INTERNATIONAL HISTORY POLITICS

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An organized section of the American Political Science Association (APSA)

In This Issue

International History and Politics (IHAP)

Website

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Call for Announcements

Section members are invited to send their announcements about upcoming workshops, recent articles/books, or anything else of general IHAP interest to the newsletter editor to be featured in the August issue of the newsletter: John Emery– jremery@uci.edu

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Newsletter Spring 2021
Volume 7, Issue 1

Message from the IHAP President:

While the COVID-19 pandemic continues across much of the world, there are signs of a shifts back to normal. Many of us are considering travel for the first time in over a year. My own first forays beyond my pandemic operating space will focus on reconnecting with friends and family. But I also know that, soon, I will have to think about a return to professional travel.

For many of us, a return to professional travel means a return to archival research. In this issue of the newsletter our editor, John Emery, has assembled an impressive array of essays on the practice of archival research. Our contributors—Laia Balcells, Jacqueline L. Hazelton, Mary Anne Mendoza, Kevin Olson, and Joshua Shifrinson—provide not only practical advice on archival research. The essays reflect on how archival research can amplify marginalized voices, and how scholars must be attentive to the ways official documents contain as much silence as they do voice. The essays discuss moments of surprise and revelation, findings that push research in new and unexpected directions. The contributions, in essence, demonstrate that archival research is no mere addendum to our work as political scientists. Here's hoping that we are all able to return to our archives in the near future.

We are also looking to travel in October, when we will hold our annual meetings of the American Political Science Association. As you all know, this year's conference with have both in-person and virtual components. Our program chair, Marcos Scauso, took on the formidable task of organizing us in this hybrid space. We are grateful to him for taking this on, and I encourage you to take a look at the panels IHAP is sponsoring. We have decided this year to hold both our annual Business Meeting and our Reception remotely, in order to make these events as accessible as possible. We'll be sending out more details over ApsaConnect as we get closer to the conference.

Finally, at this year's Business Meeting, we will approve our new slate of Executive Committee members. If you want to nominate someone to the Executive Committee, or want to serve yourself, please contact our Vice President, Catherine Lu, at catherine.lu@mcgill.ca by July 30, 2021.

I hope you continue to be safe and well throughout the summer, and that we are all able to engage in more travel and more social and professional connections as the fall approaches.

– Stacie Goddard, Wellesley College, IHAP President

Roundtable
The Theory and Practice of Archival Research in International History and Politics

The Practice of Archival Research

By: Jacqueline L. Hazelton, U.S. Naval War College, Department of Strategy and Policy[*]

I admit it. I never thought it would happen, not being much of a hero worshiper, but I felt awe the first time I held a note from President Truman signed with that surprisingly elegant "HST." The connection across time was too immediate to ignore. Reading letters between a British lieutenant colonel and the commander he disagreed with while both fought in Dhofar, Oman, in the 1970s, and the comments each jotted in the margins, brought home the limits of diplomatic language and human patience in wartime. When I came across a piece of blue paper wrapped around locks of hair cut from the heads of two young British children who died and were buried at sea in the 19th century, I felt that I was intruding upon private grief.


An historian friend describes archival research as reading dead people's mail. He is not wrong. Research involving primary documents is a surprisingly intimate experience. I did not expect this to be so when I began archival research in the United States and United Kingdom for my dissertation. Since then, I have learned to pay attention to those emotions for what they can tell me about the material at hand. Without formal training in archival research, I have picked up a number of other useful habits as well while finishing research for my first book. I offer some of them here for what help they may provide.

Who: Think about who knows things about your subject. Archivists, sociologists, anthropologists, historians, and participants in what you're researching can help. I have found at the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, MD, for example, that the staff who help you understand the strangely opaque filing system and records request process are not necessarily up to speed on the documents and the history itself. There are more expert archivists available for consultation. Archivists at the Bodleian Library at Oxford University are readily available via email for suggesting potentially useful search terms, documents, and collections.

What: What kinds of material will help you understand your topic? Government documents, personal letters and memoirs, interviews, and material objects like the luxurious robes that Faisal bin al-Hussein bin Ali al-Hashemi gave T.E. Lawrence during the Arab Revolt in World War I, as well as his sapphire ring and khanjar, or dagger, can provide insight along with information.

