Singer, David J. 1961. "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations." *World Politics*.

Singer, Joel. 2021. "Where You Sit Is Where You Stand: Table Arrangement Battles in Middle East Peace Conferences." *International Negotiation*.

Slaughter, Anne-Marie. 2004. *A New World Order*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Stein, Janice Gross. 1988. "International Negotiation: A Multidisciplinary Perspective." *Negotiation Journal*.

Stigant, Susan, and Michael V. Phelan. 2019. "A Year After the Ethiopia-Eritrea Peace Deal, What Is the Impact?"

Strange, Susan. 1996. *The Retreat of the State: The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy*. *Cambridge Studies in International Relations ; 49*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Waltz, Kenneth N. 1979. *Theory of International Politics*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Waltz, Susan. 2002. "Reclaiming and Rebuilding the History of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights." *Third World Quarterly*.

Wanis-St. John, Anthony. 2011. *Back Channel Negotiation: Secrecy in the Middle East Peace Process*. *Syracuse Studies on Peace and Conflict Resolution*. 1st ed. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Wendt, Alexander. 1999. *Social Theory of International Politics*. *Cambridge Studies in International Relations ; 67*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wilson, Ernest J., III. 2004. *The Information Revolution and Developing Countries*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Wong, Seanon S. 2016. "Emotions and the Communication of Intentions in Face-to-Face Diplomacy." *European Journal of International Relations*.

———. 2020. "Mapping the Repertoire of Emotions and Their Communicative Functions in Face-to-Face Diplomacy." *International Studies Review*.

Young, Michael D., and Mark Schafer. 1998. "Is There Method in Our Madness? Ways of Assessing Cognition in International Relations." *Mershon International Studies Review*.

Zartman, I.W. 2007. "Ripeness Revisited: The Push and Pull of Conflict Management." In *Negotiation and Conflict Management*, 232–44. New York, NY: Routledge.

3

Against the clock: Time pressure and power in US mediation

Abstract

This article explores the effects of time constraints on the dynamics and outcomes of international peace negotiations. Through a comparative study of three cases of US third-party mediation — the Dayton Accords, the Good Friday Agreement, and the 2000 Camp David Summit — it scrutinises the 'common-sense' assumption that time pressure facilitates 'breakthrough.' This research leverages negotiators' personal accounts and archival evidence to compile a narrative index of references to 'time' and 'time pressure' in these sources. It then assesses the differential effects of time pressure across the case studies and identifies key intervening factors. Findings suggest that, while time pressure can indeed spur parties towards agreement, effects are contingent on compounding variables, including perceptions of procedural justice, power asymmetries, and mediator partiality. Particularly in asymmetric negotiations, time pressure is often viewed as an unjust form of 'agenda-setting power,' which complicates its exercise as a neutral mediation tool. This study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of time pressure's role as a procedural element of international negotiations, highlighting the conditions under which it can either facilitate or hinder progress toward a peace settlement.

1 Introduction

Time structures life. It wakes us in the morning and sets the contours of our working days; it can be free, or billable. As an objective measure, we understand equal units of time to be comparable. Yet when faced with temporal restraints or incentives in pursuit of our goals, time becomes subjective; one minute may seem more costly than

the next. As any scholar knows, the pressure resulting from a time shortage is often felt acutely. This pressure ultimately influences decision-making, behaviour, and outcomes.

Private-sector negotiators have long recognised the power of time pressure, as evidenced by its treatment in several generations of negotiation manuals (see: Stevens 1963; Walton and McKersie 1965; Thompson 1998; Moore and Morgan 2014). It is also widely recognised in the diplomatic sphere. Many politicians and senior officials, such as President Clinton's envoy to the Middle East, Ambassador Dennis Ross, believe that "the concept of a deadline is critical to making a negotiation work" (Bebchick 2002, 122). Bolstered by anecdotal evidence, it is assumed that in negotiation, "necessity is the mother of invention" (Sunshine and Groth 1992, 185). Under the pressure of time and unfolding events, this assumption holds, actors will adapt their negotiating strategies — increasing their efficiency, inventiveness, and willingness to compromise.

While diplomats often advocate for using of time pressure in mediation, they offer limited evidence of the mechanisms by which this procedural element yields positive outcomes. There are inherent risks and trade-offs when using time pressure as a tactic — worse than inefficacy, time pressure may prove a "double-edged sword" by *increasing* actors' intransigence (Iklé 1964, 72). Research in the field of social psychology suggests further dangers: time pressure impinges on negotiators' flexibility (Kressel and Pruitt 1989), inhibits cognitive processes of problem-solving (Yukl et al. 1976), and hinders intercultural dialogue (Wright and Weitz 1977). In short, there is reason to believe that time pressure may *negatively* impact communication and decision-making, thereby derailing negotiation. Even if time pressure effectively spurs parties to 'get to yes,' a hasty agreement may not prove long-lasting. These differential effects of time pressure remain under-examined.

This article explores the effects of time pressure in international peace negotiations, using case studies across three episodes of third-party mediation. It explicates several factors that complicate the implementation of time pressure tactics and discusses the essentially constructed nature of temporal perceptions. This study

thereby challenges 'common-sense' assumptions that frame time pressure as a reliable and neutral tool for catalysing resolution. Finally, this article highlights the importance of perceptions of justice, power differentials, and mediator partiality in this interaction. Particularly in asymmetric contexts, it finds that time pressure is often perceived as an unjust imposition of 'agenda-setting power.' The article concludes by elaborating on an emancipatory theme: temporal domination is imminently contestable. 'Against the clock' doesn't always mean 'against the wall.'

2 Understanding 'time pressure'

2.1 Time pressure in diplomatic studies and practitioner guides

Several strands of diplomatic studies research skirt the subject of time pressure. Classic diplomatic manuals argue that time pressure "operates as a force tending to bring about conditions necessary for agreement" (Stevens 1963, 200) by "lower[ing] expectations, call[ing] bluffs, and produc[ing] final proposals" (Berman and Zartman 1982, 195). Deadlines in negotiation are portrayed as a game of 'musical chairs': parties scramble to gain an advantageous position before the music stops. However, once it does stop, they would rather have a seat at the table than risk exclusion from the process. Though largely optimistic about outcomes, these authors acknowledge that some factors can limit the effectiveness of time pressure tactics.

Aside from deadline credibility, these factors include conflict ripeness and diplomatic momentum. The concept of conflict 'ripeness' is based on the apparent tautology that parties resolve their conflict only when they are ready to do so (see: Zartman 1985; 2007). Each dispute has a 'life cycle': conflict ripens and becomes amenable to resolution only when it reaches a 'mutually hurting stalemate' (Kleiboer 1994, 10). In this way, negotiation is *inherently* laden with time pressure — as the stalemate is 'hurting,' any delay in the process is costly. This concept also hints at the potential impact of asymmetry on time pressure's effects. That is, a more powerful

party may be able to withstand the costs of stalemate longer than a less powerful counterpart.[11]

Some scholars of diplomatic studies argue that peace processes are accelerated by the force of diplomatic momentum (Bjola 2015). But what is momentum? In a poetic turn, Adler defines 'momentum' as "the dynamic intensity that propels [actors] through the layers of social resistance towards some desired or feared destiny," encompassing "rate, grace, intensity, effort, and success" (Adler 1981, 14). Most negotiating manuals agree that momentum (i.e., a productive negotiation dynamic) pushes parties from stalemate to agreement, but they propose different sources of said momentum. Sources of momentum range from procedural tactics that increase the rate of communication, like secret diplomacy and piecemeal bargaining (Watkins and Lundberg 1998, 131), to sequencing strategies that postpone difficult issues to final stages (Kelman 1992, 19). According to Berridge, however, the most effective way to generate and maintain diplomatic momentum is by imposing deadlines (2015, 477).

Even as it attempts to systematise peace processes through temporally laden concepts such as ripeness and momentum, the diplomatic studies literature often fails to contend with the fact that these factors are, fundamentally, matters of perception. This is where the field of social psychology provides useful insights, with a wealth of empirical studies investigating how temporal perceptions influence decision-making.

2.2 Time pressure in social psychology

In contrast to the optimism of the diplomatic studies literature, psychologists find "homogenous, consistent, and robust" evidence that "time stress" has negative consequences for "decision-making effectiveness" (Svenson and Maule 1993, 60). Rather than setting conditions for cooperation, time pressure distorts negotiators'

[11] The concept of 'ripeness' is intertwined with the concept of a 'peace process' (itself a temporal term). Selby writes that this term was only adopted in diplomatic discourse in the mid-1970s, indicating the field's shift toward a 'procedural approach' to negotiation wherein duration, sequencing, and timing were increasingly understood as influential procedural elements (2007).

"ideal judgement policy" (Wright 1974, 556). Kruglanski terms this 'epistemic freezing': actors become "less aware of plausible alternative hypotheses" and therefore *more* entrenched in conflictual positions (1989, 404). Time pressure makes negotiators less accommodating (Kressel and Pruitt 1989, 124), less likely to engage in trust-building and problem-solving behaviour (Yukl et al. 1976, 277), and it decreases their ability to cope with the unfamiliarity of intercultural dialogue (Wright and Weitz 1977, 429). De Dreu summarises research in this area as providing "reliable evidence" that time pressure "closes the mind" of negotiators (2003, 280).

Social psychologists have also explicated factors that act as compounding variables mediating the effects of time pressure. These are broadly categorised as: the complexity of the negotiation (Stuhlmacher and Champagne 2000, 97), the makeup of negotiating parties and their relationship to constituents (Mosterd and Rutte 2000, 227), personal characteristics of negotiators (Svenson and Maule 1993, 235), and cultural attitudes toward time and timeliness (Foster 1992, 105–44; Roth et al. 1991, 1068; Macduff 2006, 31). Of particular significance is Carnevale and Lawler's examination of negotiators' 'social motive' (i.e., their initial position and self-identification at the outset of negotiations)(1986, 636). In contrast with the consistent optimism of the conflict resolution literature, they find that when parties enter negotiations with competitive goals and attitudes, time pressure emphasises rather than de-escalates this competitiveness. However, if negotiators are inclined to be (or see themselves as) cooperative, time pressure may make them more likely to cooperate. In other words, time pressure may not be a catalyst for change, but rather an accelerant of existing attitudes and trends.

2.3 Time pressure in contemporary IR scholarship

Several strands of IR scholarship are relevant here. Foremost is work in the cognitive or 'behavioural' space on temporal discounting (Schelling 1995; Gollier and Weitzman 2010; Jacobs and Matthews 2012). The fundamental premise of 'discounting' is that actors value costs and benefits in the present differently than they do those in the

future. Krebs and Rapport argue that actors think about far-off events "in more abstract terms" than near-term events — temporal distance doesn't just change their evaluation of costs and benefits; it alters the metrics of this evaluation (2012, 541). Long 'time horizons' make actors prone to 'wishful thinking' — as the timespan lengthens, they focus less on the costs and feasibility of an action and more on the benefits of the desired outcome (Liberman and Trope 1998, 5).

Other relevant concepts in cognitive IR include 'negativity bias' and 'overconfidence,' explicated by Johnson and Tierney in various publications. They find that "negative phenomena have stronger effects on judgment and decision-making than do positive phenomena" (Johnson and Tierney 2019, 96). This negativity bias is not static; actors usually become more sensitive to the threat of a negative outcome as it approaches in time. This seems at odds with the concept of 'overconfidence,' whereby a threat's imminence causes actors to overvalue their "qualities and capabilities… believing they are invulnerable to risk" (Johnson and Tierney 2019, 96). From this dichotomy, it is apparent that 'discounting,' 'negativity bias,' and 'overconfidence' can complicate the effects of time pressure — with unpredictable results.

Despite the range of literature in other disciplines discussing time pressure in peace negotiations, only one IR scholar thus far has addressed this question directly. In *Peace Negotiations and Time: Deadline Diplomacy in Territorial Disputes*, Pinfari explores how deadlines have been employed in efforts to resolve territorial conflicts in the post-Cold War era. Utilising the Uppsala Conflict Data Program, Pinfari compares 61 such conflicts through 'fuzzy-set' analysis. Pinfari assigns point values between 0 and 1 to input variables (including 'negotiation complexity,' 'conflict intensity,' and 'intercultural difference') and output variables (including 'agreement breadth' and 'agreement duration')(2013, sec. 1.3). He then assesses the relationship between 'practical' and 'artificial' deadlines on outcomes in these cases. He finds that, although time pressure may help parties reach meaningful consensus in more straightforward negotiations, only negotiations with "low or no time pressure" are "associated with *durable* agreements" (Pinfari 2013, sec. 3.4.3 emphasis in original).

He finds that this tendency is exacerbated in negotiations with high levels of complexity.

Pinfari's efforts help break ground on this subject, but this article proposes there is more field yet to till. Drawing from a broad dataset, Pinfari's research enjoys high external validity — he provides a meaningful challenge to diplomatic anecdotage on the efficacy of time pressure. His study, however, is primarily concerned with establishing a causal relationship between time pressure and outcomes, leapfrogging a consideration of how time pressure interacts with practices and dynamics internal to negotiation processes. Pinfari's input variables are all exogenous to negotiations themselves. This overlooks how factors change, over time and in interaction, as negotiations unfold. Pinfari's study also omits consideration for the consequences of time pressure in asymmetric contexts, and he neglects to articulate the ramifications of this research for foundational concepts in IR theory such as rationality and power.

Accordingly, this article follows and expands on Pinfari's work by scoping its critical implications for IR theory. The literatures discussed above provide a conceptual arsenal to investigate how elements of negotiation procedure, such as time pressure, exert influence over diplomatic dynamics and foreign policy outcomes.

3 Methodology and sources

3.1 Research questions

This article explores an 'effects-of-causes' question: *What is the impact of time pressure on peace negotiation dynamics and outcomes?* This can be separated into the following: *1) Do these case studies provide evidence that the use of time pressure tactics does or does not impact negotiation dynamics and outcomes?* and *2) If time pressure yields different results in different cases, what factors explain this variation?* In answering these questions, this article focuses on tracing compounding variables through each case, with particular attention to questions of justice, asymmetry, and power.

3.2 Conceptual framework

This article constructs a multidisciplinary conceptual framework to compare these cases and generate insights relevant to the research questions. After presenting a narrative index of references to time pressure implementation in negotiator accounts for each case study, it applies the conceptual framework to synthesise this data into comparable categories. The framework comprises a discussion of: how time pressure tactics were implemented, what endogenous and exogenous factors influenced actors' responses to time pressure, and how various 'dimensions of power' played a role in this process. Each element of this framework is discussed in turn.

3.2.1 Time pressure and time pressure tactics

What is time pressure? In negotiation literature, it is often synonymous with proximity to a 'deadline.' Smith et al. define 'time pressure' as "closeness to a deadline that, if reached, ends the negotiation without agreement" (1982, 876). In practice, however, time pressure is more complicated. Not all deadlines are created equal; actors' perception of a deadline determines whether it produces time pressure in their minds (Pruitt and Drews 1969, 43). Thus, deadlines are often classified as either 'artificial' or 'practical' (Berridge 2015, 58). Artificial deadlines are targets for incremental progress or final resolution intended to generate momentum, not necessarily compliance. Practical deadlines, in contrast, are immovable — like scheduled elections or an existing agreement's expiration — and therefore assumed to be credible. 'Time pressure tactics' are understood as mediators' attempts to tie outcomes to practical deadlines or impose artificial deadlines.

But deadlines aren't the only time pressure tactics mediators use. 'Time pressure tactics' can also include any means by which mediators attempt to quicken negotiations' pace. Beyond deadlines, mediators may leverage 'ultimatums': tying talks' termination to specific actions and behaviours. Like deadlines, ultimatums may or may not have a set time limit; they can be presented as requiring immediate satisfaction or as an aim for the indeterminate future. In addition to threatening

negative consequences, mediators may also frame *positive* rewards in time-bound terms — manipulating 'windows of opportunity' or 'fading opportunities' as incentives (Fisher 1971, 108). In practice, time pressure is often used in concert with other forms of pressure; negotiating timelines form the basis for a larger architecture of persuasion and coercion. While rarely exercised independently, 'time pressure tactics' can be broadly understood as mediators' attempts to manipulate negotiation timelines to build momentum and catalyse resolution.

3.2.2 Endogenous and exogenous compounding variables

As the preceding definition suggests, time pressure is more than an actor's objective assessment of time and timing; it includes their subjective perception of the credibility of temporal constraints and the consequences of transgression. In addition to these perceptions, other compounding variables may condition the impacts of time pressure. Conflict intensity and 'ripeness' are exogenous pressures that may compound the urgency of time pressures imposed by mediators. Short or low-intensity conflicts may produce less exogenous time pressure on parties to reach agreement than long-lasting or existential conflicts. Alternatively, the complexity and the sequencing of issues in negotiation (such as whether more difficult or minor issues are prioritised or if they are linked or disaggregated) may be endogenous factors modulating the impact of time pressure on negotiators (Okhuysen, Galinsky, and Uptigrove 2003, 269).

Two additional factors related to the concept of justice may condition actors' behaviours in the face of time pressure. Endogenous to mediation is the concept of 'procedural justice.' This is defined as the fairness of the "procedures whereby negotiations are conducted" (Albin and Druckman 2017, 94) — such as ensuring that all parties have an equal amount of time to present their positions and that imposed time pressures affect parties equally. Exogenous to the mediation strategy is the more contentious concept of 'distributive justice,' or overall equity. Understood as a fair "allocation of benefits and burdens in the outcome," this concept comprises actors'

perceptions of principles such as equality, proportionality, compensation, and need in ultimate outcomes (Druckman and Albin 2011, 1137). Thus, actors' pre-existing constructions of their identity and interests, which are themselves contingent on socialisation and historical imagination, may confound the impact of time pressure (see: Anderson 2006). Parties may resist time pressure they view as unjust; their temporal framing of the conflict may also impact their assessment of the likelihood of achieving an equitable outcome under such constraints. The effects of time pressure cannot be isolated from these 'intervening factors' — manifest in different configurations in every case — rather, it is best understood by tracing through them.

3.2.3 Perspectives on power

Finally: what is power? In IR, this is an "essentially contested concept" (Gallie 1956). It is therefore perhaps less useful to define what power *is* than to examine what it *does* (Guzzini 2005, 495). Lukes's 'three-dimensional view of power' (decision-making, agenda-setting, and ideational power) offers a useful heuristic (Lukes 2005). Realist theorists generally focus on the first dimension, 'compulsory power,' i.e., actors' material capability to enforce decisions (or, in this inquiry, the ability to enforce deadlines through military force or material incentives)(Bachrach and Baratz 1962, 947). This article, however, finds the concept of 'agenda-setting power' particularly relevant to understanding the impact of time pressure.

Lukes frames agenda-setting power as the ability to control the agenda, i.e., to elevate or to prevent certain conflicts or grievances from ever reaching the decision-making table. By managing discussion points, actors exercising agenda-setting power can influence policy debates and outcomes without overt conflict. As Lukes writes, parties' "demands for change… can be suffocated before they are even voiced" (2005, 11). Following Lukes, this article proposes an expanded definition of agenda-setting power that encompasses not only the ability to influence 'what policy issues get discussed,' but also 'how they will be discussed' in a negotiation session. Dictating the bounds of dialogue by manipulating the procedural element of negotiation agendas

through time pressure tactics can therefore be understood as an element of agenda-setting power.

3.3 Case selection and sources

Not immune to time pressure itself, this study sharpens its focus to examine the smallest possible set of cases that can still provide meaningful insights into these questions. The cases selected are: the negotiation of the Dayton Accords in 1995; the Good Friday Agreement in 1998; and the 2000 Camp David summit. These negotiations share important commonalities that make comparative analysis possible. All are cases of US third-party mediation. As articulated, 'time pressure' is never a wholly independent variable; when manipulated by parties to a conflict themselves, it is often used in concert with (and thus indistinguishable from) other forms of coercion. This research therefore pursues an analysis of three case studies wherein a mediator imposed time pressure on *all* parties to isolate the impact of this procedural element.

Additionally, these mediators were all officials from the Clinton administration; they shared common cultural backgrounds, political ideologies, and foreign policy objectives, and they operated under the same domestic institutional structure. Furthermore, these cases all contained episodes of 'summit diplomacy,' and in all cases (to varying degrees), mediators sought to leverage time pressure to increase negotiations' pace and catalyse 'momentum' toward resolution. Dayton and Camp David can be considered most-similar cases, in that they shared the same essential model: the peace process culminated in a 'closed' and high-pressure negotiation, where the US mediator enjoyed a strong role. The Northern Ireland case provides a least-similar counterpoint: the US was part of a constellation of mediators engaged in a long-term and transparent process. There are many obvious vertices on which these cases diverge, but that is not an issue for this research. As evident from the historical record, these cases had vastly different outcomes — vertices of

divergence therefore provide more avenues to explore the factors that modulated the effects of time pressure in each case.

This research reviews historical sources to construct a narrative index of negotiators' references to 'time' and 'time pressure' (both direct and oblique). The primary sources consulted included contemporaneous (or near contemporaneous) interviews with actors (specifically, interviews from the Miller Center's "Presidential Oral Histories Project") as well as archived recordings from reputable news media outlets. Mediators' first-hand accounts (specifically: Richard Holbrooke's *To End a War*, George Mitchell's *Making Peace*, Dennis Ross's *The Missing Peace*, Madeleine Albright's *Madam Secretary*, and President Bill Clinton's *My Life*) augmented these sources. Where possible, online archives from the US Department of State and the US Institute of Peace corroborated these statements. Secondary sources were utilised to establish conflict context; while language barriers presented a limitation in two cases, sources in translation were utilised to the extent possible.

3.4 Analytical methodology

In the subsequent sections, the conceptual framework outlined above is applied to each selected case, facilitating comparative analysis. By appraising each case's respective configuration of various 'variables,' this research design uses "a combination of [comparative analysis] and within-case analysis to develop theories about different configurations of variables and the outcomes to which they lead" (Bennett and Elman 2009). This article engages "systematic and contextualised comparison" to hypothesise processes of influence and interaction and propose contingent generalisations (Mahoney and Rueschemeyer 2003, 6). This combines a 'method of difference' comparison (investigating the cause of outcome variation in two most-similar cases, e.g., Dayton and Camp David) with a 'method of agreement' comparison (investigating alternate causal pathways to the same outcome, e.g., the least-similar Dayton and Good Friday cases)(see: Mill 2009).

3. *Against the clock*

4 Case I: The Dayton Accords

4.1 Background

This first case examines the 1995 negotiations in Dayton, Ohio, to end violent conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Following the dissolution of the Yugoslav federal republic, control of this territory was contested (Doder 1993, 3). Yugoslav Federal forces and Bosnian Serb militia opposed Bosnia's secession and independence; subsequent conflict followed ethno-nationalist divisions, eliciting engagement from the Croatian government. Despite the deployment of the UN Protection Force peacekeeping mission (UNPROFOR) and multi-party negotiation attempts, violence escalated (Goodby 1996). The July 1995 Srebrenica massacre and Bosnian Serb attacks on Sarajevo provoked an increase in international intervention (Rohde 1997). The combination of Croatia's 'Operation Storm' and NATO's 'Operation Deliberate Force' fundamentally altered the balance of forces (Ripley 1999; Daalder 2000), limiting Bosnian Serb control to less than half of the contested territory — bringing the conflict to a stalemate and parties to the negotiating table.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">Principal Negotiators</th></tr>
<tr><th>Serbia</th><th>Croatia</th><th>Bosnia</th><th>US</th></tr>
<tr><td>President Slobodan Milošević*</td><td rowspan="2">President Franjo Tuđman</td><td rowspan="2">President Alija Izetbegović</td><td>Asst. Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke</td></tr>
<tr><td>* Liaising with militia leaders Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić</td><td>Secretary of State Warren Christopher</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">UN 'Contact Group' Members: France, Germany, UK, Russia</td></tr>
</table>

Table 1. Dramatis personae: Dayton Accords

4.2 US Role

The US role in the negotiation process was not always clear-cut. A member of the mediation team recounts that Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke often asked colleagues: "Are we negotiating or mediating?" (Clark 2005). While

'negotiation' can be defined as "the process whereby parties seek to settle or resolve their conflicts" (Ramsbotham, Miall, and Woodhouse 2011, 32), a mediator is generally considered to be neutral, *not* a party to the conflict (Starkey, Boyer, and Wilkenfeld 1999, 13). Given the US leadership in NATO's military intervention, however, Holbrooke's personal and official neutrality was always questionable (Hartwell 2019, 450). According to Holbrooke's memoir, at one point he urged Milošević to negotiate by reminding him that NATO planes were looming — to which Milošević responded, "Yes, Mr. Holbrooke. And you have the power to stop them" (Holbrooke 1999, 108). The US team's 'stick' of military intervention was matched by the 'carrot' of sanctions relief for the Bosnian Serbs and economic aid to the other parties. "If we can get peace," Clinton briefed Holbrooke, "we should be prepared to put up a billion dollars" (Holbrooke 1999, 87). Holbrooke was well aware of these 'carrots' and 'sticks' — or as he called them, the 'hammers' and 'sledgehammers' — available to him as he developed his mediation strategy (Packer 2019, 96, 349).

4.3 Narrative index of 'time' and 'time pressure'

Ever a student of history, Holbrooke used the 1978 Camp David talks as his template for timing and time pressure at Dayton (Chollet 2005, 180). Holbrooke termed his resulting strategy "the Big Bang approach": "lock everyone up until they reach agreement" (Holbrooke 1999, 232).

Members of the Clinton administration repeatedly framed the summit as a 'fading opportunity' for parties to achieve a settlement under US auspices. Anthony Lake, Clinton's National Security Adviser, warned parties that "this was our last, best shot" — if they didn't reach an agreement, the US would "turn them over to [the UN 'Contact Group']" (Chollet 2005, 166). Despite these efforts at temporal framing, Holbrooke and his team did not initially set a timeline for the talks; negotiating delegations arrived on one-way tickets.[12] Nicholas Burns, the US State Department

[12] There was one looming 'practical' deadline: the UN mission in Eastern Slavonia was set to expire on November 30th.

press spokesperson, announced on the sixth day of the summit that "we're willing to stay at Dayton for a very long time"; the Clinton administration's official position was that an "artificial deadline" would be "most unhelpful" (State 1995).

But Holbrooke believed that for negotiations to succeed, they should not last longer than two weeks (Chollet 2005, 148). A summit extended beyond this length, he assumed, would lose momentum and discredit parties' commitment to resolving conflict. Accordingly, after the first week, Holbrooke began to ramp up time pressure by implementing artificial deadlines. US Secretary of State Warren Christopher was not present throughout the negotiations, but travelled between Washington, D.C. and Dayton; Holbrooke began to use Christopher's arrivals and departures as 'intermediate deadlines' for resolving specific issues. For example, Holbrooke urged parties to finalise an agreement on the Federation's constitution before Christopher returned on Day 10, so they might "sign formally the next day with Christopher presiding" (Chollet 2005, 153).

This incremental, 'artificial deadline' strategy had some success in producing a draft constitution and generating momentum on the status of Eastern Slavonia. When Milošević prevaricated on a transitional government agreement, Holbrooke leveraged Christopher's itinerary again. When the Secretary returned in three days, he pushed, "Eastern Slovenia must be completed so that we can move on to our main work." Both Milošević and Tuđman agreed to reach an agreement "in seventy-two hours" (Holbrooke 1999, 265). These episodes convinced Holbrooke that the artificial deadlines created by Christopher's visits were productive. "He should visit Dayton only when a problem [is] nearly solved," Holbrooke wrote to himself, so that his scheduled presence could be leveraged to help "push it across the finish line" (Ibid).

Despite this initial success, further momentum failed to materialise in the following three days. Holbrooke worried that "the tortoise of our progress was being outrun by the hare of the calendar" (Chollet 2005, 160). As such, he implemented an even more severe time pressure tactic: ultimatum. Holbrooke briefed Christopher on this plan before his arrival: "We must have either closure or close-down," he advised,

"That, pure and simple, is the message of your trip" (Ibid). This ultimatum shifted the summit's temporal framing; it was no longer a fading opportunity, but a finite one.

In concert with Christopher's ultimatum announcement, Holbrooke "planned a day of high-level visitors who would increase the pressure on the reluctant parties" (Holbrooke 1999, 286). Lake arrived to speak on behalf of the White House, calling for closure "in the next few days" and announcing that "America's patience with the entire effort was waning" (Chollet 2005, 166). On Day 16, political rhetoric was followed by military posturing when NATO Commander General Joulwan met with the parties.[13] This visit was orchestrated with the explicit intent of making the 'ultimatum' more credible — demonstrating that leaving without an agreement would mean losing US political engagement, material resources, and enforcement capacity.

The day's agenda leveraged these visits to maximum effect; by the end of the day, the negotiating parties made major progress on five treaty annexes in addition to agreements on Eastern Slavonia and the new constitution (Chollet 2005, 169). That evening, as leaders enjoyed a lobster dinner in Dayton's Officers' Club, Holbrooke strategised the next phase: moving from a general ultimatum to a fixed deadline. "Both sides are fully primed for this [deadline] approach," he wrote to himself, "indeed, they half dread it" (Chollet 2005, 170).

On Day 18, Holbrooke set a final deadline: negotiations needed to be finished by midnight, with the final treaty announced the following morning. "This was obviously unrealistic," he later wrote, "but it gave us a twenty-four-hour cushion for our real deadline, which was completion of the negotiations Sunday night" (Holbrooke 1999, 291). Over the final three days, Holbrooke's deadlines were regularly transgressed; he struggled to communicate which deadlines were firm as opposed to aspirational. Nevertheless, this strategy enjoyed some limited success. In the day's opening discussions about the status of Sarajevo, Holbrooke reiterated his deadline

[13] Another show of US material power was Dayton's PowerScene 3D-imaging room — an innovative digital system designed to help parties visualise the terrain they were discussing. It became a form of entertainment for parties to 'fly' around the map; it was so popular the US team referred to this as the 'Nintendo Room' (Chollet 2005, 167).

to Milošević. "Okay," Milošević laughed, "I won't eat today until we solve Sarajevo" (Ibid). Shortly afterward, he conceded almost the entire city to Bosnian leadership. But disagreements over other areas of territory continued.

Holbrooke announced a new deadline: midnight Sunday. In an attempt to convey that this was a firm deadline, he "asked every member of the US delegation to pack his or her bags and place them in the parking lot where the other delegations could see them" (Holbrooke 1999, 294). The gambit was ineffective. "Everyone saw through our bluff," Holbrooke recalls, "nobody else made the slightest effort to prepare for departure. Early in the evening, we gave up and brought the bags back to our rooms" (Ibid).

Returning to negotiation as the sun set, Milošević and the Bosnian foreign minister, Haris Silajdžić, began 'horse-trading' pieces of the map (Chollet 2005, 173). Their bargaining was guided by the 1994 Contact Group plan, which had formalised the parties' intent to negotiate a 51/49 percent division of Bosnian Federation territory to Bosnian Serb territory (Leigh-Phippard 1998, 306). In the rush of the preceding days, however, Milošević had unintentionally surrendered an extra four percent (Holbrooke 1999, 295). The percentage of this split carried symbolic weight; Milošević was content to trade perceived better quality land for stretches of arid, mountainous terrain to bring the numbers back in line. Running on fumes, Milošević and Silajdžić bartered right through the midnight deadline — finally reaching agreement at 4:00 am on Monday. They relaxed; they opened a bottle of Chardonnay (Holbrooke 1999, 299).

Their celebration was premature. Exhausted and operating under extreme time pressure, the negotiating parties and US mediators overlooked a crucial fact: most of the territory Silajdžić traded away was not Bosnian, but Croatian-controlled. This '37-minute peace' was ruptured when Gojko Šušak, the Croatian foreign minister, was roused from bed and brought to the map room. He made it clear that Croatia would never accept this settlement. He shouted at Silajdžić, in English: "You have given away the territory we conquered with Croatian blood!" (Holbrooke 1999, 300). The parties

disbanded for the night, despondent. "We were too exhausted to imagine a way out," remembers Holbrooke (1999, 301).

In the morning, however, they decided to try again, extending the proposed deadline by one more midnight. A well-timed call from President Clinton cajoled Tuđman into returning to negotiations; Tuđman agreed with much of what Milošević and Silajdžić had settled the night before but demanded further territorial concessions from the Bosnian side (Chollet 2005, 175). Bosnian President Izetbegović rejected Tuđman's proposal and insisted on keeping the border town of Brčko. Holbrooke was incensed at Izetbegović for raising this last-minute 'deal-breaker,' and progress stalled again.

In response, Holbrooke and Christopher implemented their most immediate deadline yet. "We must have your answer in one hour," Christopher told Izetbegović. "If you say no, we will announce… that the Dayton peace talks have been closed down." "Closed down," Holbrooke repeated, "in one hour." Silajdžić protested that the deadline was humiliating and unjust: "We can't ever give in to a US ultimatum, we can't ever accept it" (Chollet 2005, 176). But the deadline had a meaningful effect on the other parties. Faced with the real threat of talks' inconclusive termination, Milošević manoeuvred to sign an agreement with Tuđman alone. He gambled that this outcome might sway Izetbegović — the game of musical chairs was ending, and the Bosnian government was losing its seat.

The one-hour deadline came and went. The mediators packed their bags (genuinely, this time) and prepared to announce failure; they arranged a press conference for 11:00 am Tuesday. Two hours before the scheduled press conference, however, Milošević offered a final proposal. In order to include the Bosnians, he would "walk the final mile for peace" (Holbrooke 1999, 308). Milošević proposed to defer the status of Brčko for another time.[14] The US mediators conferred with Izetbegović. Christopher told him they had "run out of time for new deadlines," and needed "a response immediately" (Chollet 2005, 178). Holbrooke recalls: "Izetbegović said, 'It is

[14] It would be decided by international arbitration within one year.

not a just peace.' He paused for what seemed like a minute, but was probably only three seconds… Then: 'But my people need peace.'" With that, Izetbegović agreed.

Giddy at this resolution but wary of its fragility, Holbrooke whispered to Christopher, "Let's get out of here fast" (1999, 309). Only a few hours later, the Dayton Accords were signed.

4.4 Applying the conceptual framework

4.4.1 Time pressure and time pressure tactics

Although the scope and quantity of contested issues meant that the negotiations at Dayton were complex in their totality, Holbrooke's agenda-setting tackled these issues individually — resulting in a gradual simplification of the process. Time pressure helped spur incremental progress on specific aspects of an issue, as when Holbrooke pegged intermediate deadlines to Christopher's itinerary. Agreement deadlines were most effectively employed when actors' range of possible decisions had already narrowed; they helped push decisions 'across the finish line.' Interestingly, there were two instances where the sudden release of time pressure was also productive: the deferral of a decision on the length of the transitional authority's mandate in Eastern Slavonia and the deferral of the final status of Brčko. This case study suggests that the sequence of the issues on the agenda, and the time at which time pressure is imposed, can condition the effects of time pressure tactics.

4.4.2 Endogenous and exogenous compounding variables

This case echoes social psychology findings on the cognitive effects of time pressure. It offers evidence that a negotiation session's pressure and accompanying fatigue cause actors to exhibit less-than-perfect rationality. The fact that Silajdžić, negotiating territorial disbursement under Holbrooke's imposed deadline into the early morning hours, traded territory that wasn't his to trade — and that all other

parties in the room overlooked this fact — demonstrates that no one was operating under their "ideal judgement policy" (Wright 1974, 556).

This case also elucidates the intersubjective construction of time pressure. Negotiating under time pressure influences how parties perceive themselves, their interests, and their relationship with each other — as Milošević's concessions to Izetbegović, at the expense of his Bosnian Serb allies, show. Furthermore, it is evident that actors' perceptions of procedural justice also influence outcomes under time pressure. Holbrooke recalls that Izetbegović complained that he "felt that he had become the object of all the pressure at Dayton, and he hated pressure" (Holbrooke 1999, 305). Similarly, as was evident in Silajdžić's insistence that "we can't ever give in to a US ultimatum," time pressure can also provoke protest at unjust domination — thus potentially rendering time pressure tactics counterproductive.

4.4.3 Perspectives on power

This case provides evidence of how the material features of 'compulsory' power do matter, to an extent. The US was never a neutral or wholly pacifist mediator in this case. The Clinton administration's advocacy for military intervention in Bosnia — and its subsequent command of NATO forces — set conditions for the summit by coercing a 'mutually hurting stalemate.' Holbrooke's mediation strategy sought to leverage the credible US capacity for enforcement and economic aid as both a threat against intransigence and an incentive to reach an agreement. This is evident in his explicit mention of these "hammers and sledgehammers" and his rhetorical framing of the summit as a fading opportunity. While not a sufficient condition to secure compliance, Holbrooke's invocation of material power helped concretise the consequences of transgression in negotiators' minds. However, the intersubjective nature of time pressure allowed actors to develop and articulate temporally-framed discourses of resistance — although forced 'against the clock,' they still worked 'against the grain.'

