WAR & PEACE & WAR

THE LIFE CYCLES OF IMPERIAL NATIONS

PETER TURCHIN

A Review of Chapters 13 & 14

By Nadia Fraga
CHAPTER 13: The Bowling Alley in History

- Italy: 1970’s Political Reform
- Regions received similar amounts of funds
- Political Scientists used the backdrop to observe how regional, political culture affects institutional performance of regional governments for the next two decades

*ASABIYA: SOCIAL CAPITAL*
CHAPTER 13: The Bowling Alley in History

Institutional Performance = How well regional government performs

Asabiya = Root of performance of regional governments
1993: Robert Putman uses 12 social indicators for measurement (including):
- Bureaucratic responsiveness
- Budget promptness
- Family clinics
- Daycare centers
CHAPTER 13: The Bowling Alley in History

Results:
- Strong North-South gradient
  - North: Piedemont, Lombardia in Po Valley
  - South: Calabria, Sicily (Mezzogiorno)
CHAPTER 13: The Bowling Alley in History

**SOUTH**
- Networks:
  - Hardly existence of networks amongst nuclear family
  - “Extreme atomization…community-level cooperative efforts are virtually impossible…not a society”
- Rural & poor
- Organized Crime:
  - Mafia
  - Camorra
  - ‘ndrangheta

**NORTH**
- Networks
  - Interests in Public Issues & causes
  - Civil associations: literary, hiking, hunting & other social clubs
- Urban, industrialized & wealthy
- Nothing Similar to the organized crime among *Mezzogiorno*
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One century ago—almost no economic difference; gap began widening in 1920…

Therefore: social differences not due to economic disparity

Causation: North is wealthier because it has more social capital
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Francis Fukuyama:

“for a huge corporation to be viable, it is necessary that... employees share a high degree of generalized trust... relying on both free market forces and group solidarity.”
CHAPTER 13: The Bowling Alley in History

Declining Asabiyah in America

- trust in government is declining
- distrust of the media
- frequency of divorce
- isolation in cars, at work, etc.
- bowling alone (as opposed to in a league)
CHAPTER 14: The End of Empire?

THE AGE OF EMPIRES IS STRONG...
BUT THE AGE OF EMPORERS IS OVER

Empire: a large multiethnic territorial state with a complex power structure
CHAPTER 14: The End of Empire?

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- minority groups
- global power
- not all empires have emperors
  - Athenian
  - British
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EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

- est. March 1957:
  - France
  - W. Germany (Germany)
  - Italy
  - Belgium
  - Netherlands
  - Luxembourg
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The End of Empire?

CHINA

- 2003: economic reforms that have lead to the quadrupling of GDP
- 2nd largest economy in the world (purchasing power)
- use of force:
  - Tibet
  - Xinjiang
  - Taiwan?
CHAPTER 14: The End of Empire?

CORE STATE OF THE FORMER SOVIET EMPIRE…

- Chechnya is KEY
  - Chechens
    - Tribal highlanders
    - Muslim threat from the South
    - Raiding and enslaving Russians

- according to Turhin, if Russia succeeds in incorporating Chechnya, it will be a world empire
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MIDDLE EAST

- Establishment of Israel in 1948
- Occupation of Iraq by the U.S.
  - metaethnic frontier theory: expect a counter response
  - Asabiya of Palestinians has greatly increased:
    - Forced withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon in 2000
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TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES

- Internet bloggers: those in power are no longer dictating the sharing of information
  - WWW: wealthier, intellectual users
- Mobile Phones: affordable, even by the poor
  - Collective unity
  - Communicating info
  - Coordination
- All small, hand-held devices are enabling cohesion across cities, borders, countries.
CHAPTER 14: The End of Empire?

Turchin Acknowledges:

- Abundant food & energy
- Technology & science
- Mass media

Are new phenomena with dynamics that are distinct from studied historical empires…

Nonetheless, he stands by the

THE LIFE CYCLES OF IMPERIAL NATIONS because,

"we still make babies the old-fashioned way, we kill each other in individual and collective conflicts, have feelings of group loyalty, and intolerance toward strangers."