Hearing the voices of men who fought in Dhofar recalling their experiences was a surprisingly personal experience. Interviews can elicit unexpected material, as when I interviewed British Major General Ken Perkins about commanding the Sultan's Armed Forces of Oman and learned that he had also served as an aviator bombing the jungles during the Malayan Emergency.

When: A mentor once told me that archival research is necessary when there are questions about what actually happened. Many projects do not require primary sources; secondary or even tertiary material will provide all you need. If you do need to do archival work, start as early as you can, even if your ideas are still nebulous. It is likely that going over the

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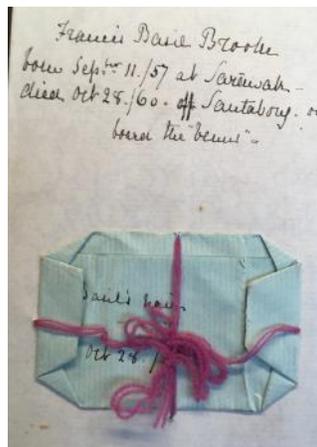
[*]These views are those of the author alone

material will not only provide food for thought but change your thinking.

Not all of us study or teach at institutions providing significant research support. Consider funding sources both internal and external. The presidential libraries offer research grants, as does the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center.

Plan ahead. Most archives have at least some information on their holdings online. Look for finding aids, which explain what is available and where. Also look for handlists and catalogs. Some archives permit advance reservation of documents or files. Take advantage of this if you can because it saves time. It can take hours or even days for archives to produce specific records, particularly those stored off site. Keep this in mind once you are at the archive as well. If you can request new materials knowing they are likely to arrive relatively close to the time when you finish with what you have, so much the better. Also have work on hand for down times when you have no documents to examine.

Where: Spread your net widely. As well as major archives, take a look at smaller archives, college and university collections, museums, libraries, and personal papers. I received a precious wealth of documents on the war in El Salvador from U.S. Army Special Forces Major General Simeon Trombitas, who served there. For those researching military subjects, there are many small regimental museums in Great Britain. The Tameside Local Studies and Archive was generous and speedy in responding to my email request for a copy of one issue of *The Journal of The King's Regiment*.

How: Send thank-you notes. Follow the rules. Be patient: Archive staff are locating your specific requests amid vast collections of probably unrelated material. Handle the materials carefully, using the rests and weights and gloves provided. Check hours; some days maybe be early closing and others late closing. Some archives stop accepting new requests some time before closing for the day.

Take careful notes as well as photos of pretty much everything you look at. One straightforward way to keep track is to take a picture of the box label and file label every time you start on a new box and a new file. Do not ever forget to note the collection, box, file, document title, author, recipient, and any other identifying information. You will be dismally unhappy if you want to cite that document later and cannot identify it properly for a footnote. Similarly, looking back through thousands of JPG's for a file box number is tedious. It is possible to make your images searchable, though it is time consuming if you don't do it initially. Ask whether the archive has a preferred citation style, as the Bodleian does. Make sure you know all the copyright rules for the archives you use as well. If the archive requires you to use a paper slug showing that you have permission to photograph the document, as NARA II does, make sure you do it. If not, you risk a dressing down and even expulsion. Beyond recording information, think about how each item fit into your thinking, or challenge it. What seems odd or out of place initially may turn out to be a key to your understanding of your subject.

I came across a raft of material at the British

"When I came across a piece of blue paper wrapped around locks of hair cut from the heads of two young British children who died and were buried at sea in the 19th century, I felt that I was intruding upon private grief."

National Archives on arguments over *jus soli* (birthright citizenship) during the Malayan Emergency. This is not a subject covered in the extensive secondary literature on that counterinsurgency campaign. It turned out to be

a [crucial example](#) of the British giving up their hope of turning their colony into a pluralistic liberal democracy with equal citizenship for all and instead acceding to the Malay sultans' demand that they retain greater political power than the ethnic Chinese or ethnic Indian communities in Malaysia.

Similarly, the lack of British government attention to the ethnicities of the insurgents in Malaya set me on the track of comparative politics research on Malaysia. I learned that the insurgency was not – as commonly assumed – an ethnic Chinese movement but one involving all ethnicities, and that many more members of the ethnic Chinese community joined government efforts against the insurgency than they did the insurgency. The narrative of ethnic Chinese insurgency was developed by the Malay-dominated government after independence as part of its effort to shape communal interests.