3. *Against the clock*

5 Case II: The Good Friday Agreement

5.1 Background

This second case study examines the 1997-1998 negotiations responding to violent conflict in Northern Ireland. Following the Irish War of Independence, the Anglo-Irish treaty established a free Irish state but split six northern counties to remain under British rule (White 2010; Longford 1935). Nationalists/Republicans in these counties continued to advocate for unification across the island of Ireland, while Unionists/Loyalists sought to remain part of the UK. Reflecting the legacy of British colonisation, Protestant unionists controlled much of the area's wealth and political power; when the Northern Ireland government began banning Catholic/nationalist demonstrations, violence escalated (Prince and Warner 2011). The UK soon dissolved Northern Ireland's government and initiated direct rule. Subsequent efforts to resolve the conflict stalled, leading conflict parties to call for international mediation.

Principal Negotiators		
Northern Ireland parties		
Nationalist	*Non-Sectarian*	*Unionist*
Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)	Alliance party	Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)
Sinn Fein	N. Ireland Women's Coalition	Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)
Ireland	*UK*	*US*
Taoiseach Bertie Ahern	PM Tony Blair	Senator George Mitchell
Other mediation chairs: Canadian Ambassador John de Chastelain; former Finnish PM Harri Hokeri		

Table 2. Dramatis personae: Good Friday Agreement

5.2 US Role

US Senator George Mitchell first became involved in Northern Ireland in 1997 as a member of the International Body on Decommissioning, a board created by UK and Irish governments to set standards for parties' participation in negotiations. In that

position, he formulated the 'Mitchell Principles': a framework for participation proposing that only parties committed to non-violence (and selected by a special election) should be allowed to participate in the peace process (Mitchell 1999, chap. 3). Consequently, the respective governments requested that Mitchell mediate subsequent negotiations convened under these principles.

Some of the negotiating parties questioned Mitchell's impartiality on the grounds of his Irish-American heritage; the Ulster Unionist Party's John Taylor complained that Mitchell's appointment "was the equivalent of appointing an American Serb to preside over talks on the future of Croatia" (as quoted in: Rooks 2016, 438). Still others criticised the "foisting upon them of an unelected chairman by 'despotic' governments" (Ibid). Nevertheless, Mitchell took up the chairmanship. Although he became a linchpin of the process and enjoyed authority as a representative of President Clinton, Mitchell served at the discretion of the UK and Irish governments. As he later recounted: "I had no real power. All I had was the power of persuasion" (Germond and Witcover 1998).

5.3 Narrative index of 'time' and 'time pressure'

Mitchell's mediation strategy reflected his personal diagnosis of the conflict. "If there is ever to be durable peace," he wrote to himself, "what is really needed is the decommissioning of mind-sets… that means that trust and confidence must be built, over time" (Mitchell 1999, chap. 3). Accordingly, Mitchell allowed delegates to speak ad nauseam in early negotiation sessions. In one instance, he gave Unionist Robert McCartney the floor for two hours straight (Rooks 2016, 438). "Several of them tried to get me to cut him off," he recalls, "but I believe in letting people have their say. It was important, I told them, not to cut anyone off at this stage. When the right time comes, I said, I'll bring this to a conclusion" (Mitchell 1999, chap. 8). This strategy paid off, but slowly. Mitchell's own legitimacy as a mediator grew as talks continued.[15]

[15] Taylor eventually told reporters that Mitchell was an excellent chairman who had "shown great ability and tremendous patience and tolerance" — a far cry from his 'American Serb' comments two months earlier (as quoted in: Mitchell 1999a, chap. 5).

Mitchell hoped these open-ended sessions would build relationships between parties and produce movement on key issues — but after a year of negotiating, little was accomplished, and violence continued.

In 1997, Tony Blair's election brought new momentum to the process. Early in his tenure, Blair reached out to the nationalist Sinn Fein party (which had been excluded from the process on the basis of their connection to the Irish Republican Army's (IRA) paramilitary activities (McAllister 2004)). "The settlement train is leaving," he warned in a speech, suggesting that further violence would only preclude Sinn Fein's participation, "I want you on that train. But it is leaving anyway and I will not allow it to wait for you" (Trimble 1997). Blair combined this 'metaphor of movement'[16] with another time pressure tactic: enhancing the credibility of a practical deadline.

The legislation that provided the basis for negotiations (establishing delegate elections) was set to expire in May 1998. This was not a new deadline, but Blair brought it enhanced credibility by pledging he would not extend the legislation — when it ran out, the time for talks did, too (Mitchell 1999, chap. 11). The new UK government began secret ceasefire negotiations with the IRA to get Sinn Fein back to the table (Mallie and McKittrick 2002, chap. 6). They verified the ceasefire after a six-week observation period, and Sinn Fein joined negotiations in September 1997 (Mitchell 1999, chap. 12). The negotiations became more substantive with the inclusion of this significant party to the conflict.

Mitchell subsequently broke talks into smaller forums and proposed his first intermediate deadline: he encouraged parties to agree on a comprehensive agenda before the Christmas recess. But in those two weeks, consensus failed to materialise. As they approached the holiday, Mitchell himself reached a turning point:

> We had been meeting for a year and a half… It had taken two months to get an understanding on the rules to be followed once the negotiations began. Then it took another two months to get agreement on a

[16] 'Metaphors of movement' are a rhetorical time pressure tactic that can generate the perception of imminence or irreversibility; they help leaders 'talk up the talks' by portraying an agreement as inevitable and closer than expected (see: Berridge 2015, 477).

> preliminary agenda. Then we had tried for fourteen more months to get an accord on a detailed final agenda… At that moment, I began to think about a deadline, earlier than the one at the end of May that Blair had already set. And it had to be a hard, unbreakable deadline… without a hard deadline these people just would not decide anything: the decisions are so fraught with danger for them that they would just keep talking… It had to be brought to an end; that was the only possible way to get agreement. A deadline would not guarantee success, but the absence of a deadline would guarantee failure (Ibid).

Mitchell decided to 'bite his tongue' and bide his time. Rather than establish a deadline before adjournment, he commended participants for their perseverance — only implying that they should enter the 'final phase' when they met in January.

Unfortunately, while the negotiating parties broke for the holidays, paramilitary groups did not; violence escalated again. Subsequently, weeks were lost relitigating parties' participation, as various groups were accused of violating the Mitchell Principles. It was late February before negotiations finally got moving again, in part thanks to progress made between the British and Irish governments. Their jointly developed "Propositions on Heads of Agreement" paper outlined the terms of a settlement that would be acceptable to both states.[17]

With this shift, the end was closer in sight — but Mitchell feared further violence could still derail progress. "I became more and more convinced that there had to be an early, hard deadline," he recalls. "As I studied the calendar, Easter weekend leaped out at me" (Mitchell 1999, chap. 15). Having reached this conclusion, Mitchell designed a detailed timetable for the negotiations' endgame. Crucially, Mitchell did not impose this timeline by fiat. After sense-checking the plan with his staff and fellow mediators, he consulted with representatives from the British and Irish governments and conferred with the domestic party leaders (Curran, Sebenius, and Watkins 2004, 523). "I went around to all of them several times," Mitchell recalls,

[17] This included proposals that: Northern Ireland would have self-government through a proportionally-elected Assembly; a Northern Ireland 'Bill of Rights' would be ratified; north-south institutions would be empowered; the existing Anglo-Irish Agreement would be revised; and an Intergovernmental Council would be created to facilitate dialogue between respective governments' members of Parliament (Mitchell 1999, chap. 14).

3. Against the clock

"Based on their comments, I revised some of the details — what we would do on each of the next fourteen days. But the deadline of midnight… remained unchanged" (1999, chap. 15). Consequently, the timetable wasn't only 'credible' because it was tied to a symbolic date — it was credible because each party contributed and consented to it.

Mitchell's original plan established Friday April 3rd as the deadline for producing the draft agreement. But when disputes emerged between the British and Irish heads of state that delayed the delivery of a crucial section of the text, Mitchell had a choice: stick to the schedule and present parties with an incomplete draft, or suffer the delay? Rather than decide unilaterally, he consulted the parties again and they reached a conclusion together: "Better to delay than to do it wrong" (Mitchell 1999, chap. 15). Mitchell brought this decision to Blair and Ahern, granting them extra time but urging them to settle on an agreed text by the evening of April 5th.

They ultimately delivered it on time, but the document they produced was problematic. Mitchell knew Unionists would reject it, as it asserted that cross-border bodies established by the North-South Council would have independent authority — and Unionists always insisted that north-south institutions be subordinate to the Assembly. Furthermore, the leaders demanded Mitchell insert their text into the draft unchanged and present it as his own formulation — perhaps trying to capitalise on the goodwill that Mitchell himself had accrued. Under the time pressure of the agreed agenda and against his better judgement, Mitchell capitulated. "There had been tremendous pressure to get the document to the parties by midnight so we could meet the Monday deadline," Mitchell recalls, "As a result, we rushed when we should have paused" (1999, chap. 15).

The Unionist reaction was explosive. They demanded to renegotiate this point, among others, and threatened to leave the process otherwise. Blair immediately agreed to revisit the text; by Tuesday evening, Ahern as well. They spent the next two days in continuous discussion; they traded concessions on issues such as decommissioning and prisoner release. By Wednesday evening, settlement seemed possible. The Thursday midnight deadline loomed.

As they prepared for the final day, Mitchell briefed the parties: "When we start on Thursday morning, it has to be clear to everyone that we'll continue until we finish, one way or the other… There's not going to be a break, not for a week, not for a day, not for an hour" (Mitchell 1999, chap. 15). As the day ground on, the parties developed a "principled compromise" on the question of authority — whether north-south institutions or the Assembly would be predominant. The compromise was, really, a delay of the question. They established a "transitional phase" wherein both bodies would begin to function simultaneously. Though the agreement made these entities mutually interdependent, the details of their relationship would be determined as it developed. With this compromise, the way seemed clear to final agreement — but parties continued haggling. "Midnight came and went," Mitchell recalls. "We had missed the deadline, but we were driving to a conclusion" (1999, chap. 15). The last holdout was the UUP — but with deputy John Taylor's support, party leader David Trimble announced he was "ready to do the business" at 4:45pm on Good Friday (Ibid).

"After 700 days of failure," Mitchell reflects, the negotiators "joined in one day of success" (Mitchell 2018). The Good Friday Agreement was signed by the UK and Irish governments and the domestic political parties and then approved by referendum. The newly elected Assembly took office in December.

5.4 Applying the conceptual framework

5.4.1 Time pressure and time pressure tactics

Although Mitchell did suggest one intermediate deadline — to resolve procedural concerns by Christmas 1997 — he did not leverage time pressure tactics until the final phase of the negotiations. His ultimate deadline was carefully chosen. Easter weekend was an artificial (symbolic) deadline, but it was perceived as a credible, practical deadline given its proximity to Blair's May 1998 ultimatum. Mitchell expended his hard-earned credibility on this final push, insisting negotiations not stop — not even "for an hour." One delegate later reflected that if Mitchell had "given everybody a badly needed rest period," and allowed them to return "refreshed" and attempt "to

iron out any gaps or ambiguities," this would have "put paid to the chances of agreement on Good Friday"(Daly 2019, 2980). Rather than implementing time pressure throughout negotiations, Mitchell leveraged a single deadline to great effect.

5.4.2 Endogenous and exogenous compounding variables

Mitchell considered various perceptions of procedural justice throughout the process to secure the maximum possible support from as many stakeholders as possible. To that end, his strategy favoured comprehensive over sequential or piecemeal issue resolution. While negotiations were divided into smaller forums for ease of discussion, he always took pains to present negotiating parties with the 'big picture' before asking them to decide and move forward. In this way, he attempted to ensure that no party was excluded from, or felt blindsided by, developments in the process. Similarly, Mitchell's insistence on "letting people have their say" evidenced his legitimacy and impartiality to the parties. This was a low-to-no time pressure strategy — and yielded predictably slow results. Mitchell's opening approach can be summarised in his own words: "Better to delay than to do it wrong."

When he did implement time pressure, Mitchell remained concerned with procedural justice and perceptions of partiality. In the endgame, he made actors the architects of their own agenda, 'agreeing to agree' on a timeline before completing the agreement. Mitchell's efforts to secure parties' consent were fully transparent — each party knew that the timetable had been drafted collaboratively and adopted unanimously. Thus, Mitchell's timetable signified the parties' credible commitment to an agreed process and eventual settlement. Parties could be reasonably assured that their defection would be anomalous; this meant that defection — whether walking away or causing delay — had high political costs. The parties knew that not only would they face domestic disapproval for withdrawing from a broadly popular agreement, but they would also likely suffer these audience costs alone. With the game of musical chairs ending, they needed to secure themselves a seat in the settlement — or risk permanent exclusion.

5.4.3 Perspectives on power

Lacking the material, 'compulsory power' to direct the course of negotiations, Mitchell's power as a third-party mediator was limited to agenda-setting and ideational dimensions. He exercised ideational power from the outset of his involvement, establishing the Mitchell Principles of non-violence and democratic election as the ground rules for the negotiations' process and participation. Setting these standards for parties' inclusion helped to legitimate actors based on their actions, not their pre-existing identities — building, over time, a coalition of non-violent 'core' actors as a bulwark against the violent extremes on all sides. This broad-based, cross-sectarian coalition of the non-violent might not have coalesced in conditions of intense time pressure; Mitchell's low-pressure process design allowed these working relationships to develop organically. Mitchell's power as a mediator was not contingent on his access to material means of enforcement and reward; rather, his agenda-setting and ideational power increased relationally, through the process of negotiation itself.

6 Case III: The Camp David Summit

6.1 Background

The final case study examines the 2000 Camp David summit, convened to address issues in the Israel-Palestine peace process. With roots in post-WWI British colonial policies supporting Zionist state-building (Stein 1983), conflict in this area escalated when Israel's 1948 declaration of independence pre-empted the implementation of a UN partition plan (Eidelberg 1987; Grant 1973). Israel claimed further territory in subsequent armed conflict, resulting in increased dispossession of Arab Palestinians (Abu-Sitta 1998; Kimmerling 1983). Violent conflict continued between Israel and Arab states, culminating in the 1967 "Six-Day War" (Pollack 2005). Subsequent treaties between Israel and Egypt (mediated by President Carter at Camp David in

1978) and Israel and Jordan (mediated by Clinton in his first term) normalised relations between the region's leading powers. However, these treaties didn't resolve the conflict between Palestinian populations and Israeli forces, which spiralled into intifada — prolonged violent protests. International mediation attempts resulted in the Oslo Accords of 1993 and other partial agreements, but Israeli Prime Minister Rabin's assassination in 1995 and subsequent political turmoil stalled implementation and threatened the peace process.

Principal Negotiators		
Israel	*Palestinian Authority*	*US*
PM Ehud Barak	Chairman Yasser Arafat	President Clinton
Clinton aides: Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Middle East Envoy Dennis Ross		

Table 3. Dramatis personae: Camp David summit

6.2 US Role

The US role in this peace process was never neutral and became increasingly involved, moving "from facilitator to mediator to separate initiator of diplomatic formulations" (Heller 1999). Clinton convened a summit in October 1998; after two weeks, the parties produced only a weak agreement, with no movement on 'final status' issues ("The Wye River Memorandum and Related Documents" 1999) — thus ensuring that negotiations would continue beyond the 1999 deadline originally stipulated in the Oslo Accords. "The Millennium was drawing to a close," Albright recalls, "and in the Middle East all eyes were drawn to calendars and clocks" (Albright and Woodward 2013, chap. 28). Rushing to resuscitate the Oslo process and to secure an agreement before his presidential term ended, Clinton convened another summit — this time, at Camp David. In contrast to this article's previous case studies, wherein Clinton dispatched Holbrooke and Mitchell as envoys and monitored negotiations from afar, this time he personally jumped into the fray. Clinton left the negotiations at Camp David only briefly, to attend a G8 summit in Okinawa; Secretary Albright and Clinton's Middle East envoy, Dennis Ross, stepped in to mediate in his absence.

6.3 Narrative index of 'time' and 'time pressure'

Madeleine Albright's memoir, *Madam Secretary*, borrows the title of its final chapter from Andrew Marvell's famous 'memento mori' poem: "Had we but world enough, and time" (Boucher 2020). This poem captures the US mediating team's acute awareness of the immovable deadline of Clinton's impending presidential term limit. Clinton himself continuously leveraged this practical deadline as a time pressure tactic, framing the summit as a 'fading opportunity' for parties to achieve agreement under a favourable US administration. He reportedly told aides that the summit was the equivalent of a 'Hail Mary pass' in American football: "a go-for-broke play with time running out" (Harris 2000). Clinton also used the deadline of the upcoming Okinawa summit to incentivise progress. In his opening speech, he promised to secure "huge financial support from the G8" if parties could reach agreement before his departure in one week's time. Like at Dayton, while no fixed deadline was established initially, mediators raised time pressure incrementally throughout.

The parties at Camp David, however, had their own explicit time pressure strategies. Barak rejected Clinton's plan to present parameters at the outset; he wanted US mediation to pace negotiations according to his preferred timeline. Albright recalls that he "thought we should let the pressure build on Arafat until there was a crisis, then move to [the] endgame" (Albright and Woodward 2013, chap. 28). He even proposed that Clinton schedule this arbitrary 'crisis,' the "key point of decision," for the summit's fifth day (Ross 2005, 654). His strategy was to "slow things down, like an orchestra conductor" (Albright and Woodward 2013, chap. 28) — forcing concessions by pitting Arafat against the clock.

Arafat had a different approach to time pressure, which was evident even before the summit began. Meeting with Ross and Albright in June, Arafat repeatedly expressed reservations about the timing and schedule, arguing that ongoing Israeli provocations demonstrated that "conditions [were] not yet ripe" and that, furthermore, "the Palestinian problem was too complicated to be resolved in a hastily

convened summit" (Hanieh 2001, 76). He considered Barak's commitment to the peace process dubious, as evidenced by the fact that settlements expanded faster under his administration than under Netanyahu's (Albright and Woodward 2013, chap. 28). Moreover, the Palestinian delegation demanded a more holistic approach to the negotiating agenda. Arafat countered Barak's stalling tactics, insisting in the opening session that the issues of Jerusalem, refugee rights, borders, and sovereignty be addressed immediately and simultaneously (Hanieh 2001, 79).

While insisting on more procedural time within the summit itself, Arafat sought to leverage time pressure over the peace process as a whole by heightening the credibility of a September 2000 deadline. The Oslo Accords' interim period had already been extended twice, stalling a declaration of Palestinian sovereignty. Arafat began to threaten that, in the absence of an agreement, Palestinian authorities would unilaterally declare themselves an independent state — on their own terms — on September 19th. "A Palestinian state is our right," argued Ahmed Ali Mohammed Qurei, a member of the Palestinian delegation (and future Palestinian Authority Prime Minister), "and preparations toward its establishment will begin immediately" (Sher 2005b, 56). All parties knew that, should such a declaration occur without an accompanying agreement between the states, more violence would surely follow.

The US mediators attributed negotiating parties' different approaches to time pressure (and the resulting impasse in the summit's first days) to a 'culture clash' (Clinton 2005, 913). Barak's "way of doing things," Clinton later reflected, was "opposed to honored customs among the Arabs with whom I'd dealt." While Barak wanted others to adhere to his own constructed timeline — expecting to present his 'best offer' and have it accepted at his predetermined 'key point' — "his negotiating partners wanted trust-building courtesies and conversations and lots of bargaining" (Clinton 2005, 916). Clinton furthermore believed that the parties' approach to time pressure owed to individuals' personal predispositions. In particular, he believed Arafat had a personal penchant for 'brinksmanship': "Arafat was famous for waiting until the very last minute to make a decision, or 'five minutes to midnight'... I had

only six months to go as President," Clinton later wrote, "I certainly hoped Arafat's watch kept good time" (Ibid).

The first two days belied any hope that agreement could materialise early. As Ross writes, the US decision to delay presenting opening parameters — at Barak's request — made these first days unproductive. The parties had no incentive to present their own proposals, as they "preferred to wait and see what [the US team] would present" (Ross 2005, 656). When the US finally advanced a proposal (reflecting extensive consultation with the Israeli delegation but ignoring Arafat's explicit demand that the status of Jerusalem be addressed first), Arafat's reaction was explosive: "Let's pack our bags and leave" (Hanieh 2001, 87) .

With their initial proposals rebuffed, the mediators tried a different approach. As Holbrooke and Mitchell had done before, they broke into smaller working groups in order to quicken the negotiations' pace (Albright and Woodward 2013, ch. 28). This enabled them to accommodate both Israeli and Palestinian preferred procedures — discussing key issues (borders and settlements, refugees, security, Jerusalem) separately, but simultaneously. The US team also sought to fast-track interpersonal relationship-building by increasing parties' social time. "We encouraged the two sides to exchange ideas informally at meals, during breaks in basketball, while communing with nature, and in secret," Albright recalls, "We even once locked two negotiators from each side in the President's office from midnight until 10 A.M." (Ibid).

These tactics did not bring parties' positions any closer. As the G8 summit approached, Clinton's team sought to heighten the credibility of his departure deadline to generate momentum. As in Holbrooke's bag-packing stunt, US mediators attempted to convey credibility by requesting delegates pack their luggage and prepare to depart (Sher 2005a). It was an obvious bluff, particularly since the mediators had already suggested negotiations continue in the President's absence (Ross 2005, 661–62). Perhaps influenced by this looming deadline — but more likely, by his own constructed timeline — Barak chose the hours before Clinton's departure as his 'key point of decision.' He presented Clinton with his best offer: conceding Palestinian territory in Gaza and along the Jordanian border, accepting Palestinian

custodianship of the Haram and sovereignty over Jerusalem's Muslim and Christian Quarters, and assuring that a solution could be reached on refugee return (Ross 2005, 668–69).

Clinton and Ross took Barak's sudden complaisance as evidence of the efficacy of their time pressure tactics. "We smoked him out by saying the only choice now is to end the summit or settle for a lesser deal," Ross congratulated the President before asking, "The pressure cooker worked on him, but will it work on Arafat?" (Ross 2005, 689). The answer came quickly and clearly: no. For some reason, Clinton decided to present Barak's 'best offer' as a US proposal, pretending that he would be hard-pressed to secure Barak's acceptance of it. Having already received this proposal from an Israeli 'back channel' interlocutor, Arafat rejected it.[18] "These are Israeli ideas," Arafat responded, "I received them unofficially from the Israeli delegation two hours ago" (Hanieh 2001, 88). Arafat was not swayed by further deadline theatrics — when Clinton called to say he was about to leave for Okinawa, Arafat responded: "Bon voyage!" (Hanieh 2001, 90). Clinton opted to relieve this time pressure, asking the leaders to stay and negotiate as he left for the G8 Summit (Clinton 2005, 914).

The negotiations stalled in Clinton's absence. Three days passed. Although Clinton did not announce a new deadline upon his July 24th return, he made it clear to both leaders that the next round of negotiations would be a 'make-or-break' marathon. He proposed a comprehensive agenda to address all issues (Ross 2005, 702). The talks began at 11:30 pm and continued until 5:30 am. They broke for sleep, then resumed talks five hours later with the question of refugee return. Both sides stuck to their initial positions. The Palestinians considered the right of return inalienable, while Israeli negotiators reiterated their view that they were "not responsible for this problem" and did "not recognise the right of return" (Hanieh 2001, 94). Even a marathon could not span the gap between these two positions.

[18] Ross remembers that there were "few secrets between the Israelis and Palestinians at Camp David"; there was a 'back channel' dialogue between parties at all times, and its members did not always keep the US apprised of their dialogue (Ross 2005, 680).

Facing these irreconcilable 'red lines,' Clinton attempted to heighten coercive force with a final ultimatum, telling Arafat: "America will wash its hands of the peace process, and you shall bear the entire responsibility. We will freeze the bilateral relationship. The Congress will freeze aid allocated to you, and you will be isolated" (Hanieh 2001, 95). Undeterred, Arafat declined Clinton's 'final offer,' but reiterated Palestinian commitment to the peace process. He once again requested more time to continue negotiations. Instead, Clinton closed the summit on a discordant note. In his concluding press conference, Clinton's language made it clear that he considered Arafat the party most responsible for the summit's failure (Clinton 2005, 916).

6.4 Applying the conceptual framework

6.4.1 Time pressure and time pressure tactics

Why did the 'pressure cooker' of time and power not work on Yasser Arafat? Applying the conceptual framework suggests a few answers. US mediators implemented several time pressure tactics. First, they framed the summit as a 'fading opportunity,' highlighting the practical deadline of Clinton's term limit. But as the summit took place in July, Clinton still had six months left in office — diminishing this deadline's immediacy and credibility from the outset. Similarly, both US and Israeli delegations evoked a 'fading opportunity' in warnings about Barak's volatile domestic base. They sought to convince Arafat and his delegation this was their 'last best chance' to reach an agreement under concurrent favourable US and Israeli administrations. When this tactic proved insufficient, they imposed another deadline — leveraging Clinton's departure for Okinawa to increase its credibility. When that did not work, they resorted to 'make-or-break' marathon sessions.

6.4.2 Endogenous and exogenous compounding variables

Arafat's immutability can, in part, be explained by the concept of 'conflict ripeness' — as he himself argued, "conditions [were] not yet ripe" for resolution when the summit

began (Hanieh 2001, 76). In context, Arafat meant that ongoing Israeli settlement expansion undercut the credibility of Israel's commitment to peace. However, a realist lens suggests the absence of a 'mutually hurting stalemate' was also determinative. Despite their disproportionately higher casualty rates, dependence on outside support, and fractious internal politics, Palestinian leaders had the advantage of domestic momentum following the First *Intifada*. A constructivist interpretation suggests that contemporary decolonisation movements were another factor influencing Arafat's evaluation. Occupation "can't last forever," Arafat told Clinton, "No one can continue indefinitely to impose domination by military force — look at South Africa" (Hanieh 2001, 85). Arafat believed time was on the Palestinian side.

Indeed, the Palestinian response to time pressure was influenced not only by conceptions of distributive justice, but also by perceptions of procedural justice. This was exacerbated by evidence of the US team's bias toward Israel. "From the first day," Hanieh recalls, "the American team concentrated all its pressure on the Palestinian delegation.... [and] made no attempt to exercise any pressure on the Israelis" (Hanieh 2001, 80). The Palestinian negotiators correctly believed that the time pressures imposed by Clinton and Ross had been coordinated with Barak — thus, these were not neutral tactics. Similarly, the Palestinian side felt that their attempts to manipulate the talks' pace were received unfairly. "Why are their tactics okay," Ahmed Ali Mohammed Qurei once asked Ross, "and mine are not?" (Ross 2005, 669).

The Palestinian negotiators saw US time pressure tactics as part of an overall mediation strategy designed to favour Israel's interests. Perhaps more than the previous case studies, the Camp David summit demonstrates that parties' perceptions of mediator partiality and procedural injustice can render time pressure tactics *counterproductive*. Resentment at being the object or target of unfair coercion may be particularly deleterious when these tactics are levelled against less powerful parties in an asymmetric conflict. The Palestinian leadership — historically besieged, and with the benefit of international law supporting many of their negotiating positions — were already highly likely to resist the imposition of an arbitrary timeline for conflict resolution by a pro-Israeli mediator. They flouted US time pressure not

because they presumed they had the material capabilities to withstand the consequences of doing so but because they believed the social and political capital of a righteous cause does not depreciate over time.

6.4.3 Perspectives on power

In this case, the compulsory power of the US — its material capability to reward agreement or punish intransigence — was not decisive. Where at Dayton, Holbrooke capitalised on the precedent of NATO intervention, the US was not prepared to involve its troops in Israel/Palestine directly. Given the asymmetric nature of the conflict, conventional force deployment would have been ineffective against Palestinian resistance. What material power the US did wield was, therefore, mostly in its provision of economic and military aid to Israel. However, as the US already heavily supported the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF), proposing further aid for Israeli forces did not motivate Palestinian concessions; status quo was ineffective as a threat. Furthermore, Clinton's warning that he would "cut off" and isolate the Palestinians was undermined by the existing networks of communication and support between Palestinian leaders and those of other regional states and international organisations.

7 Discussion

7.1 Revisiting key concepts

Having applied the conceptual framework to each of these cases, the following section synthesises findings to aid typological theorising about the impact of time pressure on international negotiations.

7.1.1 Evaluating concepts in diplomatic studies and practitioner guides

This analysis begins by evaluating two concepts in diplomatic studies literature. First is conflict 'ripeness': the concept that conflicts must be 'ripe for resolution' (usually

after reaching a 'mutually hurting stalemate') before negotiation can end them. The cases of Dayton and the Camp David summit largely support this idea. In the former, NATO intervention against Bosnian Serb forces effectively coerced a stalemate before negotiations even began. While battlefield parity was by no means a sufficient condition, the presence of a 'mutually hurting stalemate' was, in this case, associated with the successful negotiation of a peace settlement. In the Camp David case, the absence of stalemate, coupled with the Palestinian delegation's stated view that conditions were not ripe for resolution, was associated with the opposite outcome — despite Clinton's efforts, time pressure could not force resolution.

Mitchell's mediation in Northern Ireland, however, suggests that conflict 'ripeness' is perhaps a more dynamic phenomena, and may occur even in the absence of a mutually hurting stalemate. The process of negotiation itself may 'ripen' conflict for resolution by socialising actors to accept a certain outcome over time. Thus, though time pressure may only be effective when conflict is 'ripe,' this article argues that 'ripeness' is itself intersubjectively constructed.

The second concept in question is diplomatic momentum. Momentum is often framed as critical in "bootstrapping the proceedings" and breaking stalemate (Watkins and Lundberg 1998, 131). Accordingly, successful mediation is assumed to depend on whether mediators can effectively generate such momentum. Berridge writes that the utility of "keeping senior politicians, generals and civil servants on all sides seized with the importance of sustaining diplomatic momentum is self-evident" (Berridge 2015, 475). But the relationship between time pressure and diplomatic momentum itself is not self-evident. In the cases above, US mediators tend to define momentum as an accelerated pace of dialogue, wherein parties readily table positions and concessions.

This article finds that accelerated momentum was epiphenomenal of time pressure rather than caused by it in each of these cases. When parties believed a settlement was in sight, the negotiation dynamic became more productive — but increasing talks' pace unilaterally neither sustained negotiations nor catalysed change when parties believed settlement was impossible. Momentum is also

intersubjectively constructed, and while procedural elements of negotiations might have supported parties to accelerate rate of exchange and generate positive perceptions of acceleration toward settlement, they were not causal themselves.

7.1.2 Evaluating concepts in social psychology

How do these findings compare to the results predicted by social psychology? Most relevant is the concept of 'epistemic freezing.' Psychologists offer robust evidence that time pressure negatively affects individuals' decision-making during negotiation, leading negotiators to become less creative, less trusting, and less cooperative. Accordingly, one would expect parties to increase their 'selectivity of input of information' (failing to incorporate new or external information in forming and adapting their positions); to decrease their 'accuracy of human judgements' (perhaps becoming inordinately suspicious of their counterparts); to fixate more on negative information); and to exhibit a "tendency of locking in on a strategy" rather than considering alternatives (Edland and Svenson 1993, 36).

The cases in this article offer mixed evidence of this effect. For example, while time pressure may have altered actors' cognitive processes in these ways at Dayton, this was not ultimately deleterious. Similarly, the absence of significant time pressure for most of the Northern Ireland peace process does not prove that 'epistemic freezing' was not a factor in the parties' months-long intransigence there. Finally, the failure of Camp David cannot be reliably attributed to 'epistemic freezing' caused by time pressure, as mistrust and inflexibility were rife before the summit began.

Experimental psychologists propose that situational factors act as 'intervening variables' to condition the impact of time pressure. Foremost among these is the 'complexity' of the negotiation. Time pressure is hypothesised to speed up concession-making when negotiations are substantively simple (Carnevale, O'Connor, and McCusker 1993, 124). It has negative effects when a negotiator's relationship to their constituents is complicated. In his study, Pinfari offers three potential axes of complexity: quantity of issues, complexity of parties' decision-

making procedures (i.e., organisational coherence and relationship to stakeholders), and intercultural differences. His findings accord with the psychologists: negotiations with high 'complexity' are only successful when conducted under little or no time pressure (Pinfari 2013, sec. 6.1.2).

The cases examined in this article exhibit comparable levels of 'issue' and 'decision-making' complexity. Further, each negotiation was intended to reach a comprehensive settlement. The Northern Ireland peace process and the Camp David summit seem to support the idea that time pressure can be detrimental in high-complexity negotiations — facing the same level of complexity, the near-absence of time pressure in the former and intense time pressure in the latter yielded opposite results. But the Dayton case adds nuance: time pressure was effective there, despite the complexity, perhaps because the sequencing of issue resolution (and evolving inter-group dynamics between the Serbian delegation and Bosnian Serbs) resulted in a gradual simplification of issues. 'Complexity' is therefore not entirely exogenous to the negotiations — the course of negotiation itself can simplify issues and decision-making, complicating how time pressure will impact dynamics and outcomes.

7.1.3 Evaluating concepts in contemporary IR

A triad of cognitive IR concepts warrant revisitation in this discussion: temporal discounting, overconfidence, and negativity bias. This article finds that time pressure reduces discounting by shortening time horizons, and in this way concretises the costs and benefits of settlement in the minds of negotiating parties. While truncating the timeline and reducing discounting in this way can be associated with effective resolution in the cases of the Dayton Accords and the Good Friday Agreement, the Camp David case suggests further complications.

Despite Clinton's efforts to shorten time horizons, the Palestinian delegation's assumed timeline for resolution allowed for six more months of negotiation (months in which they believed their position would improve and greater concessions might be secured). Thus, they viewed reaching an agreement in July to be more costly than

reaching one the following January, despite the extension of conflict this would entail. Overconfidence — whereby proximity to a threat causes actors to overvalue their own capabilities — also played a role. In this case, a premature agreement was itself a threat to the Palestinian cause; therefore, as Clinton brought this possibility closer in time, Arafat only became *more* insistent in his resistance.

Negativity bias — the idea that actors become more sensitive to the threat of a negative outcome as it approaches in time — is evident in the Dayton Accords and the Good Friday Agreement cases. At Dayton, the most significant concessions emerged after Holbrooke levelled his 'closure or closedown' ultimatum. First Milošević, and then Izetbegović, only compromised once they perceived the conclusion of the talks as imminent. Similarly, a sudden upswing of sectarian violence in Northern Ireland made the risk of negotiations' derailment more immediate. This volatility — and the concomitant threat of a negative outcome — finally pushed Mitchell and his negotiators to commit to an agenda for resolution after years of stalemate. In both cases, sensitivity to (and desire to avoid) a negative outcome became more salient as the threat drew closer in time, thus facilitating resolution.

7.2 Identifying compounding variables

In addition to the concepts assessed above, the case studies suggest several other 'compounding variables' moderating the impact of time pressure on negotiation dynamics and outcomes.

7.2.1 Procedural justice

Each case provides evidence that parties' responses to time pressure were conditioned by perceptions of 'procedural justice.' This accords with experimental psychology research, which finds that increased time pressure decreases participants' satisfaction with the outcome in group decision-making exercises. "Reduced discussion time reduces the interaction potential," write Frye and Stritch, "which may lead to

resentment and thus rejection of the group decision. The personal reaction seems to be: 'If you won't listen to my opinion, or if I don't get a chance to express it because of lack of time, I will not accept your opinion'" (Frye and Stritch 1964, 142). Thus, time pressure is more likely to be effective when it is perceived as sufficiently open-ended and equitably applied.

At Dayton, for example, Izetbegović became more resistant to compromise when he "felt that he had become the object of all the pressure at Dayton" (Holbrooke 1999, 305). Silajdžić's insistence that "we can't ever give in to a US ultimatum" (Chollet 2005, 175) reflects a similar assessment of time pressure as a form of domination. At Camp David, too, the Palestinian delegation believed time pressure was biased in favour of the Israelis — and therefore resisted capitulating to a premature settlement. On the other hand, Mitchell's use of time pressure was enhanced by perceptions of procedural justice. As all parties had agreed to subject themselves to this time pressure, and knew it was being applied equally to all parties, the final deadline was ultimately successful in securing a settlement.

7.2.2 Mediator partiality

Relatedly, perceptions of mediator partiality and credibility played a role in moderating the effects of time pressure tactics. Mediators are generally categorised as either: biased and weak, biased and strong, unbiased and weak, or unbiased and strong (Kydd 2003). While mediation 'best practice' often assumes that unbiased mediators are the most effective, the value of impartiality has been called into question (Touval 1975). Some scholars argue that regardless of bias, "mediation with muscle" is most effective, as a 'strong' mediator can incentivise agreement and guarantee outcome enforcement (Svensson 2007, 229). While US mediators were not unbiased in any of these cases, and the strength of the US capacity to incentivise or enforce a settlement varied, these cases offer evidence that how parties viewed their mediator shaped their response to time pressure tactics.

In the Good Friday process, Mitchell initially avoided using time pressure, instead increasing 'interaction potential' and "letting everyone have their say" — aligning his strategy with participants' perceptions of procedural justice. His commitment to a no-time-pressure version of procedural 'fairness' helped to assuage concerns about his partiality; his credibility consequently grew throughout the process. When time pressure *was* eventually applied in the endgame, it was effective because it had been jointly agreed upon by all the parties and was applied by a trusted third-party figure. At Camp David, on the other hand, Clinton's adherence to Barak's proposed timelines betrayed a procedural partiality, reinforcing Palestinian perceptions of US pro-Israeli bias. As a result, Clinton's imposition of time pressure was perceived as unjust and met with resistance.

