

Letter to Dr. Simon Rofe

Manufacturing Consent and Intellectual Cloning at Leicester University

Kevin Mugur Galalae

November 2009

To comply with CONTEST's secret directives, Leicester University applies graduated pressure to filter out students who refuse to refrain from criticizing Britain's foreign policy or conform to the university's system of intellectual cloning.

Dear Dr. Rofe,

You are undoubtedly wondering why I am replying to you on the forum and not in private. What compels me to do so is the belief that my response needs to become part of the public record. This, I hope, will ensure that the university does not treat other students the way it has treated me and that a precedent exists to aid my fellow students in fighting similar mistreatment by using my case as a reference.

Let me be clear from the onset that in no way is my decision to make this public motivated by the desire to embarrass anyone in the department or to influence other students' decisions about their continuing participation in the programme. If anything, my hope is to improve the programme, not undermine it. The following comments, therefore, should be interpreted only as an attempt to strengthen its weakest links. For all of the above reasons transparency is crucial.

I have taken a few days to reply to you because I thought it wise to think about this situation calmly and rationally and to avoid acting rashly and out of anger.

Let me begin by stating that my participation in this program has been an eye-opening experience in that it has revealed a degree of political control in this field of studies that I did not expect in a country that presents itself to the world as open, democratic and respectful of dialogue, free speech and academic freedom. Clearly this is not the case. Combined with my summer experience in a political philosophy course at Oxford – which unfolded similarly and ended in my expulsion – I can only conclude that political issues are carefully controlled in British universities and that dissenting opinions and criticism of Britain's policies and system are not tolerated. It appears that British universities attempt to filter out students unwilling to conform. Whether this occurs as a matter of policy or as the result of a collusion of interests between the academic and political establishments in an environment of scarce employment opportunities and a struggle for funding is beside the point since the end result is the same, censorship and manufactured consent.

Incidentally, this explains to me why the British education system is no longer the envy of the world and why Britain has become rather insignificant in global affairs. Parroting American propaganda and regurgitating the same stale and redundant overstatements and hyperbole about the merits of the Western system of representative democracy and free market economy have long ceased to excite the world.

But let me now focus on the events that have brought me to this conclusion and on the supportive evidence. After all, you and Nick are academics and as such you must revel in facts not fiction. Also, Nick has always insisted on evidence (peculiarly and conveniently, only when he disagrees with a student's arguments and never when he agrees) so here is the evidence to support my allegation that Leicester is involved in a deliberate effort to filter out students who do not conform to the unstated practice that Britain's policies and system are not to be undermined by criticism, however much that criticism is warranted.

I will now look at the evidence week by week:

Week 1 – Order and justice in international relations

My two contributions about order and justice being compatible (Saturday, October 3, 2009 7:03:23 AM) or incompatible (Tuesday, October 6, 2009 6:11:58) in international relations were unaddressed and unacknowledged by Nick.

All in all, I made 2 contributions to the week's forum out of a total of 17 posts, which represents 11.6% of the total.

Week 2 – American primacy in the international system: Bill Clinton, the first post cold war president

My first contribution for the week (Tuesday, October 6, 2009 5:51:31 PM) about unipolarity and about what is meant by democratic enlargement elicited a positive comment from Nick and the first acknowledgement of my work and marks the beginning of our direct dialogue. He wrote:

Author: N. Wright
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2009 10:23:18 PM BST
Subject: RE: Week 2

Kevin,

You offer some good explanations above - indeed the standard of all your postings has been excellent and a great example of how to do it...

In subsequent postings we exchanged ideas amiably and Nick praised me for making "*thought-provoking points*" (Thursday, October 8, 2009 10:50:53 AM).

Nick was particularly taken with my post about China (Thursday, October 8, 2009 6:24:13 PM) which he praised as being "*an extremely detailed and interesting response*" (Thursday, October 8, 2009 10:25:50 PM) and about which he concluded by saying "*Great postings, though - I hope your colleagues on the course have a chance to read them!*"

All in all, I made 9 contributions to the week's forum out of a total of 26 posts, which represents 34.6 % of the total.

Week 3 – American primacy in the international system: George W. Bush, 9/11 and the neoconservative movement

In my first post for the week, I addressed the issue raised by Nick regarding why the US “should or will intervene” on the international arena and in so doing I stated ten possible reasons (Saturday, October 17, 2009 8:01:47 AM). My post was critical of the US.

Nick chose not to engage me, but made clear that he did not entirely agree. He wrote (Saturday, October 17, 2009 10:20:03 AM):

Some cogent and provocative arguments in there (not all of which I would entirely agree with, but where's the benefit of that?!).

I hope the rest of you will engage Kevin on some of these - he makes a strong case, but do you all agree?

Nick

Further into the week (Wednesday, October 14, 2009 9:18:18 AM), I addressed the question of “acceptable norms in IR and the moral imperative of the US post 9/11”. Once again, my post was critical of the US and Nick ignored my post.

Further still into the week (Saturday, October 17, 2009 7:18:01 AM), I addressed the issue of “responsible acting and hard power” as a continuation of Sheldon’s musings on the subject and as direct responses to two questions Nick posed and for which he solicited answers, namely: (1) what constitutes responsible acting in IR and (2) is the age of hard power in IR over?

My answers were general and though they did not refer to any particular country they condemned unilateralism as a dying ideology. Nick commented as follows:

Hi Kevin - two very eloquent responses which have given us some great food for thought. I look forward to seeing how you develop them over the coming weeks.

Nick

The next time I posted (Saturday, October 17, 2009 6:43:26 AM) was to answer four questions Nick asked concerning the exercise of American power in Iraq and Afghanistan. My answers were critical of the US and Nick ignored them.

All in all, I made 5 contributions to the week’s forum out of a total of 40 posts, which represents 12.5% of the total.

Week 4 – The European Union as a Global Actor

The first time Nick and I conversed in week four was in regards to his questions about European hard power (see Thursday, October 22, 2009 10:37:18; Thursday, October 22, 2009 4:58:38; Friday, October 23, 2009 9:05:09 AM);

Nick agreed with my views of Europe as a global leader of how politics ought to be made in the era of consensus. He wrote (Friday, October 23, 2009 9:05:09 AM):

Hi Kevin,

Some great points in here which I will leave others to respond to for now (mainly because I agree with most of what you say).

I would like to press you on one thing you mentioned - the idea of "European-wide interests".

Would you care to elaborate on what you think these might be?

Best,

Nick

His question elicited an elaborate post from me, which he acknowledged three days later (due to being out of town) by saying (Thursday, October 29, 2009 9:50:33 PM):

Kevin - a very impressive posting. I'm just sorry I didn't have the opportunity to engage with you on it last week.

Nick

All in all, I made 6 contributions to the week's forum out of a total of 34 posts, which represents 17.6% of the total.

Week 5 – Western dominance and the challenges to it: Islam

My first post (Wednesday, October 28, 2009 5:14:37) for the week was on the principal strengths and weaknesses of Huntington's 'The Clash of Civilizations' and elicited a rather disapproving post from Nick (Wednesday, October 28, 2009 9:21:20) which went on to explain his reservations about Huntington's approach:

Dear All,

Good morning and hope this finds you well and intellectually fighting-fit.

I found Kevin's analysis and argument above thought-provoking and provocative - which made it an excellent accompaniment to my coffee.

He makes a strong case for agreeing with Huntington's approach which has the advantage - if we can call it that - of offering a systematic (if extremely bleak) structure for analysing many of the problems of international relations. But (and you probably won't be surprised there is a but), I have serious problems with this approach which I will try and argue as succinctly as possible below.

1. The danger of over-arching approaches - we must beware of these in international relations; whilst searching for systems or forms of analysis that can explain/account for everything we conveniently miss the small details - and the myriad differences - that exist in each set of conflicts, tensions etc between different states (large and small) around the world.

A case in point from today's news: the turmoil in Pakistan - we can present this through the prism of "clash of civilisations", but this fails to account for the enormous social and economic problems that have beset the country since its foundation, the historical tensions with India, the difficulty of pacifying border regions that have never been meaningfully brought under the rule of law etc etc.

We should therefore be wary of the "siren call" of big, over-arching structures of analysis.

2. The danger of a binary world - leading directly from this is the risk of seeing everything in binary - a "them" and "us" approach which appeals to fundamentalists on both sides, whether of a religious persuasion or of a necon persuasion. The world is not black and white - it is countless shades of grey. People at the level of grassroots see things in terms of whether they have food and water, shelter for their families, whether they are receiving fair treatment from local or national authorities etc. Sure, their problems can be re-presented to them in terms of how it is the "fault of the West" or the "fault of Islam" - but these are slogans that don't actually offer anything more than a superficial analysis.

3. What are culture and civilisation? - I don't recall Huntington explaining these to my satisfaction. They are so difficult to pin down is so wrapped up in alternative explanations of identity and memory (both national and local) - look at the current debates over "Britishness" in the UK for example. We should therefore be extremely careful of using these as the basis for any kind of long-term, large-scale analysis.

Huntingdon satisfies the needs of a particular world view. This is not to say that it is "wrong" (although I personally disagree with it) - only that we should be aware of the difficulties inherent in his thesis before we subscribe to it.

I welcome your thoughts on this.

Best,

Nick

Although I found Nick's criticisms to be selectively unfair and largely unfounded, mainly because he faults Huntington for failing to achieve goals he never endeavoured to – such as give an explanation of what culture is, I kept my opinion to myself.

In my next post (Friday, October 30, 2009 3:32:11), I answered the three questions Nick posed (Thursday, October 29, 2009 9:48:11 PM): (1) what therefore are the alternatives to Huntington, (2) what are the challenges facing what we consider the Islamic world, and (3) given the

"difficult" history of the west's involvement in the Islamic world, what role does it have to play - if any - in helping overcome these challenges?

My post went unacknowledged by Nick.

In my next post that week (Friday, October 30, 2009 3:07:46) I addressed the second guiding question for the week, namely "What are the principal divisions between Islam and the West?" Nick took issue with the sixth and last point I made, criticizing it as "all-encompassing language" that could be used to reinforce cultural divisions:

Subject: RE: The principal divisions between Islam and the West

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Set Flag](#)

Author: [N. Wright](#)

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Posted date: Friday, October 30, 2009 9:00:07 AM GMT

Last modified date: Friday, October 30, 2009 9:00:07 AM GMT

Total views: 19 **Your views:** 4

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Date: Friday, October 30, 2009 3:07:46 AM GMT

Subject: RE: The principal divisions between Islam and the West

I see the principal divisions between Islam and the West as being the following:

1. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict and America's use of Israel as a bridgehead inside the Islamic world (see *Islam and the West: Annual Report on the State of Dialogue*, published by the World Economic Forum Community of West and Islam Dialogue at http://www.weforum.org/pdf/C100/Islam_West.pdf.)
2. Oil and who controls it
3. The West's ongoing attempt to maintain hegemony over the Islamic world, which feed Western policies of intervention that sustain client regimes and which run counter to Western rhetoric about democracy and freedom
4. Heavy American military presence on Arab soil (see Chalmers Johnson's *The Sorrows of Empire* on this subject)
5. Personal status issues such as divorce, abortion, gender equality, and gay rights, on which the Islamic world holds traditional views while the West is liberal (see World Values Survey at www.worldvaluessurvey.org/ for data on this subject)

Kevin

Dear Kevin,

You offer a familiar list of issues, and the first four are difficult to challenge. However, I would take serious issues with the fifth for similar reasons to those I set out in my earlier response to your analysis of Huntingdon's thesis.