I made a similar discovery while researching the U.S. advisory period in Vietnam. I found – without looking for it -- that contrary to the popular wisdom adopted from Andrew F. Krepinevich Jr.'s pathbreaking *The Army and Vietnam* of 1988, U.S. advisors from Saigon to the most distant provinces believed that it was necessary to build a strong modern liberal government in South Vietnam in order to defeat the insurgency. [This finding overturns one leading argument about the need for good governance to succeed in counterinsurgency](#).

In reading material, what can you discern between the lines? What are the assumptions of the author and their audience(s)? What type of material is this: Official? Draft? Personal? Advisory? Admonitory? Whose interests are identified? Whose are ignored? Who and what goes unmentioned?

Finally, ask if you want more. Sometimes you will receive. Some archives in the United States have an expert on staff who can declassify documents on the spot. At the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, Randy Rakers performed this miracle for me when I was researching the Salvadoran Civil War. The declassified material revealed more of the Salvadoran Armed Forces' own approach to the war, taking me beyond U.S. thinking, documents, and recollections.

Silence in the Archives
By: Kevin Olson, University of California Irvine, Department of Political Science

"Silence in the Archives" might sound like library rules, or an existential statement about the solitude of the researcher. This title actually aims at something much more cosmic, however. That is the question of how we research the lives, thoughts, and actions of silenced subalterns, those people who have been so thoroughly excluded from social participation that they are erased from the archives.

My question is heavily influenced by Gayatri Spivak's pathbreaking essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?"[1] Spivak takes great pains to show how layers of incomprehension and misunderstanding can result in a systematic silencing of subaltern voices. She is not merely concerned about voice or the ability to speak in a narrow, literal sense, however. Instead, subaltern speech is a metaphor for a highly complex phenomenon that has many manifestations. It poses broadly epistemic questions about how some people can vanish from view, be erased, delegitimated, remain incomprehensible, or be denied social presence.

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[1] Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak"? in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds., Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271-313.

I believe that these issues benefit from a much more continuous, sustained, and detailed investigation than Spivak gives them. Such a view considerably expands our focus: from the question "can the subaltern speak?" to a broader inquiry into the conditions and practices that produce subaltern silence. My attempts to develop this view are detailed in "Epistemologies of Rebellion" and, most recently, in a book manuscript tentatively entitled *Subaltern Silence: A Postcolonial Genealogy*.[2] It spans 150 years of Haitian history, beginning under French colonialism and ending in the turbulent postcolonial years of the 19th century.

Subaltern perspectives may be absent from the archive, but the traces of their absence are registered in other ways. Taking notice of them requires a careful interpretive hand. As Arlette Farge put it, "You develop your reading of the archives through ruptures and dispersion, and must mold questions out of stutters and silences."[3] I fully agree with this, but I want to go further, molding entire genealogies out of stutters and silences. This requires a scrupulous suspicion about what is in the archive and how it got there, combined with careful efforts to determine what was excluded, discarded, or never documented.

This project immediately faces a profound paradox. If subaltern silence is a problem of invisibility, of the denial of presence and meaningfulness, then that silence is a negativity, a non-object, a lack, something that by definition does not exist. As a result, we cannot simply go the archives and excavate silences. Nor can we merely dig deeper to find subaltern voices that have not yet been discovered. Such strategies miss the point of Spivak's work. If subaltern voices are truly silent, then acting and speaking on their behalf only compounds the problem. It risks paving over the silent traces of subordinated people with our own vigorous energy.

"Geolle des Cayes," accounting register of Les Cayes prison, Saint-Domingue (present-day Haiti), 10 Oct 1793, Archives Nationales de France, D/XXV/27/281.