In all, these cases suggest that the effectiveness of time pressure in negotiations is nuanced and contingent upon a variety of factors, but a few key compounding variables include perceptions of procedural justice and mediator partiality. Successful application of time pressure seems to depend on its perception as fairly designed and on the mediator's ability to be perceived as unbiased — levying this procedural element equally on all parties.

7.3 Considering constructions of 'power'

What do these cases tell us about the nature and exercise of power in international negotiations? Taking the 'compounding variables' outlined above into consideration, the grammar of IR theory and its approaches to the concept of 'power' can help formulate a few suggestions. Lukes's heuristic of 'compulsory,' 'agenda-setting,' and 'ideational' power is particularly useful here (2005).

Time pressure tactics were indeed more effective where the mediator enjoyed concurrent compulsory power advantages, but this was not determinative. On the one hand, Holbrooke's ability to leverage material 'carrots' and 'sticks' (in the form of economic aid and military enforcement) added credibility to his time pressure strategy and his threats of summit close-down at Dayton, ultimately encouraging

parties to reach agreement. The Camp David summit case, however, demonstrates that material power alone is not sufficient to incentivise or coerce parties to reach an agreement, on any timeline. In the Camp David sessions, despite the Palestinian delegation's absolute disadvantage in terms of military and economic might, Clinton's time pressure strategy was insufficient to force a resolution.

Meanwhile, Mitchell's mediation of the Good Friday Agreement provides the best evidence of how time pressure tactics can be understood as an exercise of agenda-setting power. Mitchell leveraged the procedural elements of negotiation to not only bring parties to agree on the issues and sequencing of a settlement agenda but also to shape rules around 'how the agenda will be discussed.' In this way, Mitchell's efforts have been compared to "couples' counselling" (Curran, Sebenius, and Watkins 2004) — the process itself became a means of relationship-building and reconciliation. By not imposing time pressure at the outset, Mitchell helped negotiating parties gradually establish norms of non-violence, build new cooperative institutions, and see themselves as stakeholders in a shared future.

Finally, these cases show that 'ideational power' plays a role in the application and efficacy of time pressure tactics. The credibility of both artificial and practical deadlines was more a matter of perception than of fact. At Camp David, the practical deadline of Clinton's expiring term limit and the more immediate risk of Barak's removal from office were no more successful in generating momentum than the artificial deadline of Clinton's departure for Okinawa. Similarly, Holbrooke's bag-packing stunt at Dayton — intended to convey a practical deadline of summit close-down by morning — was immediately perceived as a bluff. As in the Northern Ireland case, time pressure was only effective when subjectively perceived as credible. This construction emerged from parties' independent evaluations of negotiations' progress and the likelihood of an undesirable outcome, as well as intersubjectively, through perceptions of counterparts' responses to the same time pressure. It was further influenced by evolving conceptions of procedural justice, their own identity and interests, and acceptable outcomes.

In short, these cases suggest that successfully applying time pressure in international negotiations requires more than just the ability to enforce deadlines. It involves skilfully designing this procedural element as part of an overall mediation strategy to ensure that time pressures are perceived as credible and fair. The interplay of compulsory, agenda-setting, and ideational power, along with a keen understanding of the parties' perspectives, is crucial to leveraging time pressure to influence negotiation dynamics and secure lasting outcomes.

8 Conclusion

This article offers ample evidence that implementing time pressure is not a simple or sure-fire mediation tactic. The anecdotage and 'common-sense' assumption that "a deadline is critical to making a negotiation work" (Bebchick 2002, 212) should, therefore, be revisited and revised. As the deadline at the end of this article approaches, there is no straightforward answer to the motivating research question: *What is the impact of time pressure on peace negotiation dynamics and outcomes?*

This article can, however, advance an answer to the first constituent question (*Do these cases provide evidence that the use of time pressure tactics does or does not impact negotiation dynamics and outcomes?*). This study's narrative index of references to 'time' show that negotiating parties and mediators alike felt that time pressure *did* impact session dynamics in ways that shaped ultimate outcomes in these cases. This cross-case analysis demonstrates that time pressure is *not* consistently associated with more efficient negotiation processes or more peaceable outcomes. This is evident in a most-similar comparison of the Dayton and Camp David cases, where comparable mediator roles, negotiating environments, and implementation of time pressure tactics yielded drastically different results. It is further evidenced by the least-similar comparison of Dayton and the Northern Ireland peace process — where time pressure was helpful in securing a final settlement in both cases, but only under different implementation conditions. Thus, the implementation of time pressure itself is not determinative.

3. Against the clock

This article offers several suggestions in response to the second question (*If time pressure yields different results in different cases, what factors explain this variation?*). Although practitioner literature frames the main factor explaining variation as the credibility of artificial versus practical deadlines, this study finds no meaningful distinction between the two. Like the factors of 'ripeness' and momentum, the credibility of any given time pressure is ultimately an intersubjective perception. While it did not find evidence that time pressure triggered 'epistemic freezing,' this study suggests that complexity (of both substantive issues and negotiating parties' internal relationships) is a significant explanatory factor. Where the negotiation processes allowed for gradual simplification of issues, time pressure was ultimately effective in pushing decisions 'over the line.'

Additionally, this research finds that individuals' perceptions of some key factors act as compounding variables mediating the impact of time pressure. These include perceptions of procedural justice and mediator partiality. As such, findings from this study offer several broad policy and research recommendations. For policymakers, it is evident that any given negotiation should be considered a chaotic system — non-linear, multivariate, sensitive to initial conditions — and therefore, the implementation of time pressure should not be assumed to follow a reliable input-to-output prediction. While time pressure may be effective in mediating simple disputes and can help establish parties' credible commitment to resolving conflict, it can also backfire. When leveraged inequitably or against less powerful parties in an asymmetric conflict, it can be perceived as unjust domination — and thus derail the process entirely.

This is not to say that third-party mediators should never leverage time pressure. Mitchell's mediation in Northern Ireland demonstrates that time pressure that is consensually formulated and equitably applied can be an incredibly productive exercise of agenda-setting power. Negotiators and IR scholars alike would benefit from considering the dimensions of 'power in practice' evident in the ostensibly neutral time pressure tactics employed by third-party mediators. These cases show that procedural elements such as time and timing have meaningful and unpredictable

effects on negotiation dynamics and outcomes. Further research scoping the influence of this and other procedural elements promises to yield fruitful insights for theories of 'power' in the international system.

3. Against the clock

References

Abu-Sitta, Salman H. 1998. *The Palestinian Nakba 1948: The Register of Depopulated Localities in Palestine*. *Sijill Al-Nakbah 1948*. London: Palestinian Return Centre.

Adler, Peter. 1981. *Momentum, a Theory of Social Action*. *Sociological Observations ; 11*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Albin, C., and D. Druckman. 2017. "Negotiating Effectively: Justice in International Environmental Negotiations." *Group Decision and Negotiation*.

Albright, Madeleine Korbel, and William Woodward. 2013. *Madam Secretary: A Memoir*. Updated. New York; Enfield: HarperCollins; Publishers Group UK.

Anderson, Benedict. 2006. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. *ACLS Humanities E-Book*. Rev. London ; New York: Verso.

Bachrach, Peter, and Morton S. Baratz. 1962. "Two Faces of Power." *The American Political Science Review*.

BBC, dir. 2019. *Brexit: All the Times Britain Had a Deadline for Leaving the EU but Didn't*. Politics News: The BBC. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-politics-50240015/brexit-all-the-times-britain-had-a-deadline-for-leaving-the-eu-but-didn-t.

Bebchick, Brian. 2002. "The Philosophy and Methodology of Ambassador Dennis Ross as an International Mediator." *International Negotiation*.

Bennett, Andrew, and Colin Elman. 2009. "Case Study Methods." Edited by Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal. *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*. Oxford University Press.

Berman, Maureen R., and I. W. Zartman. 1982. *The Practical Negotiator*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Berridge, G. R. 2015. *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*. 5th ed. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK : Imprint: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bjola, Corneliu. 2015. "Using Momentum Analysis to Explain and Forecast the Outcome of International Negotiations." *International Negotiation*.

Boucher, Geoff. 2020. "'To His Coy Mistress' as Memento Mori: Reading Marvell after Zizek." *International Journal of Žižek Studies* 14 (1).

Byman, Daniel. 2011. "A High Price: The Triumphs and Failures of Israeli Counterterrorism." Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Carnevale, Peter J. D., and Edward J. Lawler. 1986. "Time Pressure and the Development of Integrative Agreements in Bilateral Negotiations." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

Carnevale, Peter J., Kathleen M. O'Connor, and Christopher McCusker. 1993. "Time Pressure in Negotiation and Mediation." In *Time Pressure and Stress in Human Judgement and Decision Making*, edited by Ola Svenson and A. John Maule. New York ; London: Plenum.

Chollet, Derek. 2005. *The Road to the Dayton Accords: A Study of American Statecraft*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Clark, Wesley, dir. 2005. *Public Address by General (Ret.) Wesley K. Clark with an Introduction by U.S. Senator Michael DeWine*. Youtube.com: Ohio Dayton Council on World Affairs. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9ONlWlCCPI.

Curran, Daniel, James K. Sebenius, and Michael Watkins. 2004. "Two Paths to Peace: Contrasting George Mitchell in Northern Ireland with Richard Holbrooke in Bosnia–Herzegovina." *Negotiation Journal*.

Daalder, Ivo H. 2000. *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America's Bosnia Policy*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Daly, Mary E. 2019. *Brokering the Good Friday Agreement: The Untold Story*. Dublin: Royal Irish Academy.

De Dreu, Carsten K. W. 2003. "Time Pressure and Closing of the Mind in Negotiation." *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*.

Doder, D. 1993. "Yugoslavia: New War, Old Hatreds." *Foreign Policy*, no. 91: 3–23.

Druckman, Daniel, and Cecilia Albin. 2011. "Distributive Justice and the Durability of Peace Agreements." *Review of International Studies*.

Edland, Anne, and Ola Svenson. 1993. "Judgement and Decision Making under Time Pressure:" In *Time Pressure and Stress in Human Judgement and Decision Making*, edited by Ola Svenson and A. John Maule. New York, NY: Plenum.

Eidelberg, Paul. 1987. "Foundations of the State of Israel: An Analysis of Israel's Declaration of Independence." *Judaism* 36 (4): 391.

Fisher, Roger. 1971. *Basic Negotiating Strategy: International Conflict for Beginners*. London: Allen Lane.

Fisher, Roger, William Ury, and Bruce Patton. 1983. *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In*. London: Hutchinson.

Foster, Dean Allen. 1992. *Bargaining Across Borders: How to Negotiate Business Successfully Anywhere in the World*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Frye, Roland L., and Thomas M. Stritch. 1964. "Effect of Timed vs. Nontimed Discussion Upon Measures of Influence and Change in Small Groups." *The Journal of Social Psychology*.

Gallie, W. B. 1956. *Essentially Contested Concepts*. London: The Aristotelian Society.

Germond, J. W., and J. Witcover. 1998. "The Road to Northern Ireland." *The National Journal* 30 (16).

Gollier, Christian, and Martin L. Weitzman. 2010. "How Should the Distant Future Be Discounted When Discount Rates Are Uncertain?" *Economics Letters*.

Goodby, James E. 1996. "When War Won Out: Bosnian Peace Plans Before Dayton." *International Negotiation*.

Grant, Neil. 1973. *The Partition of Palestine, 1947: Jewish Triumph, British Failure, Arab Disaster*. *World Focus Book*. New York, NY: Franklin Watts.

Guzzini, Stefano. 2005. "The Concept of Power: A Constructivist Analysis." *Millennium*.

Hanieh, Akram. 2001. "The Camp David Papers." *Journal of Palestine Studies*.

Harris, John F. 2000. "Going for Broke, Coming up Short." *The Washington Post*, 2000.

Hartwell, Leon. 2019. "Conflict Resolution: Lessons from the Dayton Peace Process." *Negotiation Journal*.

Heller, Mark. 1999. "US Involvement in Israeli-Palestinian Security Agreements: Wye and Why Not." Institute for National Security Studies.

Holbrooke, Richard C. 1999. *To End a War*. Rev. New York, NY: Modern Library.

Iklé, Fred Charles. 1964. *How Nations Negotiate: Written under the Auspices of the Center for International Affairs, Harvard University*. 1st ed. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Jacobs, Alan M., and J. Scott Matthews. 2012. "Why Do Citizens Discount the Future? Public Opinion and the Timing of Policy Consequences." *British Journal of Political Science*.

Jaeger, David A., Esteban F. Klor, Sami H. Miaari, and M. Daniele Paserman. 2008. *The Struggle for Palestinian Hearts and Minds: Violence and Public Opinion in the Second Intifada*. *Working Paper Series (National Bureau of Economic Research : Online) ; No. 13956*. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Johnson, Dominic, and Dominic Tierney. 2019. "Bad World: The Negativity Bias in International Politics." *International Security*.

Kelman, Herbert C. 1992. "Acknowledging the Other's Nationhood: How to Create a Momentum for the Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations." *Journal of Palestine Studies*.

Kimmerling, Baruch. 1983. *Zionism and Territory: The Socio-Territorial Dimensions of Zionist Politics*. *Research Series (University of California, Berkeley. Institute of International Studies) ; No. 51*. Berkeley, CA: Institute of International Studies, University of California.

Kleiboer, Marieke. 1994. "Ripeness of Conflict: A Fruitful Notion?" *Journal of Peace Research* 31: 109.

Krebs, Ronald R., and Aaron Rapport. 2012. "International Relations and the Psychology of Time Horizons." *International Studies Quarterly*.

Kressel, Kenneth, and Dean G. Pruitt. 1989. *Mediation Research: The Process and Effectiveness of Third-Party Intervention*. *Jossey-Bass Management Series*. San Francisco; London: Jossey-Bass.

Kruglanski, Arie. 1989. "The Psychology of Being 'Right': The Problem of Accuracy in Social Perception and Cognition." *Psychological Bulletin* 106 (3): 395.

Kydd, Andrew. 2003. "Which Side Are You On? Bias, Credibility, and Mediation." *American Journal of Political Science*.

Leigh-Phippard, Helen. 1998. "The Contact Group on (and in) Bosnia: An Exercise in Conflict Mediation?" *International Journal*.

Liberman, Nira, and Yaacov Trope. 1998. "The Role of Feasibility and Desirability Considerations in Near and Distant Future Decisions: A Test of Temporal Construal Theory." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

Longford, Frank Pakenham. 1935. *Peace by Ordeal: The Negotiation and Signature of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, 1921*. Lond.: Lond.

Lukes, Steven. 2005. *Power: A Radical View*. 2nd ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Macduff, Ian. 2006. "Your Pace or Mine? Culture, Time, and Negotiation." *Negotiation Journal*.

Mahoney, James, and Dietrich Rueschemeyer. 2003. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. *Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mallie, Eamonn, and David McKittrick. 2002. *Endgame in Ireland*. London: Coronet LIR.

McAllister, Ian. 2004. "'The Armalite and the Ballot Box': Sinn Fein's Electoral Strategy in Northern Ireland." *Electoral Studies*.

Mill, John Stuart. 2009. *A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive*. Project Gutenberg.

Mitchell, George J. 1999. *Making Peace*. London: W. Heinemann.

———. 2018. "Keynote Address." In *Building Peace: The Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, 20 Years On*. Belfast: Queen's University Belfast. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a5cWF0kqBb4.

Moore, Christopher W., and Adrian Morgan. 2014. *The Mediation Process: Practical Strategies for Resolving Conflict*. *Ebook Central*. Fourth. San Francisco, CA: Wiley.

Mosterd, Igor, and Christel Rutte. 2000. "Effects of Time Pressure and Accountability to Constituents on Negotiation." *International Journal of Conflict Management*.

Okhuysen, Gerardo A., Adam D. Galinsky, and Tamara A. Uptigrove. 2003. "Saving the Worst for Last: The Effect of Time Horizon on the Efficiency of Negotiating Benefits and Burdens." *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*.

Packer, George. 2019. *Our Man: Richard Holbrooke and the End of the American Century*. London: Jonathan Cape.

Pinfari, Marco. 2013. *Peace Negotiations and Time: Deadline Diplomacy in Territorial Disputes*. *Routledge Studies in Peace and Conflict Resolution*. London: Routledge.

Pollack, Kenneth M. 2005. "Air Power in the Six-Day War." *Journal of Strategic Studies*.

Prince, Simon, and Geoffrey Warner. 2011. *Belfast and Derry in Revolt: A New History of the Start of the Troubles*. Dublin: Irish Academic Press.

Pruitt, Dean G., and Julie Latané Drews. 1969. "The Effect of Time Pressure, Time Elapsed, and the Opponent's Concession Rate on Behavior in Negotiation." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*.

Ramsbotham, Oliver, Hugh Miall, and Tom Woodhouse. 2011. *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Polity.

Ripley, Tim. 1999. *Operation Deliberate Force: The UN and NATO Campaign in Bosnia 1995. Bailrigg Study ; 3*. Lancaster: CDISS.

Rohde, David W. 1997. *A Safe Area: Srebrenica: Europe's Worst Massacre Since the Holocaust. Srebrenica : Europe's Worst Massacre since the Holocaust*. London: Pocket Books.

Rooks, Douglas. 2016. *Statesman: George Mitchell and the Art of the Possible*. Lanham, MD: Down East Books.

Ross, Dennis. 2005. *The Missing Peace: The Inside Story of the Fight for Middle East Peace*. 1st pbk. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Roth, Alvin, Vesna Prasnikar, Masahiro Okuno-Fujiwara, and Shmuel Zamir. 1991. "Bargaining and Market Behavior in Jerusalem, Ljubljana, Pittsburgh, and Tokyo: An Experimental Study." *The American Economic Review*.

Rubin, Jeffrey, and I. Zartman. 1995. "Asymmetrical Negotiations: Some Survey Results That May Surprise." *Negotiation Journal*.

Schelling, Thomas C. 1995. "Intergenerational Discounting." *Energy Policy*.

Selby, Jan. 2007. "Peace Processes: A Genealogy and Critique." In *Peace in International Relations*. London School of Economics: Millennium.

Sher, Gilead. 2005a. "Lessons from the Camp David Experience." In *The Camp David Summit: What Went Wrong?*, edited by Shimon Shamir and Bruce Maddy-Weitzman. Brighton: Sussex Academic Press.

———. 2005b. *The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Negotiations, 1999-2001: Within Reach. Cass Series--Israeli History, Politics, and Society ; 43*. London: Routledge.

Smith, D., Dean Pruitt, and Peter Carnevale. 1982. "Matching and Mismatching: The Effect of Own Limit, Other's Toughness, and Time Pressure on Concession Rate in Negotiation." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

Starkey, Brigid, Mark A. Boyer, and Jonathan Wilkenfeld. 1999. *Negotiating a Complex World: An Introduction to International Negotiation. New Millennium Books in International Studies*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & littlefield.

State, US Department of. 1995. *Daily Press Briefing: Monday, November 6*. *US State Department Daily Press Briefings and Select Reports*. http://www.hri.org/news/usa/std/1995/95-11-06.std.html.

Stein, Leonard. 1983. *The Balfour Declaration*. Jerusalem; London: Magnes Press, Hebrew University; Jewish Chronicle Publications.

Stevens, Carl M. 1963. *Strategy and Collective Bargaining Negotiation*. *Publications of the Wertheim Committee*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Stuhlmacher, Alice, and Matthew Champagne. 2000. "The Impact of Time Pressure and Information on Negotiation Process and Decisions." *Group Decision and Negotiation*.

Sunshine, Russell, and Brian Groth. 1992. *Negotiating for International Development: A Practioner's Handbook*. Edited by Russell Sunshine and Brian Groth. London: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.

Svenson, Ola, and A. John Maule. 1993. *Time Pressure and Stress in Human Judgement and Decision Making*. New York, NY: Plenum.

Svensson, Isak. 2007. "Mediation with Muscles or Minds? Exploring Power Mediators and Pure Mediators in Civil Wars." *International Negotiation*.

"The Wye River Memorandum and Related Documents." 1999. *Journal of Palestine Studies*.

Thompson, Leigh L. 1998. *The Mind and Heart of the Negotiator*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Touval, Saadia. 1975. "Biased Intermediaries: Theoretical and Historical Considerations." *Jerusalem Journal of International Relations* 1: 51–69.

Trimble, David. 1997. "Ulster Unionists Won't Disappoint," 1997.

Walton, Richard E., and Robert B. McKersie. 1965. *A Behavioral Theory of Labor Negotiations: An Analysis of a Social Interaction System*. *A Behavioural Theory of Labor Negotiations*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Watkins, Michael, and Kirsten Lundberg. 1998. "Getting to the Table in Oslo: Driving Forces and Channel Factors." *Negotiation Journal*.

White, Timothy J. 2010. "The Impact of British Colonialism on Irish Catholicism and National Identity: Repression, Reemergence, and Divergence." *Études Irlandaises*.

Wright, Peter. 1974. "The Harassed Decision-Maker: Time Pressures, Distractions, and the Use of Evidence." *Journal of Applied Psychology*.

Wright, Peter, and Barton Weitz. 1977. "Time Horizon Effects on Product Evaluation Strategies." *Journal of Marketing Research*.

Young, Oran R. 1967. *The Intermediaries: Third Parties in International Crises*. *Book Collections on Project MUSE*. Princeton, NJ: Center of International Studies, Princeton University; Princeton University Press.

Yukl, Gary, Michael Malone, Bert Hayslip, and Thomas Pamin. 1976. "The Effects of Time Pressure and Issue Settlement Order on Integrative Bargaining." *Sociometry*.

Zartman, I. W. 1985. *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2007. "Ripeness Revisited: The Push and Pull of Conflict Management." In *Negotiation and Conflict Management*, edited by I. W. Zartman, 232–44. New York, NY: Routledge.

4

Virtual venues and international negotiations: Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic

This article (beginning on the following page) was co-authored with Professor Corneliu Bjola (University of Oxford) and published in *International Negotiation*. A co-authorship statement accompanies thesis submission; it is reproduced in the publication typeset with the journal's permission. Findings were later adapted in a co-authored book chapter (see: Bjola, Corneliu, and Michaela Coplen. 2023. "Digital Diplomacy in the Time of the Coronavirus Pandemic: Lessons and Recommendations." In *The Palgrave Handbook of Diplomatic Reform and Innovation*, edited by Paul Webster Hare, Juan Luis Manfredi-Sánchez, and Kenneth Weisbrode, 323–42. London: Palgrave Macmillan.)


BRILL | NIJHOFF

INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATION 28 (2023) 69–93

International Negotiation

brill.com/iner

Virtual Venues and International Negotiations: Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic

Corneliu Bjola[1] | ORCID: 0000-0003-3609-4240
Department of International Development, University of Oxford,
3 Mansfield Road, Oxford, OX1 3TB, United Kingdom
corneliu.bjola@qeh.ox.ac.uk

Michaela Coplen[2] | ORCID: 0000-0001-5182-8391
Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford,
Lincoln College, Turl Street, Oxford, OX1 3DR, United Kingdom
michaela.coplen@politics.ox.ac.uk

Received 1 February 2022; accepted 19 April 2022

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has altered international diplomacy, with many negotiations now conducted in 'virtual venues' facilitated by videoconferencing platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Webex, and Interprefy. Drawing on a survey of diplomats with experience in virtual venue negotiation, we analyze respondents' perceptions of efficacy, tactics, and legitimacy in these venues. We find that virtual venues not only affect the format, but also the substance of negotiations. In general, perceptions of efficacy are related to diplomats' ability to 'read the room'. Virtual venues also impact negotiations at the tactical level. We find that coercive approaches (including novel tactics)

1 Corneliu Bjola is Associate Professor in Diplomatic Studies at the University of Oxford, and Head of the Oxford Digital Diplomacy Research Group. He has published extensively on issues related to the impact of digital technology on the conduct of diplomacy with a recent focus on public diplomacy, international negotiations, and methods for countering digital propaganda. His recent co-edited volume, *Digital Diplomacy and International Organizations: Autonomy, Legitimacy and Contestation* (Routledge 2020), examines the broader ramifications of digital technologies on the internal dynamics, multilateral policies, and strategic engagements of international organizations.

2 Michaela Coplen is a DPhil candidate in International Relations at the University of Oxford. A Marshall Scholar, Coplen received her MPhil in International Relations from the University of Oxford and her BA from Vassar College.

© CORNELIU BJOLA AND MICHAELA COPLEN, 2022 | DOI:10.1163/15718069-BJA10060
This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the CC BY 4.0 license.

are more common than persuasive approaches. Overall, these venues are afforded the same legitimacy as face-to-face negotiations. We conclude that, as virtual venues will be a feature of international diplomacy for the foreseeable future, further research is required to inform increased diplomatic adaptation and hybridity.

Keywords

virtual venues – COVID-19 – digital diplomacy – international negotiation – hybrid diplomacy

The COVID-19 pandemic has altered the practice of international negotiation: summits have convened via video call and trade negotiations have been conducted online, while the UN General Assembly has adopted a hybrid format.[3] Virtual venues are increasingly employed for the purposes of statecraft – as 'stop-gap' measures, procedural supplements, and longer-term substitutes for face-to-face meetings. Platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Webex, and Interprefy have not only allowed negotiations to continue despite COVID-19 travel restrictions, but they have also created opportunities to increase the inclusivity, transparency, and efficiency of these negotiations. Yet generations of diplomatic scholarship stress the importance of physical proximity and informal interaction for relationship- and consensus-building among negotiators; body language, emotional expression, and casual conversation are understood to be crucial in developing the interpersonal trust and understanding that leads to mutually beneficial outcomes. The quality of such personal contact between negotiators is presumed to be diminished in virtual space – so, too, is their faith in the confidentiality of their conversations. Given these constraints, how can diplomats effectively negotiate in virtual venues? How can they navigate social and political dynamics in the 'room where it happens' when that 'room' has been flattened onto a screen? The challenges and opportunities presented by virtual venues require further examination.

This study aims to analyze diplomats' perceptions of negotiation efficacy in virtual venues during the COVID-19 pandemic, as compared to previous experiences of face-to-face negotiations. We define 'virtual venues' as computer-simulated places that allow for synchronous negotiation through online portals. Virtual venues are currently facilitated by videoconferencing platforms

3 Examples of diplomatic engagement online during the COVID-19 pandemic abound. For a few, see Shear 2021; Schneidman and Dawson 2020; Stepansky and Gadzo 2021.

such as Zoom, Skype, and Microsoft Teams, but they may be also offered by institution-specific proprietary applications. It is also expected that Virtual Reality (VR) platforms such as Oculus or HTC could soon introduce the next generation of virtual venues, especially if the new medium of the metaverse will manage to achieve mass adoption. Research in this area is thin, as the last pandemic of similar global consequence (the "Spanish flu" of 1918–1920) occurred before diplomats had access to *any* reliable simultaneous communications technology, much less virtual conferencing. Although studies of the use of technology in international negotiations remains sparse, several scholars have started to bridge this gap since the onset of the pandemic, as discussed below. As this is an emerging area of diplomatic practice, iterated research is necessary to validate previous findings, suggest further areas of interest, and keep abreast of new developments. The following study fills such a role. Surveying relevant participants, it examines diplomats' experiences conducting international negotiations in 'virtual venues' and their perceptions of how this procedural constraint has impacted negotiation process dynamics and efficacy.

COVID-19 rules and restrictions will likely continue to shape diplomatic engagement in the near future. While vaccine technology and contact-tracing infrastructure have facilitated the return to 'business as usual' or hybrid engagement in some countries, this is by no means universal; further, there is no guarantee that future variants of concern will not necessitate the reinstatement of social distancing measures. As continued climate breakdown ushers in an 'age of pandemics,' similar measures may be employed to counter future outbreaks (Wang 2020: 1). Relatedly, calls for governments to reduce their environmental impact will undoubtedly increase the use of virtual venues in international negotiations, as is already evident in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process (Klein et al. 2021; Chasek 2021). Beyond these considerations, virtual venues and hybrid formats are likely to continue being employed for the practical reason that they reduce the time and financial costs of engaging in international negotiation. Virtual venues are here to stay – by defining, analyzing, and articulating the challenges and opportunities presented by negotiation in such venues, this research will inform effective negotiation for the remainder of COVID-19 and articulate new recommendations for negotiation practice beyond this pandemic.

This study contributes to this timely and important area of research in three ways. First, it serves to confirm and add nuance to previous findings regarding diplomats' experiences of virtual venue negotiation. Second, it identifies adapted negotiation tactics (such as novel forms of 'stonewalling') that have emerged in the months since these early studies were conducted.

Finally, it identifies areas where the lack of adequate adaptation with respect to relationship-building in digital space continues to hamper the efficacy of virtual venue negotiation. The study proceeds by reviewing previous scholarship on venue selection and face-to-face interaction in negotiation processes. It continues by reviewing relevant studies of technology use and more recent studies explicitly focused on diplomatic engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is followed by a description of research methodology, including an outline of the survey tool and a discussion of limitations. Quantitative and qualitative analysis of survey responses follows, finding that while virtual venues are generally positively perceived, these venues have effects not only on negotiations' format but also on their substance – with consequences for process dynamics, outcomes, and power. The study concludes by identifying areas for further research to support adaptation to virtual venue negotiation and more hybrid engagement.

Venue Choices and International Negotiations

Practitioners and scholars of diplomacy have long recognized that venue selection is an important part of the negotiation process. Diplomats consider factors such as expedience, negotiation format, tradition, and prestige in determining the appropriate venue for sensitive international negotiations; these decisions are themselves often the subject of extended 'pre-talks' (Berridge 2015: 36–40). "The reason for this concern," argue negotiation analysts Salacuse and Rubin (1990: 5), "is that disputants almost always assume – and with good reason – that the particular location in which they negotiate will have consequences for the ensuing process and, ultimately, its results." Similarly, Henrikson (2005: 369) writes that in the selection of a diplomatic venue, "the physical location and surrounding environment … is not entirely free or a matter of arbitrary choice," arguing that this choice is constrained by the structure of power within the international system. Reflecting on the selection of the city of Bandung as the site of the first Asia-Africa conference in 1955, Shimazu (2014) finds that symbolic considerations strongly informed the decision. What was really at stake at Bandung, she argues was the will of the 29 delegations to assert Afro-Asian solidarity at a historic moment, by staging a collective crowning ceremony of post-colonial Asia and Africa. Approaching the issue of venue selection from a more strategic perspective, Coleman (2013) finds that the choice of the negotiation venue is highly consequential for why states may be more or less willing to support the adoption of emerging international norms.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the choices of diplomatic venue have often been circumscribed by travel restrictions; virtual venues have often been selected out of necessity. The instrumental, symbolic, and strategic considerations that commonly inform venue selection in face-to-face negotiations, as mentioned above, are arguably less relevant when applied to the virtual medium, or at least their impact is more difficult to gauge. Therefore, the consequences of the use of virtual venues for the negotiation processes they have enabled to continue (and subsequent results) warrant further examination.

Whereas the effects of remote negotiations are an emerging area of interest, there has been considerable research on the opposite phenomena: face-to-face interaction. Following neuroscience research that suggests information processing is improved by in-person communication, Holmes (2013) has argued that face-to-face negotiations allow participants to have more confidence in their assessments of counterparts' intentions, thereby increasing credibility and cooperation. Holmes and Wheeler (2020) have since expanded this argument, suggesting that variations in 'social bonding' within a negotiation can have important effects on the outcome. Rather than dispositional characteristics of diplomats, they argue that it is the procedural elements of a negotiation – namely, bodily co-presence, barriers to outsiders, mutual focus of attention, and 'shared mood' – that are necessary in generating the personal bonds that are required for negotiators to build mutual trust and understanding. Similarly, Wong (2020) has mapped the expressive function of emotions within negotiation. He argues that nonverbal cues such as tone and body language are important information-sharing mechanisms within a negotiation; these are not replicable in the "impersonal and irregular channels" represented by virtual venues (Wong 2016: 145). The potential implications of this body of research for virtual negotiations are significant, suggesting that shifting negotiations from a physical to a virtual format may have a detrimental effect on the ability of the participants to communicate effectively and to the develop the necessary level of trust to continue the negotiations.

While diplomatic scholarship on the use of technology in negotiation remains somewhat limited, research in other disciplines has explored the potential impact of digital platforms and strategies on negotiation and group collaboration. In a simulation experiment testing the efficacy of 'e-negotiation' media in the international business sphere, Galin, et al. (2007: 787), find that "the negotiation media … barely affects the negotiation outcomes" – a stark contrast to the expectations of the diplomatic literature outlined above. Examining business management practices, Cheng, et al. (2021: 546), find that the efficiency of collaboration between geographically distributed team members is affected

by their pre-existing levels of trust in one another. Similarly, trust assessments are continuously updated in the process of virtual collaboration. Integrating feedback and monitoring mechanisms into the virtual platform were found to increase group members' trust in each other and enhance their collaborative work (Cheng, et al. 2021: 547). Approaching this topic from the field of cognitive science, Marchi, et al. (2020) similarly find that in simulated virtual negotiations, familiarity with negotiation counterparts is associated with greater cooperation, while increased empathy has little impact.

Where studies of technological use in diplomatic negotiations do exist, they offer mixed results. Adler-Nissen and Drieschova (2019), for example, have examined the use of collaborative word processing software and its impacts on international negotiations. While they find that 'track-change diplomacy' can increase shareability, visualization, and immediacy of information, these technologies also reflect and exacerbate existing power dynamics in a negotiation. Disputes over the control of virtual text can lead to confusion and inefficiency. Parties may take advantage of procedural 'disorder' to influence the course of the negotiation; this research demonstrates that negotiating parties quickly leverage the opportunities inherent in new negotiation technologies and adapt their tactics accordingly.

Similarly, Bjola and Manor (2018) have found that Putnam's two-level game theory is highly relevant in understanding the potential impact of virtual engagement technologies on negotiation processes. Digital diplomacy has expanded the 'negotiating table'; in addition to traditional communications and messaging tactics, social media is increasingly employed as a negotiation technology. More specifically, governments can increase their win sets through three digital tactics: by using social media to craft messages and calibrate arguments in such a way that maximizes the appeal of the government's foreign policy; by listening to online conversations and tailoring messages to the target audience's feedback; and by facilitating dialogic engagement for the purpose of building coalitions with supporters and bridges with opponents. The immediacy and simultaneity of public feedback influences negotiators, their tactics, and negotiation outcomes. While negotiators have long communicated with their counterparts during negotiations via electronic messaging and social media groups, the impact of these negotiating technologies remains underexamined.[4]

4 We are grateful to a reviewer for supplying an example of this phenomena in the 2009 UNFCCC (COP 15): negotiators repeatedly texted and messaged members on the dais during the closing plenary, urging them to call a recess in order to ensure the Danish Prime Minister "took note" of the Copenhagen Accord.

More recent scholarship has focused explicitly on the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on diplomacy and international negotiation. Maurer and Wright (2020), writing in the early months of the pandemic, assess the viability of virtual diplomacy in the EU; they predict that continuity of existing negotiations will be more readily supported by virtual technologies than the initiation of new debates and relationships. Naylor (2020) similarly argues that virtual venues can lead to a 'hollowing' of summit diplomacy; the loss of the performative symbolic and interpersonal dimensions of summitry render online meetings ineffective. These mostly speculative pieces have been followed by four empirical studies of virtual venues in negotiation. The first, written by Vadrot et al. (2021), consists of a survey examining the impact of COVID-19 on UN marine biodiversity negotiations. Echoing the predictions of Maurer and Wright, they find that virtual venues succeed when they are built on existing 'normal negotiation practice' and collective 'background knowledge'. While most respondents agreed that virtual venues could not fully replace face-to-face meetings, the use of informal videoconferencing and private messaging alongside formal sessions was seen as valuable for increasing group collaboration.

The second study, conducted by Bramsen and Hagemann (2021), discusses the impact of COVID-19 on Syrian and Yemeni peace processes. Through a series of semi-structured interviews, they examine negotiators' experience of adaptation to virtual venues. They find that while participants perceive benefits to accessibility, frequency, and equity of participation, the disruption to 'social bonding' processes and diminished faith in confidentiality can be detrimental. They conclude that the 'sense of peace' which emerges in face-to-face meetings is lost, with negative impacts for peace processes. Third, a recent study conducted by Bjola and Manor (2022) found that the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a new wave of digital adaptation for ministries of foreign affairs (MFA), the result of which is the rise of hybrid diplomacy as a novel method of diplomatic engagement, in which physical and virtual engagements are expected to integrate, complement, and empower each other. The pace and shape of hybrid diplomacy will depend on how well MFAs will manage the transition from adaptation to adoption, that is, from learning how to integrate physical and virtual presences under pressure (by trial and error and improvisation), to doing so in a more deliberative, strategic, and systematic manner. Finally, a study of 18 UN environmental meeting sessions that took place during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, conducted by Chasek (2022, this issue) through interviews, direct observation, and *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* reviews, examined the development of interpersonal relationships and trust in these multilateral negotiations. As many were conducted virtually, this research offers findings for the development of trust in communication, equity,

technology, transparency, and process (that is, efficacy and legitimacy). Chasek finds that while negotiators were able to adapt and build trust in new technologies and modes of communication, concerns about equity, transparency, and process were pervasive.