You wrote: "[Personal status issues such as divorce, abortion, gender equality, and gay rights, on which the Islamic world holds traditional views while the West is liberal.](#)"

We must be extremely careful about using all-encompassing language such as this. It presents the Islamic world and the West as homogenous and ignores the huge differences in attitudes and opinions within these groupings. There are uncountable numbers of people and groups within different Islamic countries who would, for example, disagree with you regarding gender equality, gay rights etc - for a flavour of this concerning Iraq see a book written by one of my former lecturers Nicola Pratt entitled *What Kind of Liberation? Women and the Occupation of Iraq*. Equally, consider the influence of more conservative opinion on such issues most notably in the USA (whose most recent ex-President, lest we forget, was a committed social conservative), and nearer to home in Spain and Poland to offer just 2 examples.

There are influential elites on both sides of the Islam - non-Islam/Christian divide (again these labels come with a health warning) for whom such cultural divisions serve the important purpose of reinforcing notions of division and separation. But they should by no means be considered to be universally held.

Best,

Nick

Subject: RE: The principal divisions between Islam and the West

At this point, I thought it important to explain my point of view and did so as follows:

Subject: RE: The principal divisions between Islam and the West

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Set Flag](#)

Author: Kevin GALALAE

[◀ Previous Post](#) | [Next Post ▶](#)

Posted date: Friday, October 30, 2009 1:07:11 PM GMT

Last modified date: Friday, October 30, 2009 1:07:11 PM GMT

Total views: 16 **Your views:** 3

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Hi Nick,

I understand why the last point engenders suspicions of skewed thinking on my part, but I was merely presenting the results of the World Values Surveys, which speak far more eloquently of people's values in that part of the world than I could infer from my distant perspective. After all, if we cannot rely on empirical

data to come to understand complex issue than what can we rely on?

By no means would I try to present a homogenous view of the Islamic world, but brevity imposes limitations on how far we can elaborate in any single answer. By and large, the overall data shows unequivocally that the Islamic world is far more conservative on the issues I have mentioned than the Western world. And I say this with the caveat that there are countless instances where this conclusion could be turned upside down depending on the country, region, etc.

I believe that avoiding spelling out issues that are uncomfortable is far more dangerous than not doing so if dialogue between civilizations, cultures and nations is to be fruitful. Often times, I have noticed with horror here in the West, that the concern of not giving offence acts as censorship. This too, by the way, may be a cultural difference between nations and peoples who like being direct and others who like being indirect. To this end, I wish to quote Karen Armstrong, who is perhaps the most prolific and insightful writer on the intricacies of the Muslim world. She wrote "Dialogue must not degenerate into a cosy colloquy between like-minded people."

I apologize for keeping this answer shorter than I would have liked to, but we are all sick with the H1N1 virus here.

Kevin

Subject: RE: The principal divisions between Islam and the West

Nick's answer was gracious and I was equally gracious in return. Nevertheless, it became clear to all that Nick and I diverged on Huntington's theory of the clash of civilizations and that while Nick advocated a policy of avoiding spelling out differences in core values between the West and Islam in order not to exacerbate the conflict, I advocated a policy of fully confronting them openly, honestly and tolerantly in order to heal the underlying causes of the conflict.

Subject: RE: The principal divisions between Islam and the West

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Set Flag](#)

Author: [N. Wright](#)

Posted date: Friday, October 30, 2009 2:01:22 PM GMT

Last modified date: Friday, October 30, 2009 2:01:22 PM GMT

Total views: 13 **Your views:** 3

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Hi Kevin,

"I believe that avoiding spelling out issues that are uncomfortable is far more dangerous than not doing so if dialogue between civilizations, cultures and nations is to be fruitful."

I couldn't agree more! And like you I find Karen Armstrong an extremely thoughtful and interesting voice on these questions.

Hope you have a speedy recovery and thanks for all the great postings.

Nick

Subject: RE: The principal divisions between Islam and the West

Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Friday, October 30, 2009 3:44:45 PM GMT

Last modified date: Friday, October 30, 2009 3:44:45 PM GMT

Total views: 14 **Your views:** 3

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Thank you, Nick.

While my son and I are doing well, my wife has contracted the illness too and she is pregnant. By the way, one of the symptoms of the H1N1 infection is irritability, so let me know if I start going off the rails. I may not know it.

Considering that I am Romanian, and we Romanians are a passionate lot, this along with the swine flu is an incendiary combination. Even though I have immigrated when I was a child, the cultural and even genetic heritage I have inherited is here to stay and I often find myself completely at odds with common opinion here in Canada and even more so with common opinion in the States. This goes to show you that whether we define culture or not, it is real and it sets us apart in deep-seated and subtle ways. That is the beauty and challenge of consensus, bridging those differences.

Kevin

Subject: RE: The principal divisions between Islam and the West

In a reply to Sean, I emphasized the importance of sincerity and openness in dialogue between nations – a conclusion that found resonance with Sean and Sheldon - and the week's discussion ended on an amiable note between Nick and I, based on the implicit understanding that we can agree to disagree.

Subject: RE: The principal divisions between Islam and the West

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Set Flag](#)

Author: [N. Wright](#)

Posted date: Saturday, October 31, 2009 8:59:55 AM GMT

Last modified date: Saturday, October 31, 2009 8:59:55 AM GMT

Total views: 14 **Your views:** 3

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Date: Saturday, October 31, 2009 12:30:04 AM GMT

Subject: RE: The principal divisions between Islam and the West

Thank you for your well wishes, Sean.

Talking about cultural differences, let me share a story from my own life. When I was a lad, back in Romania, I attended a summer camp in Transylvania (I am from the southern part of the country and both my parents are from Moldavia). One day, I walked to the nearest village to buy a loaf of bread. It was a Hungarian village and a Hungarian bakery. Even though I was the first to walk in, the lady baker refused to serve me and instead attended to every incoming customer. Finally, when there were no new Hungarian customers, she served me.

Twenty years later, I was travelling around the world and in Brazil I came across a Hungarian front desk clerk in the hotel I was staying in. The moment we identified ourselves as being Romanian and Hungarian we smiled and behaved with the warmth of long lost friends. We had so much in common and in each other we found a bit of home. The same experience was repeated many times over, actually every time I encountered Hungarians around the world and here in Canada where I have been living for the past 24 years.

Having immigrated twice, travelled around the world thrice, visited nearly 100 countries, and speaking 6 languages to various degrees of incompetence, I can tell you that the world is a tapestry of cultures and civilizations. Yes, they all intersect. Yes, they all have more in common than not. Yes, people have ingrained beliefs and values that are the result of cultural conditioning. Yes, it is difficult to bridge those differences when coexisting and when cultures that rub shoulders have developed animosities that are fed by group feelings. But when individuals are taken out of those contexts, they will always seek commonalities when interacting with others. I contend that the stronger group animosities are, the harder individuals try to bypass them. This nobility of spirit tells me that human beings are at their best when free of the distorting influence of their cultural conditioning.

I make my living, to a great extent, as an intercultural consultant, and I have learned to navigate my way through the treacherous waters of many a culture. From experience, I know that when peoples of different cultures meet to do business or not, they must be frank with one another and tolerant. Sincerity and tolerance are equally necessary; one cannot stand without the other without giving rise to misunderstandings and dire consequences further down the road.

Such is the complexity of cultures, peoples and civilizations; and thus easy the way to bridge our differences.

What keeps the Islamic and the Western world apart is the abject lack of sincerity that characterizes their interaction. The Islamic world scores higher than the Western world in terms of sincerity but abysmally lower in terms of tolerance; conversely, the Western world is great at tolerance but terrible on sincerity.

That is the essential element of their troubled relationship.

I thought it necessary to share this because until now I have been speaking in generalities and, as a result, I have come under criticism for making broad statements. Of course, one could again accuse me of having made a sweeping generalization, but that is unavoidable unless I go on to qualify every statement and then qualify the qualifications I have made on every statement. Which brings me to a point I made in a different posting; there is nothing we cannot discuss or we should not discuss because it may lead to conflict – as long as we are sincere and tolerant.

Kevin

Hi Kevin,

Thank you for a really interesting posting - I find your experiences fascinating. What particularly struck me was this:

[What keeps the Islamic and the Western world apart is the abject lack of sincerity that characterizes their interaction. The Islamic world scores higher than the Western world in terms of sincerity but abysmally lower in terms of tolerance; conversely, the Western world is great at tolerance but terrible on sincerity. That is the essential element of their troubled relationship.](#)

I think you have touched on something that goes to the core of the relationship, and certainly struck a chord with me.

I am reminded of a phrase that I think either Timothy Garton Ash or Michael Ignatieff used in reference to the

wars in the Balkans in the 1990s. He talked about the **narcissism of small differences** - i.e. how we seek to emphasise the often tiny things that distinguish us from neighbouring people(s) rather than the things that unite us.

Anyway, I think we've covered some very interesting ground this week - and get better soon!

Nick

Subject: RE: The principal divisions between Islam and the West

All in all, I made 8 contributions to the week's forum out of a total of 43 posts, which represents 18.6% of the total.

Week 6 - Western dominance and the challenges to it: China

I began the week's forum with two posts, each answering one of the week's guiding questions: (1) *Is China a threat to the West* (Monday, November 2, 2009 5:20:51 PM); (2) *Have the events of 9/11 and the subsequent 'War Against Terrorism' profoundly transformed Sino-US relations or merely papered over the differences* (Tuesday, November 3, 2009 4:00:43).

They begot a wide dialogue between Nick and me that generated several positive comments from Nick and generous praise. Nick asked all the right questions, challenged me to think deeper, and pressed me to answer increasingly more complex questions. Invariably, he found my answers of high quality.

The following are Nick's positive comments about my posts on China:

Hi Kevin,

A really interesting - and challenging - posting which makes some excellent points. I find your analysis of the situation in the Western world at the end particularly persuasive (if, as you say, a little depressing)...

Best,

Nick

(Thursday, November 5, 2009 12:37:10)

Hi Kevin,

This was a really fascinating posting which I found (as the heading suggests) extremely insightful. I have to confess that I had not known about the way internal migration was managed and controlled in China - this was especially interesting...

...

Really, really interesting stuff - I hope the others have a chance to read through this.

Best,

Nick

(Saturday, November 7, 2009 10:45:22 AM)

All in all, I made 8 contributions to the week's forum out of a total of 28 posts, which represents 28.6% of the total.

Week 7 – Western dominance and the challenges to it 3: nuclear proliferation

I started the forum by answering one of the three guiding questions for the week, namely “How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?” (Monday, November 9, 2009 10:28:52 PM)

Nick replied positively and solicited my thoughts on (1) how the problem of the nuclear genie being out of the bottle could be solved, and (2) how the potential for nuclear confrontation could be addressed by the world (Wednesday, November 11, 2009 10:36:36 AM).

I answered each of these questions in different postings (Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:01:57 PM & Thursday, November 12, 2009 6:53:26 PM). My answer to the first question placed the onus of responsibility on the US and I gave ten reasons why this would have the best effect on nuclear disarmament. The following is my post and Nick's counter:

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?	Reply Quote Set Flag
Author: N. Wright Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:01:57 PM GMT Last modified date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:01:57 PM GMT Total views: 26 Your views: 18	◀ Previous Post Next Post ▶
Hide Parent Post	
Author: Kevin GALALAE Date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 5:25:39 AM GMT Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation? Hi Nick,	

This addresses your first point.

Both Lula and Mandela have deservedly carved themselves into the history books and brought much credit and prestige to their nations. In behind-the-scenes negotiations with aspiring nuclear nations, I am certain that Brazil and South Africa are often invoked as examples to follow. However, their choice for peace will not have the same impact as that of a superpower since they do not feature large (though increasingly important) in international relations and have either never been more than incipient (South Africa) or aspiring (Brazil) nuclear powers.

