

ROGUE STATES: ENEMIES OF OUR OWN MAKING?

Akan Malici

Furman University

RESUMEN

Este artículo analiza de forma crítica la política extranjera americana hacia los llamados estados bribones (rogue). Se utiliza el importante concepto psicológico de la *profecía autocumplida*, aunque poco divulgado en las ciencias políticas, para plantear que muchos de los conflictos de EE.UU con los estados rojos son contruidos por los propios EE.UU. Incluso antes de que algunos países supuestamente rojos tuvieran una relación significativa con la U.S., Washington creó una imagen enemiga de ellos y actuó de acuerdo con ella. Al tratar a estos países como enemigos, EE.UU indujo a una percepción hostil entre ellos y dichos países, convirtiendo así en realidad su visión construida. Se sugiere *representar el papel asociado al otro* como una estrategia para *desmontar* los estados bribones. Se concluye con algunos comentarios críticos sobre la política extranjera americana contemporánea.

ABSTRACT

This article critically evaluates U.S. foreign policy toward alleged rogue states. I use an important, but in political science not much discussed, psychological concept -the self-fulfilling prophecy- to argue that many of our conflicts with rogue states are of our own making. Even before some alleged rogue countries engaged in substantive interaction with the U.S., Washington established an enemy image of them and acted accordingly. By treating these countries as enemies, the U.S. induced a hostile intersubjective understanding between itself and those countries and this understanding was henceforth translated into reality. I suggest *altercasting* as a strategy to *unmake* rogue states and I conclude with critical remarks about contemporary U.S. foreign policy.

Key words: self-fulfilling prophecy, rogue states, conflicts, altercasting

Introduction

Since the end of the cold war, rogue states have come to be seen as a major threat to the security of the U.S. specifically and the West generally. Indeed rogue states are often viewed as even more threatening than the Soviet Union during the cold war era. The reason for such heightened fear is that rogue states allegedly do not play by the rules of rationality and are, therefore, difficult to deter from using weapons of mass destruction

(WMD). Related is the fear that they would contribute to the proliferation of WMD. Finally, there is the strong concern that rogue states are engaging in the sponsorship of international terrorism (Tanter, 1998).

The mainstream and popular commentary on rogue states is rather repetitive. The conventional wisdom is that rogue states are ruled by irrational or crazy leaders who are inherently belligerent against the U.S. (Krauthammer: A35). To be sure many of the allegations leveled against rogue states are indeed true. Over the years they have indeed been a menace in the international system, and they have indeed posed a threat to the U.S. and other countries. However, a main contention in this article is that it is also imperative to move beyond the conventional wisdom and ask questions of the following kind: How did rogue states come to be in the first place? Were these states always belligerent? What was the U.S.' role in creating a conflictual relationship? Questions such as these are rarely, if ever, asked.

I will ask these questions with regard to four states: Cuba, North Korea, Iran and Syria. These states have come to be viewed as the paradigmatic rogue states. It should be emphasized at the outset that asking these questions has nothing to do with sympathy, but rather with empathy – a concept introduced to peace and conflict studies by the prominent peace psychologist Ralph White (1991). Whereas sympathy is about favorable inclinations, empathy is simply about understanding the situation from a more comprehensive perspective. My goal is to bring to the forefront some insights that are not often acknowledged or discussed in the mainstream commentary on rogue states. Doing so will create a better understanding of the conflicts the U.S. and its allies are having with rogue states and hopefully contribute to a more constructive discussion about these security threats.

Insights from the discipline of psychology have a lot to offer towards understanding crises and conflict situations generally (Tetlock, 1986). Engaging in empathy toward rogue states can allow for a realization of how oneself may have contributed to the conflictual relationship through the dynamic of the self-fulfilling prophecy, for example. The crux of this phenomenon is that in a pending interaction Self a priori defines Other as a (future) enemy and it is Self's premature definition of Other, rather than Other's actual identity, that then elicits conflictual behavior from Other (Darley and Fazio, 1980: 869). Self, however, will take this conflictual behavior as a confirmation of its prophecy (Merton, 1957). Tragically, a relationship that may have developed in manifold ways, now develops into a conflictual one.

There have been many classic studies about the self-fulfilling prophecy (Crano and Mellon, 1978; Jones, 1977; Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968). It is a well-established fact that as a socio-psychological phenomenon the self-fulfilling prophecy is of much relevance in many social interactions between people (Darley and Fazio, 1980). Curiously, however, the concept has not been applied much to state interactions in the realm of peace and conflict studies. I contend that the self-fulfilling prophecy is also of much relevance here. After all, “states are people too” (Wendt, 1999: 215).