This study builds on and adds to this previous scholarship. Confirming some of the phenomena articulated above while adding further nuance, it contributes to the reliability of these findings. Importantly, it provides updated data on the questions raised by both Vadrot et al., and Bramsen and Hagemann regarding perceptions of the legitimacy and confidentiality of negotiations in virtual venues. Further, building on Bjola and Manor's concept of hybrid diplomacy, it examines how specific negotiating tactics have emerged in the intervening months as negotiators adapt their strategies and develop new techniques to function in virtual venues.

Methods

This study applies a survey methodology to collect data on diplomats' experiences using virtual venues with the objective of contextualizing and calibrating the findings of previous studies of virtual negotiations; keeping abreast of key developments in technology-informed negotiation tactics; and providing an empirical basis for considering the theoretical implications of virtual venues for negotiation and diplomacy studies. The study follows an inductive approach, which is particularly suitable for conducting qualitative research when the novelty of social experiences and processes, such as those prompted by the abrupt transition to the virtual medium during the pandemic, requires researchers to do a close reading of the raw data in order to derive meaningful concepts, themes, or analytical models (Thomas 2006).

The study used a web-based questionnaire hosted on Microsoft Forms. Recruitment occurred between September 2021 and November 2021 through a snowballing method: the questionnaire was shared via email, Twitter, and LinkedIn with diplomats known to the researchers to possess relevant experience. Respondents were encouraged to share the survey with colleagues possessing similar experience. Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous. 28 respondents self-selected for participation. Respondents were relatively evenly distributed between junior (32%), mid-level (36%), and senior diplomats (32%). Their experience conducting negotiations in virtual venues was self-reported according to two metrics: the number of negotiation sessions attended on virtual platforms and a Likert scale assessment of their own virtual conferencing skills. Most respondents (71.4%) considered themselves skilled

in virtual conferencing (ranking themselves a '4' or '5' out of 5), with a significant portion (29%) having participated in '25–50' virtual negotiation sessions, and an even more sizeable portion (46%) having participated in 'more than 50' such sessions. The nature of the sample presents both a limitation and a strength. Since most respondents in our small sample identified themselves as very experienced in virtual venue negotiation, their skill level may bias perceptions of confidence and efficacy. On the other hand, their depth of experience in virtual venue negotiation means that respondents within the sample are well-suited to offer meaningful insights that might be further explored in large-N studies. The survey was designed around four topics: respondents' personal backgrounds and diplomatic experience; perceptions of negotiation tactics and efficacy within virtual sessions; descriptions of technological platforms used and assessments of their suitability; and perceptions of the long-term efficacy of virtual venue negotiation. In total, the survey consisted of 22 (open and closed) questions.

Subsequent analysis included quantitative and qualitative methods. Each respondent was assigned a unique identifier according to the chronological order in which their response was received. The quantitative data was imported into the analytics software Tableau and visual representations were used to extract analytical insight from the data set. Responses to open-ended questions were inductively coded according to key themes; nodes were subsequently reviewed and adjusted as appropriate. This code frame facilitated comparative analysis across grouped responses.

Several additional limitations to this survey methodology warrant consideration. While respondents were not exclusively representatives of Western states (43% of respondents were diplomats from nations outside Europe and North America), there remained a significant Western bias. Additionally, the respondent pool reflected a gender bias (only 25% of respondents self-identified as women).[5] The lack of data on the perspectives of the populations not adequately represented in this survey sample may impinge on the generalizability of the study's findings. Ethical approval for this study was provided by Oxford University's Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC). This study did not engage external sponsors.

5 Regarding gender imbalance in our sample, it is worth noting that preliminary research, across sectors, suggests that women have been disproportionately overburdened in the move to virtual work during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is possible that this phenomenon (as well as an unequal increase in caretaking responsibilities for women working from home) may have contributed to the gender imbalance of respondents. As our survey did not include questions on gendered impacts, including domestic and childcare duties, this remains a limitation of our findings.

Virtual Negotiation Arenas

Contextual Features

As the studies discussed above indicate, virtual venues have the power to reshape the context in which negotiations are conducted. Most critically, they impact negotiation efficacy by making it difficult for participants to establish and foster interpersonal relationships. To explore how virtual venues may influence the conduct of diplomatic negotiations, we asked our respondents to describe the reasons that they used virtual venues for negotiation sessions; to clarify whether they have been able to 'read the room' during the meetings (for example, ascertain who is paying attention to the discussion, what issues resonate with whom, etc.); and to assess the extent to which the use of virtual venues has proved effective in advancing their negotiation agendas. The results are presented below and they tell an interesting story.

As shown in Figure 1, our respondents have primarily used virtual venues for conducting negotiations and for following up on decisions made in face-to-face meetings. Interestingly, virtual venues have played a less relevant role in preparing and setting the stage for offline meetings, an intriguing finding which could be attributed to the dense schedule of the participants. As one of the respondents pointed out, the proliferation of virtual meetings led to the saturation of delegates' agendas, and even increased miscommunication between them (survey response, September 27, 2021). The distribution of these preferences remains basically the same even when the results are broken down by the diplomatic rank of the participants, between junior (first or second secretaries), mid-level (counsellors) and senior diplomats (ambassadors and

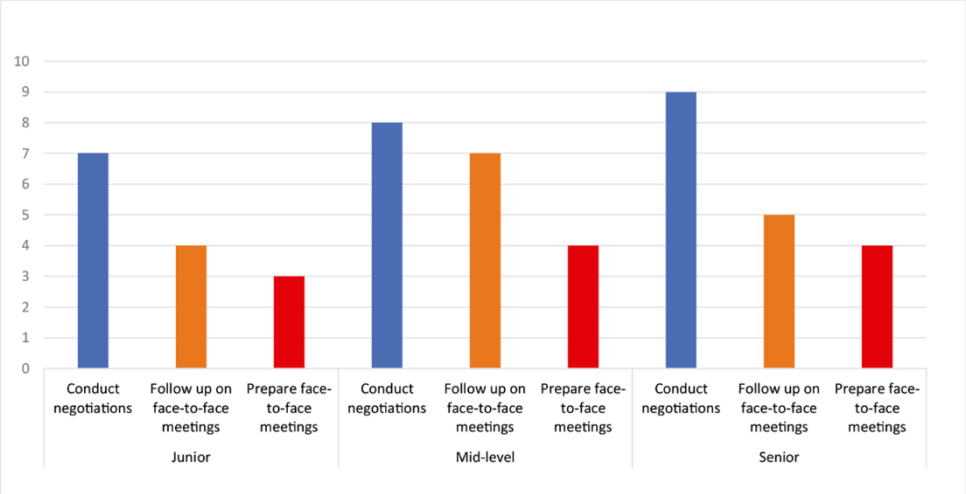


FIGURE 1 Purposes of virtual meetings by diplomatic rank

minister counsellors). The only noticeable differences, albeit hardly surprising, are the slight increase in the use of virtual venues by mid-level diplomats for follow-up meetings, as well as the stronger involvement of senior diplomats in the conduct of online negotiations.

The relative ease with which diplomats have adapted to the virtual medium is also worth noting. As one of the respondents pointed out, virtual venues proved indispensable during the pandemic, especially in multilateral regional fora "during which delegates were able to negotiate and agree on draft texts that were later adopted by heads of delegations at summits or official sessions" (survey response, September 15, 2021). While most of the diplomats have managed to make the technical transition to virtual venues rather smoothly, it nevertheless appears that age and gender do make a difference. As Table 1 illustrates, women have found it slightly more difficult to manage negotiation in virtual platforms and the gender divide has been amplified by age as well (although these responses may be influenced by a gendered tendency to understate skills in a self-evaluation or alternately, male respondents' tendency to overstate). That being said, very few participants have expressed frustration with the technical features of virtual platforms, which suggests that technical challenges are perceived to be manageable through practice and training. One (woman) responder agreed, for instance, that "technologies have definitely improved over the last two years" and that they "are suitable to facilitating virtual negotiations although there might still be security issues to be solved" (survey response, September 9, 2021).

TABLE 1 Virtual conferencing skills by gender and age

		Virtual conferencing skills				
Gender	**Age**	**1**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Grand total**
Man	above 50		4	1	2	7
	between 35–50		2	4	5	11
	under 35	1		1	1	3
	Total	1	6	6	8	21
Woman	above 50			1		1
	between 35–50		1	3	1	5
	under 35			1		1
	Total		1	5	1	7
Grand total		1	7	11	9	28

On the critical issue of how virtual venues may affect interpersonal relations and by extension the effectiveness of international negotiations, the matter is slightly more disputed. On the one hand, the majority of our respondents found that virtual venues have been helpful in their negotiations (3.39 average satisfaction rate on a scale from 1 – not much, to 5 – very much). Predictably, one key reason invoked by our respondents is practical: virtual venues have facilitated business continuity and enabled regular contact during the pandemic (survey response, September 27, 2021). However, for others, virtual venues have also helped "increase the preparatory time for negotiations, while reducing travel time and also the stress of being in the room" and "made it easier to have meetings with people from all over the world" (survey responses, September 15 & October 14, 2021). On the other hand, diplomats have expressed reservations regarding the range of opportunities that virtual venues can offer for developing close and meaningful conversations during negotiations.

As Table 2 indicates, most diplomats have been only partially able to 'read the room' in virtual venues, that is, to follow who is paying attention to the discussion, what issues resonate with whom, how participants engage with each other, etc. Specifically, 39% in our sample complained that they were not able to read the room at all, especially in large meetings or when cameras were turned off.[6] 43% said they were able to do so only partially, especially when the moderator was sufficiently skillful to stimulate participants to engage in the conversation (survey response, September 26, 2021). The remaining 18% felt quite confident about being able to capture the dynamic of the virtual engagement based on the interventions made during the meetings and provided that the internet connection was reliable (survey responses, October 14 & 18, 2021).

Interestingly, the distribution by diplomatic rank among those capable of 'reading the room' was relatively even, suggesting that virtual venues might dilute the inherent advantage of senior diplomats in capturing the dynamic of the conversations. Women in a junior position, who presumably are more familiar with digital visual representations because of their age, also seem to perform better than their more senior counterparts in their efforts to read the room. Most importantly, Table 2 shows that perceptions of the effectiveness of the negotiations are informed by diplomats' ability to read the room. The more they are able to do so, the more positive they feel about the effectiveness of their negotiations. 54% of those having such positive perceptions (3, 4, 5 marks

6 While our survey did not collect data on the size of discrete episodes of negotiation, qualitative responses indicate that the number of participants and whether the venue's 'view' format allowed diplomats to see participants simultaneously were potentially important factors in diplomats' perceived ability to 'read the room'.

TABLE 2 Perceptions of the effectiveness of virtual venues by the ability to read the room and diplomatic rank and gender

			Effectiveness					
Read the room	**Gender**	**Diplomatic rank**	1	2	3	4	5	**Grand Total**
No	Man	Junior	1	1		1		3
		Mid-Level		2		1		3
		Senior			1			1
	Woman	Junior			1			1
		Mid-Level			1		1	2
		Senior				1		1
	Total		1	3	3	3	1	11
Partially	Man	Mid-Level	1		1	3		5
		Senior		1	2	2		5
	Woman	Junior					2	2
	Total		1	1	3	5	2	12
Yes	Man	Junior			1		1	2
		Senior			1	1		2
	Woman	Junior					1	1
	Total				2	1	2	5
Grand total			2	4	8	9	5	28

on the scale from the 'partially' or 'yes' categories) have also insisted they can sense reasonably well the mood of the conversation. By contrast, only 25% found the meetings to be effective despite not being able to read the room.

While these contextual features give us a sense of the opportunities and constraints that virtual venues place in front of international negotiators, they tell us little about how they affect not only the format but also the substance of the negotiations. This aspect will be examined next.

Negotiation Tactics

Aside from creating a more constraining environment for conducting negotiations, virtual venues also have the potential to influence the way in which negotiations are pursued by recalibrating the structure of incentives and opportunities at the tactical level. In our survey, we asked diplomats to assess the impact of virtual venues on two types of negotiation tactics,

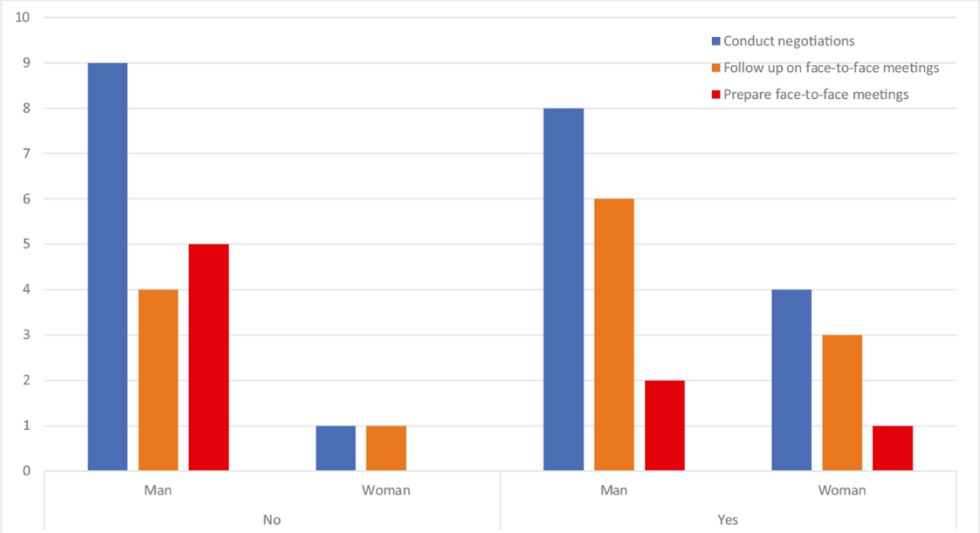


FIGURE 2 Impact of virtual venues on the use of persuasive tactics by gender

persuasive and *coercive*. The first category refers to methods by which negotiators seek to build a positive understanding with their interlocutors by facilitating information-sharing, coalition-building, or backchanneling. The second category includes methods by which negotiators seek to extract benefits by weakening interlocutors' resolve using stonewalling, ultimatums, or threats. The results presented below give us a slightly different picture of diplomat's perceptions of the influence of virtual venues on these two tactical approaches.

When asked about whether virtual venues have changed the use of persuasive tactics, 46% of our respondents said yes, 39% disagreed, while 14% expressed no opinion. The surprisingly high rate of positive responses suggests that our initial assumption about virtual venues having the potential to alter the conduct of international negotiations is indeed correct. However, there is important nuance in the responses. For some, the change induced by virtual venues is quite positive as they ensure that everyone receives the same information, the meeting is faster (survey response, September 2, 2021), and they make it easier to have pre-meetings or post-meetings with other diplomats engaged in the negotiations (survey response, October 14, 2021). Cloud-based data sharing and private communication via messaging applications, especially WhatsApp, have been highlighted by some participants as particularly useful instruments for facilitating persuasive approaches.

For others, the change is not necessarily beneficial since virtual venues make it more difficult to build coalitions, information-sharing is graphics rather than content-oriented, and there is minimal or non-existent backchannelling as "WhatsApp and private chat messages cannot substitute for in-room approaches to other delegations" (survey responses, September 27 & November 5, 2021).

As Figure 1 shows, the two groups are relatively evenly split with respect to how virtual venues may impact the conduct of the negotiations, but follow-up meetings are perceived to be more affected by the change.

Importantly, there is also an interesting gender dimension associated with the use of persuasive tactics in virtual venues, with women being more inclined than men to perceive virtual venues as having a stronger influence on the conduct of the negotiations, but primarily because of their constraining role. While having direct access to other negotiators (for example, via direct messages), or scheduling one-one-one videocalls to understand the redlines are seen as beneficial (survey response, September 30, 2021), the limitations of virtual venues carry weight as well. As one of the women participants pointed out, "when you have a negotiation through the virtual field it is more difficult to discover what are the strong or weak points of the other party" (survey response, October 18, 2021). The implication is clear. The ability to be persuasive in your virtual engagement with the other negotiators rests on being able to constantly test and monitor how the other reacts to your positions, and this possibility is perceived to be somewhat limited online.

The impact of virtual venues on coercive tactics is perceived to be even stronger than in the case of persuasive tactics. Specifically, 57% of the diplomats in our sample agreed that virtual venues impacted the use of coercive tactics, 28% had reservations about this being the case, and 14% indicated they had no experience using these tactics in virtual venues. That being said, the perceived impact of virtual venues varies significantly among respondents. For some, the "virtual room softened the impressions of personal antagonism" (survey response, September 2, 2021) and therefore the use of coercive tactics was expected to be more subdued online. The short duration of online meetings could also make coercive tactics more difficult to deploy. For others, virtual venues made it easier for delegations to stonewall and stall the discussions by invoking technical difficulties or postponing meetings (survey responses, September 29 & 30, 2021). More creative negotiators would use coercive tactics to shape the agenda for discussion, for instance, by agreeing on subjects offline, presenting them as *fait accomplis* during meetings, and taking advantage of the confusion of other delegates to proceed. They could also change versions of agreements from one call to another, invoke "missing mails" that should have been sent but were not, or use the "silence" or "offline" times to nudge agreements and profit from confusion or miscommunication (survey response, September 27, 2021).

As Figure 3 illustrates, virtual venues are perceived to have a stronger impact on the conduct of negotiations and to a lesser extent on follow-up and preparatory meetings. However, similar to the previous case, the associations that our respondents have made about the use of coercive tactics in virtual venues

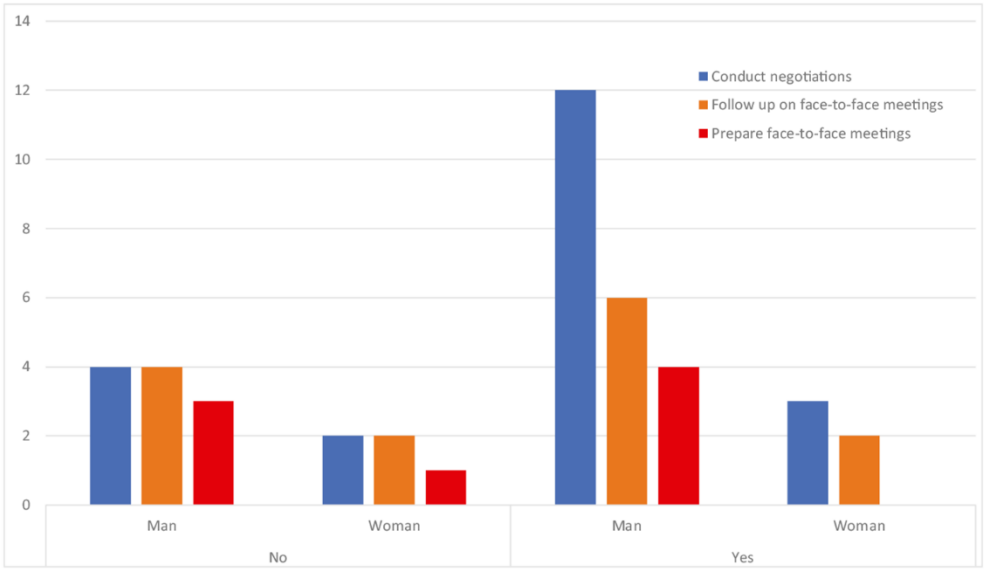


FIGURE 3 Impact of virtual venues on the use of coercive tactics by gender

reveal an interesting gender dimension, with men significantly more inclined than women to deploy these tactics online. The finding that women seem to appreciate more the use of persuasive rather than coercive tactics in virtual venues is particularly interesting, but needs to be qualified by the fact that, as suggested in Table 1 above, women are slightly more reserved than men when using virtual platforms for negotiations. As one woman (junior) participant pointed out, "virtual negotiations are helpful, but if possible, to avoid it would be better because of the lack of personal interaction that is inherent to a good outcome" (survey response, September 27, 2021).

When the issue is discussed from the reverse angle, that is, how the use of coercive and persuasive tactics may affect the effectiveness of virtual negotiations (see Table 3), participants largely agree that their impact could be substantial, especially when coercive tactics are involved. This seems to suggest that while the intrinsic features of virtual venues may constrain the application of persuasive tactics due to the relative inability of participants to connect well with each other, these features may nevertheless allow diplomats to frame the agenda of the discussion in a more coercive manner using, for instance, stonewalling or stalling tactics. This is an interesting finding that highlights a novel method by which virtual venues can influence the conduct of international negotiations, in a manner that is distinct from offline approaches. Specifically, virtual venues make it easier to deploy these tactics than in face-to-face meetings, thus generating a more direct and immediate effect on the structure of incentives and opportunities of the negotiating parties.

TABLE 3 Perceptions of the influence of coercive and persuasive tactics on the effectiveness of virtual negotiations

	Coercive tactics		Persuasive tactics	
Effectiveness (1 weak, 5 strong)	***Yes***	***No***	***Yes***	***No***
1	2			2
2	2	2	1	2
3	5	3	4	4
4	6		5	2
5	1	3	3	1
Total	16	8	13	11

Lastly, it is important also to note that most of the respondents expressed confidence in the quality of the negotiation outcomes concluded in virtual venues. When asked about whether agreements reached online would need to be renegotiated once physical meetings resumed, 39% firmly disagreed, 32% said that might be possible, and about 15% found that to be necessary or did not know. The remaining 14% expressed no view. As one of the respondents indicated, the complexity of the agreement would be the key factor to consider when deciding whether physical negotiations would be required to complement those conducted online: "I believe that an agreement that requires more depth, might need to be renegotiated. I find, however, that even the most important resolution I negotiated virtually during the pandemic would not need to be renegotiated" (survey response, September 27, 2021). The strong level of confidence in the quality of the negotiation outcomes concluded online suggests that virtual venues are no longer seen as exotic places, located outside the realm of diplomatic activity. In fact, they are increasingly perceived as a credible alternatives to face-to-face negotiation arenas.

Discussion

Following the empirical analysis of survey responses, we reviewed and analyzed respondents' qualitative answers to open-ended questions. This analysis was conducted inductively; key clauses were coded according to thematic nodes, which were subsequently reviewed and adjusted throughout the process. The

thematic code frame organized responses according to their alignment with our empirical findings; qualitative answers both corroborated these findings and suggested further areas of inquiry in this field. Unsurprisingly, every single respondent indicated that the procedural constraints inherent to virtual venues had somehow influenced the negotiation process and their ability to effectively negotiate therein. While they were not unanimous in their analysis of how and why this was the case, key points of agreement are identified and discussed below.

Several responses indicated that while the choice of virtual venue is often a necessity, these venues are not immune to the considerations that have historically influenced in-person venue selection. Not all virtual venues are created alike – features such as breakout rooms, integrated chat streams, and viewing format were all mentioned as crucial built-in aspects of the selected venue (survey responses, September 29, 28 & 27, 2021, respectively). Most commonly, respondents criticized virtual venues without a 'gallery view' function; limited layouts hampered their ability to see all other participants simultaneously (with the UN's virtual venue of choice, Interprefy, drawing particular ire as "a very faulty platform" (survey response, September 27, 2021)). Accordingly, one respondent called for the development of more tailored platforms that can be adapted to "specific needs in any organizations," such as that body's procedural rules around points of order and voting (survey response, September 27, 2021). Interestingly, one respondent described the use of Microsoft Teams as "too American" – remarking on the "infantile" and unserious nature of using "emoticons" in formal negotiations (survey response, September 29, 2021). These responses suggest that the choice of a specific virtual venue can echo considerations common to face-to-face negotiations; choosing the 'shape of the table,' for instance, remains laden with both symbolic and functional consequences.

In accordance with our empirical findings, most respondents agreed that the use of virtual venues for negotiation was 'net positive'. While the overwhelming rationale offered by respondents was that virtual venues allowed continuity despite lockdown restrictions, some other interesting benefits were identified. One 'positive' that was repeatedly mentioned was the increased accessibility and geographic scope of the negotiation table (survey responses, September 15 & 29, October 14 & 19, 2021). While the choice of time zone may still reflect biases and power differentials among negotiators, several respondents agreed that virtual venues were "relatively easy to set up over different time zones" (survey response, September 29, 2021). Similarly, one respondent proposed that a collective benefit of virtual venue negotiation was the empowerment of a centralized mediator with the ability to "mute participants" or "interrupt the

meeting" in order to move the negotiating agenda forward (survey response, September 22, 2021). Aside from group-wide benefits, a contingent of respondents pointed to individual benefits: virtual venues allowed them to be more effective negotiators by reducing fatigue from travel, increasing preparatory time, and allowing more immediate access to online information (survey responses, October 10, September 2 & 22, 2021, respectively).

In contrast, a significant portion of respondents remarked on the deleterious individual and collective effects of 'Zoom fatigue' (survey response, Sept 15, 2021). Echoing popular conceptions of the term, diplomats identified screen time, schedule saturation, and lack of adequate rest and refreshment opportunities as key factors inducing fatigue (survey responses, September 30, 27 & 30, 2021, respectively). As a result, several respondents listed 'attention', 'concentration', and 'distraction' as challenges inherent to negotiation in virtual venues (survey responses, September 8, 15, 15, 26 & 26, 2021). One respondent even suggested that "numbers of people still interested by end of the first hour of discussion" is a key metric of success in a virtual venue negotiation (survey response, September 28, 2021). Some respondents noted that the tendency toward 'Zoom fatigue' necessitated a change in mediation strategies to draw out and engage "shy" or inattentive negotiators (survey response, September 26, 2021). While participant engagement can pose a similar challenge within face-to-face negotiations, features of virtual venues made it particularly difficult for mediators, chairs, and other negotiating parties to re-connect with disengaged negotiators. Many such negotiators resorted to familiar means to mitigate 'Zoom fatigue,' including turning off their cameras – sometimes leaving their cameras off "even when taking the floor," to the chagrin of their counterparts (survey response, September 30, 2021).

Our survey revealed several forms of (mal)adaption to negotiation in virtual venues. The most glaring examples were found in respondents' descriptions of new and adapted negotiation tactics. In an open-ended question about the use of coercive tactics, several respondents pointed out the novel ways in which negotiating parties 'stonewalled' by delaying or postponing negotiating progress. Related to the phenomena discussed above, one respondent noted that it was easier for negotiators to hold up proceedings without inducing social pressure by "hiding behind a turned off camera" (survey response, September 29, 2021). Another tactic included stonewalling by indefinite postponement. Whereas the travel and logistical necessities of in-person negotiation may more effectively commit parties to engagement, meetings in virtual venues are more flexible – one respondent found it "[too] easy to postpone and propose new virtual meetings (ad eternum)" (survey response, September 29, 2021). When meetings did take place, they were often scheduled for short time

periods (such as half-hour sessions). One respondent indicated that these curtailed sessions (and the ease with which negotiators could 'walk away' from an overlong session) meant that stonewalling within sessions was more effective and less costly: "Time seems elongated. If someone is being coercive, you can delay the proceedings, retrench and strategize" (survey response, October 19, 2021). While stonewalling is by no means a new negotiation tactic, the ways in which this tactic has been adapted to the unique opportunities of the virtual venue are notable.

Our survey responses also indicated the development of a novel (if not surprising) negotiation tactic: the performance of technical difficulty. One respondent indicated that "some delegations took advantage of the technical weaknesses of the platform and the digital literacy (or lack thereof) of the moderators to disrupt the dynamics of the meeting and thus influence the agenda" (survey response, September 22, 2021). Stalling tactics included feigning connectivity issues or claiming to have difficulty with document and screen sharing. One respondent admitted that in virtual venues "it is easier to interrupt the meeting, to pretend you did not hear well" (survey response, September 22, 2021). While some negotiators may have seen this tactic as an effective way of manipulating negotiation pace, others argue that it is transparent theater. One respondent noted that "stonewalling is actually rude when in an online meeting, and pretexting IT troubles makes one look ridiculous, not unready to negotiate" (survey response, September 28, 2021). The age difference between the two respondents quoted above (with the former falling in the "35–50" category and the latter identifying as "under 35") may be telling – revealing a generational difference in digital literacy that extends to a more finely attuned sense of which technical problems are believable and which are invented.

As revealed in our empirical analysis, negotiators' degree of satisfaction with the efficacy of virtual venue negotiation correlated strongly with their confidence in their ability to read the room. Confirming Bramsen and Hagemann's theorization on the "missing sense of peace" in virtual venues, we similarly found a gendered difference in assessments by men and women – with the latter expressing a more acute sense of limitation in their ability to make accurate and nuanced assessments of their peers and interlocutors in virtual space. One (woman) respondent quipped that it was "virtually (no pun intended) impossible to read the room" (survey response, September 27, 2021). Responses such as this indicate that the procedural constraints inherent to virtual venue selection may have differential effects on different demographic groups.

One reason that it was particularly difficult for negotiators to read the room may be, as Bjola and Manor (2018) note, because the notion of the 'room' itself has expanded to include citizens, press representatives, and civil society

organizations that engage with diplomats and negotiators in virtual spaces (including social media). Indeed, several respondents indicated an anxiety around 'feeling overheard' (survey responses, September 9, 26 & 30, October 14 & 19, 2021). Faith in the confidentiality and security of virtual venue negotiation was generally low. Interestingly, respondents were less concerned that outside parties may actually gain access to 'meeting links' and join the virtual venue independently; they were more concerned that negotiating counterparts with legitimate access to the virtual venue may record or relay information to outside parties without their consent or authorization. One respondent argued that "the fact that you can easily be recorded (without knowing it) and the ease with which colleagues in the virtual room can be communicating with others (even outside the room) makes things more complicated. At times you don't know if you're handling questions from people in the virtual room or the outside" (survey response, September 30, 2021). While some negotiators believed that the pressure of this transparency "[made] partners more prudent and more accurate in statements" (survey response, September 26, 2021), some found that this confidentiality concern limited information-sharing capacity. In some instances, for example, "printed material was held in-front of camera just to avoid sending originals over digital platforms" as a result of security concerns (survey response, October 14, 2021).

Despite a noted lack of confidence in the confidentiality and integrity of negotiation processes, our respondents exhibited a remarkable faith in the legitimacy and lasting power of agreements negotiated in virtual venues. A significant 'null finding' of our survey was a low level of concern regarding the legitimacy of virtual venue negotiation processes and outcomes. As mentioned in the previous section, several respondents indicated that decisions made and agreements reached in virtual venues were just as legitimate as in-person agreements (survey responses, September 26 & 30, October 14 &14, 2021). As one respondent summarized, "There is no big difference in this sense between online and on-site negotiations. *Pacta sunt servanda* – agreements must be kept – in any means of achievement" (survey response, September 26, 2021). While some argued that these agreements may need to be "cemented" or "verified" by subsequent face-to-face meetings, these respondents were in the minority (7%).

These findings suggest that effective diplomatic adaptation should focus on developing innovative ways of negotiating that maximize the benefits of virtual spaces *as* venues rather than treating them as unique manifestations generated by the pandemic, which may become redundant once travel restrictions are fully removed. Echoing Bjola and Manor's (2022) research on hybrid diplomacy, the use of virtual venues in international negotiations ought not

to be seen as replacements of physical meetings but rather as additional arenas for conducting negotiations. The main task in front of diplomats is not whether or not to use virtual venues, but when to do so and in what combinations with physical meetings. Our findings indicate, for instance, that while diplomats feel confident about the quality of negotiation outcomes concluded online, they nevertheless agree that complex agreements require a combination of meetings in physical and virtual venues. The urgency of the negotiations, scheduling flexibility, and the suitability of coercive and persuasive tactics to the task at hand are critical factors to consider when deciding on the best combination of physical and virtual venues for conducting negotiations.

Finally, our study raises interesting questions about the exercise of power in international negotiations conducted in virtual venues. Compared to traditional face-to-face negotiations, respondents indicated an increase in the use of coercive tactics to manipulate negotiation pace and agenda. As evidence from our survey indicates that virtual venues provide more opportunities for the implementation of coercive tactics, this suggests that virtual venues may serve to exacerbate existing power imbalances between negotiating parties. This represents a critical area for future research. Virtual venues may advantage those parties with less incentive to negotiate in the first place, as the incentive and opportunity structure of a virtual format facilitates stalling and stonewalling. Less powerful negotiating partners may find themselves further disadvantaged, as the tactical mechanisms for persuasion and coalition-building are more difficult to operationalize in the virtual venue format. Virtual venues are *not* neutral or equalizing spaces – future research and the development of hybrid negotiation strategies ought to incorporate this awareness, acknowledging that a combination of both on- and offline engagement could be crucial to rebalancing power dynamics within a negotiation.

Conclusion

The use of 'virtual venues' for international diplomacy has changed the way that states negotiate power – and changed the very power dynamics within these negotiations. Overall, our study has found unanimous support for the conclusion that virtual venues not only affect the format of negotiations, but the substance of the negotiation process (and by extension, their outcomes). Perceptions of how these effects are manifest, however, were variable and at times completely opposed. While one respondent, for example, found that their counterparts were 'poker faced' and more 'remote' in a virtual venue (survey response, September 30, 2021), another respondent found their colleagues

more personable online, as "masks were more easily off" (survey response, September 28, 2021). We will doubtless be contending with these differential perceptions and effects of virtual venues for decades to come.

Despite this variability, our analysis of survey responses uncovered several crucial findings. First, and unsurprisingly, diplomats' evaluation of negotiation efficacy in virtual venues was directly related to their perception of their ability to read the room. Diplomats viewed these venues as effective when they were perceived to be an adequate analogue for traditional in-person negotiation; feeling a lack of social cues and connection was related to dissatisfaction with the virtual venue format. Secondly, we uncovered a difference in tactical approaches within virtual venue negotiations. Persuasive tactics were difficult to effectuate in virtual venues, while coercive tactics such as stalling and stonewalling were more easily employed. We also encountered a novel negotiation tactic: feigning technical difficulty with the mechanics of the virtual venue itself in order to stall or delay negotiation.

While diplomats expressed reservations regarding the efficacy of virtual venue negotiation and specifically the confidentiality of these venues, they generally supported the legitimacy of virtual negotiation processes and agreements reached therein. Diplomats agreed that virtual venues are here to stay, and for the most part have adapted accordingly. We argue, however, that there is more adaptation ahead – moving forward, diplomats will need to move beyond conceptualizing virtual venues as stand-ins for face-to-face venues, and instead find new ways of engaging with virtual venues *as* venues in their own right. This will entail further examination of the opportunities and challenges presented by these venues and may require diplomats and negotiators to undertake additional specialized training on effectively operating in these spaces.

This study has generated several areas of inquiry to guide future research and implementation of virtual venue negotiation. One avenue for research concerns participant inclusivity and engagement. How does the number of participants in a virtual negotiation impact diplomats' ability to read the room and reach agreement? Is there a 'limit' to the number of participants that can be meaningfully included, and how is this related to the 'view' format of the virtual venue selected? Similarly, how can mediators, meeting chairs, and negotiating parties better engage reluctant or withdrawn parties – and how should mediator/chair selection adapt to include these considerations? How does 'Zoom fatigue' differ from the forms of travel and negotiation fatigue common to face-to-face diplomacy? How can 'Zoom fatigue' be mitigated to make virtual negotiation more effective? What are the effects of time zone differentials in virtual venue negotiations? In general, what makes one virtual

venue more effective than another – and how can existing venues be adapted (or new ones built) to provide the 'best' international negotiation platform?

Among this litany of unanswered questions, one crucial area for future research is the potential for virtual venues to exacerbate power imbalances between negotiating parties. Venue selection is always a careful navigation of benefits and trade-offs, and selecting a virtual venue is no different. Depending on the negotiation context and content, choosing a virtual venue may benefit one party over others; in such cases, continued in-person contact and/or increased hybridity may be necessary to rebalance power dynamics for more fair and effective negotiation outcomes.

References

Adler-Nissen, Rebecca and Alena Drieschova (2019). "Track-change diplomacy: Technology, affordances, and the practice of international negotiations." *International Studies Quarterly* 63, 3: 531–545.

Berridge, G. R. (2015). *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*. 5th ed. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bjola, Corneliu and Ilan Manor (2018). "Revisiting Putnam's two-level game theory in the digital age: domestic digital diplomacy and the Iran nuclear deal." *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 31, 1: 3–32.

Bjola, Corneliu and Ilan Manor (2022). "The Rise of Hybrid Diplomacy: From Digital Adaptation to Adoption." *International Affairs* 98, 2, March: 471–491.

Bramsen, Isabel and Anine Hagemann (2021). "The missing sense of peace: diplomatic approachment and virtualization during the COVID-19 lockdown." *International Affairs* 97, 2: 539–560.

Chasek, Pamela (2022). "Is It the End of the COP as We Know It? An Analysis of the First Year of Virtual Meetings in the UN Environment and Sustainable Development Arena." *International Negotiation* 28, 1.

Cheng, Xusen, Ying Bao, Xiaodan Yu, and Yuanyanhang Shen (2021). "Trust and Group Efficiency in Multinational Virtual Team Collaboration: A Longitudinal Study." *Group Decision and Negotiation* 30, 3: 529–551.

Coleman, Katharina P. (2013). "Locating norm diplomacy: Venue change in international norm negotiations." *European Journal of International Relations* 19, 1: 163–186.

Galin, Amira, Miron Gross, and Gavriel Gosalker (2007). "E-negotiation versus face-to-face negotiation what has changed – if anything?" *Computers in Human Behavior* 23, 1: 787–797.

Henrikson, Alan K. (2005). *The Geography of War and Peace*. Oxford: Elsevier Ltd.

Holmes, Marcus (2013). "The Force of Face-to-Face Diplomacy: Mirror Neurons and the Problem of Intentions." *International Organization* 67, 4: 829–861.