The scenario I contemplated works best if the United States makes the first move towards nuclear disarmament. This is so for several reasons: (1) it is the first nuclear power, (2) it possesses the most and the most lethal nuclear heads, (3) it is the only nation to have ever used nuclear weapons (and to have used them on non-military targets and dense civilian population centres, i.e. Hiroshima and Nagasaki), (4) it is the most important and aggressive international player, (5) it is the only nation that continues to advance its nuclear technology and weaponization even though it is far in the lead, (6) it has the most mobile and the most widespread nuclear arsenal through its dominant fleet of submarines, (7) it has the most explicit intent to use nuclear weapons if necessary, (8) it is the only nation that uses its nuclear prowess to affect geopolitical outcomes in places far away from home and without being actually threatened by aggressive intent, be it conventional, nuclear or otherwise, (9) it is the most vociferous advocate for peace and freedom, (10) it is the only nuclear power that has covert (with Israel) and overt (with India) military programmes of nuclear technology assistance and is therefore the only “legal” proliferator of nuclear weapons.

Russia and China, the second and third most powerful nuclear states meet few of the above criteria and their unilateral disarmament would therefore have a lesser global impact than that of the US. The unilateral disarmament of France and Britain would have an even smaller international impact than that of Russia and China. Last, Pakistan and India would only affect their region, while North Korea would only elicit a global sigh of relief.

Kevin

Hi Kevin,

Some interesting points here, but I want to take issue with you on a few of them. You wrote:

[\(4\) it is the most important and aggressive international player](#)

Whilst it may be the most important, I think characterizing it as the most aggressive is deeply problematic. There are a number of other countries that are more overtly aggressive. A case in point is the most obvious: North Korea. This country has been perhaps more overt than any other about its willingness to use force (potentially nuclear) if it does not get what it wants - although what that may be remains unclear.

[\(5\) it is the only nation that continues to advance its nuclear technology and weaponization even though it is far in the lead](#)

Again, you ignore other states: Russia, China India, Pakistan, France, etc, etc - all the nuclear states will be working to maintain and upgrade their nuclear technology.

(7) it has the most explicit intent to use nuclear weapons if necessary

This needs to be qualified as I can think of other states that have made their intentions pretty clear as well.

(8) it is the only nation that uses its nuclear prowess to affect geopolitical outcomes in places far away from home and without being actually threatened by aggressive intent, be it conventional, nuclear or otherwise.

How? Where?

My point is that it is far too simple to scape-goat the USA in the debate on nuclear proliferation. Whilst I fully agree with you that gestures it makes in regard to nuclear disarmament will have far more influence than those of other states, I would also suggest that it remains far less likely to use nuclear weapons than a number of other states, particularly the smaller ones.

Over the last few years the notion that if only the USA changes then everything will be alright has been far too prevalent in recent years, whether it be in terms of climate change, the international criminal court, nuclear proliferation, etc, etc. It allows the rest of us - whether in Europe, Russia, Asia or wherever - to avoid asking hard questions of ourselves and our own governments, and ultimately does the international system no favours.

Food for thought, I hope!

Nick

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

I then set out to answer each of Nick's four requests for evidence to substantiate my assertions, something Nick had never asked me or anyone else for that matter to do before. This required six different posts in order to stay within the 400 word limit that you and Nick intimated I should try to adhere to in our private email correspondence. In the 4th of these posts I described Canada's view of America as follows:

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Friday, November 13, 2009 5:14:30 PM GMT

Last modified date: Friday, November 13, 2009 5:14:30 PM GMT

Total views: 7 **Your views:** 4

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Hi Nick,

I hope you are right in stating that the US is the least likely to use its nuclear weapons. Having live in Canada since 1985 and witnessed America's steady slip towards extremism and arrogance, I do not share your optimism. Its proselytizing tendencies, fanatical sense of mission, self-awarded title as leader of the free world, militarization and increasingly rigid and repressive social controls do not bode well. Having grown up in a totalitarian country - Ceausescu's Romania - I know decay when I see it; and the US reeks of decay almost as badly as Romania when I left it in 1981. I have great hope that Obama and the liberal 50% of the

country can pull the US out of the hole it has dug itself into under the Republican leadership goaded by the evangelical half of the nation.

We Canadians - and I take the liberty of referring to myself as Canadian in this case because my view on the US is shared by over 90% of Canadians - know the US best and we fear it and dislike it equally. Although firmly in America's sphere of influence and culturally very close, we know the US as a psychotic nation, given to excesses, delusions of grandeur, and utterly devoid of social conscience. America is ruled entirely by the profit and power motives and the liberty and freedom face it shows to the world is nothing more than a smoke screen.

If/when its brutal capitalist system crumbles and the nation starts to disintegrate, its nuclear arsenal will be as unsafe and available to misuse as Iran's or North Korea's. We should not delude ourselves by the notion that America is any more stable than any other nation and that therefore its nuclear arsenal will be safe in perpetuity. History has shown us that no country is immortal, that no empire escapes decay, and that peace is temporary; all of which are good reasons to demand that our leaders dismantle nuclear weapons. Believing that deterrence will work forever is at best blindly idealistic and at worst irresponsibly credulous, especially when deterrence is preached and enforced by the world's worst nuclear practitioners who reserve rights for themselves they deny others. Justice is never the outcome of injustice, just as peace is never the outcome of aggression. The brand of deterrence currently practiced in the world has elements of both, injustice and aggression, which is why we should not see it as foolproof or accept it as adequate. Simply stated, it is neither nor.

Kevin

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

Nick then replied with a post entitled "A response to Kevin's views of America" in which he accepted my supporting evidence but criticized my take on America as "cynical and also intellectually unfair". This is the first time he attacked me openly and attempted to undermine my intellectual integrity. I resented the criticism for being unwarranted, but replied most politely, keeping my disappointment to myself:

Subject: RE: A response to Kevin's views of America

Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Sunday, November 15, 2009 4:32:49 PM GMT

Last modified date: Sunday, November 15, 2009 4:32:49 PM GMT

Total views: 7 **Your views:** 3

[Hide Parent Post](#)

Author: N. Wright

Date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 1:00:06 PM GMT

Subject: A response to Kevin's views of America

Hi Kevin,

I have read through your various responses to my queries, and you have certainly gone some way to addressing them. My main desire was for some supporting evidence for your statements, which you have provided. For me this places the academic debate which this discussion represents on a much surer footing.

In terms of my personal views on the merits (or not of the United States), I think I would have to disagree with you however. Whilst there is much to legitimately criticise the US for in terms of its policies and how it interacts with the wider

world - not least the terrifying prospect of a foreign policy informed by biblical prophecy! - the United States remains much more than simply the sum of its foreign policy actions.

What is both exciting and deeply frustrating about the US in equal measure is what it represents versus what it seems to be in practice. We could spend weeks alone debating the principles espoused by the Founding Fathers and what is done in the name of such principles. However, the fact remains that for almost 50 years US foreign policy was governed by the guiding principal of ending the subjugation of large parts of the world by communism and the USSR, and the fundamental lack of freedoms that brought. We can rightly debate whether the substitution of one ideology (communism) for another (capitalism) has brought the benefits many at the time claimed - that is another matter, however.

It is too cynical and also intellectually unfair to focus only on the negatives, and dismiss the good as merely the propagation of a defunct and decaying ideology.

The United States is very far from being perfect, but I would rather have the leading power of the world be a democracy and governed by the principles of the rule of law and freedom of speech, than be an autocracy where notions of freedom are arbitrary and uncertain at best.

We may not like the US, but the alternatives seem to me to be far worse.

Best wishes,

Nick

Hi Nick,

I used to be of the same persuasion, but then the US crossed a line by allowing itself to torture human beings, to perform extrajudicial killings, to imprison minors, to imprison without charges and indefinitely, to kidnap citizens from other countries (rendition) and then clandestinely fly them to secret jails, to tap into citizens' phone lines, library records and credit histories, and to subject prisoners to indecent abuse as at Abu Ghraib were sodomizing defenceless people was the order of the day.

These are blatant violations of human dignity and hard-won civil liberties (too many millions have died to win those liberties and to ensure that governments treat citizens with dignity), local sovereignty and human rights (too many millions have died defending those inalienable rights), and bring the US at a par with the behaviour of the Eastern Bloc or worse. My father suffered 6 years of imprisonment and torture (and his torture was not nearly as nasty as the kind employed by CIA agents on Muslims; anyone for simulated drowning, aka water-boarding?) as a political prisoner in Romania and I am not about to tolerate the same behaviour here in the West by excusing it as being the imperfect application of perfect intentions (the same could then be said about the Soviet Union before its fall, about today's China, or indeed about any pariah state), for if that were to become the norm there is nowhere left to immigrate to for safety and dignity.

The US is not the best we have. Scandinavia, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and any western European country are much better at safeguarding democracy, the rule of law, and freedom of speech. We should not short-change our own countries because the US is bigger and flexes its muscles. More importantly, the time is ripe to look beyond national entities to advance the cause of liberty and freedom. International organizations are already much better situated to accomplish this and the US is standing in the way of the United Nations and multilateralism.

The baton of what the US represents has long been taken by the international organizations that govern the global system. They have run with it faster and further than the US has or could. Today's America is more of a hindrance than a vehicle for democracy (look at the Middle East for innumerable examples), the rule of law, and freedom of speech.

What is most disturbing about America's behaviour is that it does so in the name of the free world and I, as a citizen of the free world, resent this immensely. I for one want nothing to do with this sort of behaviour and as a citizen of the free world I am implicated by the US in behaviours that are despicable and reprehensible. In good conscience, I cannot accept this; for history and our children will take us to task for acquiescing.

Kevin

Subject: RE: A response to Kevin's views of America

All in all, I made 22 contributions to the week's forum out of a total of 45 posts, which represents 48.9% of the total.

Week 8 – Western dominance and the challenges to it 3: the war on terror

My contribution to the week's discussion began with my attempt to answer the three guiding questions for the week, which I did in three separate posts in quick succession. Nick ignored my first two posts (Monday, November 16, 2009 4:06:02 AM & Monday, November 16, 2009 4:16:44 AM) – probably because in the second of these posts I referred to the war on terror as essentially a war of civilizations, a topic Nick and I had already disagreed about.

Nick engaged me most cordially on my last of these three posts, which dealt with the issue of whether or not the challenge posed by al-Qaeda peaked. This led to a post from me in which I identified al-Qaeda's attempt to unite the Muslim world along religious lines and in opposition to the West; a post that Nick misunderstood:

Subject: RE: Response to Kevin

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Set Flag](#)

Author: Kevin GALALAE

[◀ Previous Post](#) | [Next Post ▶](#)

Posted date: Monday, November 16, 2009 5:07:38 PM GMT

Last modified date: Monday, November 16, 2009 5:07:38 PM GMT

Total views: 18 **Your views:** 6

[Hide Parent Post](#)

Author: N. Wright

Date: Monday, November 16, 2009 9:33:39 AM GMT

Subject: Response to Kevin

Kevin,

I think you are quite right in your framing of how the Al Qaeda philosophy is spreading. Indeed, one of the most interesting aspects of this is how it is very much representative of a globalising world where an over-arching concept/idea moves from place to place and is then adapted to fit with local requirements. If McDonalds can do it, why not Al Qaeda?

In that sense, it could be argued that Al Qaeda and what it represents, far from being out-dated and anachronistic with its references to a return to long-distant medieval past, is actually ultra-modern.

Like it or not, we have to accept that this maleable ideology (and it is its maleability that I would argue makes it so attractive) speaks to certain people all around the world who feel disenfranchised and powerless. In that sense this is nothing new - what is new, though, is that the technology exists for such ideas to spread across the globe in a fraction of the time it would have taken previously.

And if we accept that it is the ideology that matters, the capture of Osama bin Laden becomes almost irrelevant. It's not the man so much as what he represents that is crucial.

Nick

Hi Nick,

Al Qaedaism, if I may put it this way, though anachronistic in its nostalgia for Islam's glory days, is contemporary in its drive for a united Islamic world under the auspices of a pan-Islamic super-state. As such, it is the Arab equivalent to Europe's European Community, to North America's NAFTA, and to Asia's ASEAN. While al-Qaeda's call for a Caliphate endeavours to unite the Muslim through a religious impetus, the European Union is uniting Europe through a political impetus and North America is united through the economic impetus. Asia is following suit along a combination of economic and political factors, which can only be described as pragmatism, a uniquely Chinese quality. Each region/civilization makes use of its strongest imperative and the most defining cultural characteristic: Islam and religion, Europe and politics, North America and economics, Asia and non-ideological pragmatism.