In the remainder of this article I will first discuss the self-fulfilling prophecy in more detail. I will then illustrate how U.S. leaders had “prophecies” about the states discussed here. Subsequently I will suggest that U.S. fears were false or exaggerated; however, they brought forth what would indeed become a threatening situation in subsequent years and decades. Then I will contend that altercasting may be a possible strategy to “unmake” rogue states. I conclude by summarizing the argument and making some critical points about U.S. foreign policy.

The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

American leaders, as well as the American public, generally tend to see the U.S. as the “first nonimperialist superpower” - a claim that, in the words of Samuel Huntington (1999: 38), “manages in three words to exalt American uniqueness, American virtue, and American power.” However, when taking an honest look at the history of U.S. foreign policy, it is evident that American leaders tend to act with a sense of superpower arrogance. Indeed, Huntington points to a long list of corresponding actual or perceived U.S. actions. One of them is meddling in other countries’ internal affairs. Indeed, the U.S. is known and criticized around the world for its interventionism. In a recent critique of U.S. foreign policy, Parker and Stern (2002: 608) noted:

Many Americans seem to have difficulty in understanding that non-Americans do not always share the positive national self-image cherished by U.S. leaders and citizens alike. American power, seen at home as largely benevolent and a source of virtue and security in the world, is often seen as threatening by others. American interventions in conflicts abroad may well be seen as clumsy, gratuitous, and brutal. Americans may be inclined to see the use of violence as a distasteful duty forced on the United States by international circumstances, whereas others may see these same actions as indications of an “imperialistic” and arrogant super-powered elephant in the china shop of international affairs.

The history of U.S. foreign policy since the Second World War is full of examples in which U.S. leaders believed they had to intervene in other countries' internal affairs. Some years ago the *New York Times* wrote, "Since the end of World War II, the United States ... has installed or toppled leaders on every continent, secretly supported political parties of close allies ..., fomented coups, spread false rumors, bribed political figures and spent countless billions of dollars to sway public opinion" (Broder, 1997). A closer look at the history of U.S. interventionism shows that leaders in Washington were very often motivated to act because they feared the spread of communism.

This fear and belief was often unsubstantiated or false, yet it compelled the emergence of real conflicts through a dynamic that is captured well by the concept of the self-fulfilling prophecy. The concept of the self-fulfilling prophecy was first set forth by Robert Merton. He explains (1957: 423):

The self-fulfilling prophecy is, in the beginning, a *false* definition of the situation evoking a new behavior which makes the originally false conception come *true*. The specious validity of the self-fulfilling prophecy perpetuates a reign of error. For the prophet will cite the actual course of events as proof that he was right from the very beginning.

The self-fulfilling prophecy follows an escalatory interaction sequence. In abstract terms, it goes as follows: (1) Self develops or is already holding an expectancy about Other. This expectancy has no firm grounding. In international politics it is often motivated by the "inherent bad-faith model" of decision making, i.e., the tendency to assume unrealistic and improbable worst-case scenarios (Holsti, 1967). (2) Self then acts toward Other in a manner that is in accordance with his or her expectancy of Other. (3) Subsequently, Other interprets the meaning of Self's action. (4) Based on this interpretation, Other responds to Self's action. Because conflictual action is usually reciprocated Other responds accordingly. (5) Self sees his or her initial expectancy (prophecy) to be confirmed.

Of course, in international politics, as well as in any real life situation, the successive steps in this interaction sequence are not always immediate or clear cut. However, the general phenomenon is generally traceable and easily understood: As people come to interact with each other they ascribe "definitions" (images) to each other. These become an integral part of the situation. Actors may "learn" and internalize them and the newly created intersubjective understanding between Self and Other thus affects subsequent developments (Darley and Fazio, 1980). It is through this venue that people or states literally "make" their enemies and friends (Wendt, 1992,

1999; Onuf, 1989). In the second part of this article I will discuss how the same logic also lends itself toward “unmaking” enemies.

Finally, it is important to emphasize and understand the tragedy in the interactions between Self and Other, namely that the conflictual relationship between Self and Other came into being not because Other indeed holds a hostile or dangerous identity, but because Self falsely assumes so. This false assumption can be the result of misinformation, misperception or a host of other contingencies that deflect the reality of the situation. However, it can also be the result of a calculated motivation. In this case Self is not innocent, but knowingly ascribes a false identity to Other because they serve ulterior interests of Self. Critical students of international relations know well that a well-established enemy image facilitates the governing role and strengthens the authority of the initiating leadership (Campbell, 1998).