Holmes, Marcus and Nicholas J. Wheeler (2020). "Social bonding in diplomacy." *International Theory* 12, 1: 133–161.

Klein, Richard, Katy Harris, Inés Bakhtaoui, Frida Lager, Andres Lindblom, and Marcus Carson (2021). *Building climate diplomacy back better: imagining the UNFCCC meetings of tomorrow*. Stockholm, Sweden: Stockholm Environment Institute.

Marchi, Sofia, Niccolò Targi, Paul M. Liston, and Oronzo Parlangeli (2020). "The possible role of empathy and emotions in virtual negotiation." *Ergonomics* 63, 3: 263–273.

Maurer, Heidi and Nicholas Wright (2020). "A new paradigm for EU diplomacy? EU council negotiations in a time of physical restrictions." *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 15, 4: 556–568.

Naylor, Tristen (2020). "All that's lost: The hollowing of summit diplomacy in a socially distanced world." *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 15, 4: 583–598.

Salacuse, Jeswald W. and Jeffrey Z. Rubin (1990). "Your Place or Mine?" *Negotiation Journal* 6, 1: 5.

Schneidman, Witney and Brionne Dawson (2020). *The US and Kenya Launch Negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement. Will They Succeed?* Washington: The Brookings Institution.

Shear, Michael D. (2021). "Biden and China's Xi Will Hold Virtual Summit on Monday." *The New York Times*, 12 November.

Shimazu, Naoko (2014). "Diplomacy As Theatre: Staging the Bandung Conference of 1955." *Modern Asian Studies* 48, 1: 225–252.

Stepansky, Joseph and Mersiha Gadzo (2021). "World Leaders address United Nations General Assembly." *Al-Jazeera*, September 22.

Thomas, David R. (2006). "A General Inductive Approach for Analyzing Qualitative Evaluation Data." *The American Journal of Evaluation* 27, 2: 237–246.

Vadrot, Alice B. M., Arne Langlet, Ina Tessnow-Von Wysocki, Petro Tolochko, Emmanuelle Brogat, and Silvia C. Ruiz-Rodríguez (2021). "Marine biodiversity negotiations during COVID-19: A new role for digital diplomacy?" *Global Environmental Politics* 21, 3: 169–186.

Wang, Emilie (2020). "Anthropocene in an age of pandemics." *Anthropocene* 30: 100247.

Wong, Seanon S. (2016). "Emotions and the communication of intentions in face-to-face diplomacy." *European Journal of International Relations* 22, 1: 144–167.

Wong, Seanon S. (2020). "Mapping the Repertoire of Emotions and Their Communicative Functions in Face-to-Face Diplomacy." *International Studies Review* 22, 1: 77–97.

5

Thirteen ways of looking at a black notebook: Examining notetaking practices and negotiation dynamics

Abstract

This article investigates how notetaking practices shape the dynamics and outcomes of international peace negotiations, drawing on interviews with thirteen diplomats, mediators, and negotiation experts. It explores participants' varied notetaking methods and the rationale behind their use, yielding findings regarding the instrumental and performative functions of notetaking. Notetaking is found to influence continuity, information flow, attention signalling, and trust-building, with effects highly contingent on contextual factors. The article adopts a 'Cubist' conceptual framework to theorise the multiplicity of interpretive effects that notetaking can produce in negotiation settings. This heuristic helps conceptualise how the shared material facts of procedural 'elements' in a negotiation can generate diverse and sometimes divergent associations; integrating these views in one frame is key for practitioners navigating the 'affordances' of notetaking technologies. The article's findings offer insights into the design of peace negotiation processes, suggesting broader implications for international relations theory and future diplomatic practice.

1 Introduction

> "Miraculously, although it doesn't really make any logical sense, if I'm sitting in the meeting and I have a pad and a pen and I'm taking notes, and they say, 'what I'm going to say now is not for the record'… You symbolically put down the pad and pen, but you're still there. And I mean, they suddenly feel very free to talk. As if you had evaporated. But you're still there" (Interview 10 2023).

This observation, shared by a national ambassador with three decades of diplomatic experience, speaks to the impact of notetaking practices on the dynamics of international negotiation. In efforts to end armed conflict — where trust is tenuous, and uneasy confidences can have existential consequences — these dynamics can make a difference.

Most peace processes involve at least one form of notetaking. This may include: official 'minutes' compiled by a secretariat, shorthand transcripts scribbled by aides, comments in shared digital documents, or, rarely, audio/video recordings. The rationale behind notetaking is 'common-sense': human memory is imperfect, and notes enable accurate recall. Notetaking helps parties: keep track of each other's positions and commitments, measure progress against established benchmarks, understand trends over time, and accurately communicate these findings with principals and constituents 'outside the room.' Notetaking also enables institutional learning and continuity, as foreign policy bureaucracies compile records and analyses to guide future engagements.

Despite a common appreciation for the utility of notetaking in negotiations, there is considerable variation in practice. While some meetings are strictly 'no-notes,' others employ teams of notetaking personnel and/or recording technology to capture every nuance. Even *within* a negotiation process, practices shift over time. Peace talks that begin at live-streamed summits may move to off-record backchannels and vice versa. What explains this variation in notetaking practices? Do these different forms of notetaking influence negotiation dynamics and outcomes? And if so, how?

Drawing on interviews with thirteen leading experts in international negotiation — four senior diplomats (including two national ambassadors), six current or former members of the United Nations (UN) Mediation Support Unit, and three experienced international negotiators at leading research and non-governmental institutions — this article offers practitioner-informed perspectives on these questions. These perspectives do not always align; as the title of the article

suggests, there is more than one way of 'looking at a black notebook.'[19] Following critical work in international relations (IR) scholarship on the role of technological 'affordances' in both enabling and constraining the forms of statecraft they re/produce (see: Branch 2018; Adler-Nissen and Drieschova 2019), this article initially offers a descriptive analysis of the forms of notetaking discussed by research participants. This section illustrates 'who' takes notes in an international negotiation, 'what' notes get taken, and 'how.' It also sheds light on 'why' notetakers take notes and, in some cases, 'why not.' Interview data highlights the considerations of accountability, continuity, and sensitivity that influence what notetaking methods diplomats choose to employ — and why they might subsequently modify these practices — throughout a negotiation process.

Following the descriptive section, the article outlines findings on the key functions of notetaking, both instrumental and performative. Negotiation notes are instrumental in enhancing continuity across negotiation sessions and streamlining information flows between and among the parties, but participants' responses suggest that notetaking practices have effects that are not reducible to this instrumental utility. Notetaking can also serve meaningful performative functions, shifting interpersonal dynamics within a negotiation by signalling attention, intention, and trustworthiness (or lack thereof). These performative functions, however, are highly individuated and contingent; cultural and contextual factors colour parties' interpretations (e.g., whether parties view a notetaking practice as neutral or intrusive). The same 'black notebook' can be seen, in the same moment, from very different angles.

To account for this phenomenon, this article adopts a 'Cubist' conceptual framework for understanding the impact of procedural elements on a negotiation. Following the Cubist movement in visual art, this heuristic highlights how multiple

[19] The title alludes to the Wallace Stevens poem, 'Thirteen ways of looking at a blackbird' (Stevens 1954): a piece that, in sections that sketch different aspects of a 'blackbird,' adopts a Cubist ethic of "incorporating into unity and stasis a number of possible views of the subject observed over a span of time" (Buttel 2015, 165).

interpretations of the same element can coexist in a negotiation session. Shared objective material facts are overlaid with a range of symbolic associations, fears, and desires — at least as many 'views' exist as there are people in the room. A critical contribution of this research is identifying notetaking practices (which are often overlooked or taken as default) as potentially influential mechanisms in peace processes. This article concludes by summarising how findings on notetaking practices may be transferable to other procedural elements of negotiation. The conclusions also contribute relevant insights to perennial debates in IR theory, such as the aggregation of individual agency to collective outcomes and the nature and exercise of power in the international system.

2 Notes on 'notetaking' in IR scholarship

Diplomacy runs on paper. Or at least, it has historically; scholars often cite the etymology of the word 'diplomacy' as evidence of the deep-rooted relationship between material text and diplomatic practice.[20] For centuries, diplomats have taken notes to help navigate international negotiations. Historical studies examine diplomats' use of "archival arsenals" in negotiating the peace of Westphalia (Montcher 2018) and outline how sixteenth-century Venetian diplomats recorded verbal exchanges in ambassadorial audiences for use in subsequent negotiations (de Vivo 2016). There are doubtless earlier examples.

It is difficult to imagine contemporary statecraft without this kind of paperwork — transcripts, minutes, reports, instructions, statements, draft agreements, et cetera remain the 'bread and butter' of international negotiation (Freeman and Maybin 2011). As diplomats increasingly shift to digital and hybrid modes of engagement, however, the range of text production methods used in negotiation has expanded. Notetaking is no longer confined to the physical page; digital tools have increased the speed, accuracy, and shareability of negotiation notes.

[20] 'Diplomacy' originates in the ancient Greek word 'diploma,' an official document early envoys carried to prove their authority (Dittmer 2016).

A growing body of literature examines the impact of technological advancements on negotiation processes and outcomes (Batora 2009; Heine, Cooper, and Thakur 2013; Bjola and Holmes 2015; Melissen 2015; Branch 2017; Duncombe 2017; Bramsen and Hagemann 2021; Bjola and Coplen 2022), but few focus specifically on modes of text production (with one notable exception discussed below).

This article is interested in the impact of these technological shifts on negotiation processes, and in understanding the role of the more basic underlying technology (i.e., the written word). *How does the act of notetaking itself — the process of inscribing verbal information into text, and thereby rendering it re/readable — impact peace processes? Do different ways of performing that act have different effects in a negotiation?* This brief background review proceeds by outlining concepts relevant to these questions in IR theory and diplomatic studies.

2.1 International Relations theory

The subject of this research ('notetaking practices') sits uneasily on the material/ideational divide that characterises the field of IR theory. As Branch argues, 'technologies' challenge the material/ideational binary: "Because they are created artifacts, technologies are material, but they are also socially constructed by the ideas that give them meaning" (Branch 2018). 'Notetaking' is a technology that blends social practice with material facts. The material features of notetaking technology lie in the physical act of recording and the medium used for this purpose (e.g., notebooks, digital devices). Concurrently, however, notetaking practices may have distinct ideational qualities and consequences: the social and cultural associations of the actors engaging this technology shape their use, significance, and interpretation. As an example: a tape recorder is a material object with a limited function determined by its physical characteristics — but whether it is considered a 'threat' to the confidentiality of a negotiation session is a socially arrived-at assessment (i.e., perhaps, 'trust').

This can move in both directions: as ideational forces shape understanding of 'the material,' material facts constrain/enable particular types of ideation. Drieschova

spells out an example: "When we write on a computer we move chunks of text around on the screen to organise our thoughts. Our thought processes are not purely ideational, but inextricably linked to the manipulation of material objects, and by consequence those objects structure our thought processes" (2017). Similarly, the tools and physical objects used in negotiation processes are intertwined with the way negotiators think. Cognitive decision-making processes are not intrinsic or abstract but are shaped by interactions with the physical world. The research advanced in this article responds to this material/ideational dichotomy: it understands negotiation as a fundamentally social process, but it is careful not to underestimate the material forces that shape/constrain agency therein (Fritsch 2011).

2.2 Practices, actor-network theory, and the 'new materialism'

Recent IR scholarship has developed strategies to bridge the field's material/ideational divide in theorising the impact(s) of technology on international relations: three overlapping (but not coterminous) research streams, including 'practice' approaches, Actor-Network Theory (ANT), and 'new materialism.'

Scholars working in the 'practice turn' have argued that the habitual, patterned performances of everyday diplomatic engagement, which are *both* material and meaningful (i.e., socially co/constitutive) merit further attention (Adler and Pouliot 2011). Adding the 'logic of practice' to the arsenal of decision-making frameworks in IR (alongside old standbys, the 'logic of consequence' and the 'logic of appropriateness') these theorists argue that diplomatic practices sometimes 'take on a life of their own' in shaping international outcomes (see: Hopf 2010; Adler-Nissen 2012; Bueger and Gadinger 2015). Interrelated practices are performed, contested, adapted, and ultimately internalised as 'doxa' in a field of practice (Pouliot 2008; Holmes 2015). 'Habitual dispositions' reproduce themselves by making these practices appear natural. Choice within this order is not rational, as it is constrained by actors' imagination of what is possible (Bourdieu and Nice 1977; Holmes and Traven 2015). As relevant for this study, 'practice turners' might argue that

establishing or influencing 'doxa' around notetaking practices is a means of affecting negotiation processes and outcomes.

In developing their arguments, several 'practice turn' scholars have adopted concepts from the discipline of Science and Technology Studies (STS), most notably Bruno Latour's Actor Network Theory (ANT). Originally designed to model knowledge production in scientific laboratories, ANT focuses on the 'network' as its basic unit of analysis. A network is defined as a dynamic and ever-changing set of relationships among 'actants.' Actants can be both human and non-human entities; actants within a network interact and influence each other in the construction of social reality (Latour 2007). ANT argues that, while not necessarily 'causal' in a positivist sense, outcomes such as war-ending agreements are produced in the networked interaction between actants (e.g., buildings, borders, bodies, events, relationships, and cognitive processes) in a negotiation process (see: Best and Walters 2013; Dittmer 2016; McConnell and Dittmer 2018). As Nexon and Pouliot articulate, ANT is particularly useful for bridging IR theory's material/ideational divide, as it "expressly abandons the dichotomy between the semiotic and the material… reclaiming materialism for constructionist analysis" (Nexon and Pouliot 2013).

A wave of 'new materialism' scholars in IR have also addressed this dichotomy (see: Coole and Frost 2010; Srnicek, Fotou, and Arghand 2013; Lundborg and Vaughan-Williams 2015). Similar to ANT, new materialists argue that non-human forces exert meaningful influence on international relations, particularly at the micro-level of face-to-face diplomacy. As Drieschova summarises, "matter plays an irreducible role in social relations and does not entirely depend upon what people make of it" (2017). While intangible social relations often 'make or break' peace processes, these scholars argue that, at some level, matter also 'matters.' Scholars in the field of political geography have similarly advanced frameworks of 'more-than-human diplomacy' to situate human agency in the material context that co/produces it (see: Braun and Whatmore 2010; Kuus 2013; Dittmer 2016; 2017).

It is evident from the theoretical approaches outlined above that the research questions are more complex than they may initially appear. The 'big debates' of IR

theory, such as the relationship between material and ideational factors, the mechanisms by which micro-processes aggregate to macro-outcomes, and the perennial debate between structural predetermination and individual agency, are all involved in understanding the impact of notetaking practices on negotiations.

2.3 Technological 'affordances'

Several scholars have examined modes of diplomatic text production (such as the importance of "pen-holding" in the UN Security Council (Ross 2007; Farrall and Prantl 2016), or "audit culture" (Kuus 2013), and documents' utility as sources for tracing bureaucratic information flows (Harper 1997; Hull 2012). Yet there are few studies directly examining the impact of notetaking practices in negotiation. A notable exception, Adler-Nissen and Drieschova's 2019 article on 'track-change diplomacy' offers a useful concept for this analysis: 'technological affordances' (Adler-Nissen and Drieschova 2019).

Adler-Nissen and Drieschova expand on Walters' concept of 'inscription,' or "the material practices of making distant events and processes visible, mobile, and calculable" (Walters 2002), to develop their concept of 'affordances.' They argue that technology-facilitated inscription allows actors to "translate the messiness of the world… into tangible knowledge that is concrete and visible enough for governing purposes" (see: Aradau and Blanke 2018; Adler-Nissen and Drieschova 2019). In this way, notetaking can be understood as a mode of inscription; negotiators make the messiness and ephemerality of live verbal information more legible, tangible, and 'sticky' by fixing it in text.

Adler-Nissen and Drieschova define the concept of 'technological affordance' as, essentially, the possibilities for action that result from the use of a particular mode of inscription: "the way a tool or technology simultaneously enables and constrains the tasks users can possibly perform with it" (2019). In other words: technologies make certain actions im/possible, which is as much a function of the material features of the technology itself as the social context in which it is employed (Ibid). Drawing on an ethnography of the European Union's Committee of Permanent

Representatives, they articulate how the affordances of track-changeable digital documents — increased shareability, visualisation, and immediacy — influence negotiation dynamics and outcomes. Rather than enabling diplomatic 'shared authorship,' this technological shift often results in 'loss of authorship,' as iterative, frenzied rounds of drafting and editing occlude or preclude the input of individual diplomats.

This has consequences for that bugbear of IR theory: power. In the negotiations Adler-Nissen and Drieschova examine, 'power' is not only dependent on a state's material might or even the legitimacy/persuasive force of its arguments, but also on the technological savvy and agility of its agents in a negotiation session. The most influential diplomats are those who "[skilfully use] language within specifically set design parameters, circumventing the diverging text edits to assert a preferred meaning" (Adler-Nissen and Drieschova 2019).

In this way, their study echoes previous work on how technology can alter the exercise of power in IR. Branch explores how innovations in map-making technology changed the nature of state formation and the construction of 'sovereignty' as a norm in the colonial period (Branch 2012), which remains true for territorial visualisation tools now used in contemporary negotiations (Branch 2017). Similarly, Der Derian articulates how visual imaging technologies have afforded new modes of representation in warfare, which changes how soldiers perceive the battlefield and how they act according to those changes (Der Derian 2003). "Just as barbed wire changed the logics of war in a symbolic and material sense," Adler-Nissen and Drieschova argue, digital technology shapes world politics — and it does so in ways that its designers did not necessarily intend. The concept of technological affordance outlined here has implications for this research, pointing to how modes of notetaking have (sometimes unintended) consequential effects that are not reducible to their material features.

Alongside the concept of affordance, two notable works examine modes of diplomatic text production as 'performance.' Riles, observing UN conference sessions, interprets the process of collective text drafting as following an internal 'aesthetic'

logic (1998). As delegations' suggestions are initially entered in brackets, subsequent negotiation sessions focus on addressing divergences in bracketed suggestions to produce a clean, bracket-free text. Riles finds that this aesthetic imperative leads to the hasty dismissal or consolidation of the bracketed comments in ways that don't necessarily reflect their importance (and might not fully resolve the disagreements represented by the different formulations)(Ibid). The content of the collective agreement is subsumed in the *performance* of an agreement, i.e., in producing a press-ready text. In negotiation notetaking, similar aesthetic (or editorial) imperatives may be at play in determining what gets recorded/reported and how.

Similarly, Ball advances a 'dramaturgical' approach to analysing UN negotiations. According to Ball, the process of collective text production (e.g., drafting agreements) has both a performative force (cajoling parties 'inside the room') and a 'spectacular impact' (i.e., creating a spectacle for contemporary audiences 'outside the room'). But even after the fact, the products of this performance have a 'historical life': many diplomatic actors are aware of their performance as part of a historical 'paper trail' (Ball 2020). In both the near- and long-term, then, negotiation notetaking is an effort to "recuperate the instability of live performance" by "perform[ing] textual stability" in the historical record (Ibid). When diplomats take 'good notes' in a negotiation session, they are not only re/producing a performance for their immediate interlocutors in the 'front row seats' (i.e., on the other side of the table), but perhaps also for the principals/constituents at the 'stage door' and scholars/other interested parties in the 'cheap seats' of future archives.

3 Methodology and limitations

It is famously tricky to research international negotiations; access for participant observation over substantial periods of time in high-profile, secret-sensitive settings is rarely — if ever — granted. As a result, many scholars turn to archival material to understand negotiation processes ex post facto. Yet, as this article explores, negotiation notes are imperfect sources. Available material may be problematically

skewed to "those governments that kept documentary records and those individuals who kept personal diaries, memos, telephone logs, letters, and the like" (Kaufmann 1994). Even when records are assiduously kept, the language therein "is often instrumental as well as representative" (Stein 1988) — actors may deliberately adapt their notetaking for different audiences, making it difficult to draw reliable connections between official records and 'what actually happened.' Recognising these challenges (and instead of using archival sources to interrogate the 'stuff' of archival sources), this research adopted a semi-structured interview methodology to engage practitioners directly about their experiences (or lack thereof) with notetaking practices in international negotiation sessions.

To construct the interview sample, the researcher identified potential participants through professional networks, particularly the October 2022 Oxford Mediation Forum.[21] Targeting individuals with extensive practical experience in international negotiation, initial outreach focused on participants with experience acting as notetakers themselves or who had used notetaking personnel or services in negotiation contexts. To ensure competing perspectives were represented, subsequent participant outreach focused on selecting negotiators who had *not* engaged notetaking practices or who expressed explicit opposition to engaging notetaking practices in their initial conversations with the researcher. Ultimately, the sample included 13 participants with several decades of experience in international negotiation between them. Two served as national ambassadors for their respective countries, another two were high-level national diplomats, six were involved in UN-sponsored mediation, and three were negotiation practitioners or consultants operating in academic and non-governmental institutions. This diverse selection was

[21] On 11 October, 2022, the University of Oxford's Department of Politics and International Relations and the Centre for the Resolution of Intractable Conflict convened a discussion on the effectiveness of mediation in resolving and preventing armed conflict. The hybrid discussion was convened in person and online, involving 30 academics and practitioners who work in mediation, peace studies, conflict resolution, international relations, history and regional studies. See Annex A, page 228 for additional information.

instrumental in forming a more comprehensive view of the breadth of notetaking practices and their consequences in contemporary negotiation processes.

Nevertheless, the resulting sample presents a couple of limitations in terms of representativeness. While the author made extensive efforts to engage a diverse range of participants, the final sample displayed biases in terms of gender (85% of the sample are male and 15% are female), and 'Western' orientation, (70% of the sample are diplomats from 'Western' countries; 30% are not). These biases may have influenced findings, but also reflect disparities in the field of peace negotiation and mediation itself. Another potential limitation is that sample selection focused on participants who were career diplomats and negotiators, with extensive training and experience negotiating or mediating across multiple contexts and processes. While the career experience of the sample is a strength in terms of the validity of observations across cases, there is a marked absence of perspectives from 'the mediated' — that is, perspectives from heads of state or non-state delegation leaders, who may have valuable insights from experience in their particular negotiation situations. This is a promising area for future large-N research.

The interview format consisted of half-hour, semi-structured interviews over Microsoft Teams; interviews often extended past their allotted time. Open-ended questions prompted participants to discuss their own notetaking habits (or lack thereof) and their criteria for 'good' versus 'bad' notetaking in negotiation. Subsequent questions followed up on participants' responses, highlighting specific anecdotes and overall 'lessons learned' from participants' experiences. This flexible approach allowed interviews to be led by practitioners' perspectives and associations rather than the researcher's. Interviews were recorded for the sake of accuracy. Related recordings, subsequent transcripts, and participant data were anonymised and stored securely.

Interestingly, in a 'meta' turn, this research method encountered limitations related to the phenomena it aimed to investigate. The researcher took pains to inform participants about data security measures, but personal concerns about confidentiality and data security (and related 'observer effects') may have caused

participants to be less forthcoming than in informal, off-the-record, or in-person conversations. For example, one participant who readily shared detailed anecdotes from their decades of negotiation practice in a preliminary chat later hesitated to provide the same level of detail during the recorded interview. This observed disparity between informal and recorded responses contributes to the research findings in two significant ways. First: assuming that this phenomenon applies to most participants, it actually bolsters the validity of the findings, suggesting that these diplomats felt confident in expressing their opinions and positions despite reservations related to confidentiality. Second: it highlights the challenges associated with building trust and sharing sensitive information when participants know their contributions are being thoroughly noted/recorded.

Once interviews were transcribed (using Microsoft Teams' proprietary AI transcription software, followed by manual 'cleaning'), they were inductively analysed. Leveraging NVivo software, the researcher coded interview data by creating and refining nodes as the analysis progressed. These nodes were iteratively collapsed and/or expanded to reflect recurring patterns and thematic elements within the data; nodes ultimately reflected the article headings in subsequent sections.

4 Findings

4.1 Descriptive analysis

> "I always carry a little black notebook to any meeting that I have. I will note down what my interlocutors say, and it will almost be verbatim. Certainly, if I think it's something important. But almost everything, you know, one way or another, that is said, I try to capture" (Interview 5 2023).

There is no single established 'best practice' method for notetaking in negotiation. As the quote above suggests, the methods described in research interviews were as wide-ranging and idiosyncratic as the participants themselves. While some negotiators may be constrained by formal guidance (e.g., their government's bureaucratic codes or the UN Handbook on Selected Issues in Administration and Management (as discussed in: Interview 4 2023)), this area of statecraft remains more 'art' than 'science.' The

following paragraphs outline how research participants described the 'nitty gritty' of their notetaking methods — who takes notes, what they note, and how — as well as considerations that go into notetaking practice and design in negotiation contexts (the 'why' and 'why not').

4.1.1 Who, what, and how

As one interview participant described, in most negotiations, "the default for everybody is to have a notetaker… Everybody uses notetakers. Everybody needs notetakers" (Interview 8 2023). But who exactly is the notetaker? As with many procedural elements of negotiation, this varies depending on the size and formality of the session. Some diplomats take their own notes; sometimes they employ a deputy. Several respondents agreed that notetakers are generally junior staff or "people in training" (Interview 2 2023); being 'brought along' as a notetaker is a way for younger personnel to gain experience (Interview 6 2023). Notetaking is not usually done by the most senior diplomat in a delegation — as one ambassador retorted, "I don't take notes, I have people that take notes" (Interview 1 2023). Yet several participants indicated that notetakers who are "too junior" might miss important nuances in a negotiation, arguing that it is best to have "someone [who] understands the context, understands the issue, and is experienced enough" to recognise what is notable (Interview 1 2023). One respondent argued that ideally, "the notetaker is much more than a notetaker," acting as an in/formal advisor to their superiors (Interview 8 2023).

What do these designated notetakers think it is important to record? Unsurprisingly, this varies based on the anticipated audience, with individuals' 'notes to self' often less detailed than notes intended for broader circulation/reflection. As some UN mediators indicated, several peace processes have adopted formalised 'templates' to standardise meeting notetaking (with critical categories such as 'gender issues,' and 'livelihoods' that can then be collated/analysed to identify entry points)(Interview 4 2023). In general, however, the content of negotiation notes was

described as wide-ranging, from factual details to more interpretive assessments. Some key categories mentioned by the participants are included in Table 1.

Common responses to the question: What is most important to record in negotiation notes?
A "summary of the context," e.g., "time of day," "who I was meeting," and "where we were" (Interview 9 2023)
The "atmosphere," e.g., "the way you were received," including "meeting duration" and "body language" (Interview 1 2023)
"Key words or key sentences," "the images built with words", and "emotions, assumptions, definitions, simplification of issues, generalisations" as signified in language (Interview 6 2023)
Notes on interpersonal dynamics, particularly "who is influential" (Interview 1 2023)
"What is new," or "what is different" in counterparts' speech from one session to the next (Interview 8 2023);
"Whatever catches my attention" (Interview 2 2023)

Table 1. Participants respond: what a notetaker should note

Participants disagreed over the ideal quantity of notes (i.e., what proportion of verbal speech should be captured in text). As shown above, some participants advocated for "verbatim" notes (as quoted above); others argued that "in almost none of it is the verbatim thing necessary" (Interview 9 2023). Several participants agreed that notes should be accompanied by a brief analysis reflecting on "the key points of a discussion" (Interview 5 2023), and "what direction we ought to be taking next" (Interview 7 2023). In several interviews, the concept of a summary or framing paragraph emerged as a means for notetakers to significantly impact negotiating parties' perceptions and alter the course of negotiations.

To understand notetaking-as-technology, it is also vital to understand *how*, in practical terms, notetakers took the notes described above and the affordances of the tools they used. Again, notetaking methods were largely ad hoc and individuated. The most prodigious notetakers described notetaking methods in terms of their personal history or personality. One described using a cryptic 'personal shorthand' they developed as a schoolkid (Interview 9 2023) and one described a method of 'coding' notes in accordance with the diagnostic tools in Fisher and Ury's *Getting to Yes* (Interview 2 2023; see: Fisher, Ury, and Patton 1983). A majority of participants

described using 'pen and paper' to take notes in-the-moment.[22] One participant reported that "nowadays people are also using tablets to a greater extent" (Interview 4 2023), and several described a process of translating 'paper notes' to "an electronic record" (Interview 5 2023). Most participants reflected that speed and immediacy were the key factors influencing how they take notes: "It needs to be really very soon" (Interview 12 2023); "It's difficult because… you don't write as fast as you hear" (Interview 10 2023). Interestingly, several participants suggested that working with language interpreters can be helpful, as the lag between speech and interpretation provides time to scribble notes (Interview 5 2023; Interview 7 2023; Interview 9 2023).

4.1.2 Why/why not

The paragraphs above illustrate the wide variation in notetaking practices across research participants. But interviews revealed that individuals were not necessarily consistent in their own notetaking practices, even within a given negotiation process. Diplomats adapted their practices depending on the situation. What explains this variation, i.e., what considerations informed the design and adaptation of notetaking practices? First: a majority of participants indicated that 'consent' of negotiating parties is the most important determining factor, arguing that all parties must be aware and agree to notetaking protocols in order for them to be effective — or at least, not counterproductive. "You must ask permission," one diplomat stressed, "you must ask if it's okay" (Interview 10 2023). Another emphasised that even minor details of notetaking protocol should be pre-agreed, including "what kind of notes, what are the techniques that we are going to follow," although "in general, people do agree that… we [can each] keep our notes as we [see] fit" (Interview 1 2023). Beyond the ethical imperative for consent, participants articulated a sense that consent around notetaking was related to trust-building, further discussed below. Other considerations, including phasing, flexibility, and sensitivity, are discussed in turn.

[22] Only one participant described using 'dictation' as a method of notetaking (dictating meeting notes immediately after the fact to a personal assistant)(Interview 7 2023).

5. Thirteen ways of looking at a black notebook

A majority of participants indicated that the phasing of the peace process can determine the details of notetaking protocols. As one diplomat relayed, "in this kind of process, you've got different moments," ranging from initial approach and pre-negotiations through agreement implementation (Interview 6 2023). A few participants invoked the idea that a "vast bulk" of peace mediation is "not what you do at the 'fabled table,'" but rather in preliminary communications and meetings (Interview 9 2023); they indicated that while individual notetaking may be useful in this preparatory phase for the sake of organisation, more precise 'negotiation notetaking' would be premature. Many participants suggested that notetaking comprehensiveness and precision is related to parties' 'closeness to an agreement' – with initial "sporadic" notes becoming more robust "the more you advance into the detail and the small print" (Interview 10 2023). In short, more detailed 'inscription' is required as parties get serious about drafting the text of an agreement.

Relatedly, considerations of flexibility are also influential. Referring to a perceived trade-off between inscription and flexibility, one diplomat suggested that notetaking protocols should "[depend] very much at what stage of the discussion, at what stage of the negotiation you find yourself" (Interview 1 2023). In other words, participants suggested that notetaking 'too much, too soon' might actually be counterproductive. As one mediator summarised this dilemma: "you need to allow for brainstorming around solutions… the minute you put things in writing, people are less willing to compromise" (Interview 1 2023). Another participant stridently urged against notetaking too early in mediation sessions: "Don't do any notetaking… it gets the parties entrenched… they're going to stick to [their positions] because they're written" (Interview 11 2023). These responses suggest that the 'inscription' inherent to notetaking (and perhaps, a shared cognitive bias regarding the rigidity of the written word), might impact parties' flexibility and creativity, with potentially meaningful effects on negotiation process and outcomes.

Finally, and perhaps least surprisingly, all participants indicated that considerations of sensitivity and confidentiality were key in the design and adaptation of their notetaking approaches. Several shared a concern that "everything

that is in writing can leak" (Interview 3 2023). As one diplomat put it: "You know, the notes — you never know how far they fly" (Interview 1 2023). Several participants suggested negotiation notes are more easily disclosed outside the negotiating room due to increased smart phone/social media usage (Interview 12 2023). A few respondents invoked Putnam's "two-level game"[23] to describe negotiators' concern with the premature revelation of potentially compromising positions. "If things are not secret… you're actually negotiating with both sides," one ambassador recalled, "you're negotiating with your negotiating partner, but you are also negotiating with your own constituency" (Interview 10 2023).

Relatedly, some interview participants indicated a liability in another direction: the concern that leaked negotiation notes can reveal that a negotiator has exceeded their principals' agreed instructions, or mandate, with negative consequences for both negotiators and the process itself (Interview 9 2023). One participant also indicated that negotiating parties' concern with personal liability might heighten the sensitivity of sessions. Particularly in the midst of violent conflict, parties may be concerned that notes that reveal their participation in war-time activities will be used as evidence for future legal retribution (Interview 12 2023). Similar to the flexibility consideration, participants articulated a trade-off between comprehensive notetaking and parties' self-censorship. One participant summarised: since negotiation notes decrease deniability, "[what] you gain in precision, you lose in freedom of speech" (Interview 10 2023).

4.2 Instrumental functions of notetaking

The responses above speak to the plurality of notetaking practices in peace processes and the trade-offs that negotiators consider — sometimes explicitly, sometimes intuitively — when adopting them. With a descriptive sense of this wide variation in notetaking practice now established, the following sections explore generalisable

[23] Putnam's two-level game describes how international agreements are negotiated through simultaneous domestic and international bargaining processes, where leaders must balance internal political pressures with external diplomatic challenges (Putnam 1988b).

findings about the instrumental and performative functions of notetaking. Participants' responses to questions about the utility of notetaking (e.g., *why do negotiators take notes?*) reflected a breakdown across traditional 'levels of analysis.' They framed notetaking as potentially valuable for: individual actors, coordinating between parties, and communicating with principals, constituents, and allies 'outside the room.'

4.2.1 Individual

The primary instrumental function of notetaking, raised by all research participants in some capacity, is as an individual memory aid. Negotiators rely on notetaking to compensate for failings of human memory and to mitigate cognitive biases. "I think we forget 50% of everything we hear almost immediately, or within an hour or so" one participant elaborated, tellingly, "I can't remember those exact figures… after two months we've forgotten 75%… and then of the 25% that we can remember, we've misremembered half of that. Or something like that" (Interview 5 2023). This participant affirmed that notetaking "helps to offset that" (Ibid). Several participants discussed the utility of notes for their own personal use in remembering "who's who" and "picking up where we left off" in complex or protracted peace processes (Interview 8 2023; Interview 9 2023; Interview 10 2023; Interview 12 2023). As one diplomat confessed: "I thought my memory was excellent — it's absolutely, really terrible. So notes are absolutely essential." (Interview 3 2023). In this way, notes help individual participants competently advance negotiation processes, facilitating clarity and consistency.

Beyond countering memory failings, many participants discussed the utility of notetaking for addressing or counteracting cognitive biases that might otherwise distort their perceptions and interpretations. They recognise that these biases influence decision-making and can thereby change the course of a negotiation (usually, not for the better). As several participants explicitly mentioned, human minds are prone to a 'laundry list' of cognitive biases. (A robust group of 'cognitive IR' scholars have further examined these biases (see: Kahneman and Tversky 1979;

Goldgeier and Tetlock 2001; Sasley 2011; Johnson 2020).) For instance, diplomats might leave a negotiation session with their counterparts' 'parting words' at the front of their mind (recency bias), failing to adequately consider information communicated earlier in the session. Interview participants argued that notes can help counterbalance biases by capturing the full scope of discussions; they provide a secondary (and tertiary, et cetera) means for processing information. As one respondent noted, "We need that second process of reflection in order to really, you know, discern what is of real significance, what is new compared to what you knew before" (Interview 5 2023). A few respondents described how reviewing their notes led them to a realisation they didn't see 'in the moment.' One diplomat shared such an epiphany: "I was able to identify the point of entry… a breaking point in the conversation and in the way the parties [were] perceiving the conflict… I was many times looking for that moment when I was reflecting about the mediation" (Interview 6 2023).

4.2.2 Within-side

In addition to individual benefits, many interviewees underscored the role of notetaking in coordinating efforts 'within side,' particularly when negotiating as part of a team or communicating with principal decision-makers not present in the room. As discussed at the individual level above, diplomats similarly framed notetaking as a tool to mitigate collective cognitive biases and facilitate secondary processing across teams. As one participant noted, "You can have five people sitting in a room and a day later those five people remember what happened in a different way," so referring to notes is an essential practice for cross-checking perspectives (Interview 4 2023). Accurate notes become 'arbiters of truth' when team members' recollections diverge. One participant's anecdote illustrated this point: delegation members left the negotiation session with opposite impressions of their counterpart's position because some hadn't heard the word "no" before a particular phrase; consulting their notetaker's account of the phrase rectified this confusion (Interview 12 2023).

This sentiment was echoed in another context by a diplomat from an international contact group, who highlighted the necessity of comparing notes to reconcile different understandings of proceedings. "We would definitely hear things differently, and the only way we knew that we'd heard them differently was if the guy taking the notes that day then sent them around that evening and then we would contest them with each other and say, actually that's not, that's not what they said" (Interview 13 2023). This diplomat further acknowledged the value of notetaking in "leveling off understanding" within a group. This is even more relevant in complex peace processes, where many team members may meet with different permutations of their counterpart's delegation in different sessions (Interview 5 2023).