If the disparate parts of the Islamic world are ever to be united, and thus ever to become a force to be reckoned with, it can only be done along religious lines and with Islam as the driving force and the coalescing element. Love him or hate him, bin Laden will go down in history as the first modern Arab to have endeavoured to unite the Islamic world, and to a great degree and despite unfavourable odds to have succeeded.

The fact that he has not yet been captured suggests the sympathy and support of 1.3 billion Muslims, most of which are disenfranchised and in dire need of leadership and purpose, something they are certain not to receive from their sclerotic military dictatorships or self-serving monarchies.

If bin Laden is succeeded by a less fundamentalist and conservative generation of Islamist leaders, who can nevertheless inspire Muslims of all ethnicities to unite and rise as one, then a modern day Caliphate stretching from Pakistan to Mauritania will inevitably come into being.

Kevin

Subject: RE: Response to Kevin

Subject: RE: Response to Kevin

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Set Flag](#)

Author: [N. Wright](#)

[< Previous Post](#) | [Next Post >](#)

Posted date: Monday, November 16, 2009 5:41:31 PM GMT

Last modified date: Monday, November 16, 2009 10:05:49 PM GMT
Total views: 35 **Your views:** 12

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Kevin,

Whilst agreeing with you that Al Qaeda's ideology is certainly appealing to particular groups around the world (as I wrote in previous post) I really cannot agree with you that it is the equivalent to the EU, NAFTA or ASEAN. It is not an economically-driven grouping of states, and nor does it unite nations. It is an ideology that brings together disparate groupings on the margins of a number of different societies who espouse violence to achieve their aims.

Moreover, Al Qaeda is not an "Arab" anything as it has been picked up by fundamentalist Islamist groups all over the world – e.g. the Abu Sayyif in the Philippines, insurgents in the Caucasus etc. It may well have been started by Arab Islamists, but its ownership is now far beyond one ethnic grouping, and this is one of things that makes it so difficult to deal with: it is a **global** ideology.

I also have to say that the notion of a Caliphate running from Pakistan to Mauritania is highly unlikely at best. Yes, Muslim countries have things in common, but there are equally large differences – look at the relationships between Iran and Iraq; Pakistan and Afghanistan; Turkey and its immediate neighbours, etc. You are suggesting that the Muslim world is somehow homogeneous, but this is like saying the Christian world is homogeneous, which it plainly isn't.

Nick

Subject: RE: Response to Kevin

Subject: RE: Response to Kevin

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Set Flag](#)

Author: Kevin GALALAE

[◀ Previous Post](#) | [Next Post ▶](#)

Posted date: Tuesday, November 17, 2009 2:49:58 AM GMT

Last modified date: Tuesday, November 17, 2009 2:49:58 AM GMT

Total views: 25 **Your views:** 6

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Hi Nick,

You misunderstood me. What I have said is that al Qaeda is seeking to achieve the union of the Muslim world through religion, Islam being the only common denominator of the disparate cultural and ethnic elements that compose the Islamic world. Obviously al Qaeda has neither the amplitude nor the support the EU, NAFTA or ASEAN command. I invoked these as examples of how the rest of the world is seeking to achieve closer integration between similar constituent parts of their civilizations by using the defining characteristic of their particular civilization. Homogeneity has nothing to do with it. What does matter is the common denominators that span civilizations. While the Islamic world is infinitely multifaceted it does share

Islam as a universal religion, the Qu'ran as their holy book, Arabic as their universal language (however poorly many Muslims speak or understand it), and a life centred around the mosque and the requirement to pray five times a day facing Mecca as a way of life. In short, what they have in common is Islam as a way of life. The second common denominator they share is opposition to the West due to the belief that Islam is being undermined by the westernization of their societies.

Al Qaeda is in the meantime international or at least pan-Islamic but it was started by Arabs and was funded by Saudi Arabia. Just because it spread around the world and is continuously morphing it does not mean it is not an Arab creation. Al Qaeda apparently came in existence in 1988 as the result of a meeting between several leaders of Egyptian Islamic Jihad (the most important of whom was Ayman Muhammad Rabaie al-Zawahiri), Abdullah Azzam (a Palestinian Sunni Islamic scholar and theologian) and Osama bin Laden himself, all whom are (or were, since some are already dead) Arabs. As the Wikipedia succinctly describes it, Al Qaeda "*operates as a network comprising both a multinational, stateless arm and a fundamentalist Sunni movement calling for global jihad*" (see Wikipedia entry on Al-Qaeda).

A Caliphate running from Pakistan to Mauritania is highly unlikely, but then so was the notion of a European community, or the idea that China and Japan will ever collaborate on anything. Be that as it may, if a supranational entity spanning the Muslim world is ever to emerge it will do so under the impetus of Islam (and in opposition to the West), not economics or politics, and certainly not due to non-ideological pragmatism. And since we are living in a time when supranational entities are born, it seems unlikely that the Islamic civilization will be the only one incapable of finding unity, however much the Anglo-American camp wishes that this be the case.

Kevin

Subject: RE: Response to Kevin

Then Nick, once again, accused me of making "sweeping generalizations" and intimated that my thinking is "unsophisticated". I found this particularly offensive in light of the fact that he chose to ignore the evidence I provided in two separate posts to refute his assertion that al-Qaeda is merely a fringe group without much support (Tuesday, November 17, 2009 3:19:22 AM & Tuesday, November 17, 2009 3:37:58 AM).

Subject: RE: Response to Kevin

Author: [N. Wright](#)

Posted date: Tuesday, November 17, 2009 10:46:26 AM GMT

Last modified date: Tuesday, November 17, 2009 10:46:26 AM GMT

Total views: 29 **Your views:** 12

[Hide Parent Post](#)

Kevin,

If you read my posting carefully you will see clearly that I did **not** claim that Al Qaeda was not created by Arabs: "[It may well have been started by Arab Islamists, but its ownership is now far beyond one ethnic grouping, and this is one of things that makes it so difficult to deal with...](#)"

I would also again caution against sweeping generalizations against the "Muslim World" thinking this or that, such as: "[The second common denominator they share is opposition to the West due to the belief that Islam is being undermined by the westernization of their societies.](#)"

There are definitely elements in many Muslim societies and among the elites that govern them that believe this, some very influential and arguably with good cause. However it is a vast over-simplification as it ignores the specific situations within the countries, the different socio-economic, historical and cultural challenges they face, the development of nationalism, etc.

As analysts and scholars it behoves us to take a more sophisticated and nuanced view.

Nick

Subject: RE: Response to Kevin

Given that this was the second instance of a direct and unfair attack on my intellectual integrity, I took a stand:

Subject: RE: Response to Kevin

Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Tuesday, November 17, 2009 2:54:17 PM GMT

Last modified date: Tuesday, November 17, 2009 2:54:17 PM GMT

Total views: 31 **Your views:** 4

[Hide Parent Post](#)

Hi Nick,

When I disagree with you, I have disappointedly noticed, you accuse me of over-simplification, sweeping generalizations, lack of sophistication and nuance, or, as last week, of cynicism and intellectual unfairness. Yet I more than anyone else have provided evidence to substantiate my analysis.

I am sure you would agree that undervaluing my intellectual abilities is not conducive to free academic debate and is also unfair given the time and effort I put into keeping the forums alive.

Agreeing to disagree is the basis on which to engage in academic debate, or any civilized debate for that matter, so let us agree to disagree. To this end, I once again invoke Karen Armstrong's wisdom on this subject. She wrote "*Dialogue must not degenerate into a cosy colloquy between like-minded people.*"

I would hope that you would treasure my ability to debate and my courage to dissent as assets to the pursuit of academic freedom and not as liabilities to the cosy colloquy of like-minded people in the course.

Kevin

Subject: RE: Response to Kevin

All in all, I made 15 contributions to the week's forum out of a total of 43 posts, which represents 34.9% of the total.

At this point, you, Dr. Rofo, entered the fray by sending me a most foreboding email in which you browbeat me for allegedly disparaging Nick, thus turning the truth upside down. I take the liberty of posting it here:

From: Rofo, Dr J.S.

To: Galalae, K.M.C.

Subject: RE: PL7508 SO9 Week 8 Discussion forum

Sent: Nov 17, 2009 2:21 PM

Dear Kevin,

I write to you with some concern, and looking through the week 8 forum for Post-Cold War World Order.

It is clear the class have been having a heated debate, but I am particularly concerned by your post of from earlier this afternoon (Tuesday, November 17, 2009 2:54:17 PM GMT). My concerns rest on two points one directed to Nick, your associate tutor, and another towards your classmates.

As you acknowledged in your previous correspondence with me you have the capacity to "sound threatening" and this post certainly does that. Having read this post I then went back through each of the forums for the previous three weeks, and I simply cannot find grounds for the substance and the tone of your post. I really do not want our Associate Tutors to be disparaged in this fashion: you are welcome to read into that any hidden establishment power you see fit. It is not there. It is courtesy and politeness to a colleague who is doing a grand job catering to all of the students in the group.

While I didn't particularly care for the posts remarks about Nick I know he has a thick skin and plenty of experience on which to rest, my greatest concern in this post is the remarks you make in respect of the rest of the class. Citing Armstrong is one thing but then to finish by suggesting that there is a "cosy colloquy of like-minded people in the course" is both unfair given the veracity of debate here, and rude to your fellows. It is not acceptable. Not every student is as forthright as yourself in coming back and putting their point of view. I would ask that you remember we have to cater for students of all dispositions not just those who care to continue the debate. I would counsel that measuring the resistance to any point you are making is a significant skill; knowing when you can acquiesce is important so you can give emphasis to the things that really matter. Otherwise one risks being a whirling dervish which eventually becomes tiresome to those in its surrounds, and one is left exhausted from fighting battles that cannot be won.

I would ask that you edit the post within the next 24 hrs to remove its accusatory and unhelpful remarks; and ask that you bare in mind another sage remark that you can "say more with less".

I am not in the business of arguing with you about this; As you say 'agreeing' to 'disagree' is at the heart of the academic endeavour. As Director I have the ultimate responsibility for the programmes and would ask you respect that.

As ever, I look forward to hearing from you.

*All the best,
Simon*

The last two sentences are particularly revealing because they give me an ultimatum and no choice in the matter. Needless to say, I found your email to be unfair because it does not acknowledge any legitimacy in my request that Nick stops undermining my intellectual abilities and integrity and because it uses a do-it-or-else tone meant to intimidate me into submission. Furthermore, the remaining email misrepresents my post as “disparaging” and “threatening” to Nick when the contrary is the case since Nick was the one who disparaged my intellectual integrity, which the evidence clearly shows.

Nevertheless, my reply to you was polite and came after re-posting an amended version of my post of Tuesday, November 17, 2009 2:54:17 PM (see post of Tuesday, November 17, 2009 9:54:30 PM) in order to comply with your demand that I give no offense to students:

From: kevin galalae [kgalalae@hotmail.com]
Sent: 17 November 2009 22:10
To: Dr. Rofe Leicester
Subject:

Dear Dr. Rofe,

I hope you find my amendment satisfactory.

It puzzles me however that you have not identified a discrepancy in Nick's demands for evidence when opinions he disagrees with are presented while he makes no such demands for evidence when opinions he agrees with are presented.

Kevin

You replied by writing:

From: jsr13@leicester.ac.uk
To: kgalalae@hotmail.com
CC: kmcg1@leicester.ac.uk
Date: Tue, 17 Nov 2009 22:40:13 +0000
Subject: RE:

Dear Kevin,

thank you for your prompt response. I have looked on the board and from what I can see you have removed the final section of the last sentence.