Making Rogues

In this section I shall briefly illustrate the first step of the escalatory interaction sequence of the self-fulfilling prophecy. This will show, from the perspective of rogue states, how the enemy relations between them and the U.S. were initiated and developed. In all cases the U.S. was motivated to act by a more or less exaggerated fear of communism and a naïve believe in the so-called domino theory. Initially applied to Asia, this theory perpetuated the belief that if any country would fall to communism, it would precipitate the fall of neighboring states to communism as well (Khong, 1992; Ninkovich, 1994). However, more generally, the domino theory was also understood to imply the spread of communism worldwide and not only in certain regions. President Johnson went even so far as to express his fear that communism will advance to California (Dallek, 1998: 754).

Cuba

When Fidel Castro came to power in 1959, there is good evidence that he sought an amenable relationship to the U.S. However, he also pursued economic independence from the U.S. Leaders in Washington saw this ambition as an affront against U.S. businesses in Cuba and they viewed their own economic interests to be threatened. They were further alarmed that Cuba would turn into a communist Soviet satellite. During his presidential campaign, John F. Kennedy was very concerned about the “communization” of Cuba (qtd in Gardner, 1972: 293). He proclaimed, “I think there is a danger that history will make a judgment that these were the days

when the tide began to run out for the United States. These were the times when the Communist tide began to pour in” (qtd. in Paterson, 1988: 199).

The revolutionary missions of Fidel Castro did indeed coincide with Nikita Khrushchev’s announcement that Moscow would support wars of liberation worldwide. However, according to Cuba scholar Thomas Paterson, “It mattered little to Americans that the two appeals appeared independently or that Havana and Moscow differed markedly over the best method for promoting revolutionary change – the Soviets insisted on utilizing Communist parties ..., whereas the Cubans espoused peoples’ rebellions.” Instead, Cuba came to represent the Cold War in the United States’ backyard, and, as such, one senator explained, it became a ‘target for our national frustration and annoyance with Moscow and the whole Communist conspiracy’.” (Paterson, 1989: 125)

It was thus quickly decided that Fidel Castro’s regime must be overthrown through covert military operations. This plan resulted in the infamous Bay of Pigs fiasco in 1961. According to critics of U.S. foreign policy it was then only reasonable that Cuba seek an alliance with the Soviet Union as the other superpower. Relations between the U.S. and Cuba have been bad since then.

North Korea

The first hostile action of the U.S. against North Korea occurred already in 1905. In a secret agreement with the Japanese government, Secretary of State (and later President) William Howard Taft approved Japan’s domination of Korea. In return, Washington was given assurances that Tokyo would not challenge U.S. colonial domination of the Philippines. Upon the agreement, Japanese forces immediately occupied Korea and annexed it as a Japanese possession in 1910. Enabled by the U.S., Japan subsequently ruled as the harsh colonial master of the peninsula until its defeat in the Second World War (Oberdorfer, 1997: 5).

The North Korean regime also considers the U.S. to be responsible for the artificial separation of the peninsula in 1945. Indeed, as North Korean specialist Bruce Cumings (1981: 120) writes, “The initial decision to draw a line at the thirty-eight parallel was wholly an American action, taken during a night-long session of the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC), on August 10-11” (see also Oberdorfer, 1997: 6). Cumings (2004: 2-3) elaborates this point further: “John J. McCloy, Lt. Col. Dean Rusk, and Col. Charles H. Bonesteel unilaterally divided this ancient country, consulting no Korean and no allies, and once U.S. occupation forces

arrived three weeks later, they immediately set about repressing the mushrooming progressive movements that spread throughout the peninsula”

After the division, U.S. troops controlled that part of Korea which included its capital, two thirds of its population, most of its light industry, and the larger part of its agricultural capacity (Cumings 1981: 121). The goal of U.S. leaders was to establish a “bulwark” against communism (Cumings, 1981: 136). When North Korean forces illegally invaded the South in 1950, Pyongyang and Washington escalated into the catastrophic Korean War. Since 1953 there is an armistice, but relations between North Korea and the U.S. have remained conflictual.