Expanding on the utility of notetaking for internal team coordination, negotiation notes were found to be instrumentally valuable for interfacing with superiors/principals to inform their understanding of proceedings and, in some cases, influence their decision-making. The Vietnam Peace Process archives at the Nixon Presidential Library provide evidence of this phenomenon, as documents show Secretary of State Henry Kissinger regularly highlighted and annotated sections of negotiation transcripts to steer Nixon's perceptions of sessions toward Kissinger's preferred course of action (Brigham 2018). Negotiation experts emphasise the importance of regular note-sharing with principals to inform and refine strategies, highlighting notetaking as both a preparatory and an adaptive tool for subsequent meetings. As one negotiator put it, "[there are] principal/agent conflicts, but there's also principal/agent ignorance, like I don't know exactly what my principal wants as an agent… By bringing notes early on, it gives them an opportunity to learn and refine a bit" (Interview 2 2023).

This functional value of notetaking was voiced by participants who cited experiences in which they needed to either draw attention to overlooked details or temper their superiors' overenthusiasm, post-meeting. "The notetaker has to be able to push back with the principal, after the meeting," one diplomat suggested, "and either draw their attention to something or sometimes curb their enthusiasm… you can bury opportunities, or you can create illusions" (Interview 8 2023). Evidence of

this influence is reinforced by senior diplomats who acknowledge the value of well-documented notes in grounding negotiating team members' advice. One ambassador argued that "notes can help you to make sure that your advice has some kind of basis, as a reason to be listened to… the notes are important for that, to make sure that whoever is in charge pays attention" (Interview 1 2023).

The instrumental utility of notetaking for within-side coordination transcends the immediate negotiation team and extends through time, facilitating continuity through administrative transitions and handovers. One mediator, with experience in a few decades-long peace processes, pointed to this necessity with the illustrative analogy of a medical doctor's patient files. To ensure consistent care, doctors "pass the notes on to the next person who's looking after them… that was the whole point of [notetaking] in the context of government, so that you could hand on to somebody else" (Interview 12 2023). As peace processes become increasingly protracted, the importance of documenting progress to prevent misunderstandings and maintain momentum across different governmental administrations is only heightened. Furthermore, some participants argued that sharing notes with implementation partners as agreements near finalisation allows for a comprehensive understanding of the negotiation's evolution — highlighting concessions made, alternatives introduced, and any lingering ambiguities needing resolution (Interview 11 2023). Whether across a single delegation, between an agent and their principal, or through iterative administrations, notetaking was repeatedly found to be vital in ensuring continuity 'within side' of a negotiation process.

4.2.3 Across-side

In discussions about the 'across-side' dynamics of negotiations, participants highlighted how notetaking serves an instrumental function for ensuring clarity and accountability, particularly in peace processes involving multiple stakeholders and iterative meetings. One diplomat discussed a particularly complicated peace process wherein their chief negotiator was coordinating between 19 different armed groups:

> He developed this system where he had a notebook for every single group. So he would meet the group, update his notebook, you know, add to it in between… It was like, very meticulous…. And I actually think that really gave him an advantage over the armed groups, who would very often forget what they'd said last time, or agreed to, or had gotten too drunk during the parties around the negotiation to remember… he always had this very consistent record. For himself, but also I guess, in a way that he could then quote back things that people said and so on (Interview 13 2023).

This level of detail and commitment to notetaking was seen as a crucial factor in maintaining a clear and authoritative stance in complex negotiations. Another interview participant similarly highlighted the utility of notetaking in facilitating shuttle diplomacy. They underscored the importance of accurately conveying messages and positions between parties, with notetaking being instrumental in ensuring the fidelity of communication and the progression of negotiations towards détente: "You want to get the message right" (Interview 9 2023).

Beyond its role in promoting clarity and consistency, notetaking was also recognised for its function in maintaining accountability, helping diplomats 'keep each other honest' and counteracting attempts to revise previously stated positions. As one participant described: "You may need to go back to your notes because, you know in a month's time, you say something and they say, 'I never said that,'… and then you have material to go back and say, 'OK, well, let me check'" (Interview 5 2023). The ability to refer to notes to confirm or dispute recollections of past statements was seen as a valuable tool for keeping all negotiating parties grounded in a factual history of the negotiations. However, the use of notetaking as an explicit tool in rhetorical confrontations varied among diplomats. One participant described a particularly congenial negotiation environment, wherein "rarely did I ever see… people go back to the notes and look at them and say 'you said A, B, and C.' It was never used as a sort of… weapon to hit anybody, 'you said this!'" (Interview 13 2023). However, another diplomat indicated that "many times [I] challenge people's positions based upon what I have in my notes" (Interview 6 2023). Despite these differences, most participants agreed that having a reliable record could be crucial in across-side coordination,

particularly in final negotiation phases when the exact wording of commitments becomes paramount (Ibid).

Interestingly, one respondent pointed out that in their role as a mediator, notetaking facilitated coordination and understanding across sides despite the previously described sense of rigidity that written records might impose. They described how, often, one party to a negotiation "would come to us and say we're a bit confused about what happened today. Can you, [tell us] what they were trying to say when they were talking about X? And then we would say, well, what we thought they meant was… and that would create like that possibility to dialogue around, you know, whatever it was, and to explore other options" (Interview 13 2023). Mediators can foster dialogue and explore alternatives by providing parties with clarifications based on their notes. "So it doesn't have to be that at the end of the day the notes is the truth," this participant elaborated, arguing that notes are less helpful as a definitive record than as a basis for continued discussion (Ibid). The impact of notetaking on the dynamics across negotiation sides is a critical area for further exploration, and the performative functions discussed below primarily deal with understating how notetaking practices influence these 'across side' dynamics.

4.3 Performative functions of notetaking

The findings above provide a descriptive analysis of the notetaking practices employed and the considerations therein to address the original research questions: *How do notetaking practices impact negotiation processes?* and *What explains variation in practices within and across processes*? Many diplomats understand and attest to the instrumental utility of notetaking, but another area of interest emerged throughout the interviews: the *performative* functions of notetaking. As one senior diplomat put it: "You've got to be careful about this. Because, you know, for example, the act of taking notes, affects the other person… [it] affects how they react" (Interview 12 2023). Sometimes self-aware and explicitly expressed, sometimes implied in the framing or wording of their responses, almost all participants indicated an

understanding that notetaking technology has effects on negotiation dynamics not reducible to the material facts of the notetaking tools themselves. Rather, they describe the affordances of notetaking — the types of interaction that are constrained or enabled by using these practices — in terms of interpersonal relationships, trust-building, and collective meaning-making. Three performative categories emerged: notes' function as co-constitutive of process, notetaking as a means of interpersonal signalling, and notetaking as an aesthetic 'tool.'

4.3.1 Notetaking as co-constituting process

Echoing Ball's dramaturgical approach to negotiation, some diplomats described notetaking as an integral part of the 'spectacle' of negotiation sessions. For instance, one diplomat detailed how, each day, the two governments involved in their peace process shared their own versions of notes on the previous day's negotiations, leading to extensive discussions and disagreements about the content of these notes at the start of every session. This performance, as the diplomat put it, is "not just about what's the content of the notes, what's down, who noted it and all that kind of business. It's also part of the whole process of how people engage with each other" (Interview 12 2023). This response illustrates another key finding: that notetaking and procedures for sharing notes are not facilitative and can in fact introduce counterproductive performative dynamics. As a few participants described, there is a sense that notetaking sometimes provides opportunities for parties to perform their positions 'for the record,' inscribing their 'toughness' in the archive. One notetaker expressed their belief that notetaking sparks such unhelpful behaviours, as it "[creates] some kind of audience for the speaker" that "triggers sometimes the posturing dynamic" (Interview 8 2023).

Regardless, many participants agreed that producing and debating over the shared text of notes provides a 'preview,' or some essential practice in confidence-building, for conflicting parties as they move toward the goal of their negotiations: jointly producing the text of a peace agreement. For better or worse, reviewing the

written record of previous sessions is often the first item on negotiation session agendas, forming a structure of engagement and interaction: the 'stage directions' for these actors. While some participants suggested that the time spent debating over notes is "not worth the energy" due to the potential discord it introduces (Interview 11 2023), notetaking and sharing notes across sides remains a common procedural element of iterative negotiation sessions — providing both opportunities for performance and structuring these performances.

Many participants also discussed how notetaking practices constitute session-specific dynamics in terms of negotiation 'flow.' Participants frequently cited concerns about assiduous notetaking "spoiling the dynamic" or "interrupting the flow" (Interview 8 2023). The balance between maintaining a faithful record and preserving the organic progression of conversation is delicate, particularly in intimate settings where interpersonal relationships are paramount. As one diplomat negotiating directly with a head of state noted, "When we got into a pattern of one-to-one… I think it would have been seriously damaging to my ability to conduct a meaningful discussion if I'd been taking detailed notes" (Interview 7 2023). Another diplomat described how "the role that I played in the room was a lot more around dynamics and observing who was upset in the moment, who was struggling that day, who was pushing too hard" — asserting that they didn't take notes because that would have interrupted their ability to assess these dynamics (Interview 13 2023). Two other diplomats who were active notetakers spoke about the careful trade-off of notetaking and 'flow' in terms reminiscent of a circus high-wire act (Table 2).

Complementary perspectives on notes and 'flow'
"It's almost like a physical thing, a kind of mental rope between you, and you don't want to drop it… it's not necessarily very thick, and so anything that can break it easily, you're nervous about… you don't want — I didn't want — the notes to be part of the reason why that breaks" (Interview 9 2023).
"You have to think about your moment by moment relations… if somebody's just so focused on their notes, that they're not doing that… they have failed… That's why I think this ability to take the notes while simultaneously ensuring that you don't drop any of those balls which are in the air — that's a really, really crucial skill" (Interview 5 2023).

Table 2. Participants respond: notetaking as circus performance

These responses highlight a perceived trade-off between capturing the content of discussions and remaining attuned to the subtleties of interpersonal dynamics — further evidencing the affordances of notetaking practices in negotiation.

4.3.2 Notetaking as interpersonal performance

Beyond influencing these collective processes and performances, many participants discussed how notetaking impacts individual-to-individual performances in meaningful ways. This was particularly evident when participants discussed performances wherein their objective was to build trust or give their interlocutor a strong impression of their attention and/or intention. Interestingly, participants offered diametrically opposed perspectives on what notetaking in this context means. Some negotiators felt that refraining from or pausing notetaking could signal 'active listening' and foster a deeper personal connection, which is critical in building trust.[24] In contrast, others argued that diligent notetaking demonstrated seriousness and a genuine interest in understanding and remembering their counterparts' words. Two participants voiced strikingly opposite perspectives (Table 3).

Opposing perspectives on notes and 'active listening'
"I found myself in situations where I felt a greater inclination to… try to connect eye to eye, and halt my activity of taking notes in order to build trust… many times the personal connection is much more important to create this bonding than making notes… in many occasions I was just… putting one or a few words in my notes" (Interview 6 2023).
"Quite often I've opened my notebook and I've made notes and I've not found that that is a disincentive… in fact quite often it reinforces the conception on their part that you are serious, you are really interested in what they are saying and that you want to ensure that you capture it so that you can share it with other people" (Interview 5 2023).

Table 3. Participants respond: notetaking as signalling attention

[24] Some participants admitted that their decision about whether to take notes in a particular session had less to do with performance and perception than their own limitations: "I would very rarely take notes during a meeting. I found it to be distracting for the other side. Distracting to myself also, because you know you listen and you take notes, and then you actually don't concentrate on what you'd like to respond, how you'd like to respond" (Interview 10 2023).

This dichotomy suggests that notetaking can be seen simultaneously as both a bridge and a barrier to interpersonal communication, depending on the context and the individuals involved. Some diplomats suggested that cultural differences determined whether notetaking signified 'active listening' or its opposite. A few argued that some negotiators from non-Western cultures "feel insulted that you're not listening, [if] you're just sitting there writing" (Interview 3 2023). One 'non-Western' diplomat argued that the idea of notetaking signalling attention was a bias of "Western European culture, where the written word is more important than the oral, and if you can start to get written stuff down, it means the parties are serious and seriously engaging," a view this diplomat considered reductive (Interview 11 2023). As is evident in these responses, drastically different views on the meaning and interpretation of a particular notetaking performance can coexist within the same negotiation session: some negotiators might see notetaking as a distraction from genuine engagement, while others might see it as a sign of commitment to the dialogue and 'getting it right.'

While participants disagreed on the performative effects of notetaking as a trust-building tool through performing 'active listening,' they were almost unanimous in their view that halting notetaking can be a strategic performance to invite confidence and foster a more open and candid dialogue. The act of 'going off the record' or pausing notetaking can signal a readiness to engage in a more sensitive and confidential discussion; the quote opening this article is evidence of that perspective. As the participant quoted later elaborated, "It's a lot of psychology… the feeling of a liberty to express yourself stems very much from the fact that you know that nobody can quote you exactly… you always keep the deniability" (Interview 10 2023). Even when negotiating parties have previously consented to a notetaking protocol, there can be performative force in pausing those practices or interrupting them — laying down a pen, for example — to signal increased sensitivity.

Additionally, informal and interstitial dialogues (e.g., coffee breaks or social events) were highlighted as crucial for building trust and breaking through

negotiation impasses (Interview 5 2023). In these settings, participants argued, notetaking is inappropriate and potentially disruptive to budding social dynamics.

4.3.3 Notetaking as aesthetic tool

As discussed above, the performative functions of notetaking extend beyond the 'common-sense' understanding of notetaking as a record-keeping activity. Surprisingly, some respondents discussed using their notes as a performative tool — akin to a 'prop' in a stage production — to leverage the material and aesthetic qualities of their notetaking for performative effect. As one diplomat revealed:

> Sometimes I [used] my notetaking in front of the parties in interpersonal mediations… sometimes writing in big words, in big letters that they will look at, because I want to talk about *that* … I'd make a circle around a word or around a couple of words to call the attention of the parties on that (Interview 6 2023).

This strategic use of notes to non-verbally emphasise key points and ultimately steer the conversation illustrates how notetaking practices can generate and leverage aesthetic tools. Similarly, another negotiator discussed the value of sharing notes 'across the table,' opening their notebook toward their counterparts to foster a sense of transparency: "Every now and then, if I see them curious, I'm like, 'you want to see what I'm taking notes of?'… And so sometimes I show them… which is a great trust-building exercise" (Interview 2 2023).

One mediator described another instance of notes being used as a visual catalyst. In this case, the mediator drew a tennis net on a flip chart and left it in the corner of the negotiation room. When one delegation leader paused to ask about the meaning of the image, this provided the mediator with an opening to propose a new mode of engagement, using the game of tennis as an analogy to stress the importance of considering "How do you send something back that keeps that thing going?" (Interview 9 2023). Drawing a tennis net on an easel has a different impact than doodling it on the corner of a notebook. These anecdotes suggest that the aesthetic qualities of a notetaking tool can have a meaningful impact on their performative force.

While material qualities such as those described above may have a significant impact 'in the room,' a different and almost literary aesthetic concern emerged when participants were asked about the process of translating notes into reports and/or long-term records. Many respondents discussed the importance of accuracy, fidelity, and clarity in reports, but several participants also discussed the importance of a notetaker's 'editorial' sensibility in framing and presenting their notes. "The framing makes a whole lot of difference," urged one diplomat, "which side you're going to emphasise and which side you're going to kind of play down… the notes could emphasise [an] opening or bury it in the rubble" (Interview 8 2023). Participants highlighted the importance of writing in an engaging and interesting manner, particularly given the limited time and attention spans of diplomatic practitioners. One senior diplomat noted the importance of "charm" and brevity in reports, stating, "I know for myself how quickly I stop reading a six-page report that is as dry as the Sahara. If you see in the first few sentences that there's a little bit of charm in the way it's written, you'd probably read it through. And keep it short. Very important" (Interview 10 2023). This sentiment reflects that there is a difference between 'writing to record' and 'writing to be read.' There are usually good reasons for notetakers to 'punch up' a particularly mundane report or fixate on particularly notable descriptive details. In negotiation notes, however, these aesthetic choices are not trivial — they may influence principals' perceptions of the negotiation process, potentially shaping the strategies and policy decisions that follow.

5 Discussion

5.1 Key findings

As expected, the interview data reflected a wide variation in notetaking practices. Despite this range, however, this research identifies several generalisable findings regarding their implementation and impact. For example, sensitivity and consent are found to be key considerations in negotiators' choice and adaptation of notetaking

protocols. Further considerations include negotiation phasing, with protocols generally moving from informal to more detailed iterations as parties moved closer to agreement. Participants expressed a trade-off between inscription and flexibility — suggesting that notetaking in early stages might hinder creativity and compromise and arguing that a lack of deniability may also lead parties to self-censor.

Interview data also illustrates several instrumental functions of notetaking practices. As expected, participants emphasised the utility of notes as individual and collective 'memory aids' to keep individuals and counterparts 'honest' through accurate record-keeping. They also discussed notetaking as a tool for reconciling diverging interpretations, countering cognitive biases, and providing a means and basis for reflective processing. They discussed how notetaking facilitates continuity between administrations in complex and protracted peace processes.

Beyond validating these largely anticipated and 'common-sense' perspectives, this research identifies several performative functions of negotiation notetaking — where notetaking technologies are found to have effects not reducible to their material qualities. In some cases, notetaking and note-sharing practices become organising structures, constituting modes of engagement within a peace process. Notetaking influences negotiators' perceptions of 'flow' and momentum in dialogue with counterparts. Relatedly, this article finds that notetaking can impact interpersonal dynamics, with several notetaking 'moves' (such as 'making a show' of assiduous notetaking, or, alternately, going 'off the record') identified as recognisable performances that signal attentiveness and confidence-building. Finally, this research identifies instances in which notetaking practices were used as an aesthetic tool, leveraging the visual or material properties of the 'notebook' itself to performative effect. The article also identifies an 'editorial' logic that informs the framing and presentation of negotiation notes and reports. This literary, aesthetic sensibility places notetakers in a subtle but influential position. As the act of notetaking becomes a critical component in the narrative construction of events, notetakers' editorial choices shape principals' perceptions.

5.2 A 'Cubist' approach to procedural elements in negotiation

It is apparent that notetaking in a negotiation involves an interplay of strategic and communicative considerations, with consequences that extend beyond simple record-keeping. This article advances a 'Cubist' conceptual framework to account for the multifaceted — and sometimes opposing — impacts of procedural elements like notetaking on negotiation processes and outcomes.

Drawing inspiration from Cubism, a revolutionary art movement pioneered by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque in the early 20th century, this approach frames peace negotiations in a multi-perspective construction. Cubist art is characterised by fragmented forms, challenging conventional single-point perspective by displaying multiple viewpoints simultaneously. Applying this to the study of negotiation, a 'Cubist' approach suggests a method of analysis where various perspectives and realities are acknowledged and incorporated without privileging one above another. This approach recognises that diverse actors in international negotiations hold different, often conflicting, perceptions of reality; these perceptions, in turn, shape their interests, assessments, and actions. As a viewer approaching a Cubist painting, a practitioner approaching a negotiation context might focus on particularly salient fragments, or 'elements,' to understand how they fit into the overall picture. Procedural elements of a session (e.g., the venue, organisational constraints, social relationships, diplomatic technologies) can, in this way, be 'broken out' and examined to provide a useful cross-section of the negotiation context.

Say, for example, a mediator begins taking notes in a negotiation session where two states at war are discussing potential territorial concessions on either side of a shared border. As the notetaker records proposed solutions, one party becomes more animated and interactive, while the other party becomes more withdrawn and circumspect. Rather than assuming the procedural element of notetaking exerts no effect here (or exerts equal effects on both parties), a practitioner adopting a 'Cubist' approach might pause to investigate these divergent responses. Through careful observation, monitoring and feedback mechanisms built into the process (such as a

mediation team member dedicated to recording process variables such as semantic specificity, rate of responses, et cetera), and transparent conversation with parties, this practitioner might glean valuable information about how the affordance of this procedural element is influencing parties' behaviours.

As such, investigating these elements can provide useful entry points for procedural interventions. For example, the mediator might learn that the more reticent party is concerned about assiduous notetaking because the content of the conversation exceeds the instructions provided by their principal; as a result, they view this element as a liability and are less likely to advance risky, collaborative proposals when they are aware of being recorded. On the other hand, the more engaged party may view the same level of notetaking positively, as evidence of the negotiation moving toward a more concrete, formulative phase. Integrating both of these views without privileging one or the other, the Cubist-informed mediator will be well-positioned to adapt elements of the negotiation session accordingly — perhaps by setting aside time for parties to communicate with principals, or making assurances about the confidentiality of session notes, or adopting a more discreet anonymised notetaking method. This adaptation, in turn, may lead to more productive dialogue and formulation and avoid stalling or breakdown as the parties determine the contours of their territorial settlement.

In highlighting how the shared material facts of procedural elements can generate diverse and sometimes divergent associations, this 'Cubist' approach offers useful insights for constructivist and 'new materialist' IR theory. Multiple interpretations of the same features can coexist, with each view adding depth and complexity to negotiators' understanding of a subject. When one negotiator scribbles in their 'black notebook,' all parties will have their own view on what that action signifies. These intersecting 'ways of looking at a black notebook' will influence their subsequent behaviours and, to some degree, shape the resulting negotiation outcomes.

In the field of peace negotiations, a Cubist diplomatic approach advocates for a departure from Western-dominated, single-point perspective, allowing negotiators

to view the negotiation room (and indeed the conflict) from various angles simultaneously. The most successful negotiators, this article argues, are those who can effectively frame this complexity — to extend the metaphor, a successful mediator is like a critic advancing an interpretation of a Cubist art piece — in a way that does not collapse these views but rather enables all other parties to see their counterparts' perspective. Integrating these views in one frame is key for practitioners navigating the affordances of notetaking technologies. A Cubist approach challenges negotiators to look beyond the apparent and delve into the deeper, often hidden, layers of perception at the intersection of 'power' and 'procedure' in negotiations.

5.3 Affordances and constraint

Diplomatic negotiations are characterised by fluidity and complexity. As the interviewees attest, notetaking is often a balancing act between capturing detail and preserving the organic momentum of dialogue. Diplomats must negotiate not just with their counterparts, but with the process of documentation itself, deciding when and how to inscribe verbal and contextual information to meet their own recording needs while effectively communicating 'across the table.' As this research has shown, the affordances of notetaking technologies can influence interpersonal negotiation dynamics by signalling trust and intention. The trade-offs that research participants describe — between flexibility and precision, between diligence and 'flow' — are produced as much by the material qualities of the technology as by the social associations governing their use. As most participants still describe notetaking as a 'pen-and-paper' activity, it is no wonder many characterised notetaking practices as unwieldy, obtrusive, and requiring special skill to effectively manage.

Revisiting Adler-Nissen and Drieschova's concept of technological affordances, this research illuminates how notetaking technology serves as both a lens through which diplomats view and interpret the negotiation process and a canvas on which they inscribe strategic moves. The constraints of notetaking technologies are equally instructive. The act of inscription inherently filters and alters the original content. This process can both clarify and distort, as practitioners reflect their own

cognitive biases, limitations, and even editorial aesthetic choices in the 'framing' of their notes — with potentially consequential interpretive effects. In validating the concept of affordances, this article reinforces the need for diplomats to reflexively examine the impact of technologies adopted within a negotiation session.

6 Conclusion

This article highlights notetaking as a critical yet under-examined element of diplomatic practice — a background practice in many negotiation processes that nevertheless exhibits a wide variation in its conception, design, and exercise, with a similarly broad range of instrumental and performative functions. From an individual-level cognitive aid, to a delegation's means of collective comparison, to inscribing events in the historical record, notetaking practices are a vital tool of international negotiation. Advancing a 'Cubist' conceptual framework, this article has demonstrated the theoretical and practical value of examining notetaking as a procedural element. Validating the concept of technological affordances, the article finds that the material qualities and social context of any given notetaking practice both enable and constrain certain forms of communication, relationship-building, and compromise.

The advent of artificial intelligence (AI) notetaking tools has the potential to transform international negotiations. With 'technological affordances' such as real-time transcription, contextual analysis, and language translation, AI-assisted notetaking technologies could significantly augment the efficiency and accuracy of negotiation record-keeping and information sharing. As AI tools can process and analyse vast amounts of data, they might reveal previously unnoticed patterns and insights, boosting the 'secondary processing' function of notetaking — potentially suggesting new negotiation strategies and solutions for practitioners. This technological leap, however, also introduces new constraints in diplomatic interactions — with particular concerns regarding the reliability and neutrality of AI

in capturing and interpreting sensitive diplomatic information. This constitutes a pressing area for future research.

In the meantime, this article suggests the need for diplomatic training to incorporate a more profound understanding of the role and implications of procedural elements such as notetaking in peace negotiations. As diplomacy and related technologies evolve, a 'Cubist' approach to understanding elements of negotiation practice and their multifarious impacts is crucial in building more efficient, effective peace processes.

5. *Thirteen ways of looking at a black notebook*

References

Adler, Emanuel, and Vincent Pouliot. 2011. "International Practices." *International Theory*.

Adler-Nissen, Rebecca. 2012. *Bourdieu in International Relations: Rethinking Key Concepts in IR*. *The New International Relations*. Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge.

Adler-Nissen, Rebecca, and Alena Drieschova. 2019. "Track-Change Diplomacy: Technology, Affordances, and the Practice of International Negotiations." *International Studies Quarterly*.

Aradau, Claudia, and Tobias Blanke. 2018. "Governing Others: Anomaly and the Algorithmic Subject of Security." *European Journal of International Security*.

Ball, James R. 2020. *Theater of State: A Dramaturgy of the United Nations*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Batora, Jozef. 2009. "Foreign Ministries and the Information Revolution: Going Virtual?" *Diplomatic Studies*.

Best, Jacqueline, and William Walters. 2013. "'Actor-Network Theory' and International Relationality: Lost (and Found) in Translation." *International Political Sociology* 7 (3): 332–34.

Bjola, Corneliu, and Michaela Coplen. 2022. "Virtual Venues and International Negotiations: Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic." *International Negotiation*.

Bjola, Corneliu, and Marcus Holmes. 2015. *Digital Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*. *Routledge New Diplomacy Studies*. London: Routledge.

Bourdieu, Pierre, and Richard Nice. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. *Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology ; 16*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bramsen, Isabel, and Anine Hagemann. 2021. "The Missing Sense of Peace: Diplomatic Approachment and Virtualization during the COVID-19 Lockdown." *International Affairs*.

Branch, Jordan. 2012. "'Colonial Reflection' and Territoriality: The Peripheral Origins of Sovereign Statehood." *European Journal of International Relations*.

———. 2017. "Territorial Conflict in the Digital Age: Mapping Technologies and Negotiation." *International Studies Quarterly*.

———. 2018. "Technology and Constructivism." In *Constructivism Reconsidered: Past, Present, and Future*, edited by Mariano Bertuccci, Jarrod Haye, and Patrick James. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Braun, Bruce, and Sarah Whatmore. 2010. *Political Matter: Technoscience, Democracy, and Public Life*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Brigham, Robert K. 2018. *Reckless: Henry Kissinger and the Tragedy of Vietnam*. 1st ed. New York, NY: PublicAffairs.

Bueger, Christian, and Frank Gadinger. 2015. "The Play of International Practice." *International Studies Quarterly*.

Buttel, Robert. 2015. *Wallace Stevens: The Making of Harmonium*. *Princeton Legacy Library ; 2409*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Coole, Diana H., and Samantha Frost. 2010. "New Materialisms Ontology, Agency, and Politics." *E-Duke Books Scholarly Collection*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Der Derian, James. 2003. "The Question of Information Technology in International Relations." *Millennium*.

Dittmer, Jason. 2016. "Theorizing a More-than-Human Diplomacy: Assembling the British Foreign Office, 1839-1874." *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*.

———. 2017. *Diplomatic Material: Affect, Assemblage, and Foreign Policy*. *E-Duke Books Scholarly Collection*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Drieschova, Alena. 2017. "Peirce's Semeiotics: A Methodology for Bridging the Material–Ideational Divide in IR Scholarship." *International Theory*.

Duncombe, Constance. 2017. "Twitter and Transformative Diplomacy: Social Media and Iran–US Relations." *International Affairs*.

Farrall, Jeremy, and Jochen Prantl. 2016. "Leveraging Diplomatic Power and Influence on the UN Security Council: The Case of Australia." *Australian Journal of International Affairs*.

Fisher, Roger, William Ury, and Bruce Patton. 1983. *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In*. London: Hutchinson.

Freeman, Richard, and Jo Maybin. 2011. "Documents, Practices and Policy." *Evidence & Policy*.

Fritsch, Stefan. 2011. "Technology and Global Affairs." *International Studies Perspectives*.

Goldgeier, J. M., and P. E. Tetlock. 2001. "Psychology and International Relations Theory." *Annual Review of Political Science*.

Harper, Richard. 1997. *Inside the IMF: An Ethnography of Documents, Technology and Organizational Action*. *Computers and People Series*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Heine, Jorge, Andrew Cooper, and Ramesh Thakur. 2013. "Introduction: The Challenges of 21st-Century Diplomacy." Oxford Handbooks of Politics & International Relations. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Holmes, Marcus. 2015. "Believing This and Alieving That: Theorizing Affect and Intuitions in International Politics." *International Studies Quarterly*.

Holmes, Marcus, and David Traven. 2015. "Acting Rationally Without Really Thinking: The Logic of Rational Intuitionism for International Relations Theory." *International Studies Review*.

Hopf, Ted. 2010. "The Logic of Habit in International Relations." *European Journal of International Relations*.

Hull, Matthew S. 2012. "Documents and Bureaucracy." *Annual Review of Anthropology*.

Interview 1. 2023. Examining Notetaking Practices and Negotiation Dynamics Interview by Michaela Coplen. Microsoft Teams.

Interview 2. 2023. Examining Notetaking Practices and Negotiation Dynamics Interview by Michaela Coplen. Microsoft Teams.

Interview 3. 2023. Examining Notetaking Practices and Negotiation Dynamics Interview by Michaela Coplen. Microsoft Teams.

Interview 4. 2023. Examining Notetaking Practices and Negotiation Dynamics Interview by Michaela Coplen. Microsoft Teams.

Interview 5. 2023. Examining Notetaking Practices and Negotiation Dynamics Interview by Michaela Coplen. Microsoft Teams.

Interview 6. 2023. Examining Notetaking Practices and Negotiation Dynamics Interview by Michaela Coplen. Microsoft Teams.

Interview 7. 2023. Examining Notetaking Practices and Negotiation Dynamics Interview by Michaela Coplen. Microsoft Teams.

Interview 8. 2023. Examining Notetaking Practices and Negotiation Dynamics Interview by Michaela Coplen. Microsoft Teams.

Interview 9. 2023. Examining Notetaking Practices and Negotiation Dynamics Interview by Michaela Coplen. Microsoft Teams.

Interview 10. 2023. Examining Notetaking Practices and Negotiation Dynamics Interview by Michaela Coplen. Microsoft Teams.

Interview 11. 2023. Examining Notetaking Practices and Negotiation Dynamics Interview by Michaela Coplen. Microsoft Teams.

Interview 12. 2023. Examining Notetaking Practices and Negotiation Dynamics Interview by Michaela Coplen. Microsoft Teams.

Interview 13. 2023. Examining Notetaking Practices and Negotiation Dynamics Interview by Michaela Coplen. Microsoft Teams.

Johnson, Dominic D. P. 2020. *Strategic Instincts: The Adaptive Advantages of Cognitive Biases in International Politics*. *Princeton Studies in International History and Politics ; 172*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Kahneman, Daniel, and Amos Tversky. 1979. "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk." *Econometrica*.

Kaufmann, C. D. 1994. "Out of the Lab and into the Archives: A Method for Testing Psychological Explanations of Political Decision-Making." *International Studies Quarterly*.

Kuus, Merje. 2013. "Foreign Policy and Ethnography: A Sceptical Intervention." *Geopolitics*.

———. 2016. "Diplomacy and Audit: Technologies of Knowledge in Europe." *Geoforum*.

Latour, Bruno. 2007. *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. *Clarendon Lectures in Management Studies*. First paperback edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lundborg, T. O. M., and Nick Vaughan-Williams. 2015. "New Materialisms, Discourse Analysis, and International Relations: A Radical Intertextual Approach." *Review of International Studies*.

McConnell, Fiona, and Jason Dittmer. 2018. "Liminality and the Diplomacy of the British Overseas Territories: An Assemblage Approach." *Environment and Planning*.

Melissen, Jan. 2015. "Diplomacy in the Digital Age." Clingendael, Netherlands Institute of International Relations.

Montcher, Fabien. 2018. "The Portable Archives of the Westphalian Negotiations: From Archival Arsenals to Archival Absolutism (France, Portugal, and Spain)." *Journal of Early Modern History*.

Nexon, Daniel H., and Vincent Pouliot. 2013. "'Things of Networks': Situating ANT in International Relations." *International Political Sociology* 7 (3): 342–45.

Pouliot, Vincent. 2008. "The Logic of Practicality: A Theory of Practice of Security Communities." *International Organization*.

———. 2016. "Hierarchy in Practice: Multilateral Diplomacy and the Governance of International Security." *European Journal of International Security*.

Putnam, Robert D. 1988. "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games." *International Organization*.

Riles, Annelise. 1998. "Infinity within the Brackets." *American Ethnologist*.

Ross, Carne. 2007. *Independent Diplomat: Dispatches from an Unaccountable Elite*. London: Hurst.

Sasley, Brent E. 2011. "Theorizing States' Emotions." *International Studies Review*.

Srnicek, Nick, Maria Fotou, and Edmund Arghand. 2013. "Introduction: Materialism and World Politics." *Millennium*.

Stein, Janice Gross. 1988. "International Negotiation: A Multidisciplinary Perspective." *Negotiation Journal*.

Stevens, Wallace. 1954. "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird." Poetry Foundation. 1954. https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45236/thirteen-ways-of-looking-at-a-blackbird.

Vivo, Filippo de. 2016. "Archives of Speech: Recording Diplomatic Negotiation in Late Medieval and Early Modern Italy." *European History Quarterly*.

Walters, William. 2002. "The Power of Inscription: Beyond Social Construction and Deconstruction in European Integration Studies." *Millennium*.

6

Discussion and conclusions

1 Research impetus, questions, and aims

"Paris was a nightmare," writes John Maynard Keynes, "and everyone there was morbid" (1920, 6). This isn't a travelogue — Keynes spent five months with the British delegation at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference. He eventually resigned his position in protest of the 'Carthaginian' terms imposed on Germany, presciently arguing that the settlement only set the conditions for future conflict. In *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, Keynes — that great macroeconomic thinker — puts forward a striking case for the 'micro' features of diplomacy. He traces how the 'nitty gritty' details of the negotiation process aggregated to its ultimate result. The Treaty of Versailles, Keynes argues, was a direct consequence of Lloyd George and Georges Clemenceau breaking down Woodrow Wilson's resolve. He describes the "hot, dry room" where the Council of Four met: "Day after day and week after week, [President Wilson] allowed himself to be closeted, unsupported, unadvised, and alone… He allowed himself to be drugged by their atmosphere, to discuss on the basis of their plans and of their data… Buried in the Conference… no echo reached him from the outer world" (Ibid, 45-48). Keynes describes how Clemenceau and George manipulated procedural features of the negotiation to this end: winnowing the 'Council of Ten' to 'Four,' separating Wilson from his staff, speaking over language interpreters, quickening the pace of discussion, and generally harrying Wilson into capitulating every point of his 'Fourteen Points' plan for a fair settlement.

'Atmosphere' — isolation, asymmetric information, acceleration — these are all aspects of the negotiation process that could have been designed differently. And a different design might have yielded very different results.

This thesis approached the question *Does how states negotiate affect the outcomes they can achieve?* and subsequently, *Do the procedural features of a negotiation process impact outcomes and efficacy, and if so, how?* The questions themselves emerged from the combination of an observation and an intuition. The observation: diplomatic practitioners often expend significant effort in 'setting the stage' for negotiations; pre-negotiation talks about procedural elements such as agenda, venue selection, and rules of engagement are often protracted (Berridge 2015, 27). As elaborated in numerous negotiation handbooks, many practitioners agree that procedural features affect outcomes — for better and for worse. The intuition: these practitioners are onto something. A closer examination of said procedural elements can provide insights that are valuable not only in improving negotiation processes but also in furthering theoretical development in international relations (IR).

For the purposes of this thesis, the scope of research was limited to examining peace negotiations between states (excluding negotiations between states and non-state entities). These are high-stakes talks: in the context of violent conflict, any delay or failure comes at a direct cost to lives and livelihoods. Adopting a pragmatic research strategy and objectives, this thesis acknowledges that in the real world, many variables in a negotiation context are already set by the time states agree to negotiate. Nevertheless, there is still room for would-be peacemakers to craft better negotiation processes that may effectuate better outcomes. This work offers insights that help practitioners do just that.

2 Academic context and interventions

The review of existing literature surrounding these research questions proved to be an exercise in multidisciplinary paradigm-wrangling. Studying negotiation as an 'activity in itself' draws in work across and beyond IR theory, political psychology, and

diplomatic studies. At its core, studying negotiation means studying different concepts and constructions of 'power': generations of IR theorists have circled this topic, advancing answers to the questions, "What makes states agree to stop fighting? What forms of persuasion/coercion might be at play? At what 'level of analysis' do they operate?" and more.