This does not wholly address my previous email's concerns. The post's tone has not changed. I would ask that you return to it and address its potentially 'threatening' tone.

Further, I'm afraid I myself am puzzled by your suggestion of discrepancy. I don't read it that way. The role of the Associate Tutor (AT) is to "encourage students to engage with one another through the online discussion forums; Promote and instigate student participation". This is what Nick has been doing; in many regard he has gone above and beyond the call of duty and has at times no doubt play devil's advocate to 'promote and instigate student participation'. That the message boards for his group are by far and away the busiest of the 9 currently operating is to his credit on this level (your total posts for the weekly forums is 260, the next busiest weekly forums board has just over a hundred). You may not agree with his views, you are entitled of course, but I would ask you respect the role of AT.

*With my best wishes.
Simon*

To this I replied as follows:

From: kevin galalae [mailto:kgalalae@hotmail.com]
Sent: 17 November 2009 22:52
To: Dr. Rofe Leicester
Subject: RE:

*Dear Dr. Rofe,
I am at a loss. Frankly I do not know how I could possibly address the issue of Nick's disparagement of my intellectual abilities more respectfully than I have already done. Can you please suggest what you would consider an adequate formulation!
Sincerely,
Kevin*

Though I waited for your direction, your reply never came. My guess is that you failed to answer my call for direction because, first, you knew that my post could not be more polite than I already penned it and, second, because if you did tell me what to write you would enter the legally unfavourable territory of coercion and censorship.

Instead you replied as follows:

From: jsr13@leicester.ac.uk
To: kgalalae@hotmail.com
CC: kmcg1@leicester.ac.uk

Date: Wed, 18 Nov 2009 19:56:52 +0000
Subject: RE: RE:

Dear Kevin,

Thank you for your email. May I begin by stating that I have taken a great deal of time to contemplate the scenario we find ourselves in since reviewing the message board yesterday evening and my initial email to you at 1922 last evening. Throughout the day I have pondered this, while seeking advice from colleagues across the University throughout the day. What follows is my considered response to the scenario which provides for a constructive solution, and allows all parties to move on with the completion of the module and ultimately your degree.

The first point in response to your request for an “adequate formulation” below, is that the whole matter should not have been played out on the forum. If at any point you had concerns over the way the forums were being operated you should have approached your Associate Tutor directly. If you were then unsatisfied with the response, or felt unable to raise the matter with them, you should have approached me as your Personal Tutor, and I would happily have investigated the matter. That is part of the role of the Personal Tutor as explained in an email I sent during the first week of the module. Further, as Director of DL any issues that arise I want to be kept abreast of issues pertaining to student engagement and so would have welcomed your correspondence. Playing this out in public is unhelpful, not because of any personal upset, but because it has skewed this week’s forum.

Further, you have been given the opportunity to edit the tone of your posts and have chosen not to do that.

Simply put, in my opinion, your Associate Tutor has not disparaged your intellectual abilities, and you have neglected the opportunity to change your remarks.

Then your post this afternoon 1300 suggesting that your Associate Tutor’s post was an ‘act of censorship’ was equally unhelpful. I cannot help ponder why you would consider their remarks suspicious. That you and I may disagree, doesn’t mean we need to be suspicious of each other. There is no need to be suspicious of the Associate Tutor’s remarks: or my remarks here. That your remarks remain would suggest an absence of censorship.

In essence, the “direction” of which you speak in your post of 1858 this evening should not be needed in these matters. Appreciating when matters have reached their natural conclusion is, as suggested in my mail of yesterday evening, something that we need to work towards mastering.

That you are ‘at a loss’, provides a good opportunity for pause and reflection I suggest, to ensure we avoid the time and effort devoted to this correspondence in the past 24 hours and instead focus upon the learning we wish to undertake in this subject.

As your Personal Tutor, and as Director of DL, I will be glad to hear of anything else you have to say. Equally, I look forward to discussion of the variety that typified the early weeks of the class, and correspondence that reflected our earlier conversation about brevity.

*With my best wishes,
Simon*

This email has a considerably softened and accommodating tone, which, I contend, is in no small part the result of (1) Nick's attempt to change the subject of the week's discussion and my subsequent post that takes him to task for censoring the debate (which put Leicester on the defensive), and (2) the realization that I am not intimidated by threats.

Going back to the forum, here is the exchange between Nick and me on the change of subject:

Subject: RE: Moving on: Failed States	Reply Quote Set Flag
Author: Kevin GALALAE	< Previous Post Next Post >
Posted date: Wednesday, November 18, 2009 1:00:21 PM GMT	
Last modified date: Wednesday, November 18, 2009 1:00:21 PM GMT	
Total views: 23 Your views: 3	
Hide Parent Post	
Author: N. Wright	
Date: Tuesday, November 17, 2009 7:13:02 PM GMT	
Subject: Moving on: Failed States	
Dear All,	
Thanks for your various - and varied - contributions. You've all put some good postings up which I hope has provided food for thought.	
We still have a fair amount of discussion time available for this week, so I would like, if I may, to move our attention on to the question of failed states .	
The pop quiz for this week asks simply what a failed state is and we frequently hear reference to these with Somalia being perhaps the most common example. However, as well as considering that, I would like you to offer some thoughts on how we deal with them .	
1. We have the technical, logistical and material capacity to "help" failed states - but is there a duty to do so? If so, how does this manifest itself? Is this something that can be sanctioned only by the UN and then carried out under its auspices?	
2. Do other bordering states have the right to intervene if they feel that a failing state may well have a serious impact on their own territorial integrity - a potential example that springs to mind is that of North Korea and the impact its collapse might have on China; you can also see this on the eastern borders of Europe where states such as Moldova have faced huge difficulties in recent years.	
3. A final question is, what happens if a state is allowed to fail - perhaps a little philosophical, but can a state cease to exist, and what might take its place? Much of the post cold war era has been about the birth of new states. But if a state lacks the wherewithal to function, how do we manage that? The implications are a commitment that would run to decades to rebuild such an entity - and if we can't guarantee to stay there to see the job done, should we just avoid involvement in the first place?	
As ever, I look forward to hearing what you come up with!	
Best wishes,	
Nick	

Nick,

With all due respect, I believe this constitutes an act of censorship.

Kevin

Subject: RE: Moving on: Failed States

Subject: RE: Moving on: Failed States

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Set Flag](#)

Author: [N. Wright](#)

[◀ Previous Post](#) | [Next Post ▶](#)

Posted date: Wednesday, November 18, 2009 1:30:08 PM GMT

Last modified date: Wednesday, November 18, 2009 1:32:09 PM GMT

Total views: 26 **Your views:** 5

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Dear Kevin,

I am not entirely clear on what exactly is being censored here.

There has been a pretty comprehensive discussion of various aspects of the War on Terrorism. However one we have yet to address is failed states which is included on the list of points recommended for consideration this week (please see the guidance for week 8).

As students are perfectly able to continue the discussion of the previous points should they wish, that does not seem to constitute censorship to me.

Best wishes,

Nick

Subject: RE: Moving on: Failed States

Subject: RE: Moving on: Failed States

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Set Flag](#)

Author: Kevin GALALAE

[◀ Previous Post](#) | [Next Post ▶](#)

Posted date: Wednesday, November 18, 2009 3:02:01 PM GMT

Last modified date: Wednesday, November 18, 2009 3:02:01 PM GMT

Total views: 26 **Your views:** 4

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Hi Nick,

This week's topic is Al-Qaeda and terrorism and the guiding questions are:

1. Has the challenge posed by al-Qaeda peaked?
2. Is it possible to win the 'war on terror'? What would victory look like?
3. How far are al-Qaeda's demands essentially political and how far essentially religious?

We have never before discussed the pop quiz questions in a forum. Changing the subject just two days into the debate and at a time when you no longer agree with the opinions aired seems highly suspicious to me. I remind you that a university is an environment where freedom of speech and academic freedom are supposed to thrive and not be subverted by overt or covert censorship.

This is my opinion on the subject and unless we return to the topic we were discussing I for one am withdrawing my participation in the forums. I wish to also state that it is this very kind of treatment that has Muslims of all colours up in arms against the West and seething with anger at the methods of control that are being imposed on them by the Anglo-American coalition. Furthermore, manipulating the dialogue in this fashion and at a time when dialogue is the only method of forging international consensus and maintaining global peace is a recipe for disaster and a reflex that I would have hoped Britain has abandoned when it lost its colonies. Its presence in the context of a university and in an international relations program is most unbecoming.

In conclusion, I wish to state that I am not attempting to influence any of my fellow students and that I hope each and every one of them will make their own decision.

I wish all my colleagues a successful completion of the course.

Warm regards,

Kevin

Subject: RE: Moving on: Failed States

My response to your email was a request that you reassess Nick's markings of my e-tivity 3 and e-tivity-4, which show clear signs of bias.

From: kevin galalae [mailto:kgalalae@hotmail.com]

Sent: 19 November 2009 14:46

To: Dr. Rofe Leicester

Subject: RE:

Dear Dr. Rofe,

Social and business engagements have prevented me from getting back to you yesterday, which I very much wanted to, given the time and effort you have dedicated to this issue and your prompt response.

Before I can address your well considered email point by point I need to know what your opinion is on the way my last two e-tivities have been marked. The impartiality of your answer will have a great bearing on my impending decision to stay in or leave the programme.

I am of the opinion that they reflect Nick's biases more than the actual value of my work. I include the marked e-tivities as attachments and the correspondence (from last to first) between Nick and me on the evaluation of e-tivity 3 (see below) to aid you in understanding the issue.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kevin Galalae

Re: Resubmission of e-tivity 3

Dear Kevin,

First of all I would like to re-iterate that the score you received for e-tivity 3 - 4/5 - was very good and demonstrated high quality work on your part. That said, I have reviewed the instructions for this e-tivity and am satisfied that they are clear about what is required. Resubmission will therefore not be possible.

Best wishes,

Nick

*From: kevin galalae [kgalalae@hotmail.com]
Sent: 10 November 2009 15:30
To: Nick Wright
Subject: RE:*

Hi Nick,

If that is the case, can I resubmit my essay? Afterall, the misunderstanding is partly due to the lack of clear direction in the e-tivity text. It seems

unfair to me that I should alone burden the consequences.
Kevin

From: nw78@leicester.ac.uk
To: kgalalae@hotmail.com
Date: Tue, 10 Nov 2009 14:54:27 +0000
Subject: RE: RE:

Hi Kevin,

Thanks for your message - the title of e-tivity 3 is "Text Critique I" and so it is assumed that this will be the basis on which students approach the analysis.

Best,

Nick

From: kevin galalae [kgalalae@hotmail.com]
Sent: 10 November 2009 14:30
To: Nick Wright
Subject: RE:

Hi Nick,

Sorry for being unclear. My query was not about the length but about having to critique the article. The e-tivity instructions do not say anything about having to critique the article. It requires only that we analyse it. Your comments on my e-tivity seem to indicate that the reason I did not receive full marks (and was only given 80%) is because I did not also critique Huntington's article within the allotted 400 word limit. Having read and re-read the e-tivity 3 instructions I cannot see any mention of critique but only the requirement that we analyse. That is why my 400 page analysis is only that, an analysis, and my subsequent postings include my critique. In this regard you wrote:

Text critique - a good summary of Huntington's key points and you demonstrate here and in your subsequent postings an excellent understanding of what he is arguing. I would like to have seen more critical engagement with the article, however.

Dialogue with Group

It is a shame that the critique of Huntington came here and not in the original posting,

I would greatly appreciate elucidation on whether we also needed to critique and not just analyse the articles we chose. For if that is the case, I totally misunderstood the task and the absence of any requirement that we critique in the e-tivity instructions is to blame for this and not my lack of trying or of ability.

Warm regards,

Kevin Galalae

*From: nw78@leicester.ac.uk
To: kgalalae@hotmail.com
Date: Tue, 10 Nov 2009 09:32:59 +0000
Subject: RE:*

Hi Kevin,

I've got to my computer and have had a look at the instructions for e-tivities 3 and 5 on Blackboard.