Iran

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had been conducting covert operations in Iran since the late 1940s (Byrne, 2004: 216). In June 1948, President Harry Truman signed a directive authorizing “propaganda; ... sabotage, anti-sabotage, demolition, and evacuation measures; ... subversion ... including assistance to underground resistance movements, guerillas and refugee liberation groups....” (Etzold and Gaddis, 1978: 125-128; Byrne, 2004: 216). These covert operations intensified when in 1950 Mohammed Mosaddeq became the Prime Minister of a popular and democratically oriented government (Gasirowski, 1987: 261). Washington leaders, however, feared that Mossadeq would restrict U.S. and British control of the Middle Eastern oil industry. Yet, more important though was that Washington also feared that he would turn the country towards communism. Indeed, Iran was described as “dangerous and explosive,” and a possible “second China” (Gasirowski, 1987: 267).

In 1952 Truman signed a directive “authorizing a series of aggressive military, political, ‘special,’ and other operations ...” (Byrne, 2004: 217). Soon afterwards Dwight Eisenhower became President of the U.S. and he would continue his predecessor’s approach. Two weeks after Eisenhower’s inauguration in January 1953, leading U.S. and British officials met to review the ensuing situation. At this meeting it was decided to topple Mosaddeq and install a leadership more complacent to the interests of Washington and London. In April, \$1 million was transmitted to the CIA station in Tehran and it was authorized to use it “in any way that would bring about the fall of Mosaddeq” (Gasirowski, 2004: 232). Operatives orchestrated Operation AJAX and the fall of Mossadeq led to the establishment of the Shah who was previously described as “unscrupulous” by U.S. officials (Gasirowski, 1987: 267, 271). Among experts there is little doubt that this epi-

sode has been the catalyst for the conflictual relations between the U.S. and Iran that remain today.

Syria

Also in Syria the U.S. had engaged in covert operations since the late 1940s because it feared a Soviet outpost. A high point came in March 1949 when the CIA encouraged a right-wing military coup and pro-American Colonel Adib Shishakli emerged as the Syrian leader. He was a brutal dictator and this was known to leaders in Washington. According to the CIA station chief in Damascus, Shishakli was a “likeable rogue” who “had not ... ever bowed to a graven image. He had, however, committed sacrilege, blasphemy, murder, adultery and theft” (Weiner, 2007: 138; Little, 1990: 52; Ma’oz, 2004: 165). It was perhaps no surprise that by 1954 Shishakli was overthrown through an internal effort. Thus, in August 1957 the U.S. attempted a new coup to overthrow the existing regime (Jones, 2004; Lesch, 1992; Little, 1990). The plans, however, failed again and the Syrian government expelled three U.S. diplomats. The U.S. responded in kind and declared the Syrian ambassador to Washington *persona non grata*.

President Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Dulles then viewed the perceived signs in Syria as “unacceptable” as they believed that the U.S. “could not afford to have exist a Soviet satellite not contiguous to the Soviet border and in the midst of the already delicate Middle East situation” (qtd. in Lesch, 1996: 134; see also Lesch, 1992: 96). Thus, the U.S. leadership seriously contemplated direct military action against Syria. In late August, Dulles stated to Chief of Staff General Nathan Twining that “we are thinking of the possibility of fairly drastic action.” And to the British foreign minister he communicated that “we must be prepared to take some serious risks” (Lesch, 1996: 134-137; Little, 1990: 71-72). However, Washington ultimately refrained because of the lack of support from Saudi Arabia and Iraq, which it considered necessary to avoid a regional upheaval. Relations between the U.S. and Syria have remained bad since this time.

Facing Rogues

Conventional discussions about rogue states tend to lack an acknowledgment of the historical periods briefly illustrated here. It seems that the first significant interactions between the U.S. and the states that would come to be known as rogues were initiated by the U.S. and they were based on a faulty understanding and ascription of the target states. This is what sets the self-fulfilling prophecy in motion. In the present cases the faulty

definition consisted in an exaggerated or instrumentalized fear of communism and a naïve believe in the domino theory. Indeed, the plausibility of the domino theory rested on a very superficial level of knowledge. It resulted from a profound ignorance of the actual context of the countries discussed here as well as their leaders' actual initial ambitions and intentions.