As such, the thesis begins with an illustrative review of existing conceptualisations of power in IR theory (see page 21). It critiques mainstream approaches, including 'rational,' 'institutional,' and 'structural' frameworks, and highlights their limitations in negotiation contexts due to their static and intrinsic constructions of power. These constructions are found inadequate for capturing the dynamic and relational aspects of power in negotiations. The review then identifies Steven Lukes's 'radical view of power' as more suitable, given its additive and extrinsic character that accounts for various factors across levels of analysis and considers power as relational and dynamic (Lukes 2005). Lukes's framework is used to comparatively assess predominant paradigms in the peace negotiation literature, organised according to its one-dimensional ('compulsory'), two-dimensional ('agenda-setting'), and three-dimensional ('ideational') views of power.

This mapping exercise (see Figure 3, page 30) yields two key findings. First: the peace negotiation literature exhibits saturation, verging on redundancy, in studies reflecting one- and three-dimensional views of power. There is a wealth of studies adopting rational choice frameworks that emphasise the role of material considerations and domestic political stability in shaping parties' interests and potential outcomes. Simultaneously, various constructivist and critical examinations consider the impact of individual cognitive and affective variables, interpersonal relationships, 'speech acts,' discursive practices, and social processes. These studies convincingly argue that these features of the negotiation milieu influence how parties understand their own identities and interests, each other, their shared problem, and potential solutions.

There remains, however, an area in this field of research that warrants further development: research in peace negotiation theory and practice that expands on

Lukes's 'two-dimensional' view of power. The institutionalist studies that do fall in this category generally offer a narrow definition of 'agenda-setting power' (i.e., the ability to set discussion topics, to elevate or suppress issues within an institution). In response to this observation, the thesis promotes a broader understanding of agenda-setting power, encompassing procedural rules and conventions of negotiations — i.e., *how* agenda items get discussed. The thesis advocates for further study examining the procedural elements of negotiation to bridge this 'gap' in the literature. It hypothesises that, while these elements might appear neutral or apolitical, they significantly influence negotiation processes.

The thesis then articulates a conceptual framework, or 'set of propositions,' for conducting research in this area. Building on Lukes's work, it introduces a 'Cubist concept of power.' Applying philosophical and aesthetic innovations from the 20th-century art movement to the practice of power in negotiation, this approach comprises three key tenets (see Figure 5, page 55). These include: 1) multi-dimensionality: asserting that all dimensions of power are interrelated and potentially significant in a negotiation context; 2) fragmentation and integration: deconstructing negotiation contexts into basic components to understand each party's unique perspectives on these elements, and then integrating these views in subsequent analysis; and 3) perceptual relativity: recognising that 'power' varies according to perception and context, with all parties and researchers actively participating in the signification process.

Further, this thesis proposes that operationalising a 'Cubist concept of power' entails adopting the methodological commitments of Cubism (see page 56). Cubist art makes a feature of the 'flatness' of the medium — drawing *onto* a two-dimensional canvas rather than *into* it — eschewing 'forced perspective' and visual techniques that create the illusion of depth. Following Picasso's injunction not to "attempt to paint the invisible and, therefore, the unpaintable" (Baxandall 1985), this thesis focuses on triangulating empirical data to trace observable realities. The studies comprising the thesis's main chapters reflect methodological pluralism, with data collection methods chosen according to each topic.

These three studies examine three distinct yet interrelated aspects of negotiation practice. The first article, "Against the clock: Time pressure and power in US mediation," delves into the impact of time pressure tactics (especially as imposed by a third-party mediator) in shaping negotiation dynamics and outcomes (see page 68). The second study, "Virtual venues and international negotiations: Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic," shifts focus to examine the effects of venue selection on negotiations, with a particular emphasis on the implications of the 'virtual venues' that have become prevalent since 2020 (see page 122). The third article, "Thirteen ways of looking at a black notebook: Examining notetaking practices and negotiation dynamics," explores notetaking practices, highlighting their significance as a mode of communication, record-keeping, and information sharing (see page 148).

These topics are not comprehensive, by any means, of all the procedural elements of negotiation that warrant attention under the proposed Cubist framework. They were chosen, however, for their fundamental relevance to the architecture of peace negotiation processes, spanning essential aspects such as time, space, and modes of communication. They also touch on key issues for contemporary negotiators such as interpersonal relationship building, perceptions of procedural justice, and the role of technology in negotiation processes. The section below reviews the studies' key findings before examining these cross-cutting themes.

3 Key Findings

3.1 Against the clock: Time pressure and power in US mediation

While many seasoned diplomats believe that "the concept of a deadline is critical to making a negotiation work" (Bebchick 2002) by driving parties toward a resolution, there are inherent risks and trade-offs when implementing time pressure tactics. Particularly in mediation contexts, deadlines are frequently employed as a seemingly 'common-sense' method to coax parties toward compromise. However, many assume these pressures apply equally to all parties — "lower[ing] expectations, call[ing] bluffs,

and produc[ing] final proposals" (Zartman and Berman 1982). Yet insights from social psychology challenge this notion, suggesting that time pressure can paradoxically lead to adverse outcomes such as 'epistemic freezing' or heightened intransigence rather than fostering agreement. Consequently, this article examines the questions: what is the impact of time pressure on peace negotiations? How do different parties view this element of procedural architecture, and how might their views co-constitute the process and shape the outcomes?

This article engages a comparative case study design that juxtaposes most-similar and least-similar cases to evaluate key intervening variables. Each case was an instance of third-party mediation conducted by US officials during the Clinton administration. Specifically, it examined the seminal negotiation cases of the 1995 Dayton Accords, the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, and the 2000 Camp David Summit. In this analysis, the most-similar cases identified were the Dayton Accords and the Camp David Summit; both adopted a summit diplomacy/'black box' model, with starkly different outcomes. In contrast, a least-similar comparison was drawn between the Dayton Accords and the Good Friday Agreement process. The latter was a prolonged, highly transparent process wherein the US mediator played a facilitative role — a stark divergence from the Dayton model — yet both engaged time pressure tactics and culminated in similarly positive results. Adopting the 'Cubist concept of power,' this article examined parties' divergent responses to time pressure elements to better understand their perspectives on these elements and how they relate to various dimensions of power in these negotiations. Data collection included an examination of primary sources, including archival research, contemporaneous interviews, first-hand accounts from mediators, and materials from online archives at the U.S. Department of State and the United States Institute of Peace.

The results of this study shed light on the differential impact of time pressure in asymmetric contexts. It finds that time pressure is often perceived as a form of domination by parties who feel compelled to make concessions. This sentiment was notably expressed by Izetbegović and Silajdžić at Dayton (see page 87) and Arafat at Camp David (see page 100). Parties under duress from US-imposed deadlines viewed

this pressure as unjust, leading to resistance (and in Arafat's case, disengagement from the process). While the 'compulsory power' wielded by US mediators did play a role in these cases, it proved insufficient to force a resolution. Conversely, the study found that consent to a mutually agreed-upon timeline, as was the case in Northern Ireland, was both well-received and effective (see page 92). In this instance, time pressure worked best when it aligned with a thorough understanding of the conflict's motivating grievances and dynamics. Mitchell's approach, which involved a comprehensive airing of grievances (i.e., "letting people have their say") exemplifies this alignment. Here, 'agenda-setting power' meant extending dialogue to foster relationships and habits of engagement that would be crucial for establishing a lasting peace.

3.2 Virtual venues and international negotiations: Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic

The subsequent article in this series explores another crucial element of peace negotiations: venue selection. Considering the COVID-19 pandemic and related global shifts toward remote engagement, this research focuses on the emergence of 'virtual venues,' e.g., platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams, which have become increasingly prevalent in peace processes (Bramsen and Hagemann 2021). This shift to online or hybrid models triggered rapid diplomatic adaptation — necessitating urgent descriptive and scoping research. Particular attention was needed to understand how diplomats have adapted to the challenges and opportunities of these venues, to evaluate their effectiveness compared to in-person negotiation spaces, and to examine how these venues are constructed as 'neutral' spaces. As such, the article examines the questions: *what is the impact of 'virtual venues' on peace negotiations? How do different parties view this element of negotiation procedure, and how might their views co-constitute the process and shape the outcomes?*

The study's methodology was designed to capture the ongoing experiences of diplomats negotiating in virtual venues. A web-based questionnaire served as the primary data collection tool. The survey attracted 28 respondents, who varied in

experience and seniority within the diplomatic field and considered themselves experienced in virtual venue negotiation. The survey comprised 22 questions organised around four topics: respondents' backgrounds; their perceptions of negotiation tactics and the efficacy of these tactics within virtual sessions; assessments of the technological platforms used and assessments of their suitability for diplomatic purposes; and their views on the long-term effectiveness of virtual venues for negotiation. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods to analyse the responses. Quantitative data was processed using the analytics software Tableau, providing a statistical overview of responses. Qualitative answers meanwhile underwent inductive coding, allowing for a thematic analysis.

This article supports the thesis's proposal of a 'Cubist concept of power,' advancing an understanding of how various dimensions of power are applied across different venues and how diplomats and diplomatic institutions adjust to new practices, technologies, and modes of operation. In one key finding, all respondents affirmed that the procedural constraints inherent to virtual venues significantly influenced the negotiation process and their efficacy within it. This unanimous response validates the thesis's overarching hypothesis that the procedural elements of negotiation have significant impacts on dynamics and outcomes.

Diplomats also reported significant reservations about virtual venues' capacity to foster meaningful conversations; interpersonal relationship-building and diplomats' ability to 'read the room' suffered. As one respondent noted, "WhatsApp and private chat messages cannot substitute for in-room approaches" (see page 136). Additionally, the article finds that 'virtual venue' usage recalibrates the structure of negotiation incentives and opportunities at a tactical level. Survey responses reflected an increase in coercive stonewalling tactics, such as parties stalling negotiations by delaying or postponing meetings, "hiding behind a turned off camera," or feigning technical difficulties (see page 141). The study suggests that virtual venues, in facilitating coercive tactics, might inadvertently favour parties with less incentive to negotiate. Parties with less compulsory power might therefore find

themselves at a disadvantage, as the mechanisms for exercising agenda-setting and ideational power can be more challenging to implement in virtual settings.

3.3 Thirteen ways of looking at a black notebook: Examining notetaking practices and negotiation dynamics

In a departure from the second study's 'high-tech' emphasis, the following article examines a usually 'low-tech' yet critical element of peace negotiations: notetaking. Most negotiation sessions involve some form of notetaking, yet even negotiation manuals and practitioner accounts generally overlook this element of negotiation as potentially influential in shaping processes and outcomes. Notetaking practices get to a core concern of the thesis, which is whether the material facts of a negotiation session can be influential in constraining or enabling the forms of engagement possible therein. Drawing on the concept of 'technological affordances' (Adler-Nissen and Drieschova 2019), this study probes how the element of notetaking relates to crucial areas of concern in negotiation practice such as continuity, information management, participant engagement, attention signalling, and trust-building. Understanding that most negotiation sessions involve some form of notetaking, the core questions behind this study were: What are the impacts of notetaking practices on peace negotiations? How do different parties view this element of negotiation procedure, and how might their views co-constitute the process and shape the outcomes?

This study employed a methodological approach centred around semi-structured interviews. Thirteen seasoned professionals, including senior diplomats, members of the UN Mediation Support Unit, and negotiators from research and non-governmental organisations were interviewed. Selected for their extensive practical experience in international negotiation, these participants offered a range of insights on notetaking practices. Conducted via Microsoft Teams, the interviews were open-ended, allowing participants to share their notetaking habits, criteria for effective notetaking, personal anecdotes, and 'lessons learned.' The transcribed interviews were inductively coded to identify recurring patterns and trends.

6. Discussion and conclusions

The article reveals a diverse array of notetaking styles among negotiators, shaped by individual preferences, cultural backgrounds, and specific conflict contexts. It identifies multiple factors that influence the choice of notetaking methods, including parties' consent and the sensitivity of the negotiation session. The study identified several instrumental and performative functions of notetaking. Instrumentally, notetaking aids memory and organisation in managing complex information. Performative functions include using notetaking to signal engagement or respect, or, conversely, ceasing notetaking to indicate sensitivity or foster confidence. Participants' responses suggested several ways these functions of notetaking exert subtle but meaningful influence on relationship- and trust-building within negotiations. The study also affirms the 'Cubist concept of power' as applied to negotiation, highlighting how different parties may perceive the same element' (e.g., a particular notetaking practice) in opposite ways. The article finds that more effective negotiators were able to integrate various views of this element by explaining their notetaking practices to counterparts, sharing notes, and adopting other collaborative meaning-making strategies.

4 Cross-cutting themes

The three studies presented in this thesis explored three distinct but related procedural elements of peace negotiations, employing a variety of data collection methods, but united in their adoption of a 'Cubist' analytical approach to power (as outlined above). Each procedural element offers a cross-section for understanding negotiation dynamics; tracing parties' views on respective elements reveals valuable insights and 'points of entry.' These studies demonstrated how different dimensions of power can coexist, overlaid, in any given context. Even within a single negotiation session, views on these elements may be diametrically opposed. The overarching conclusion from this research, then, is that an effective negotiator or mediator (or negotiation scholar, retrospectively) is one who can hold these contrasting views, in tension, together, without collapsing them or privileging one over another. Bringing

parties to 'see the whole picture' in this way — and reach a shared, though not necessarily identical, appreciation of their significance — may be critical. This integrative Cubist approach can help diplomats: 1) capitalise on the opportunities these procedural elements can represent, 2) mitigate counterproductive perceptions of agenda-setting unfairness, and 3) build meaningful interpersonal relationships into the architecture of the peace process. These cross-cutting themes are discussed below, in turn, drawing evidence from each of the studies above.

4.1 Technological 'affordances'

This thesis understands 'technology' in the broadest sense of the term — i.e., an intentionally designed system or process applied to solve a problem (Branch 2018). Each of the thesis's studies involved the use of technology in peace negotiations, whether that 'technology' was material (e.g., paper and pen), digital (e.g., a virtual conferencing platform), organisational (e.g., a timeline for managing dialogue sessions), or some combination of the above. Insights from literature examining the role of 'technology' in IR can be usefully applied to assess the impact of these procedural elements; the most relevant here is the concept of technological affordances. This concept refers to the idea that technology both shapes and is shaped by social relations, enabling certain forms of action while constraining others within a given organisational context (Adler-Nissen and Drieschova 2019). Each article in this thesis validates the concept of affordances, with evidence that the technologies in question produced effects on negotiation processes and outcomes that are not necessarily reducible to the intrinsic features of the technologies themselves.

This was perhaps most firmly evident in the second article, where survey respondents unanimously agreed that "the procedural constraints inherent to virtual venues" significantly "influenced the negotiation process and their ability to effectively negotiate therein" (see page 140). One particular affordance of the technology was the ease with which negotiators could disengage from discussions; one click allowed them to "[hide] behind turned off cameras" (see page 141).

Respondents found that this impeded their and their counterparts' ability to interpret non-verbal cues and consequently hindered the development of interpersonal relationships and collaborative dialogues. Enhanced opportunities for text-based communication — such as instantaneous chat messages, which might not be workable in in-person contexts — failed to offset the aforementioned negative impacts.

Further, the affordances of this digital technology intersected in interesting ways with the 'organisational technology' of scheduling. Remote negotiation sessions were easier both to convene and leave, so session length was often curtailed into hour-long 'blocks' and competed with other activities in negotiators' professional and personal schedules. This affordance resulted in a reduced commitment of energy and resources from negotiators, which may have contributed to a lesser degree of engagement and seriousness. It is important to note that while the intrinsic design of the virtual conferencing technology constrained and/or enabled these forms of action, technology alone did not predetermine the outcomes. This article validated the idea that a technological affordance interacts with specific usage norms and the broader social context. Utilising virtual tools in a different way (e.g., removing the ability to 'go off camera') might yield different results. While the technology sets certain parameters, the interplay between its design and its application determines its influence in a negotiation context.

The concept of affordances is further validated in the thesis's first and third studies. In these articles, the forms of action constrained and/or enabled by the technology in question primarily relate to parties' capacities to signal their intent to their counterparts. This is examined explicitly in the third article, where the material features of a notetaking technology were found to be directly related to its instrumental utility (e.g., as a memory aid, to ensure continuity, and to share information). These intrinsic qualities, however, were also found to relate directly to a potential constraint, as some negotiating parties refrained from candid dialogue due to fears of sensitive positions 'leaking' via notes. Notetaking technologies were further found to have effects not reducible to their material qualities, as participants indicated that notetaking also served performative functions. These functions were

highly contingent on social and conflict context factors, as notetaking was alternately seen as signalling attention and trustworthiness or as the exact opposite, depending on intervening factors.

While not discussed explicitly in the article itself, the first article also validates the concept of affordance with regard to the organisational technology of 'time pressure.' Time pressure, as a negotiation tactic, confers specific affordances by constraining the available time for deliberation. For example, Holbrooke's application of time pressure through incremental artificial deadlines initially catalysed agreement on discrete issues in the Dayton negotiations. Yet when time pressure was applied (as an ultimatum) to the final territorial settlement, however, frenzied 'horse trading' resulted in a fundamentally flawed agreement, wherein Silajdžić ceded land that was not under his authority (see page 84). Here the opportunity afforded by this organisational technology was at odds with the constraints of human cognition under conditions of acceleration, stress, and fatigue. Interestingly, this article found that the intrinsic features of time pressure (e.g., whether a deadline was actual or artificial) were less significant than the social associations the application of this technology generated. In other words, as seen in the Northern Ireland process, whether a deadline was credible was less important than whether it was consensual.

Taken together, insights from these three studies illuminate how technological affordances shape negotiation dynamics and outcomes. This research urges practitioners to recognise that both emerging and existing technologies may significantly influence negotiation processes and outcomes. As the second article demonstrates, technology adoption always leads to some amount of diplomatic adaptation (see also: Bjola and Manor 2022). As such, this thesis argues that negotiators should be vigilant during the adoption of new technologies and design feedback mechanisms into initial processes to assess how the affordances of this technology might operate. Furthermore, as shown in the first and third articles, the affordances of even established, taken-for-granted negotiation technologies might yet hold undiscovered effects on diplomatic processes. As several participants in research interviews for the third study indicated, diplomatic training on the

affordances of these procedural elements is currently thin. Designing diplomatic training modules to highlight these 'nitty gritty' aspects of applying technology to diplomatic craft would likely enhance the efficacy of negotiation processes and help practitioners to further systematise 'best practices.'

In validating the impact of 'technological affordances' on negotiation processes, this thesis also contributes to debates in IR theory. As advanced in the thesis's 'Cubist concept of power,' control over the procedural features of a negotiation constitutes a key aspect of agenda-setting power. As Adler-Nissen, Drieschova, and other practice theorists argue, the adept handling of technology and its affordances (a requisite aspect of 'competent performance' in negotiations) can enhance a negotiator's influence and ability to advance their interests and persuade counterparts (Adler and Pouliot 2011; Pouliot 2008; Adler-Nissen and Drieschova 2019). The thesis's findings regarding the role of technology also trouble the 'material/ideational' schism in IR theory, following work in the 'new materialism' literature that affords a more significant causal role to the material micro-foundations of diplomatic practices.

4.2 Perceptions of procedural justice

Another trend that emerged across all three studies was the role of 'procedural justice' (and perceptions thereof) as an intervening factor shaping negotiation outcomes. Applying Rawls's and Habermas's theories of justice to the negotiation context, the concept of procedural justice emphasises the importance of fair and transparent processes in achieving lasting agreements (Höffe and Haan 2013; Deitelhoff and Müller 2005). Procedural justice principles include ensuring that all conflict parties have equal opportunity to participate, voice their concerns, and influence outcomes. 'Procedurally just' processes are free from coercion, facilitating a sense of ownership among stakeholders. Scholars of procedural justice have argued that when conflicting parties perceive the negotiation process as equitable, they are more likely to commit to the resulting agreement and cooperate in its implementation — thereby enhancing

prospects for a lasting peace (Druckman and Albin 2011; Albin and Druckman 2017; Zartman and Touval 1985).

While not examining 'procedural justice' directly, each study in the thesis found that perceptions of fairness in the design and application of procedural elements had significant effects. This was most directly evident in the first chapter, where mediators' application of 'time pressure' elicited explicit protests from negotiating parties based on their unfairness and partiality. This was particularly pronounced in the Camp David case. The Palestinian delegation repeatedly (and correctly) identified US time pressure tactics as promoting the Israeli delegation's ideal timeline. As Hanieh expressed, "From the first day, the American team concentrated all its pressure on the Palestinian delegation… [and] made no attempt to exercise any pressure on the Israelis" (Hanieh 2001). This perception of procedural injustice led the Palestinian delegation to effectively disengage from the process in protest (see page 102). In contrast, George Mitchell's approach in the Northern Ireland negotiations emphasised procedural justice principles through a 'low-to-no time pressure' strategy. When Mitchell did ultimately engage a symbolic deadline to bring parties to agreement, he began by securing support for this plan from as many negotiating parties as possible (see page 91-92). The parties' joint consent conferred a sense of fairness; consequently, the final deadline was met with little resistance. In each of this article's cases, parties that perceived procedural shifts as coercive were almost automatically resistant to further compromise. As such, this article offers a significant finding that perceptions of fairness are a vital consideration for exercising agenda-setting power.

Parties' resistance to negotiation tactics perceived as coercive was also evident in the thesis's second article. Survey respondents indicated that the 'coercive' tactics facilitated by the affordances of a virtual venue, such as stonewalling and stalling, were negatively received by other negotiators — with negative consequences. Some called these tactics "rude" or "ridiculous," and additional responses suggested that negotiators' affective reactions to these procedurally unjust tactics led to further alienation and disengagement from the negotiation process (see page 142). On the

other hand, several respondents asserted that virtual venues have the potential to generate more procedurally just processes, as a mediator is better equipped to enforce fair rules of engagement (e.g., to 'mute' speakers who have gone over their allotted time, or to elevate 'spoken over' voices)(see page 140). While none of the survey questions spoke to procedural justice explicitly, these responses suggest that perceptions of the fairness of negotiations in a virtual venue directly influence diplomats' engagement and collaboration therein.

The thesis's third study evoked other issues related to procedural justice, namely accountability and transparency. Some scholars of procedural justice have highlighted the importance of "open and accessible" peace processes, urging negotiators to inform constituencies of evolving positions as talks progress to 'prepare the ground' and gain support for a resulting settlement (Albin and Druckman 2014). Yet a majority of interview participants indicated that concern about 'leaking' the content of negotiation sessions was a significant consideration in limiting or controlling the use of notetaking practices. As one participant put it, "The notes… you never know how far they fly" (see page 165). These participants indicated a trade-off between accountability and flexibility. Where notetaking recorded parties' statements and positions and thereby reduced their deniability in the public sphere (or even, in some cases, with their principals), parties were less willing to advance 'risky' compromises. This finding suggests that not all principles of procedural justice are created equally — parties might prioritise the efficiency of negotiation procedures 'in the room' over broader constructions of justice in the overall process.

As these studies demonstrate, perceptions of procedural justice are key intervening factors in the exercise of agenda-setting power. Perceived unfairness or coercion can prove counterproductive, while jointly agreed and implemented procedures lend legitimacy to both the process and the agreements produced. Reflecting a key proposition of the 'Cubist concept of power,' this thesis finds that efforts toward establishing integrated views of procedural elements can go a long way toward mitigating the effects of perceived procedural injustice. As one participant in the third study recounted, "Every now and then, if I see them curious, I'm like, 'you

want to see what I'm taking notes of?'" (see page 176). In this case, sharing notes openly with counterparts helped these parties 'see' the notetaking practice as a form of active listening rather than a means of future entrapment. As this negotiator argued, "[It] is a great trust-building exercise" (Ibid). This research suggests that building opportunities for integrative perspective-sharing on procedural elements into the negotiation process can foster a sense of procedural justice. Further, sensitivity and prompt responses to perceived injustices can prevent the escalation of resentment.

It's important to note, however, that this thesis also finds that applying procedural justice according to rigid, exogenously constructed principles can be counterproductive. Transparency, for example, may not always be appropriate for every phase of a negotiation process. Where one party is particularly sensitive to the domestic audience costs of compromise, insisting on 'open and accessible' processes may itself be perceived as coercive. In short, the studies in this thesis suggest that procedural justice is not 'one-size-fits-all' and must be developed for the unique contexts of each negotiation — ideally, with the input and consent of the parties.

Nuancing the thesis's hypothesis, these studies suggest that procedural elements don't just influence negotiation processes through their immediate affordances — they also exert an indirect influence as they intersect with parties' perceptions of procedural in/justice. Actors exercising agenda-setting power in the design of negotiation sessions are more likely to be successful in their ultimate aims if the procedural elements they propose are perceived as fair. This finding is a key theoretical contribution to IR constructions of power, validating the thesis's Cubist insistence on multi-dimensionality; procedural justice can be understood as a nexus between agenda-setting and ideational power.

4.3 Relationship-building and agency

The studies in this thesis examine the often-overlooked procedural elements of negotiation — aspects of negotiation architecture that are typically regarded as

apolitical, the background machinery of diplomatic practice. Adopting the Cubist injunction not to 'paint the invisible,' these studies emphasise the empirically measurable effects of these procedural features, gathering evidence 'from the horse's mouth' through practitioners' written accounts, surveys, and interviews. But in doing so, this research incidentally reveals the importance that more intangible features of the negotiation context hold for these practitioners. Study participants expressed an overwhelming belief in the importance of interpersonal relationship-building. This reflects a 'common-sense' view that, although a range of contextual and institutional factors may constrain negotiators' actions, they nevertheless exert some agency within a negotiation process. There is still some scope for actors to persuade and cajole each other in ways that might shape outcomes, and this scope widens when parties also share a social relationship. As the example raised by Keynes's account of the Paris Peace Conference suggests, these studies find that the procedural elements of negotiation can be critical in building these relationships (and heightening their salience) — with potentially existential consequences.

Each of the thesis's constituent articles produces evidence in support of this finding. In the first chapter, Holbrooke's utilisation of the PowerScene digital mapping technology provides a striking example. While intended as an instrumental tool, this technology became a shared means of entertainment. Negotiators even called the PowerScene area "the Nintendo Room" (Johnson 1999). The unintended consequence of this procedural element — an informal interactive space (and the all-night scotch-drinking session that accompanied its use) — was to provide more opportunities for positive social interaction between negotiators. The social connections ultimately enabled agreement on a territorial corridor (the "scotch road")(Ibid).

In the second study, the impact of procedural elements on interpersonal relationship-building is particularly evident in the negative. Diplomats in virtual venues expressed how the lack of a 'gallery view' function, counterparts turning off cameras, and missed opportunities for informal or interstitial dialogue hampered attempts at relationship-building (see page 140). While one survey respondent

bemoaned the use of 'infantile' emojis in group chats, these modes of communication can be understood as negotiators' attempts to re-insert a human, affective element into a virtual venue — to develop reciprocal social feedback mechanisms — in order to increase rapport with their counterparts. The third study also speaks to the importance of an intangible sense of 'rapport' in building requisite relationships between negotiators. As one participant argued, building 'flow' in an interpersonal dialogue is "almost like a physical thing, a kind of mental rope between you… you don't want to drop it… anything that can break it easily, you're nervous about" (see page 173). As evident in all three studies, practitioners believe that procedural elements can make or break that "mental rope" — and concomitant chances at relationship-building.

It is apparent, therefore, that procedural elements of negotiation play a crucial role in fostering interpersonal relationships. Practitioners argue that these relationships, in turn, are influential in shaping negotiation outcomes. It's important to note, however, that while procedural elements may contribute to fostering opportunities for connection, they do not pre-determine the results of these connections. The US team at Camp David built a wide range of social events into the summit agenda, including 'movie nights,' bowling, ping pong, and golf cart driving. While these 'mandatory fun' moments may have had some effect in building interpersonal relationships between Israeli and Palestinian delegation members, they ultimately had no meaningful impact on moving parties toward compromise (Miller 2020). For practitioners designing peace processes, then, this thesis's findings suggest that they should consider the importance of relationship-building while designing procedural elements. This might mean building a social agenda (or 'flex' time for informal socialising) into the negotiation sessions. Yet the thesis cautions that there are limits to this exercise of agenda-setting power; while some procedural elements may effectively preclude relationship-building, there is no 'formula' that can ensure parties will build interpersonal rapport.

In exploring the role of interpersonal relationships, this thesis offers a unique perspective on IR theoretical questions of individual-level agency in the international

system. The structure/agent debate in IR theory revolves around which has a more critical role in shaping international outcomes: the international system's structure (as emphasised by structural realists like Waltz (1979)) or the actions and decisions of individual states and their leaders (as highlighted by constructivists like Wendt (1999)). The articles in this thesis suggest that human agency is key in mediating 'power in practice.' In other words, negotiators can indeed make a meaningful difference in negotiations. Individuals exert their own agency to build the interpersonal relationships that facilitate risk-taking and compromise — working with, through, and (in some cases) against the procedural elements, institutional rules, and conflict contexts that structure a negotiation setting. But procedural elements are also, to a degree, agential; the design of negotiation sessions can either provide 'room' for human agents to build relationships, or restrict and stifle them.

Writing reflexively about his research methods (participant observation and "liberties which are habitual to historians") in *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, Keynes argued that "the world needs light, even if it is partial and uncertain, on the complex struggle of human will and purpose" represented by the negotiation process (1920, 27). While much about the role of interpersonal relationships in negotiations remains, by nature, 'unpaintable,' the thesis nevertheless casts light on this topic.

Additional themes emerged beyond the current scope of the thesis. One area of particular interest is the difference between the role of a partial or impartial mediator, including the trade-off between principles of consent in negotiation procedures versus the expedience of 'productive coercion.' Productive coercion in mediation refers to a mediator's strategic use of pressure, including manipulating procedural elements, to encourage disputing parties to move towards a mutually acceptable solution (Eriksson 2019). While mediators generally seek to ensure that any agreement is reached voluntarily and not through undue influence, scholars have suggested that in some cases, parties may prefer a partial mediator over an impartial one for concomitant enforcement guarantees and/or to justify unpopular but necessary outcomes with their domestic constituencies. As discussed earlier, the

trade-off between confidentiality and transparency was another theme raised by research participants. Many practitioners expressed anxiety about social media and digital technologies potentially compromising negotiation content — expanding the 'negotiating table' by leaking information to publics.

While this thesis doesn't offer prescriptive solutions to these dilemmas, the Cubist approach it proposes is easily applied across multiple negotiation contexts. The following section will demonstrate the utility of this approach and revisit the thesis's cross-cutting findings by applying them to a case: prospective negotiations between Russia and Ukraine.

5 Prospective application: Russia/Ukraine negotiations

When Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022 — in the middle of an emergency session of the UN Security Council — there were immediate calls for a negotiated withdrawal. "It is the responsibility of this body," urged Sergiy Kyslytsya, Ukraine's ambassador to the UN, "to stop the war" (BBC 2024). As Russian veto power hamstrung the Security Council's peacekeeping functions, it soon became clear that diplomatic efforts would not be conducted under UN auspices. Initial attempts at bilateral and multilateral negotiations stalled in the following months (Minakov and Kusa 2022). At the time of this chapter's drafting, almost two years later, negotiations between Russia and Ukraine remain 'off the table.' As the war drags on, however, the likelihood of a diplomatic endgame increases. Both sides have little chance of 'checkmating' each other — Russia's visions of total military victory are unlikely to be realised; Ukraine's hopes for Russian withdrawal are similarly distant hopes. The threat of further escalation lingers, but this is largely eclipsed by the grim realities of (contained) attrition.

While it is not true that 'all wars end in diplomacy,' it's likely this one will. Presently, both sides are resistant to the prospect of negotiation, seeking instead to secure their military positions and maximise future points of leverage. However, three key factors could shift their calculus in the coming year. First: the battlefield 'balance

of power' remains critical. Although progress over the past year's counteroffensive has slowed, Ukraine has outlasted expectations, successfully expelling Russian forces from the northern front; they are poised to continue fighting. Should they make meaningful gains in the next year, they may be willing to negotiate from a 'position of strength.' On the other hand, Russia has solidified its hold in the south and east — should Ukraine lose more ground here, the threat of further losses might also 'bring them to the table.'

The second factor that could lead parties to negotiate concerns Ukrainian membership in EU and/or NATO. The concomitant security assurances would enhance Ukraine's negotiating position or possibly compel a Russian withdrawal. Even in the absence of official membership, meaningful commitments to eventual accession and a G7 interim security arrangement might serve a similar function, forcing Russia to accept the need to negotiate. A third factor: Western military aid has always been a key variable in this equation. While this has been arguably robust in the last two years, it is not perceived as consistent. US congressional language and the upcoming 2024 US presidential election add a layer of uncertainty to ongoing apprehensions regarding the sustainability of this support.

If these dynamics shift significantly in the next year, it's conceivable that the parties involved might see it as the 'right time' — or 'ripe' time — to pursue peace talks seriously. A window of opportunity could open suddenly and may not stay open long; prospective peacemakers should be ready. What can this thesis's 'Cubist concept of power' and its research findings lend to a diplomat 'setting the stage' for these negotiations?

To explore that question, the following paragraphs present a hypothetical case with several built-in assumptions. It assumes the US continues some level of military support to Ukraine, the EU follows suit, and Ukraine succeeds with substantial advances to force Russian withdrawal from much of the territory occupied post-February 2022. Struggles persist in the south, and Russia continues to occupy Crimea. EU and NATO memberships for Ukraine remain pending, without a G7 interim security arrangement beyond existing assurances. It is the end of September 2024,

and combat slows, reaching a stalemate. In the US, former President Donald Trump (who is polling evenly with President Biden), renews his overtures supporting Putin and threatening US withdrawal from NATO. This adds even more uncertainty to Ukraine's 2025 outlook. At this juncture, perhaps grasping for an 'October surprise' to revive his domestic popularity, President Biden proposes to mediate a peace summit between Russia and Ukraine. Russia's President Vladimir Putin, still in power, is amenable to US mediation — a change in tack from the 2022 negotiation approach through Turkey's PM Erdogan. For his own reasons, he believes this offers an opportunity to link settlement conditions with his broader, 'grand strategic' aims. Within these assumed hypothetical parameters, a State Department envoy must draft the architecture of potential negotiation sessions.

5.1 Multi-dimensionality

Adhering to the Cubist concept of power, this envoy should begin by analysing how multiple dimensions of power are expressed in the conflict and how they may be overlaid in the negotiating room. This starts with a detailed analysis of compulsory power 'facts on the ground' — mapping battlefield realities such as troop deployment, weapons and munitions status, supply lines, and conflict trends, including projecting seasonal constraints and expectations for allied support. Other aspects of material power warrant similar close analysis, such as the impact of international sanctions on various aspects of the Russian economy writ large (not to mention the frozen assets of some 'selectorate' elite) and the potential gains earned from easing these sanctions. Another element of this rational choice analysis would gauge each party's domestic stance on an acceptable settlement. In this hypothetical, current sentiments show a lack of domestic popularity for a negotiated settlement in Ukraine, contrasted with a general apathy among the Russian public. Scoping the 'compulsory' power dimension is not only helpful in understanding the conflict context and potential 'levers' within the process, but also for planning ahead to design commitment and enforcement measures that can be linked to an eventual settlement — crucial in this context, as

Ukrainian officials have indicated their understandable scepticism regarding Putin's trustworthiness.

The hypothetical envoy should add to this (fairly standard) analysis of compulsory power factors a two-dimensional power analysis. This would consider how parties, including international organisations, have already exercised agenda-setting power in framing points for an eventual settlement. This analysis might begin with established precedents and international law, particularly the 2019 Minsk Agreement. Russia's agenda, articulated by Putin on multiple occasions, is explicitly oriented towards a broader goal of reasserting Russian hegemony and countering Western influence, specifically through ensuring Ukrainian neutrality and occupying territory viewed by Russian leaders as 'culturally Russian.' Ukraine has been similarly active in its agenda-setting activities, with President Zelenskyy advancing his 'Ten Point Plan' for a peaceful settlement and convening 'Copenhagen format' meetings with an ever-broadening base in the international community to set expectations for his 'red line' positions (e.g., conceding no territory, gaining EU and NATO membership). The envoy conducting this analysis should also consider the explicit and implicit positions of the US itself (and other potential allies) on expected outcomes, including statements or omissions regarding Ukraine's full territorial integrity and defining 'success' in terms of survival. Analysing the 'state of play' in terms of agenda-setting power is critical in preparing for negotiations. (The procedural elements governing how said agendas might be discussed will be elaborated under the following heading.)

Before the negotiation starts, most negotiators typically perform an analysis covering the first two dimensions of power discussed. The Cubist approach proposed by this thesis encourages practitioners to also consider how the 'ideational' dimension of power intersects with these other dimensions. This might explore the specific personalities, prejudices, and preferences of individual negotiators. Although it is difficult to ascertain these factors in advance, many practitioners conduct research on their counterparts' worldviews or belief systems and negotiation styles to prepare preliminary profiles. In this case, initiating pre-negotiation early and using

these talks to identify and research 'most likely' representatives would enhance the US envoy's preparation. Beyond individual-level variables, their preparatory analysis might also consider the paradigm of 'communicative action' and potentially meaningful similarities and differences in 'logics of arguing' across Russian and Ukrainian diplomatic cultures. This would scope how different definitions of terms and understandings of potential solutions might be reconciled (or not) in the discursive process. One axis of ideational power that might be particularly salient is the construction of 'justice' and a justice/peace trade-off. Ukrainian demands for justice in the form of complete withdrawal, reparations, and criminal charges (particularly for perpetrators of war crimes such as those perpetrated in Bucha) will be particularly salient in this dimension.