The parameters of each e-tivity are set out in four sections: purpose, task, respond and outcome. The bit you referred to below is the purpose, but below it you will see task, including word limits. E-tivity 5 again has a 400 word maximum.

Hope this helps.

Nick

*From: kevin galalae [kgalalae@hotmail.com]
Sent: 09 November 2009 21:46
To: Nick Wright
Subject:*

Hi Nick,

In relation to e-tivity 3, I forgot to mention that I was unaware we had to also critique the article we were tasked to analyse in 400 words. Given that Huntington's article is 29 pages long and very dense, even if I had known I

would not have been able to squeeze a meaningful analysis and critique in 400 words. My critique came in my subsequent postings. The e-tivity 3 page says only that we are "Analyse ONE of the following [articles] and identify its major attributes."

To prevent this from occurring again I would like to make sure that e-tivity 5 does not require us to critique the article as well as analyse it. The e-tivity 5 page says only that we are "To analyse a well-known article and identify its major attributes." Please let me know.

Thank you.

Warm regards,

Kevin Galalae

Although the marks I received for these two e-tivities are clearly influenced by Nick's biases (especially e-tivity 4, which received a failing mark) and I expected an admission of this fact, you decided, against all evidence, that all is kosher and wrote:

From: Rofe, John S. (Dr.) jsr13@leicester.ac.uk
Sent: Friday, 20. November 2009 19:37:47
To: 'kevin galalae' (kgalalae@hotmail.com)

Dear Kevin,

I hope this finds you well. As I stated yesterday I write in following up the matters you raised in your email of 14.46 19 November . As you will appreciate I have given a great deal of thought to the matter and want to make clear the policy and processes involved in assessment of e-tivities.

It is our stated policy that e-tivities 2 and 3 are first marked by the Associate Tutor and then moderated: e-tivity 4 is first marked by the module convenor with the Associate Tutor providing the second marking. The moderation of these e-tivities, and those across the different modules was undertaken by myself at the time they were submitted and feedback provided.

I found the application of the marking criteria, which can be found in the IRDL Blackboard site, for your group as with all of the others was in line with the requirements of the position of Associate Tutor. This reflected the careful selection and training we undertake of our Associate Tutors.

I have revisited your e-tivities: 4/5 for e-tivity 3 is a very good mark – 80% which would see you well in the distinction bracket. Equally I am sure you would be disappointed with you e-tivity 4 mark, but there is

a clear rationale provided by the feedback from the first marker for this, which if you rectify would mean a good essay mark is still very much in your grasp.

There is every possibility that with a strong essay, addressing the points raised in your feedback, you could still achieve a distinction level mark for the module.

I would urge you to consider your position carefully with regard to remaining on our programme, as it is clear you have much to say on many of the important issues of the course.

*With my best wishes,
Simon*

To demonstrate just how egregiously unfair your finding is and how devoid of the impartiality I asked you to provide, I am posting my marked e-tivity 3 as an attachment (since it is a pdf. file) and e-tivity 4 below:



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

DL E-tivity 4 Assessment

Student's name: Kevin GALALAE

Module title: Post Cold War World Order

Module code and presentation: PL7508 A S09

Date: 10/11/2009

Marker: James Hamill

ESSAY TITLE

Some threats to Western hegemony are routinely exaggerated. Discuss with reference to China.

ESSAY PLAN

Introduction:

- Two schools of thought inform predictions of China's role in the world in the foreseeable future. One sees it as a threat to Western hegemony and another as a willing partner in the existing global order. **Although that may be a rather crude binary as there are shades of opinion within those two broad 'camps'**
- China's stance will be discussed with reference to economic, political, security, strategic, energy and socio-cultural dimensions since each emphasizes a different set of factors in the evolving Sino-American bilateral relationship. External variables likely to influence this relationship will then be identified and brought to bear on the attempt to identify China's likely future behaviour on the international arena.
- Arguments for and against a new hegemony will be considered and shown to be of secondary relevance and insufficient power to both mark a change in the cooperative spirit and non-aggressive nature with which China has sought to forge a new place for itself in the multilateral world it favours, and to reverse the growing relevance of multilateralism as the method of choice for consensual engagement and global integration. **This is rather convoluted and vaguely expressed. Look for clarity in your phrasing.**

Analysis:

- Why is China perceived as a threat to western hegemony and by whom?
 - China and the West differ in their world-views, strategic interests, and political systems and this has led to contentious relations. This lack of common interests and values has made China and the West strategic competitors on a variety of fronts, ensuring mutual distrust.

- China's rapid ascendance is seen ominously by Japan, whose regional pre-eminence is being gradually eroded by increased Chinese economic clout. Given Japan's past aggression against China, it has reasons to fear that if supplanted as regional leader Japan will be marginalized by China. Japan being the only Asian nation that is fully integrated into the Western system, its decline will mark the end of Western hegemony in the region.
- For America the notion of no longer being in charge of the world by policing other nation's actions and dictating the terms of international engagement is hard to accept. **Be careful of overstatement** For China, the notion of continued American hegemony in Asia is equally hard to accept. China, as the only rising power with the potential to challenge American hegemony, is therefore viewed with mistrust. This mistrust is exacerbated by certain aspects of the American system.
 - In the absence of the Soviet Union, it is in the interest of America's industrial-military establishment to exaggerate the Chinese threat. **(evidence that this is occurring?)**
 - A culture of militarism and America's transformation post 9/11 into a near police state (**wild exaggeration – please avoid such hyperbole**) only encourages a suspicious and belligerent attitude towards the rising power and status of China.
- Power transitions have in the past led to conflict and war. However, since they unfold according to the "*nature of rising state's regime and the degree of dissatisfaction with the old order*" (Ikenberry, 2008), China being neither a belligerent state nor dissatisfied with or marginalized by the global system, its future is most likely to be envisioned as part of the existing multilateral order. Several factors support this outcome:
 - China is fully integrated in the international order and its "*economic interests are congruent with the current global economic system*" (Ikenberry, 2008). **Broadly, yes, although it may feel a strong interest in seeking to expand its power within multilateral institutions which may become a source of friction with those who 'lose' in that transition**
 - China needs access to the global capitalist system and protection from discrimination through the system's rules and institutions, principally the

WTO's multilateral trade principles and dispute-settlement mechanisms.

- China is gaining access to the inner circle of the international economic institutions that govern the current system.
 - As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China already enjoys the benefits of “great-power exceptionalism”.
 - While China may well surpass the US in economic and military power, it will not overshadow the economic and military capacity of the Western system as a whole. China's economy and military will always be much smaller than the combined capacities of the OECD countries.
- China is feared for its unwillingness to embrace democracy and for the threat it poses to democracy once it becomes the most powerful economy on earth, which is predicted to occur by 2020 (**whether it will be the most powerful economy by then is a moot point, it will still fall well behind the US in crucial indicators – GDP per capita, research and development, education**).
- While democracy is not on the agenda of China's CCP, the trend has been towards more individual freedom and social openness, and various piecemeal approaches are used to test the viability of more political openness. Shanghai, for instance, has adopted China's first provincial-level open information legislation on January 20, 2004, as a first step towards open government.
 - The Chinese Communist Party (CCP), it could be argued, is in effect two parties in one. The two major factions within the CCP, the radicals and the moderates (also known as the conservatives and the reformers), differ fundamentally in their visions for national development and are in many respects as disparate as are America's democrats and republicans. While the radicals pursue “*the achievement of political consciousness, ideological devotion to communism, and human liberation*” (i.e. “redness”) and seek the political and ideological control of the populace, promoting social equality and opposing economic stratification, the moderates, whose “*approach to national development is mainly economic and technical, and much less political and ideological...focus on the material and moral improvement of people's lives,*” and want to develop the skills and qualifications of the workforce (i.e. “expertise”) (Tsang, 2000).

- The current deadlock between liberals and conservatives, some have argued (Gong-Qin Xiao, 2002), may help create the preconditions for political reform. This is especially likely, since economic development has already given rise to modest social pluralism and interest groups and this will eventually lead to political "bargaining" within the political system, instead of ideological battle.
- The very idea of hegemony is a remnant of unipolar thinking in a multipolar world, leading to a refusal to see the new world order as a cooperative effort towards consensus between equal state actors. Given China's cooperation with every multinational institution, it is safe to conclude that China is a firm supporter of a multilateral world order and that it is not about to seek hegemony. Furthermore, China could not become the new hegemon even if it wanted. Several factors prevent it from fulfilling such an ambition:
 - Lacks internal cohesion. Its many ethnic, religious and tribal entities are loosely held together by a manufactured national identity based on the forced use of Putonghua as the language of national unity.
 - China is not even equipped to exercise control over the country let alone over the world. Although an authoritarian state, it lacks effective centralised control being fragmented by its many power bases in the provinces which are in a constant struggle with the central government. "*China is held together by the formal structure of authority*" (Lieberthal & Oksenberg, 1990) and not by real authority and has difficulty enforcing the directives emanating from the central government partly because it has five levels of government that overlap and compete for authority.
- Past and present actions as well as the character of the Chinese people show a nation willing to work in concord with other nations to reach mutually beneficial agreements rather than to challenge existing power structures to advance solely its own interests.
 - China's strategic plans are peaceful and non-threatening and are concerned with addressing three big challenges it faces: shortage of resources, environmental pollution, and lack of coordination between economic and social development. To address these concerns it has devised three grand strategies (Bijian, 2005):

- realizing a new model of industrialization that is based on low consumption and optimal allocation of human resources so as to achieve a society of thrift,
 - transcending ideological differences while striving for peace, development and cooperation with the world, and
 - constructing a harmonious socialist society by supplanting outdated methods of social control with self-governance
-
- China is rising at a time and in a world defined by the postwar Western order which is distinctive because liberal and non-discriminatory, accessible and legitimated by its shared leadership and by the fact that it is rule based and has global institutions to enforce the rules. More than that, it has mechanisms for security cooperation, expansive economic growth, and has an open and multilateral character. It is therefore easier to join than it is to overturn and the incentive for China is to integrate into the liberal international order rather than challenge it, especially given the economic and technological interdependence of the day.
-
- China has always sought to solve its problems internally rather than export them through expansionary intrusions on the territories or resources of others.
 - One-child policy ensures China can live within its means and is not forced by dint of impending social chaos to colonise or invade other people and lands.
 - Non-aggression is the avowed policy of the CCP and there are no precedents save for Tibet to indicate that China is not sincere in its aspirations for peace and cooperation with the world. **Although official declarations are of limited utility here (the Soviet Union provided a seemingly endless series of such reassurances) and in any case past Chinese actions when it was a weak state may not be a reliable guide to the actions of an infinitely more powerful state**
 - The rural-urban divide, maintained through residence permits, serves as an internal safety valve, making China a microcosmic model of the global economy and allowing it to contain the effects of failed policies within its borders.
-
- Different dimensions paint a different picture. While China and the US have common economic interests and interdependencies they do not have common military and

diplomatic interests or shared cultural and political values.