A State Department publication after the Bay of Pigs invasion acknowledges that "It is not clear whether ... Castro intended from the start to betray his pledges of a free and democratic Cuba, to deliver his country to the Sino-Soviet bloc..." (qtd. in Langley, 1970: 41). The influential Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairperson William Fulbright stated to the president that Castro would be "a thorn in the flesh, but not a dagger in the heart" (qtd. in Neustadt and May, 1986: 149). For the Senator any operation to oust Castro was "wildly out of proportion to the threat" (Giglio, 2006: 55). The situation with Kim Il Sung in North Korea was also misdiagnosed. Although it has been said that Kim's rise to power was facilitated by Moscow, he was indeed quite independent from this communist center, fashioning his own and autonomous brand of Marxism, later known as the Juche ideology (Cummings, 2004). The U.S., however, refused to engage with Kim Il Sung and so any potential for an alliance between Moscow and Pyongyang would grow stronger.

Regarding the case of Iran, although Mossadeq was supported by the Communist Tudeh party, scholars tend to agree that this alliance served instrumental purposes only (Behrooz, 2004; Byrnes, 2004). His reforms proved him to be a liberal democrat and "ardent nationalist," not communist (Gasirowski, 1987: 262). Regarding the case of Syria, it did not matter to Washington leaders that there was, in fact, no ideological agreement between Moscow and the leadership of the Syrian Communist Party (Little, 1990: 54). As Michel Aflaq, one of the founding members of the Ba'th party stated in 1956, "Communism is strange to Arabs just as the capitalist system is strange to them. They will not embrace communism just as they do not embrace capitalism ..." (qtd. in Lesch, 1992: 105).

In sum, although there was some "communist movement" in the countries discussed here, they were not as threatening as they were assumed to be or as they were made out to be. The latter conclusion is reinforced by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles who later acknowledged deliberately exaggerating the dangers of communism, "admitting that fanning the flames served important purposes, including preserving allied unity abroad and garnering support for tough policies at home" (Byrne, 2004: 219; Gaddis, 1982: 102-103, 143-145). In Dulles' words, "It's a fact, unfortu-

nate though it be, that in promoting our programs in Congress we have to make evident the international communist menace” (qtd. in Gaddis, 1982: 144). What makes matters worse is that not only were situations – willfully or not – misdiagnosed, but in accordance with the “prediction” of the self-fulfilling prophecy the faulty diagnoses contributed to the emergence of real danger situations:

In the post-1945 period, the over-estimation of the Communist threat has led to global containment, and, in turn, to American expansion and an empire that faces unrelenting challenges. Paradoxically, American global activism to extend and protect American interests and to guard against the spread of Communism has not produced more security, but rather a deeper vulnerability. The exaggeration of the Communist threat, in the end, has meant more danger and more threat (Paterson, 1988: xi-xii).

History runs only once and so it is not unproblematic to assert that relations between the U.S. on the one hand and Cuba, North Korea, Iran and Syria on the other would have turned out much better than they did. However, U.S. action ensured that one of the worst, if not the worst, outcomes was obtained and it continues to plague the world today. To be sure, the claim here is not that U.S. fears were always void of any legitimacy. It is also important to acknowledge that blame for the ensuing situation is certainly also to be attributed to rogue states. The point here is that in the interest of constructive and productive discussion about the U.S. crises with rogue states it is important to consider the context presented here.

Unmaking Rogues: altercating

U.S. relations with the countries discussed here are seriously bad and it seems that leaders in Washington are faced with two alternative choices. The first choice is to be unreflective, dishonest, short-sighted, reactive, and thereby continue the pattern of mutual (gradual) escalation. To critical observers of U.S. foreign policy, it appears that this has been the dominant way of making decisions since the beginning of the crises and conflicts with the states discussed here. Some observers have gone so far as to characterize the U.S. approach as a “hardline rejectionsist, crime and punishment” strategy (Shenon, 2002; Sanger 2002, Sigal, 1998). The second choice is to be more self-reflective, honest, far sighted, and magnanimous and thereby explore a path toward peaceful conflict resolution.

If the second option is viewed as desirable, then altercasting may be an appropriate strategy (Wendt, 1999). The underlying logic of altercasting is the above discussed self-fulfilling prophecy. It is interesting (and ironic) that the same psychological “pathology” that can create enemy relationships, can also function in reverse. The difference is that in the self-fulfilling prophecy the false definition can be the result of a non-willful distortion. In altercasting, on the other hand, Self is willfully assuming a *desired* identity for Other: By treating the other as if he is to respond in a certain way, ego is literally trying to “teach” its definition of the situation to Other. If alter is “willing to learn” then both actors will emerge with a newly created intersubjective understanding of each other (Blumer, 1969: 2; Wendt, 1999: 330-331; Merton, 1953).