5.2 Fragmentation and integration

Having conducted a multi-dimensional analysis of power in the negotiation context, the hypothetical US envoy must now design (or ideally, prepare to co-design) procedural elements that are sensitive to these dynamics. A Cubist approach entails breaking out and examining a 'fragmented' view of each procedural element, such as timing, venue, and rules of engagement (discussed in turn).

The assumptions in the hypothetical case outlined above imply a degree of time pressure already: the shadow of a US election cycle and the potential change of presidential administration. In this case Russia might stall, expecting a more favourable treatment in a new Trump administration; Ukraine might push for a settlement before the election. This 'actual' time pressure could serve as a catalyst for compromise, though its leverage as a tactic by a US mediator would undoubtedly prove counterproductive. Similar to Holbrooke's approach at Dayton or Clinton's at Camp David, the imposition of US-dictated deadlines might be perceived as unduly coercive by either party. In this hypothetical, Russian engagement would likely come at the cost of broadening the negotiating agenda beyond Ukraine, perhaps including negotiating directly with the US regarding its long-term goals and security concerns.

While these talks might be necessary to secure a more durable peace for Ukraine, such complex negotiations would require even more extended timelines. As this thesis suggests, an integrative approach to the time pressure element would necessitate transparency about these competing needs and timelines. Acknowledging the limited time available, the envoy might encourage parties to consider alternatives such as partial agreements, a public agreement on principles, or an armistice agreement rather than aiming for a comprehensive political settlement immediately.

The envoy must consider several factors when deciding on a venue for US-mediated talks. The likelihood of the three heads of state meeting on US soil, reminiscent of Camp David or Dayton-style summits, seems low. Similarly low is the prospect of leaders visiting each other's capitals. Consequently, it is more likely that state leaders will appoint representatives to negotiate on their behalf than directly involve themselves in negotiation sessions. Considering safety and logistical issues, a virtual venue might be considered (although previous episodes of virtual venue negotiation at the war's outset were abortive). This thesis's findings remind the hypothetical envoy that no venue is entirely neutral. Whether opting for virtual, hybrid, or in-person sessions, the affordances of the venue — including how it facilitates relationship-building and/or the use of persuasive (rather than coercive) negotiation tactics — should be comprehensively analysed. In-person venues present their own challenges, particularly in finding a location with neutral signification for all parties. For instance, Putin's aversion to Western-centrism might rule out European capitals like Paris, Vienna, or Oslo for symbolic reasons. Istanbul, initially an attractive venue due to Turkey's role as a trusted intermediary, may have lost its appeal following the failure of the negotiations held there in 2022. Ultimately, however, the choice of venue might be less significant than the US mediator's ability to integrate the fragmented perspectives each party holds on this procedural element. This involves understanding what each venue option represents to the parties, mitigating related concerns, and moving forward with this shared understanding.

Additionally, this thesis suggests that a hypothetical US envoy should also examine the elements that comprise the negotiation's 'rules of engagement,'

particularly around acceptable modes of communication and information-sharing. One obvious consideration is the choice of the primary language for dialogue (e.g., Russian, Ukrainian, and/or English). While it would be ideal for all participants to be fluent in all three languages, insights from interviews in the thesis's third article indicate that language barriers may not necessarily prove a meaningful hindrance. In fact, the time taken for language interpretation within a negotiation session can be beneficial, providing participants with interstitial moments to process information, understand the positions of others, and formulate their own responses.

The thesis also offers some guidance on how notetaking practices might be considered in this context. Ukraine's representatives, for instance, may have mixed feelings about the presence of notetakers. On the one hand, they might favour detailed notetaking to ensure transparency and accountability, especially to hold Russia accountable to commitments both during and after the sessions. On the other hand, Ukraine's delegation could be reticent about thorough record-keeping if the negotiation involves making contentious concessions (e.g., ceding Mariupol to Russian control or modifying plans for EU/NATO accession). Russian delegates, for their part, may also resist meticulous notetaking, fearing 'leaked' withdrawal proposals could project an image of weakness to domestic audiences. A US mediator would be well-served to discuss these procedural elements with parties in advance — and perhaps, offer an integrative solution (e.g., a third-party secretariat with confidentiality guarantees) — to mitigate potential perceptions of untrustworthiness.

5.3 Perceptual relativity

Finally, this thesis argues for a Cubist sense of 'perceptual relativity' in approaching and analysing power in negotiation contexts. This means understanding power not as a fixed entity but as an extrinsic, relational dynamic. It acknowledges that different actors will perceive power differently — and further, that they may reify their constructions of power in this signification process. This reification shapes each country's approach to the negotiation, their understanding of the other's actions, and

their receptiveness to various negotiation tactics. Much has been written regarding Putin's sense of 'realpolitik' and his penchant for raising compulsory power threats and exerting personal pressure within negotiation settings; his appointed representatives would likely adopt a similar view of power. On the other hand, Ukrainian rhetoric throughout the war has highlighted the moral righteousness of their cause in terms that appeal to international law (i.e., defending principles of sovereignty and self-determination) as well as Western political ideology (e.g., framing itself as the 'arsenal of democracy'). International consensus and enforcement commitments on an eventual settlement, then, might be a more salient form of power for the Ukrainian delegation. For a US envoy preparing for negotiations, it's crucial to understand both these perspectives on power, acknowledging each view without collapsing or privileging one. Ignoring these power perceptions can lead to a situation where each party feels their form of power is predominant, potentially leading to an impasse, with both sides expecting more concessions from the other.

The Cubist tenet of perceptual relativity also involves reflexivity — an understanding of the limitations of the medium, and the fact that all parties are mutually imbricated in the process of signification. The US envoy, even in a mediating role, should reflect on how US power and interests are manifest within the negotiation, and how these may be influencing the conceivable 'solution set' of the peace process. This could entail a critical analysis of the mediator's cultural and ideological assumptions (to avoid accusations of 'Westsplaining'). It also includes self-monitoring to understand how their own actions and positionality 'in the room' may be influencing perceptions of power. Beyond understanding how their rhetorical framing or 'speech acts' might signal intentions to other parties, they must also be aware of the role of non-verbal communication. Acknowledging limitations, in this context, means being realistic about what even a 'perfect' mediator can conceivably achieve — avoiding the pitfalls of President Clinton at Camp David, for example, wherein an expectation of success led the US team to implement a counterproductive time pressure strategy. This pragmatism also extends beyond the negotiating table. As in the lesson of President Wilson at the Paris Peace Conference, a US envoy should

keep in mind that they are not able to guarantee US congressional support for proposed peace settlements.

Beyond these angles of a Cubist approach, this thesis offers a few cross-cutting words of warning for the hypothetical US envoy. Validating the concept of technological affordances, it calls for a degree of awareness and sensitivity to how the organisational, digital, and material technologies employed by a mediator may enable and/or constrain particular forms of action. As such, it recommends incorporating 'feedback mechanisms' into the negotiation process — whether that means tasking a member of the mediation delegation with observing and analysing the effects of these affordances or 'checking in' with parties as to how these affordances are impacting them in real-time — to mitigate adverse effects. The thesis also highlights how procedural justice is a key intervening variable in a mediator's exercise of agenda-setting power. As perceptions of procedural justice will be particularly salient in this case, the US envoy should emphasise mutual consent and co-design of procedural elements as much as possible. Finally, the thesis's findings regarding the importance of 'making space' for personal relationship-building within the architecture of a negotiation process is critical. While the development of 'political friendships' between Russian and Ukrainian representatives seems unfathomable now, a US mediator should consider how procedural elements might be adjusted to allow for this possibility and to capitalise on social connections where they organically occur.

6 Summarising contributions

Applying the thesis's findings and Cubist approach to the Ukraine/Russia negotiation hypothetical demonstrates the real-world utility of the thesis's contributions. The pragmatic ethic of the thesis is perhaps best understood in terms of an 'impossibility theorem,' such as the one posited by economists Myerson and Satterthwaite. Their game theoretical exploration of 'bargaining power' revealed that there was no negotiation procedure under which parties could reliably achieve all available gains

(Myerson and Satterthwaite 1983). This accords with the thesis's findings. As the studies of these procedural elements show, every design choice involves some risks and trade-offs — no one formula guarantees that parties will reach an optimal or 'equilibrium' settlement. However, this 'impossibility theorem' should be considered alongside what might be termed a 'horrifying *possibility* theorem': that parties with a genuine but unrealised 'zone of possible agreement' might miss the opportunity to end a war because the procedural elements they employ fail to afford them the time/space/means to arrive at this solution. Unfortunately, this 'horrifying possibility' is too often a reality. The primary contributions of this thesis lie on the spectrum between the 'impossibility' of designing a perfect process and the 'horrifying possibility' that flawed processes lead to further unnecessary loss of lives and livelihoods. This thesis's contributions are, therefore, mostly pragmatic — helping practitioners move toward designing better negotiation processes. Nonetheless, this thesis also makes several contributions to IR theoretical development.

The first study provides a novel analysis of how time pressure constraints affect peace negotiation dynamics and outcomes, a perennial feature of negotiation design that remains under-examined. Similarly, the second article on virtual negotiation venues offered a 'first wave' study on an emerging area of diplomatic practice; this article, published in *International Negotiation*, has been widely cited in subsequent studies, adopted in IR syllabi and diplomatic training modules, and adapted for inclusion as a chapter in *The Palgrave Handbook of Diplomatic Reform and Innovation*. The third study represents a 'first of its kind' contribution in examining the impact of notetaking practices in negotiation processes, with implications for diplomatic training and implementation of this nearly universal element of negotiation contexts. Each study contributes to 'bridging the gap' between diplomatic practice and academic research.

Regarding the thesis's contributions to IR theory: the 'Cubist concept of power' offers a new view on power, akin to the multi-perspective approach of the Cubist art movement. This conceptual framework: accounts for the multi-dimensionality of power in international negotiations; proposes a methodology for fragmenting study

of procedural elements and subsequently integrating these views to form a more complete picture of the negotiation context; and calls for critical assessments of perceptual relativity and positionality in the study and practice of negotiating power. Significantly, this thesis offers an expanded definition of agenda-setting power that includes not only actors' ability to determine what issues are elevated or suppressed in an international institution (e.g., a negotiation agenda), but also their power to shape 'how the agenda will be discussed.' These two contributions, taken together, underscore the importance of ostensibly apolitical procedural elements in shaping the course and outcomes of negotiations.

7 Limitations and further research

The research in this thesis has some methodological limitations that bear discussion. Adopting the Cubist ethic of methodological plurality and inductive analysis, this thesis's data collection methods went 'straight to the source' — using historical methods, surveys, and interviews to gather information relevant to the studies' questions from practitioners themselves. Some social science scholars argue that practitioner accounts are unreliable data sources, owing to several factors: practitioners' own subjectivity and bias, selective memory or retrospective reinterpretation/narrative construction, and social desirability bias. Acknowledging these potential 'skew' factors, the studies triangulated data by fact-checking across multiple sources and adopted critical analytical frameworks to anticipate and correct for potential biases (including researcher reflexivity training in Oxford's DPIR Research Methods module and 2022 Spring School in Advanced Research Methods).

In each study, to an extent, sample size was limited and not necessarily fully representative of the larger population in question (in the first study, this was due to the limited accessibility of foreign language counterpart accounts; in the second and third studies, samples were limited by the availability of voluntary survey respondents and interview participants, respectively). While there is no reason to believe that sample bias meaningfully skewed findings — and analysis attempted to anticipate and

correct for potential bias — it is possible that valuable insights from underrepresented groups were missed as a result. In the second and third studies, measures to mitigate observer effects/social desirability bias included anonymisation of research participants and a question frame that combined structured questions (providing some level of standardisation across respondents) with open-ended questions (giving participants the freedom to respond in their own terms).

Given the inherently unique and contingent nature of peace negotiation cases and the aims of this research, the acknowledged methodological limitations of these studies are perhaps less significant. While the research offers considerations for 'best practice,' it does not claim generalisability or to identify 'causal' relationships; as such, the standard of evidence may be considered accordingly. Essentially: if enough practitioners indicate a clear perspective on the influence of a particular negotiation element, this is evidence enough of its influence.

This thesis acknowledges further theoretical limitations. Mirroring the question of findings' generalisability is the challenge of the 'aggregation problem' — that 'disciplinary obsession' with understanding how individual psychology and micro-practices like interpersonal communication aggregate to 'macro' foreign policy outcomes (Gildea 2020). Again, this is not a central concern for the thesis, which readily acknowledges that procedural elements of negotiation are not causal forces in and of themselves, but rather aims to understand the scope of their influence. In this, it echoes the attitude of practitioners, who are usually more concerned with 'getting down to' negotiation than 'linking up' the chain of theoretical aggregation. Another theoretical limitation, on the other hand, is that the 'Cubist concept of power' framework (which starts from a methodological commitment to empirical observation) may struggle to account for the intangible factors critical in peace negotiations (e.g., psychological dynamics, non-verbal communication). This is not a significant issue for this research, however, as it aims to provide insights regarding the exercise of agenda-setting power and the impact of procedural elements in shaping negotiation procedures and outcomes, and empirical evidence has proven sufficient in that regard. The thesis happily hands its tools over to other scholars more

capable of 'painting the unpaintable' — offering a conceptual framework for future work to sketch these intangible aspects of the negotiation scene.

Other substantive limitations of the thesis are primarily questions of scope: issues outside the accomplishable aims of this thesis given resource and researcher constraints. Accordingly, these limitations can be more appropriately viewed as opportunities for further research; five such topics are discussed in turn. First: the thesis primarily examines negotiation sessions themselves, but as practitioners know, only a small proportion of a peace process unfolds around the 'fabled table.' Much remains unexplored in understanding preparatory and peripheral activities (e.g., pre-talks, shuttle diplomacy, and public diplomacy campaigns), which also significantly shape outcomes as an element of agenda-setting power. Second: the thesis also doesn't delve into the post-agreement phase, including assessing the implementation and longevity of peace agreements; further research might scope how procedural elements of a negotiation might impact these considerations. Third: moreover, the thesis focuses explicitly on negotiations between states. While this is particularly relevant in the current global context (see: Russia/Ukraine), many armed conflicts involve sub-state or transnational actors. Further research might include examining how the exercise of agenda-setting power differs in negotiations with non-state actors, and whether thesis findings are also applicable in these cases. Fourth: additionally, while the thesis focused exclusively on peace negotiations, its implications could extend to other areas like trade and environmental negotiations, suggesting a broader applicability of the findings in various multilateral contexts. Fifth and finally, the thesis only briefly touches on how negotiators' own demographic characteristics, and those of their constituents, intersect with agenda-setting power; an analytical lens that focuses more on gender, race, and/or class might go a long way in understanding how systemic biases influence the perception and exercise of power in a negotiation.

Each of these is a promising area for future research; the 'Cubist concept of power' advanced by this thesis provides a 'set of propositions' for the researchers approaching them. In the meantime, the thesis's findings on the role of procedural

elements in exercising agenda-setting power are not only academic contributions but also constitute 'pointers' for improving diplomatic practice. Future negotiation manuals and diplomatic training modules may take these findings forward, developing greater nuance around a wider arsenal of procedural elements. In this way, the thesis contributes to both negotiation theory and practice — calling for a renewed focus on the craft (craftiness?) of international negotiation.

References

Adler, Emanuel, and Vincent Pouliot. 2011. "International Practices." *International Theory*.

Adler-Nissen, Rebecca, and Alena Drieschova. 2019. "Track-Change Diplomacy: Technology, Affordances, and the Practice of International Negotiations." *International Studies Quarterly*.

Albin, C., and D. Druckman. 2017. "Negotiating Effectively: Justice in International Environmental Negotiations." *Group Decision and Negotiation*.

Albin, Cecilia, and Daniel Druckman. 2014. "Bargaining over Weapons: Justice and Effectiveness in Arms Control Negotiations." *International Negotiation* 19 (3): 426–58.

Baxandall, Michael. 1985. "Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures." New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

BBC, dir. 2024. *Watch: Diplomats Recall Moment War Broke out at Peace Council*. BBC. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-68113443.

Bebchick, Brian. 2002. "The Philosophy and Methodology of Ambassador Dennis Ross as an International Mediator." *International Negotiation*.

Berridge, G. R. 2015. *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*. 5th ed. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK : Imprint: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bjola, Corneliu, and Ilan Manor. 2022. "The Rise of Hybrid Diplomacy: From Digital Adaptation to Adoption." *International Affairs* 98 (2): 471–91.

Bramsen, Isabel, and Anine Hagemann. 2021. "The Missing Sense of Peace: Diplomatic Approachment and Virtualization during the COVID-19 Lockdown." *International Affairs*.

Branch, Jordan. 2018. "Technology and Constructivism." In *Constructivism Reconsidered: Past, Present, and Future*, edited by Mariano Bertuccci, Jarrod Haye, and Patrick James. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Deitelhoff, Nicole, and Harald Müller. 2005. "Theoretical Paradise Empirically Lost Arguing with Habermas." *Review of International Studies*.

Druckman, Daniel, and Cecilia Albin. 2011. "Distributive Justice and the Durability of Peace Agreements." *Review of International Studies*.

Eriksson, Jacob. 2019. "Coercion and Third-Party Mediation of Identity-Based Conflict." *Review of International Studies*.

Gildea, Ross James. 2020. "Psychology and Aggregation in International Relations." *European Journal of International Relations*.

Hanieh, Akram. 2001. "The Camp David Papers." *Journal of Palestine Studies*.

Höffe, Otfried, and Joost den Haan. 2013. *John Rawls, A Theory of Justice*. Leiden: Brill.

Johnson, Richard G. 1999. "Negotiating the Dayton Peace Accords through Digital Maps." *USIP Virtual Diplomacy Report*.

Keynes, John Maynard. 1920. *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*. London: Macmillan and Co.

Lukes, Steven. 2005. *Power: A Radical View*. 2nd ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Miller, Aaron David. 2020. "Lost in the Woods: A Camp David Retrospective." Commentary. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. 2020.

Minakov, Mykhailo, and Iliya Kusa. 2022. *Ukraine-Russia Negotiations: What's Possible?* Washington, DC: The Wilson Center (Kennan Institute).

Mitchell, George J. 1999. *Making Peace*. London: W. Heinemann.

Myerson, Roger B., and Mark A. Satterthwaite. 1983. "Efficient Mechanisms for Bilateral Trading." *Journal of Economic Theory*.

Pouliot, Vincent. 2008. "The Logic of Practicality: A Theory of Practice of Security Communities." *International Organization*.

Waltz, Kenneth N. 1979. *Theory of International Politics*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Wendt, Alexander. 1999. *Social Theory of International Politics*. *Cambridge Studies in International Relations ; 67*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zartman, I. William, and Maureen R. Berman. 1982. *The Practical Negotiator*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Zartman, I. William, and Saadia Touval. 1985. *International Mediation in Theory and Practice*. *SAIS Papers in International Affairs ; No. 6*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press; Foreign Policy Institute, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University.

Annexes

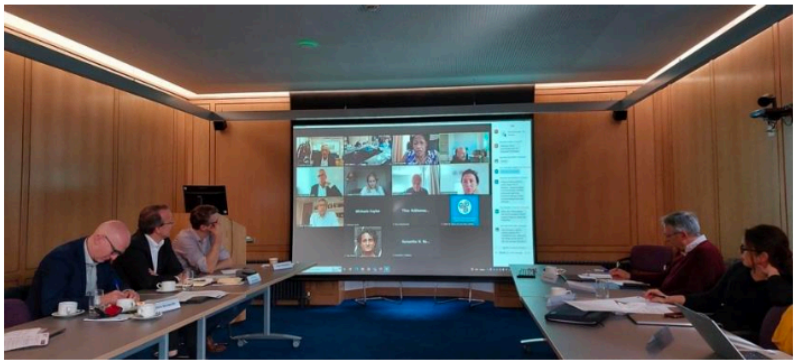
A

Meeting note: The Oxford colloquium on international mediation and armed conflict

The author produced this meeting note (beginning following page) to capture key events and insights from the 2022 Oxford colloquium on international mediation and armed conflict. It was reviewed and published by the colloquium's co-convenors.

MEETING NOTE

THE OXFORD COLLOQUIUM ON INTERNATIONAL MEDIATION AND ARMED CONFLICT



On 11th October 2022 Oxford University's Department of Politics and International Relations (DPIR) and the Centre for the Resolution of Intractable Conflict (CRIC) convened a full day multidisciplinary discussion on the effectiveness of mediation in resolving and preventing armed conflict.

Background

Conflicts are proliferating. In 2021 there were armed conflicts in at least 46 states. The ability of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security is being called into question. The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 raises the risks of wider inter-state conflict. In so many regions around the world, peacemaking and mediation efforts have failed to resolve or prevent the fighting. The Colloquium was convened to explore the reasons for this, and to enable deliberation and debate about changes that could improve the prospects for the prevention and sustainable resolution of armed conflict.

Modalities and participation

The Colloquium was hosted at Linacre College, Oxford University and co-chaired by Professor Richard Caplan and Lord (John) Alderdice. The hybrid discussion was convened in person and online and involved 30 highly respected academics, thinkers and practitioners who work in mediation, peace studies, conflict resolution, international relations, history and regional studies. Their names are included in the Appendix to this note. The discussion was held on the basis of the Chatham House Rule. Only the opening remarks of the Co-chairs and Presenter are attributed below.

The Colloquium consisted of the following sessions: Introductions; Research Presentation; The Changing Context; Flaws and Deficiencies in Mediation; What Needs to Change; and Conclusions. This note attempts to capture some of the key issues and themes that emerged over the course of these sessions.

Introduction

Professor Caplan opened the Colloquium by welcoming the group. He recognised the timeliness of the research and the broader discussion on international mediation effectiveness, especially in light of developments in the Ukraine conflict. He commended the multidisciplinary composition of the Colloquium and articulated conference aims: to discuss the changing international environment, review the challenges it presents for mediation, identify the flaws and weaknesses of mediation, and generate potential solutions.

Lord Alderdice situated mediation in the historical context of the past century. He argued that the post-WWII move toward a 'rules-based international order' underpins contemporary mediation practice, with the assumption that it is possible to resolve intractable conflicts by engaging 'reasonable interlocutors.' Speaking from his own experience in negotiating the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland, he elaborated on the failures of this assumption. It was only by widening the aperture of the peace process, that genuine and sustainable progress was possible. He concluded by calling for a similar re-thinking of current global challenges, urging participants to adopt solutions-based and systemic approaches.

Research Presentation and Discussion

DPIR Associate Matt Waldman presented findings emerging from his ongoing research into mediation effectiveness. He has conducted 86 non-attributable, in-depth interviews with the world's leading mediators and mediation specialists – the largest consultation of its kind. The interviewees comprise 26 principal mediators, including 14 current or former UN envoys, 43 mediation experts, and 17 academics.

Waldman outlined how the views of interviewees are complex and diverse, yet there is wide agreement that the field of mediation is facing enormous challenges. The interviewees identify powerful exogenous factors: the strength and persistence of the drivers of conflict, changing geopolitics, and the increasing complexity and internationalisation of armed conflict. Interviewees also identify endogenous factors – flaws and deficiencies in the practice of mediation itself – including in resourcing, goals and methods, qualities and skills, knowledge and expertise, systems and standards, and the overarching paradigm. They advocate corresponding changes and reforms. Three macro-level approaches to enhancing mediation effectiveness can be discerned: pragmatism, which urges a focus on ending violence; diffusion, which emphasises the importance of multiple actors operating at multiple levels; and diversification, which underscores the need for mediation actors to play a wide range of roles in any given context. On some issues there is convergence of opinion, and on others divergence or contention – yet virtually all specialists and practitioners agree that the mediation field needs to adapt and improve.

In wider discussion, participants reiterated the timeliness and urgency of this research. Several participants indicated that the emerging findings of the research corresponded to their own experiences. They registered concerns about mediators' lack of contextual knowledge and expertise, for example with respect mediation efforts in the Horn of Africa. Participants agreed that resourcing is a major challenge, as donors often 'projectify' mediation activities with timelines that are too short and deliverables that are sometimes self-interested or irrelevant. These comments precipitated a discussion that re-emerged later in the Colloquium regarding the possible trade-offs involved in professionalisation. Some participants argued that greater training and specialisation for mediators is vital. Others argued that creating a 'mediation industry' can misalign incentives and suggested that sometimes knowledge can 'get in the way' of the empathy required for effective mediation.

Some participants brought attention to the multi-layered and complex nature of mediation activities. One practitioner said that '95 per cent of the time we are not mediating' but rather surveying, analysing, preparing the field, empowering and supporting negotiators. Echoing this point, some participants called for more research into the enabling environment and mediation support activities, suggesting that 'focusing on mediation [alone] will not help mediation.' Questions were raised relating to North/South relations with respect to mediation and a 'hardening of trust' in the 'post-colonial moment.' Participants pointed to the adverse effects of competition between mediators and mediation actors at different levels and related 'forum shopping.' They also raised concerns about alternative approaches to mediation, by major and regional powers, that are not always consistent with the values and norms of liberal mediation efforts.

The Changing Context

The first speaker of this session argued that beyond 'major' and 'middle' powers, 'minor' powers are constantly negotiating and mediating conflicts, but that this happens out of geopolitical focus. He cautioned the group on engaging in 'presentism' and commented on how current global events are flexing established norms of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-intervention. He further invoked the re-emergence of interstate war and nuclear threats evident in the Ukraine conflict.

The next speaker situated trends in 'humane interventionism' in the post-Cold War context. He argued that contemporaneous pronouncements of the 'end of ideological conflict between major powers' have been proven false. He suggested that 'humane interventionism' may be on the rise again, and suggested that values-laden approaches to international mediation may cloud our views of effectiveness. As an example, he raised the Dayton Accords: though viewed at the time as violating norms of sovereignty and self-determination, this agreement did end armed conflict. Similarly, he argued that outrage against calls to mediate an end to the war in Ukraine (on the grounds that this favours President Putin) may involve risks and foreclose possibilities to manage or resolve the conflict.

The next speaker added further context on the imbrication of international conflict. She argued that no conflict is truly 'local,' and that in the contemporary context every conflict has nationalised and internationalised dimensions. Echoing earlier comments, she argued that the increasingly values-laden nature of conflicts can create 'effectiveness deficits' and make it difficult to find mediators without an established position. This is particularly harmful when some parties are

labelled 'terrorists' and mediators are not willing or able to mediate neutrally. She further raised issues of mediator selection and positionality, invoking instances where the underwriters of mediation become part of the problem and asked the question: 'Can we ever avoid the biases of guarantors and paymasters of these mediation processes?'

The following discussion was wide-ranging. Participants elaborated on mediator (and guarantor) bias, with one participant echoing that there is a distinction between mediation as a technical practice and mediation as a political enterprise. One participant shared research findings on the utility of mediator partiality, and another discussed how the US has 'taken a step back' from leadership roles in international peace processes since the administration of President Trump. Participants reiterated the need for a more global understanding of the changing context for mediation, including evaluation of how states like China and Türkiye are using overseas economic presence to lead and influence negotiations.

Flaws and Deficiencies in Mediation

The first speaker commenced her remarks by reiterating that all mediation is international. In accordance with Waldman's findings, she argued that a key flaw in mediation practice is the appointment of mediators. She argued that the de facto selection of heads of state and senior ministers as mediators is sometimes self-defeating, and stressed that empathy, trauma sensitivity, and the ability to gain the trust of the parties are more salient qualities for mediator selection. She further cautioned against overreliance on regional organisations for mediating conflicts within their geographic purview, as they may be vulnerable to manipulation. She outlined three 'blind spots' of international mediation: a lack of research on trust and trust-building (between mediator and parties, between parties themselves); an over-emphasis on 'track one' negotiations (without adequately considering track two potential as well as conditions in the enabling environment for implementation); and the underdevelopment of 'preventive' practices. She argued that early warning systems are insufficient; people lose trust in mediation if they see that leaders have identified threats but not taken meaningful steps to deescalate or proactively resolve them.

The next speaker elaborated on the 'identity crisis' in international mediation, interrogating how we might define the 'essence of mediation.' She reiterated that one of mediation's 'core norms' is that decision-making power lies with the parties themselves, not the mediator. Echoing earlier comments, she reminded the group that 'mediators' are only a small part of the picture. Mediation support teams, the parties, and other key actors are significantly more important and influential. She questioned the implicit objectives of mediation: is there a bias toward the political resolution of conflict, or are we 'just' ending violence? Put another way, is the goal sustainable conflict resolution or pragmatic conflict management? She noted that some powers such as China, Türkiye, and Russia seem to favour militarised conflict management, and asked what the price is of such approaches. She closed her comments by articulating a systemic deficiency of mediation research: in leading journals, 85 per cent of first authors are men, and a similar proportion are situated in Western universities.

Participants responded by noting that while pragmatism has its price, so does its alternative. The case of Nagorno-Karabakh illustrates that comprehensive negotiations for a political resolution are prone to stall and may prolong violence. A theme that emerged in the following discussion was

the trade-off between parties' consent and 'welcome imposition'. While some participants argued that the principle of consent dictates that mediation approaches should 'only go as far as the parties themselves are willing to go,' others argued that sometimes parties may quietly welcome outside actors exhorting or even pressuring them in certain ways. The case of Dayton was raised, as participants suggested that mediator pressure enabled parties to defer accountability (and blame) with their constituencies, while making progress on difficult issues. Another participant argued that the decline of the international community's ability to pressure parties has been a double-edged sword, sometimes undermining a mediators' ability to manage and guide a process.

Other flaws and deficiencies in mediation research were identified, particularly a perennial 'information gap' between academic work and mediation practice. Some participants raised the 'deliberate impenetrability' of academic research as well as practitioners' proclivity to dismiss large-N academic studies as insufficiently nuanced to have relevant findings for their specific cases. One participant argued that there is not an 'information gap' per se, rather, there is sometimes a deliberate, political decision to ignore evidence. Another participant said that bottom-up approaches to mediation are undertheorized and argued that researching these approaches would require longer-term and continuous funding to develop field-based relationships. Other participants identified a widening gap between peace research and the 'realities of power,' particularly 'great power' geopolitics that historically underpin work in international relations and political science. Some participants called for further research and/or the development of a new (sub)field of peace research to guide post-agreement facilitation and implementation.

What Needs to Change

Several speakers presented thoughts on 'what needs to change' in the field of international mediation. The first speaker raised the importance of greater civil-military coordination and called for mediators to engage in more rigorous self-reflection. The second speaker said that mediation is only a small part of the picture and called for lower ambition in terms of 'what mediation can accomplish.' He raised the example of FARC negotiations to illustrate that mediation is more effective when it establishes minimum conditions for ending active conflict as a foundation for long-term peace, rather than attempting to establish all dimensions of sustainable peace, including a new political settlement. The third speaker stressed the importance of contemporary mediators understanding themselves not as individual actors, but as team leaders. He affirmed a previous speaker's call for a re-evaluation of mediation's limitations, highlighting the field's preoccupation with achieving 'agreements' and arguing that this results in documents that reflect international expectations more than the parties' own interests. He expanded on the concept of 'adaptive mediation,' stressing the consensual nature of this approach, foregrounding the parties as opposed to the mediator. He argued that overly interventionist mediators may undermine parties' capacities to learn and develop their own solutions.

Some participants raised the question of whether such approaches were always viable, given the internationalisation of civil conflict. They pointed to the trade-offs between more muscular intervention and the parties' consent, and referenced the ongoing food crises and the threat of genocide in Ethiopia. Other participants called for more tangible and programmatic approaches to mediation, including translating mediation activities into broad-based projects to support infrastructure, transport, education, and industry, as a means of building trust between parties,

strengthening social ties and building shared futures. Some participants called for more support to civil society capacity in mediation and for efforts to empower 'champions' for peace 'behind the scenes.' Further discussion focused on the question of 'when mediators should resign,' with parameters including parties' trust in the mediators, as well as their trust in parties' intent and capability to negotiate 'in good faith.' This thread of discussion culminated in a call for greater attention to accountability mechanisms for mediators.

Concluding Session

In the concluding session, participants remarked on the variety and quality of previous discussions and considered what steps could be taken to advance these discussions. Speakers called for more well-funded academic research, a point echoed by participants. They also raised the need for donor governments, international institutions, and other mediation actors to take a more systematic approach to evaluating the effectiveness of mediation practices. They raised the need for increased support research in this area and greater efforts to translate and disseminate existing academic research for non-expert audiences. One speaker shared his experience participating in and leading peer exchanges among psychology practitioners and expanded on the benefits of this model, suggesting that regular forums for mediators may help them work through difficult cases and improve overall practice. Participants called for further methodological development on 'peace mapping' and network analysis, as well as better systems for including representatives and perspectives from 'mediated' populations in further discussions. Finally, the co-chairs expressed their gratitude to all participants and welcomed practical suggestions and ideas on steps that could be taken to advance this important discourse.

B

Review: *Soft power and the future of US foreign policy*

This book review (beginning following page) was commissioned by *International Affairs* and prepared by the author in 2023.

North America

Soft power and the future of US foreign policy. Edited by Henrik W. Ohnesorge. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 2023. 280pp. £90.00. ISBN 978 1 52616 912 9. Available as e-book.

In August this year, Camp David hosted a summit between US President Joe Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol. The resulting 'principles', and the new era of security cooperation they promise, are a testament to resurgent US 'soft power'—that capacity to convene, cajole and ultimately convince allies to advance US objectives. In this case, the American goal is to counter China's presence in the East and South China Seas. As the threat of another 'America First' presidency looms, however, the longevity of this and other Biden-brokered agreements remains unclear. Henrik Ohnesorge's edited volume on soft power and US foreign policy reflects these concerns, addressing several themes, including the fluidity of US soft power resources; the evolving landscape in which this soft power is operationalized; and the implications of these changes for collective diplomatic futures.

Soft power, a term coined by Joseph Nye in the 1990s, is commonly understood in relation to its opposite complement, hard power. This volume and many of its contributions begin by revisiting this taxonomy. To Nye's original triad of soft power 'sources' (culture, political values and policies), Ohnesorge adds the influence of prominent 'personalities'—a necessary analytical move to account for the impact of Donald Trump, or a Trump-like figure (p. 4). Expanding on his work in *Soft power: the forces of attraction in International Relations* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2020), Ohnesorge argues that these sources of soft power operate on different timetables: while mercurial 'personalities' may have a short-term impact on US soft power resources, established cultural institutions (such as the global US entertainment industry) yield more enduring effects (p. 9).

The volume's subsequent contributors offer further angles on the status of US soft power resources and their imbrication with hard power instruments in several key areas, including cyber security and countering violent extremism (pp. 123 and 161). Other contributions explore the link between soft power and related theoretical constructs such as credibility, reputation and strategic narratives (pp. 32, 78 and 100). There is a trade-off here, as in any edited volume, between plurality and coherence. The contributors rightly expand the definition of soft power in several directions, to include 'private sources'; the 'unintended attraction-based influence' of 'virtuous [domestic] governance'; and the aspirational appeal of the US' 'large economy', to name a few (pp. xvii, 45 and 149). The resulting impression, however, is that soft and hard power may have outlasted their utility as distinct analytical categories in an age where international relations increasingly elide binaries (for example, war and peace or state and non-state).

Michael F. Oppenheimer's compelling chapter anticipates this challenge, offering examples that perforate the soft/hard power divide. He reminds readers that US misuses of hard power resources (such as in the invasion of Iraq) continue

to degrade US soft power by diminishing allies' trust in its foreign policy competence (p. 27). And, he argues, US soft power 'can and has been used coercively', as in the decades of 'Washington Consensus'-style structural adjustment programmes that 'amounted to regime change by soft but coercive means' in the developing countries that accepted their conditions (p. 27). Oppenheimer proposes that, while domestic political reforms and judicious foreign policy leadership can replenish the 'supply' of US soft power, external forces may render these changes moot. In an increasingly multipolar international system, where more heterogeneous and authoritarian political regimes are on the rise, the demand for US influence is steadily declining. As Oppenheimer puts it, 'the outside world has become less receptive to [US] charms' (p. 26).

Whether or not the world wants to hear them, this edited volume offers actionable recommendations for the would-be spokespeople of US soft power appeals. Nicholas J. Cull's chapter on public diplomacy and reputational security provides a useful historical overview of the creation of the United States Information Agency. Cull examines subsequent US government efforts to invest in and effectively deploy soft power since the Second World War, ultimately calling for reinvestment in these institutions. Drawing on her own experience as an arts envoy, Carla Dirlikov Canales offers an inside view, with historical cases illustrating the potential and pitfalls of State Department-sponsored cultural diplomacy programmes. Giles Scott-Smith's chapter highlights the ever-growing role of substate actors in operationalizing soft power. Scott-Smith analyses how city governments' efforts to affirm climate change targets effectively presented the image of an 'alternative America', in contrast to Trump's isolationist moves (p. 241). As the 2024 presidential election draws nearer, this book provides some timely insights. Namely, it suggests that greater investment in soft power resources of cultural production, public diplomacy and city-to-city exchange may yield much-needed reputational benefits, regardless of who sits in the White House.

Michaela Coplen, University of Oxford, UK