The colonial archives are full of elite letters, reports, engravings, and pamphlets. These sources are always tendentious, always problematic, and often yield important secrets in oblique ways. They give vivid insights into what was bothering and chafing the elite mind. Fear, anxiety, obsession, and paranoia play across these texts in ways that reveal the preoccupations of those enacting subaltern silence. One can discern the internal contradictions, sticking points, and self-doubt of the colonial enterprise. Often, this reveals the considerable psychic work of subordination.
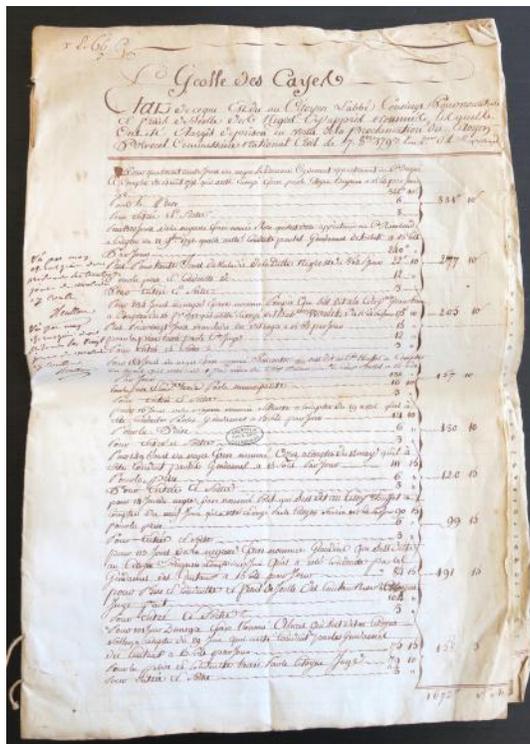
Instead, we must think much more carefully about how to discern silences and absences by drawing on the materials that *are* in the archive. I think of this as a process of working around the borders and edges of what is excluded from view.

These documents reveal other preoccupations as well. Michel Foucault described an "incitement to discourse" as the way an era's most troubling themes cause obsessional processing and endless

[2] Kevin Olson, "Epistemologies of Rebellion: The Tricolor Cockade and the Problem of Subaltern Speech," *Political Theory* 43:6 (2015): 730-752.

[3] Arlette Farge, *The Allure of the Archives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 94.

discussion.[4] In the French colonial archives, one sees sudden bursts of discourse on very specific topics: slave fugitivity, poison, fear of conspiracy between abolitionists and enslaved people. These surges of attention are registered in the print media and private letters. They are episodic and patterned, taking specific foci at specific times. Viewed in *longue durée*, such shifting preoccupations reveal a changing mosaic of subaltern silence and the practices surrounding it.

Elite reactions must always be treated with interpretive caution, of course. They are heavily flavored by their own preoccupations, biases, agendas, and epistemic limitations. Their perspectives are warped by power and incomprehension. What is valuable in such texts is not a truth of the subaltern that can be read out in a straightforward way. Rather, it is the shadows, after-effects, and action-at-a-distance of the very silences that elite actors were producing. The signs of their incomprehension, arrogance, and psychic unease provide valuable hints of what is obscured from our view. From them, we can read a more complete picture of what is missing, what has been pushed off stage as unworthy of attention.

There are other ways in which the traces of subaltern silence show up in the archives. Sometimes it has an incomplete or episodic character. The subaltern may be extensively subordinated but nonetheless manage some cryptic presence. Or that silence may come and go over time. Here genealogy is a subtle tool, allowing us to trace subaltern silence by observing the conditions attached to its appearance and disappearance. In Haitian postcolonial history, for instance, I observe a series of agrarian rebellions that surface periodically out of the Haitian countryside, have brief, highly disruptive effects, then vanish again.

In my interpretation, a careful reading of these moments reveals the seemingly paradoxical presence of absence. It is the occasional surfacing of subaltern political movements that are otherwise silenced and pushed to the margins. The occasional efflorescence of these movements allows us to draw conclusions about what is *not* visible in the interim.

In short, the epistemic paradoxes surrounding subaltern silence do not prevent us from giving it careful, genealogical attention. Rather, they force us to be considerably more sophisticated in our approach to the archives. Subaltern silence is often fringed by practices and phenomena that reveal its absence. A judicious interpretive hand can draw out the complexities of such situations. The challenge is to preserve their indeterminate and mysterious character, to step around their paradoxes while creatively revealing the presence of what is absent.

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[4] Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction* (New York: Vintage, 1980), p. 17-35.

Making Room for Context in a Colonizer's Archive

Mary Anne Mendoza, Cal Poly Pomona, Department of Political Science

"The Tagalog language is fearfully and wonderfully made, most difficult...there are four ways of saying 'no,' and the distinctions are very difficult. Perhaps this explains why so many Filipinos find it difficult to say no."[5] My head snapped up in shock. But when I looked around me, the other researchers were quietly documenting archives for their own projects and staff were processing requests from waiting patrons. Silence, while not mandated, was enforced amongst the researchers too engrossed in their own work to notice how troubling mine became. I felt the blood rush to my ears and the silence grow deafening. How was everyone else fine right now? After a few seconds, I realized that I was the only researcher in the archives that day who wasn't white.