○ *Economic dimension*

The overarching point of contention is Beijing's state-dominated model of development versus America's liberal economy model. This has engendered flashpoints along the following issues:

- The US trade deficit with China has led Washington to call on Beijing to liberalize its exchange rate, allow true market-oriented reform, abolish antimonopoly laws, protect intellectual property rights, reduce state intervention in the economy and permit capital to exit China. Failure to do so, it is feared, will only exacerbate already dangerous trade imbalances between China and the US.
- In return, Beijing argues that, especially in light of the recent global economic meltdown, finance-driven economic integration must be carefully controlled. China also expects the US to lift restrictions on technology sales and worries about the security of the US Treasury bonds it continues to buy despite the declining value of the dollar and the ailing American economy.
- China's mercantilist currency policies have been blamed for the trade imbalances that have contributed to the US trade deficit, whose unintended by-product has been that China stockpiled large US dollar reserves that it then placed in US government securities, leading to a capital glut and to reckless lending by US banks.
- China has called for an end to the dollar's dominance in the international monetary system and for a global reserve currency based on the weighted average of a basket of currencies that includes the Yuan. Since the dollar accounts for 65% of the world's foreign exchange reserves, and China holds one-third of these, America's massive printing of money in response to the financial crisis has caused concerns in China that the value of its substantial dollar reserves is being undermined. However, China cannot dump its stock of dollars without triggering a collapse of the currency. To get out of the "dollar trap" China has suggested two solutions: a new global currency and the international use of the Yuan (*The Economist*, 2009), neither of which bodes well for the US. This could very well prove to be a flaring point in Sino-American relations. For the time being, however, China needs access to the US market and the US needs China to

prop its currency.

The nature of the Sino-US economic relationship is one of irreversible interdependence. As long as American self-interest propels Chinese economic prosperity the two nations will seek cooperation for the sake of their mutual long-term interests and are unlikely to resort to conflict to satisfy short-term objectives. Accommodation rather than trade war will define Sino-US economic engagement.

○ *Military and strategic dimension*

The overarching point of contention between China and America is pre-eminence and leadership in East Asia. This has engendered several flashpoints between the two powers:

- China is unhappy with the current American dominated regional-security architecture (America's bilateral alliances with countries in the region, its forward deployed military forces in East Asia, NATO expansion in the region, the extension of the 'Partnership for Peace' to Central Asia, the US Pacific Command's (PACOM) naval stranglehold of the Pacific, and the potential deployment of theatre and national missile defences (TMD/NMD) in Japan and other allies in the region), which it views as a grand strategy of containment against China. Particularly vexing for China is the issues of US arms sales to Taiwan, which is the most fundamental security grievance between the two nations.
- The US, in return, resents China's assertiveness in respect to Taiwan (China's increased deployment of short-range ballistic missiles directed at Taiwan, its refusal to renounce the use of force against Taiwan even as it professes 'peaceful reunification', its refusal to accept the rationale for US presence in the region, and its increasing range of ballistic missile systems) and the South-China Sea (where China has increased its naval presence and assertiveness). However, given China's inferior military capabilities, the US and its allies have little to fear. The Taiwan issue entails an irreconcilable dilemma for Sino-American relations; China will not accept Taiwan independence and the US will not accept Chinese interference in Taiwan's right to self-determination.
- China's visceral reaction and reprisals to any foreign country receiving the

Dalai Lama shows just how sensitive and unreasonable China is in regards to Tibet. Its fear of Tibetan nationalism and secessionism could trigger a dangerous overreaction in China with negative economic implications though less significant consequences for world peace and security.

- Common interests, however, trump differences. They encompass the need to maintain regional stability, peace on the Korean peninsula, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and a wide range of non-conventional security threats. These have engendered cooperation on low security threats (fighting narcotics production and smuggling, organized crime, illegal migrants smuggling) and even on select high security threats (controlling weapons of mass destruction, nuclear proliferation, delivery systems for nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, North Korea, nuclear-arms control, export controls of fissile and other sensitive materials).

As long as China does not force its hand on Taiwan and the US does not stand in the way of Taiwan's closer economic integration with China and their gradual rapprochement, there are no irreconcilable differences that would necessitate either armed conflict or a new cold war.

- Political dimension

The deep ideological divide separating China and the West on national and international governance issues makes a strategic partnership inconceivable over the short-term but possible if they continue to engage with one another and give each other room to evolve.

- Beijing is sharply critical of American hegemony and US attempts to maintain a unipolar world. While China seeks a multipolar world in which nations respect their differences and maintain peaceful and mutually beneficial economic and diplomatic relations regardless of their internal makeup, abuses, and inequalities, the US seeks global leadership to expand the number of democracies and market economies and to build a global security architecture that it alone controls and that is favourable to its own interests.
- The US is sharply critical of China's one-party autocracy, its selective economic liberalization without the requisite political plurality, its human rights abuses, its repression of free speech, and its suppression of an

independent judiciary.

- These differences are being fought over on the international arena through efforts to influence the very structure and norms of international relations and are manifested in:
 1. America's expansion and strengthening of bilateral and multilateral security alliances and in China's counter efforts to have such military alliances and pacts abrogated.
 2. Differences over the limits of national sovereignty and the acceptability of humanitarian interventions that defy sovereignty as well as the role of the UN in legitimating such intrusions.
 3. Differences in approach regarding trade and monetary issues, the degree of market liberalization versus national control, and expanding the role of the IMF and the World Bank to deal with transnational rules for capital movement.

Given the large size of the two camps of thought, the historical depth of each camp's political system, and the low level of interference in and tolerance for each other's internal affairs, conflict along political lines will occur within the international framework of political engagement and will be waged as dialogue and posturing. The unappealing nature of China's political system and China's lack of interest in promulgating it abroad ensure that the Western liberal model will continue to be the one other nations will aspire to.

○ Energy dimension

China's basis for engagement with the world is to propel the country towards industrial modernization, which is unachievable given the country's large population and modest natural resources without access to the global market of mineral resources. This has created a competitive environment between developed nations, whose mature economies are large consumers of energy, and developing nations like China, whose rapidly developing economy is in need of ever greater primary resources.

- A growing gap between domestic supply and demand for energy resources has forced China to abandon its traditional goal of energy self-sufficiency and to look abroad, driving China's foreign policy. Meeting the country's demand for oil and natural gas has become a primary objective. As the

world's second-largest oil importer and an economy that continues to grow at 9% per annum, China's appetite for key mineral resources continues to grow and is expected to double, from 20% to 40% of the global total, within a decade. Growth being the cornerstone of China's social stability and China being a government-driven economy, Beijing has been forced "*to adapt its foreign policy to its domestic development strategy*" (Zweig & Jianghai, 2005) with negative consequences on foreign policy issues where Beijing and Washington do not see eye-to-eye.

- Peak oil at a time of growing demand due to Chinese modernization and growing industrialization in developing countries have given rise to fear in the West that there is not enough oil in the world to satisfy both Western and Chinese needs. These fears have been exacerbated by China's direct investments in the economies of repressive regimes that challenge the Western order; direct investments in oil exploration and development projects in oil-producing states in the Middle East, where the US maintains heavy military presence to secure its own energy needs; plans for a strategic petroleum reserve, which hold military implications; the internationalization of the China National Petroleum Corporation, which is seen as an aggressive measure to gain a foothold in oil markets hitherto monopolized by the US and its allies; and China's cultivation of closer diplomatic relations with oil-exporting countries, like Iran and Venezuela, that are antagonistic to American hegemony. Yet by diversifying its suppliers and encouraging its national oil companies to acquire assets abroad, China is doing nothing more than following Western nations to ensure its own energy security.
- China's growing dependence on imported oil trumps humanitarian, democratic and non-proliferation considerations towards countries it relies on for its energy needs (Myanmar, Angola, Iran, and Sudan) and has forced China to oppose US containment plans for Iran's nuclear ambitions and the US occupation of Iraq, and to weaken the language of Security Council resolutions to punish Sudan for its actions in Darfur.
- In return, China regards its dependence on foreign oil as a strategic vulnerability that could be exploited by the US to coerce China to accept unfair terms. Beijing also fears the US will deny China access to oil crucial to its continued economic development and that it will use its dominance of the sea-lanes to do so. To avoid this, China is attempting to

promote the development of Central Asian and Russian oil fields and the construction of pipelines to transport oil from these regions to China.

For the time being, China's quest for energy security collides with American interests only in Sudan and Iran, posing no serious threat to their competitive yet peaceful relationship. China's unwillingness to jeopardise its oil supply for Western objectives, however, along with its efforts to reduce the vulnerability of its energy supply to US power, will give rise to fiercer competition in the near future, as the gap between global oil production and demand widens and the US will not tolerate being supplanted by China from its position of control of the world's major oil and gas fields.

○ Human and social dimension

China's cultural heritage is shaped by the ethical principles of three peaceful religious traditions – Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism – the result of which China, despite being a secular and authoritarian society since 1949, seeks peaceful and cooperative relations with other countries.

- China's cultural practices and thought systems are pluralist, tolerant and non-dogmatic as a result of its religious heritage and shape the Chinese emphasis on finding one's natural place in the order of things (a Taoist inheritance); creating a harmonious society and a virtuous state and treating all people with humanity (Confucian inheritances); and abstaining from harmful actions, training a disciplined mind, and seeking a proper understanding of the self and the world (Buddhist inheritances). China's foreign policy objectives reflect this religious heritage and foretell a cooperative not a belligerent China.
- Deference towards the West due to the recognition that it is superior in terms of science and technology and that therefore China has much to learn from it if it is to reach an equal level of modernization, enforces a one-sided relationship between China and the West, whereby the West and especially the US has a transforming influence on China's culture and society, while China has little or no impact on Western culture and society. This foretells China's evolution towards Western principles and not away from them.

While China's foreign policy seeks to address real geopolitical interests and national objectives, its approach is informed by the benign character of its cultural traditions and by the deference with which it views the West for its scientific and technological superiority. This suggests that China is not about to

challenge Western hegemony as much as seek a place for itself in the current system.

Conclusion:

China is neither a strategic partner nor a hostile adversary of the West. Being a country with few aggressive tendencies and precedents (Tibet being the exception) and with a stance of deference and respect for Western achievements and abilities in science and technology as well as in culture, China does not intend to challenge the Western order but merely to coexist and prosper within the existing international framework and to make positive contributions to a more accommodating transnational polity. China's only ambition is to be viewed as an equal and willing partner in the struggle to bring prosperity and peace to the world.

The only subject of contention is China's intransigence and lack of tolerance for outside interference in the integrity of its borders and on the sovereignty to make its own decisions on what it views as internal matters, which, unfortunately, also include Taiwan and Tibet. However, since the West and China are completely interdependent in economic terms, they are not about to jeopardise their prosperity and world peace by provoking each other.

The only serious area of potential conflict is access to energy sources, which due to dwindling supplies and increasing global demand will pose a global problem that can only be resolved by rapid technological progress on renewable energy and the attendant political will to retool one's economy away from sole dependence on fossil fuels. Since both China and the US are late starters in this respect, they may not make sufficient progress in time to survive the next energy crisis without recourse to predatory actions that will lead to armed conflict between them.

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COMMENTS

Structure

This plan is in most respects not a plan at all. It is 4,800 words – a full 3,800 words longer than the recommended length for the E-tivity. It simply doesn't work as a plan and if the various sections identified here were extended still further (a reasonable assumption) the final essay will be approaching 10,000 words in length. Thus, this particular document fails to meet the basic purposes of an essay plan

Analysis & Content

The content is perfectly competent and it identifies a range of useful areas for discussion. However, at 4,800 words this is hardly surprising and the scope to develop these ideas further in the way that you hope does not exist given the 5,000 word limit.

Areas for improvement

Please remember to submit assessed work in accordance with the guidelines

The final essay will have to be selective in its approach if you are not to be penalised for excessive length.

Summary

This was an unhelpful plan (a plan cannot be as long as the essay itself) and it displayed an unwillingness to edit and to summarise issues. The length is unacceptable. Economy of expression is a core skill you must develop.