More specifically, altercasting is “a technique of interactor control in which Self uses tactics of self-presentation and stage management in an attempt to frame Other’s definition of the situation in ways that create the role which ego desires alter to play.” Thus, within the strategy of altercasting Self attempts to induce Other to take on a new identity (and thereby enlist Other in Self’s effort to change itself) by treating Other as if it already had that identity (Wendt, 1992: 421; see also: Goffman, 1959; Weinstein and Deutschberger, 1963; Earle, 1986). The ultimate goal is that both Ego and Alter, in the end, subscribe to a newly emerging “definition of the situation” or a new intersubjective understanding (Mead, 1934, Stebbins, 1967, Perinbanayagam, 1974).

In practical terms, the strategy of altercasting (towards improved relations) entails continuous gestures (moves and tactics) that an opponent would not expect. It is similar to Charles Osgood’s (1960, 1962) Graduated Reciprocation In Tension-reduction (GRIT) strategy. Osgood (1962: 96-103) argued that unilateral cooperative initiatives should be unexpected surprise moves, should explicitly invite reciprocation, and should be continued over a considerable period of time even if reciprocation is not immediately forthcoming (see also Goldstein and Freeman, 1990).

This is not an idealistic or naïve strategy. Scholars have argued and shown that Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev used an “altercasting” strategy to transform the cold war enmity between the U.S. and the Soviet Union (Goldstein and Freeman, 1990; Koslowski and Kratochwil, 1994; Malici, 2008; Wendt, 1999). Wendt (1999: 76) explains:

For four decades ... the Soviet Union treated the Cold War as a given. Then in the 1980s it engaged in “New Thinking,” an important outcome of which was the realization that aggressive Soviet foreign policies contributed to Western hostility....

According to Wendt (1999: 76, 375), Gorbachev's "New Thinking" was the result of a "moment of reflexivity" and it allowed him "to end, unilaterally and almost overnight, a conflict that seemed like it had become set in stone." U.S. foreign policy and security may also benefit from a moment of reflexivity, and I contend that the strategy of altercasting is a worthwhile consideration for the U.S. as it deals with contemporary enemies. Just as the cold war was not set in stone, neither are ensuing crises and conflicts.

Conclusions

All politics are enacted and perceived by human beings. Therefore, all politics are a fundamentally socio-psychological endeavor. In order to understand politics better, it is, therefore, necessary to incorporate insights from fields such as psychology. In order to understand conflict situations better it is also recommendable to empathize with real or perceived opponents. Doing so allows for a better understanding of how oneself may have contributed to a conflict situation through a self-fulfilling prophecy, for example. This is what I attempted to do in this brief article where I have suggested that the U.S. contributed to the making of rogue states that are today a major international security concern.

This argument certainly lacks popularity, especially in the U.S. It is almost a given that U.S. leaders, at least publicly, feel innocent of any previous actions against the countries discussed here, and they are quick to discard any accusations "leveled against [them] by outsiders as paranoid nonsense or blatant, deliberately distorted propaganda" (White, 1991: 295). The public, by and large, in this regard, is in agreement with its leaders. However, such feelings are often based partly on sheer ignorance of the actual history between the U.S. and alleged rogue states and partly on rationalizing whatever the U.S. has done.

In this article I have highlighted some historical facts that are rarely acknowledged in the public discussion. Also today much of the commentary on rogue states is rather one-sided not, considering how the actions of the U.S. are not leading to an end of conflicts, but to their reification, i.e. a perpetuation of the self-fulfilling prophecy. In January 2002 U.S. President George Bush branded Iraq, Iran and North Korea as members of the infamous "axis of evil." Cuba and Syria were regarded as "junior varsity axis of evil" (Ma'oz 2004: 157). In September of that year, the White House published *The National Security Strategy of the USA*. Most importantly and controversially, the new security strategy elevated preemptive strikes to a legitimate action in the conduct of international politics. Fourteen months

later the U.S. launched an illegal invasion of Iraq as one of the members of the axis of evil.

Naturally these events led to a heightened concern in the capitals of the U.S.' enemies. Their concrete fear is that they could be the next target of preponderant U.S. power. Against such a backdrop, it may only be reasonable for leaders in rogue states to seek a deterrent, for example through the development of WMD. The public commentary, however, has been successful in dissuading any such consideration. One rarely, if ever, reads or hears about possible defensive motivations of these states against a superpower that has demonstrated that the strong do what they will. Instead, it is a given that rogue states do harbor offensive intentions. Such one sided commentary, although pretending that it is to the well-being of the U.S. security, is, in fact, nothing, but propaganda and it achieves the opposite of what it claims to achieve.