Such is not always the case with studies of the Philippines, nor any other former colony. But it is a vastly different experience to research the state of your family's birth from the perspective of the colonizer. I thought I was prepared for this, having grown up accustomed to the casual microaggressions of a state that did not give enough attention to the contributions of Asians or Asian America to its development.

Before my archival trip, I cleared a memory card, wiped my camera lens, and brought a sweater. My Excel sheets were organized by row, leaving room to summarize key words from each of the pages in the collections I had asked the Manuscript Division for in advance. This was the bulk of what other scholars, suggested I do in preparation. But I never prepared for the disorientation I would experience at reading exactly how casual American officials were at infantilizing the natives during their time in the Philippines. Other scholars, who did not understand the context, did not think to prepare me for that.

For those of us who use archival work, the difficulty of learning the process is compounded by the circumstances of each place we visit. Some archives are robust, ensuring that researchers gain a well-rounded understanding of a time or place. Other archives are woefully incomplete, owing the loss to indiscriminate natural disasters or deliberate destruction by those who prefer their words/actions to never see the light of day. In many ways, researchers are warned that an archive is never the complete story and that reading between the lines, or situating things in context, is important.

Yet not enough is said about *when* that context should be introduced. How can you read between the lines if you don't know where the lines are?

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Guarding against bias is often touted as important when it comes to data collection and analysis. But there are some who conflate context with bias. Therefore, some researchers might decide to approach their archives cold, preferring to learn about their subject(s) or situation(s) from documented perspectives first before matching it to historical record. This approach is problematic for several reasons. First, lacking context prevents us from evaluating our narrators as we read. Our minds make associations while we interact with the people around us. The same can be said of archives. The casual way in which a subject notes their process of buying a house in the Philippine colony may seem mundane enough. Yet without any explanation that the "perfect" Spanish houses only exist because Spaniards slaughtered some of the natives for land, we lose insight into

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[5] Journal of W. Cameron Forbes, 21 August 1906, Vol. II, Box 2, W. Cameron Forbes Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, United States.

how certain American officials were not just there for "benevolent assimilation" but were also complicit in land-grabbing.

Second, context helps us focus. I was often told to "be open" to anything I might find in an archive. While I kept this in mind as I filed certain things for later projects, having context helped me figure out which portions of a journal to skim over because they were factually incorrect or riddled with bias that would not make it into the bulk of my project. With prior knowledge, I was able to assess whether these inaccuracies were deliberate or a sign of ignorance. We can account for the bias, in a footnote or a sentence, without belaboring the point in our work or wasting hours wading through pages of affirmation. Researchers with a limited budget, and particularly graduate students on a time crunch, do not have unlimited resources to expend on treating every page as worthy of equal scrutiny.

There are different ways to learn context. For most researchers, we learn about the context of our archives by reading the work of others, visiting other archives, or interviewing people. For some researchers, there is a certain un-knowing that needs to take place in order to better understand where an archive fits. For example, someone who has only been taught a specific perspective of American history may not understand the gravity of Philippine independence in 1945 if they were never taught that the first attempt for Philippine independence by the Katipunan was denied by the Americans in 1898. For an even narrower set of researchers, context comes with the emotional component of knowing that certain things are not just words on a page, but their family's history.

When Forbes concluded that it was hard for Filipinos to say no, I could not help but immediately think about how forcibly American

officials denied Philippine independence even though the Malolos Congress had already written a constitution. I also thought about how the Muslim population, who had arrived in the region at least a century before the Spanish, successfully resisted colonial rule so thoroughly that the Spanish never conquered the entire Philippine Islands. *Inhabitants of the Philippine Islands had no difficulty saying no. It's simply that American colonizers had a problem taking no for an answer.*

At a cursory glance, Forbes' comment may simply read as iconic of the racism of the time, the necessary tools of a colonizer to justify their oppression for constituents back home. But with context, gained not from Forbes but reading beyond him, it's clear that his statements reflect a re-writing of history. Without proper context, researchers can accidentally, yet actively, participate in the further erasure of their subjects.