Recommendation for E-tivity 5

Deudney, D and Ikenberry, J G 'The Myth of the Autocratic Revival: Why Liberal Democracy Will Prevail' FOREIGN AFFAIRS, Jan/Feb 2009

Second Marker's comments

Kevin, you clearly have a broad and comprehensive grasp of the issues relating to China's status, position and development in the post-Cold War world system, so your knowledge is not in question. However, this piece is not an essay plan. It is far too long and ambitious in what it sets out to achieve. You must be much more selective in what you focus on. You can certainly refer in passing to many of the issues you note above, but I recommend you pick out the 2 or 3 you consider most significant to your case and concentrate the bulk of your attention on them. This will ensure you do yourself justice in the final assignment, and also that you will be within the specified word limit. I concur with the 1st marker's comments and score. NJW

Mark

6/15

I have two years of college teaching experience and two more in high school, so I am no stranger to marking papers, essays and exams. While the e-tivity 3 mark could be forgiven as an error in judgement, the e-tivity 4 mark is beyond reason and can only be called a work of fiction. In awarding me only 6 out of 15 possible points (a mere 40%), the explanation is that this is so because it is too long and fails to meet the word-limit requirement. While I admit that I have accidentally overlooked the word-limit, this rationale means that the content – which is by the marker's admission "broad and comprehensive" - is worth less than the form (i.e. the length); the form being worth 9 out of 15 while the content is worth only 6 out of 15. By this rationale any gibberish I would have presented would have received a mark of 9 out of 15 so long as it did not have more than 800 to 1000 words. To show you just how preposterous and warped this rationale is, I am presenting you an essay plan that fulfills the length requirement while totally ignoring the content requirement, and which according to your professional judgement would be worth 9 out of 15 points. Here it is:

ESSAY PLAN

Introduction:

- Xosl opfhf of ppgp dhdhdgsf ahshsg ahsggdio jdjdgf hhjrmtf gkfnhfn dnkdk jfjkd jfkfk jkfkf jkffd kaeoe kdfkfdkg lekfo loodkfo kldjfods kljdo kjdfo lksfso sfosdif asojs ksdf sak ksdjfsa kkjsdf ked .
- China's xoso cosyudnhfkl lflfj kfjfh orufhsbfk mmmen enenene ofoifhjebsy ndndhdfy nhfjhf fjfj djdk kdkdk [[py nouo gtotot kkgf kawejweh kdjfk kjdfoksjdk k ksdf kjfdf sdjk jhsd eko kerjrwe kjer khwe kihwe.
- Arguments for and against ldjd djdfjfh fhtaewcwew afasdse egegedvf sggsehd hdh hddg ehdgh hjhdh sdxskd kjjj kisdj kjdfkj kjf kjofsd kdk jsdj kksd kks jks ksdplwe loeir nowe kjewr kje kjwe oiwer loier kowe oiw hgtqw fgtdqw jujwe.

Analysis:

- Why is China perceived as a threat to western hegemony and by whom?
 - China and the West differ nndnd nnj ooyuiy fgjkgju kykyjky fjfj kfkfk kfkdfk jkdfkdfk kdkdf fkkfk kfkfd sksdk jkksdk jkskid kjdf prtt ptptryo loortkoer qwiqw wjuerwe.
 - China's mmm dmdm kitktkt jkgjkgkg jfgjjgg jgggj nnn npprpr ptotykiyhuy lgtltjjh jgig dkldo dkdk kdfkdk kdfkj kjsh lodfs lsdfjas losd sdjsd opqwqwp qwoqwi oiqw.
 - For America jrrjrj iioypyoyp oooo upupu ojkjku ooki hoho kklkhn lohhlhlh khkh khkh ksdk osjdi ksd ksd khjkd kisd kksd kjksd jke lo p[yoft p[w grqw owquyw yuwg uywe uwe kwqe.
 - In the absence of the Soviet Union ofo hsgsd hdhhrh dhdfh fkf ooo rrr ttt kkkkk eeee ssssssz sss sss klfrfkjfk kfkdfkkl klfmg lfdjg.
 - Khfhf jfhf fjfjj pprprkir oh pfpf jdjd kooi hdhh kdkdfk fkkfk jkfjhsdkjbh jfjdf jdfnhdf kdjfk.

- Kksdhsd kd kudf oi pw uwe utwe hts lopdid Ags kjsd jks hss gfsakjdfhseg gsd hy jhdf jkd jkdr.
 - Power didi kfkfgk pptpt kittt koghkg hlo igkigjkghj kkkjk kghkg part of the existing multilateral order. Several factors support this outcome:
 - China is fully ogogo in the international order kfkf jfjf fjfj sjsj jfkdf jdffk kfjksdf kodfjkf kfdjfg sk kdfj kdf kfdjf k dfkfhsdkif kfdv jk kh .
 - China needs access to the global capitalist system jfjf jdjd jfjf pypy kiiij popup fjfjkdf kksdsk kdkdk kfkfdk kdfdkf kdf fdfk fkfdk kf dfkd kkdf dfk dfk.
 - China is jfjf popo uyuy uteyet yfyfyf ok dkdkd kdkd jkdkkd jkdkd dkdkd jdjdj djdkdk dosowo kddkie kododjr sdjdsj jjsd jh jkweek kijueiw jkwer ihywer iwe iu jj.
- Different dimensions nfnfn ksdkdk ki ootitj jkgkjg popup jyddd.

- Economic dimension

The overarching point og jskdkdfj jhhfhfj jkdkd kdkdk kdkdk kieieoe lorortort kfkfrt ktkodf djdj kksd kkdf kk dsk kodf kiiksd kki dk dkksd kkdf kdf kkid fjksd sdkas ajasjr:

- The US iofofof djdj wfrqeqg pgkgn ufjfg djdkkd kdkdkd kkddk jkdkdk kdkkesd.
- In return ofof herhej jkfkjfkf djdk loeope pppf w w woopf ekdfkofk ekdkd ek kodrfd.
- China's mercantilist kfkfjk jfjf popi oooo kjhjkj reeee fkfkf kklksdkd kfkfkdf jkfj.

- Military and strategic dimension

The ofofo jifj phepoarwve hdjf hfjff jffjkkf pioeiofssus kfkfk dkdkds ptptp kooeoo rorroki kffr jffjkfk kkkf jkddk jksa kksd oppopoidre oiewr oeriw oiqwet iuqweuit juhwe ukywuewq kywe iewwriowe kidie:

- China is ofof eqeqeq sdsds acata dkjdfkd kkddk kdfkdfk kkfkd kfkkd kfkdfk kdfkdfk.
- The US, in return, ofof hjhj poepeo kofkf jfjfo jkfjfk jfjff hgfdkdkj kdfkfkj jkfj sjsjs ksksk jfjkfir jdfhdhfdh jkdkdfdj.

○ Political dimension

The deep ideological divide lfkf ppopeo qeqeq hsjsjd hfdjfdjd jkfjk bhjj skd snhehd hfdj.

- Beijing is sharply critical of jfj jkdd jfkfk kkk oeoee loskdj fjfjkfk fnfjk fjfj sjsjs ksksk jsjsjs jkdkssk kfkf.
- The US isofof nhjf jfgkg rg ghs fj kdfkfglg kgkg kgkg kgkg jgjdkfg hdh dkdkd kdkfk kfkfkfk kkj kkk kjeue gyww srseww asdwewf fsfw.
- These kfkf hsgsdjdk fkkfg jkldfk nhhk jfkk kfkfg kfkf kfkfg kfgkfg kfg in.

○ Energy dimension

China's basis for engagement jffg kgkg ufufkr kfkfc kjfkfg kfgsfs edeede fsfsd ccc ssg hchdh kfkkg kfkfk.

- A growing gap hfhf djfdj eee ddd sssz g jj kdfkdfk kdfk pglogfnn jfjff jfjff jfjff fjfjrd ksklsk.
- Gjfd jkdkd ppp ooo iii ttt yyy rrr eeee sss eeeee mfjkf jkfjk jgkfg llll kfkfk kjk.

○ Human and social dimension

China's cultural heritage jgjjg yyy ttt ssssw eee e dfff ddjdj kkkk ggg kkk kk yryeryr jfffj.

- China's cultural kgkgk djddj jfffj.
- Deference towards the West fjfhf jfffj eeee iiii ssss eee zzz ooo fff ooo fff kkk.

Conclusion:

China is neither a strategic partner nor a hostile adversary of the West. Hsshssj jdjdj ppepepe jrjr jfffj jsdjhsjs jdfkfdn kofon odjodfnkdfjodg lokdfogk odffigo ppoisw opieps. Hb sns jjsdkj klidsosf kjofe kjwiedh jkhukqweh kliqwe jkwile kljqw qwow qwj,w ojoweq kjiaswe iluoieuwq kluwoqequjkihy uuw yywyw uweu uuei ieie ieieio iuw uqie iwewpoe kpre leriore lirek qwliiewwjw kej ljwe kuew eor ekiw ekw3 kihwe jw u kihjer kider wejihwe kiwewe .

Ohdhd sksks hfddfnj ko kf lfgnfg kfkfggdf kldja sd lf lpsd ao kdkd. Hksakas jakj kjsjhs kkis kjs sjsa lokw ioewvejsjhd kje liee ocs kjuasa lo lkiwe ad;i edi osag kisdv isd kousa os jkusa oasd iaw iusde liswe kiew ilwe iwee jkie iuweb ise iuw iluwei owe ier iweru iwe oweqwh iur iwer iwe iuwe iweo popwer pre loerirew power oere ppweroer oieri pier opier oer.

What the evidence I have provided above shows is that you and Nick are the self-nominated overseers of an intellectual environment that does not tolerate dissent from the prevailing state propaganda and/or criticism of the Western system in general and Britain's policy and actions in particular.

To filter out students who refuse to conform to this system of intellectual cloning, you and Nick are employing the following graduated steps:

1. Ignore a student's expressions of dissent from the accepted norm while showering with praise those that conform.
2. If they continue, discourage his/her ideas with subtle yet clearly disapproving comments.

3. If that does not help either, criticize his/her approach or motivation.
4. Should that fail too, undermine the student's intellectual integrity and academic abilities and mark down his/her assignments so as to give him/her to understand that regardless of the quality of the work presented he/she will not be allowed to pass the course.
5. When all else fails, threaten the student in private emails with expulsion from the course and misrepresent his/her posts as "threatening" and/or "disparaging", thus paving the way for a possible breach of netiquette.
6. Throughout this process, present a united front with your colleagues so as to intimidate the student with your strength in numbers.

The cavalier and egregious fashion in which my essay plan has been undervalued can only be explained as a manifestation of point 4 of the filtering process I have outlined above. Despite your overly friendly tone – which is meant to mask to outside scrutiny the hidden intent that I leave the course of my own volition – the message you are sending me is loud and clear, *'If you choose to stay, Kevin, you will not be allowed to pass this or any course or, should you happen to be an outstanding student, we will ensure that your marks will be so low that no one will look at your degree'*.

This being the case, I have decided to accept your not so subtle invitation to leave the programme. Not only do I not want to be part of a programme where I am not welcomed, I would also be ashamed of myself for taking part in a programme designed to favour government policies over truth and academic integrity and thus be co-opted to aid the British government's social control mechanisms. Ensuring that the programme toes the government's line is obviously your and Nick's prerogative since that is the best insurance towards continued government funding. That, however, is below my dignity as an independent thinker. My prerogative is to go where the evidence takes me and to formulate theses that have a better world as their outcome. Suppressing criticism and alternative ideas to protect systemic biases is not my idea of wise use of my time.

Therefore, to ensure that my money goes towards real academic pursuits, and to avoid a prolonged conflict, I ask that Leicester refunds the tuition fees I have thus far paid.

I hope you would agree that your compliance in this respect will save us both a great deal of trouble and will enable us to part ways on amiable terms.

As a last note, I want to draw your attention to the fact that the fail mark I have received on e-tivity 4 is on a subject that I am intimately familiar with since my professional career for the past six years as an analyst/consultant has revolved around China. My work on various aspects of China – from politics to economics and education – is subjected to almost weekly scrutiny at the board level of corporations and NGOs and was never found wanting. Furthermore, it is applied in the real world and is not collecting dust in theoretical publications that no one reads.

Sincerely,

Kevin Galalae

P.S. To my fellow students, I wish the very best. It was a pleasure engaging with you in interesting debates. Should any of you need to contact me, I can be reached at any time at my email address: kgalalae@hotmail.com. I will be more than happy to assist you in every way I can. Good luck!