These final considerations shall not be understood as an advocacy for the possession of WMD by rogue states. This argument is also not meant to deflect from the considerable blame that rogue states must carry for ensuing crises and conflicts. Rather, these considerations are to be understood as an advocacy for a more honest debate about issues that affect the well-being of people worldwide.

References

- Behrooz, Maziar. 2004. The 1953 Coup in Iran and the Legacy of the Tudeh. In *Mohammed Mosaddeq and the 1953 Coup in Iran*, edited by Mark Gasirowski and Malcolm Byrne, pp. 102-125. Ithaca, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Blumer, Herbert. 1969. The Methodological Position of Symbolic Interactionism. In *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*, edited by Herbert Blumer, pp. 1-60. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Broder, John. 1997. Foreign Taint on National Election? A Boomerang for U.S. *The New York Times* (March 31).
- Byrne, Malcolm. 2004. The Road to Intervention: Factors Influencing U.S. Policy Toward Iran, 1945-1953. In *Mohammed Mosaddeq and the 1953 Coup in Iran*, edited by Mark Gasirowski and Malcolm Byrne, pp. 201-226. Ithaca, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Campbell, David. 1998. *Writing Security. United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- Crano, William and Phyllis Mellon. 1978. Causal Influence of Teachers' Expectations on Childrens' Academic Performance: A Crossed-Leg Panel Analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology* 70: 39-49.
- Cumings, Bruce. 1981. *The Origins of the Korean War: Liberation and the Emergence of Separate Regimes 1945-1947*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

- Cummings, Bruce. 2004. Decoupled from History: North Korea in the "Axis of Evil." In *Inventing the Axis of Evil: The Truth about North Korea, Iran, and Syria*, edited by Ervand Abrahamian, Bruce Cummings and Moshe Ma'oz. pp. 1-91. New York: the Free Press.
- Dallek, Robert. 1998. *Flawed Giant: Lyndon B. Johnson and His Times, 1961-1973*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Darley, John and Russell Fazio. 1980. Expectancy Confirmation Processes Arising in the Social Interaction Sequence. *American Psychologist* 35: 867-881.
- Earle, Walter. 1986. International Relations and the Psychology of Control: Alternative Control Strategies and Their Consequences. *Political Psychology* 7: 369-375.
- Etzold, Thomas and John Lewis Gaddis. 1978. *Containment: Documents in American Policy and Strategy, 1945-1950*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Farhang, Mansour. 1993. U.S. Policy toward the Islamic Republic of Iran: A Case of Misperception and Reactive Behavior. In *The United States and the New Middle East: A Search for New Perspectives*, edited by Hooshang Amirahmadi, pp. 151-175. New York: SUNY Press
- Gaddis, John Lewis. 1982. *Strategies of Containment*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gardner, Lloyd. 1972. Cold War Counter Revolution, 1961-1970. In *From Colony to Empire*, edited by William Williams, pp. 431-474. New York Wiley Publishers.
- Gasirowski, Mark. 1987. The 1953 Coup D'Etat in Iran. *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19: 261-286.
- Gasirowski, Mark. 2004. The 1953 Coup d'Etat Against Mossadeq. In *Mohammed Mosaddeq and the 1953 Coup in Iran*, edited by Mark Gasirowski and Malcolm Byrne, pp. 227-260. Ithaca, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Giglio, John. 2006. *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy*, 2nd ed., revised. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.
- Goffman, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Doubleday.
- Goldstein, Joshua and John Freeman. 1990. *Three-Way Street. Strategic Reciprocity in World Politics*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Holsti, Ole. 1967. Cognitive Dynamics and Images of the Enemy. *Journal of International Affairs*, 21: 16-39
- Huntington, Samuel. 1999. The Lonely Superpower. *Foreign Affairs* 78: 35-49.
- Jones, Matthew. 2004. The 'Preferred Plan': The Anglo-American Working Group Report on Covert Action in Syria, 1957. *Intelligence and National Security* 19: 401-415.
- Jones, Russell. 1977. *Self-fulfilling Prophecies: Social, Psychological, and Physiological Effects of Expectancies*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Khong, Yuen Foong 1992. *Analogies at War. Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965*. Princeton, NJ.: Princeton University Press.
- Koslowski, Rey and Friedrich Kratochwil. 1994. Understanding Change in International Politics: The Soviet Empire's Demise and the International System. *International Organization* 48: 215-247.
- Krauthammer, Charles. 2005. In Iran, Arming for Armageddon. *Washington Post (December 16)*: A35.