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In my work on colonial education policies in Southeast Asia,[6] I am especially attuned to the context of U.S. colonization of the Philippines since I'm a Filipina-American scholar. Not many scholars share this position in their respective archives. Turning to the archives of the colonizer to learn about the colonized may be an extreme example of why context prior to a visit is important, but the same approach should be taken to any archive. Context does not necessarily mean bias. Instead, it can make a real difference in the assessments we make while engaging in an archive.

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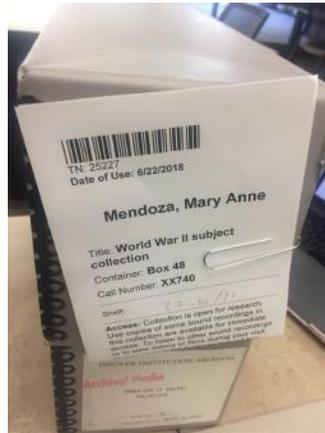
[6] Mary Anne S. Mendoza, "When institutions reinforce regional divides: Comparing Christian and Muslim colonial education policies in the Philippines," *Asian Politics and Policy* 13, no. 1 (2021): 90-104.

Historical Research in Political Science: Best Practices

Laia Balcells, Georgetown University, Department of Government

While historical research is not new in political science, there has been a burgeoning of quantitative research using historical archives in the past decade. This surge has been partly driven by new technologies (i.e., web scraping, machine learning-assisted text recognition) that allow for more efficient (and hence faster) digitization of sources. While the greater accessibility of archival data is excellent news for our discipline, this can come with perils in data collection and analysis. For example, the slowness traditionally associated with archival research had some advantages such as a greater reflection on the origins of the data, a more profound knowledge of the data generation process (DGP), and, overall, a more conscientious treatment of the collected information. Nowadays, researchers can quickly access large amounts of data without even traveling to archival sites or meeting with archivists and historians. The lack of expense means that researchers may treat as somewhat "cheap" data that once their predecessors would have considered "precious." This can lead to important flaws in the research.

For example, in the case of the Spanish Civil War, which I have studied very closely after several years of fieldwork,[7] some researchers have recently used easily accessible mass graves data from the Spanish Government as an indicator of violence against civilians during the conflict.[8] However, mass graves are not a good proxy for civilian victimization in the Spanish case, as combatants buried hundreds of other combatants alongside civilians at these sites. At the same time, hundreds of civilians were assassinated on a selective basis and were not necessarily buried in mass graves. Furthermore, regional variations

> ## *"Only through careful (and often slow) archival work might one be aware of these kinds of limitations and not fall in the trap of easily accessible data."*

in patterns of selective, collective, and indiscriminate violence mean that mass graves are an inconsistent measure of civilian victimization. Only through careful (and often slow) archival work might one be aware of these kinds of limitations and not fall in the trap of easily accessible data.

To avoid similar pitfalls, below I summarize what I believe are best practices from historical research in political science. For generality, I tailor these practices to the use of historical archives in general, rather than the "conflict archives" that underpin my work.[9]

a) *Understanding the archive:* Researchers working in a given archive should have an in-depth knowledge of the historical case and, in particular, the

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[7] Balcells, L. 2017. *Rivalry and Revenge: The Politics of Violence during Civil War.* Cambridge University Press. For more details on my fieldwork, see Balcells, L. 2020. "Researching an Old Civil War." In *Cautionary Tales*. Edited by O. Szekely and P. Krause. Columbia University Press.

[8] Ministerio de Justicia, Gobierno de España. Mapa de Fosas. Available from: https://mapadefosas.mjusticia.es/exovi_externo/Car garMapaFosas.htm

[9] Christopher Sullivan and I reflected on best practices for generating and analyzing data from conflict archives in an introductory piece of a special issue for the Journal of Peace Research published in March 2018: Balcells, L. & Sullivan, C. 2018. "New Findings from the archives of political conflict. An Introduction and Methodological Framework." *Journal of Peace Research* 55(2): 137-146. Interested readers can consult the original article for more details on each of the points I outline here.