- Langley, Lester, ed. 1970. *The United States, Cuba, and the Cold War*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company.
- Lesch, David. 1992. *Syria and the United States: Eisenhower's Cold War in the Middle East*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Lesch, David. 1996. The 1957 American-Syrian Crisis: Globalist Policy in a Regional Reality. In *The Middle East and the United States: A Historical and Political Re-assessment*, edited by David Lesch, pp. 131-146. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Leverett, Flynt. 2005. *Inheriting Syria. Bashar's Trial by Fire*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- Little, Douglas. 1990. Cold War and Covert Action: The United States and Syria, 1945-1958. *Middle East Journal* 44: 51-75.
- Malici, Akan. 2008. *When Leaders Learn and When They Don't*. Albany, NY: SUNY University Press.
- Ma'oz, Moshe. 2004. Damascus vs. Washington: Between the "Axis of Evil" and "Pax Americana." In *Inventing the Axis of Evil: The Truth about North Korea, Iran, and Syria*, edited by Ervand Abrahamian, Bruce Cumings and Moshe Ma'oz. pp. 157-213. New York: the Free Press.
- Mead, George (1934) *Mind, Self, and Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Merton, Robert. 1957. *Social Theory and Social Structure*. Blencoe, Ill: Free Press.
- Neustadt, Richard, and Ernest May. 1986. *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers*. New York: Free Press.
- Ninkovich, Frank. 1994. *Modernity and Power: A History of the Domino Theory in the Twentieth Century*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Oberdorfer, Don. 1997. *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Onuf, Nicholas. 1989. *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press.
- Osgood, Charles. 1960. *Graduate Reciprocation in Tension Reduction*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Osgood, Charles. 1962. *An Alternative to War and Surrender*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Paterson, Thomas. 1988. *Meeting the Communist Threat: Truman to Reagan*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Paterson, Thomas. 1989. Fixation with Cuba: The Bay of Pigs, Missile Crisis, and covert war against Castro. In *Kennedy's Quest for Victory: American Foreign Policy, 1961-1963*, edited by Thomas Paterson, 123-155. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Perinbanayagam, Robert. 1974. The Definition of the Situation: An Analysis of the Ethnomethodological and Dramaturgical View. *Sociological Quarterly* 15: 521-541.
- Rosenthal, Leonore. and Robert Jacobson. 1968. *Pygmalion in the Classroom: Teacher Expectation and Pupils' Intellectual Development*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Wilson
- Sanger, David. 2003. North Korea Says it Seeks to Develop Nuclear Arms. *New York Times* (June 10): A10.
- Shenon, Philip. 2002. U.S. Rejects North Korean Call for Talks on Nuclear Program. *International Herald Tribune* (5 November).

- Sigal, Leon. 1998. *Disarming Strangers: Nuclear Diplomacy with North Korea*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Stebbins, Robert. 1967. A Theory of the Definition of the Situation. *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 4: 148-164.
- Tanter, Raymond. 1998. *Rogue Regimes. Terrorism and Proliferation*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Tetlock, Philip. 1986. "Psychological Advice on Foreign Policy. What Do We Have to Contribute?" *American Psychologist* 41: 557-567.
- Weinstein, Eugene and Paul Deutschberger. 1963. Some Dimensions of Altercasting. *Sociometry* 26: 454-466.
- Wendt, Alexander. 1992. Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics. *International Organization* 46: 391-425.
- Wendt, Alexander. 1999. *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Weiner, Tim. 2007. *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA*. New York: Doubleday.
- White, Ralph. 1991. Empathizing with Saddam Hussein. *Political Psychology* 12: 291-308.

Akan Malici es profesor ayudante en la Furman University, Sur de Carolina USA. Su actividad investigadora se centra en los estudios de conflicto y paz, la psicología política y las decisiones de política exterior. Sus publicaciones más recientes son: *Learn and When They Don't* (SUNY Press, 2008) y *The Search for a Common European Foreign and Security Policy* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). Este artículo también se publica en *in Political Psychology, The Journal of Conflict Resolution, The Journal of Peace Research, Foreign Policy Analysis* and *Psicologia Politica*.

Address: Akan Malici. Furman University. Department of Political Science. 3300 Poinsett Highway. Greenville, SC 29613. akan.malici@furman.edu