process leading to the creation of the archive. The documents in the archive are composed, preserved, and released as a result of one or multiple processes, and researchers should be aware of them. For example, the Spanish National Archive's Causa General, which contains information on civilian victimization during the Spanish Civil War, results from the judicial prosecution of left-wingers in the wake of the Francoist dictatorship. Accordingly, it is overwhelmingly biased against leftist perpetrators of anti-civilian violence, largely overlooking acts by right-wing combatants. Thus, the information in this archive has to be triangulated with other historical sources that lack this bias, in order to be useful at all.[10] A good way for understanding the materials contained in (and missing from) archives is to spend time learning from archivists about the structure of the archive, the origins of the documents, and how they are preserved. It can also be helpful to learn about previous scholarly work done with the information in a given archive. Again, these

> **"A good way for understanding the materials contained in (and missing from) archives is to spend time learning from archivists about the structure of the archive, the origins of the documents, and how they are preserved."**

important personal interactions might be missed if we limit ourselves to remote digitizing work.

b) *Be aware of the biases:* Researchers should be explicit about the potential biases in the data and its generalizability to the studied population. This should be informed by the archival DGP. For example, were there political constraints on data collection that limited observations about a particular region or type of political episode? These biases have analytic implications: for example, clear evidence of selection bias in the archive may lead the researcher to estimate empirical models that account for them.

c) *Sampling and coding*: Researchers must develop sampling and coding procedures to efficiently collect information speaking to the population of interest. Researchers should be as transparent as possible about what sampling strategy was used, what alternatives were available, and what implications their sampling strategy holds for subsequent analyses and inferences. Coding decisions should also be

> **"Coding decisions should also be informed by thorough historiography---that is, how historians have interpreted the events and episodes that political scientists are coding."**

informed by thorough historiography---that is, how historians have interpreted the events and episodes that political scientists are coding.[11]

d) *Replication*. Scholars should made available their coding protocol and sampling procedures for subsequent replication.[12] Moreover, each step in the research process, beginning with the initial pilot tests and ending with the analysis of complete datasets, should be transparent and replicable. Scholars should try to pre-register their theoretical expectations prior to analyzing the data that they gather from the archive. Unlike experimental research, however, the iterative process of archival investigation can easily unveil new data and avenues of research, which

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[10] For some pioneering work (by historians) triangulating data from this archive with local archival data and oral sources, see: Solé i Sabaté, J. M. & Villarroya, J. 1989. *La repressió a la reraguarda de Catalunya (1936-1939).* Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat.

[11] Lustick, I. 1996. "History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias." *The American Political Science Review, 90*(3), 605-618.

[12] For example, Balcells, L., and Villamil, F. 2020. "Teachers as Fifth Columnists: The case of Francoist Spain." *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 26(3): 260-278. The replication files are all uploaded at Harvard Dataverse, but more detailed information on how the dataset was built is available from Villamil's website: https://franvillamil.github.io/data.html

a pre-analysis plan could potentially curb. It is important to remember that the purpose of the pre-registration is analytic transparency and thoughtfulness in measurement, not hands-tying for its own sake.[13] For this reason, scholars may update their PAP once they discover new data, prior to analyzing it;[14] they should also be explicit about the plan's limitations where they lack access to the archive and its contents.

Overall, the new trends in historical research in political science are up-and-coming and very promising; the wealth of data now being examined is extraordinary. However, political scientists should keep some of the old archival research methods (e.g., visit the archives *in situ*, talk to archival workers, sit down with historians having worked with the data, etc.) to make this research granular and high-quality.

Preparing for Papercuts: Archives Between Concepts and Practices
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Archival research occupies an odd place in international relations research, to say nothing of political science more generally. Infrequently covered in graduate methods training and often considered – wrongly, in my opinion – primarily a way of collecting evidence in support of qualitative case studies, surprisingly little thought has gone toward systematically discussing how researchers can execute archival work. A comprehensive discussion is beyond the scope of a single short essay. Nevertheless, I want to take this generous opportunity afforded by the IHAP newsletter to draw on my own experience and reflect on what makes for a successful archivally-based project.

The bottom-line up front: the key to effective archival research is preparation. Archival research, as Joseph Torigian has observed, is a

kind of detective work. Like detectives attempting to create a theory of a crime scene, researchers digging through archival files are effectively privy to a mass of individual and often-incomplete facts, and thus required to link these bits of data into a broader framework (a 'theory of the crime'). To do so, researchers need to go into archival research (a) knowing what
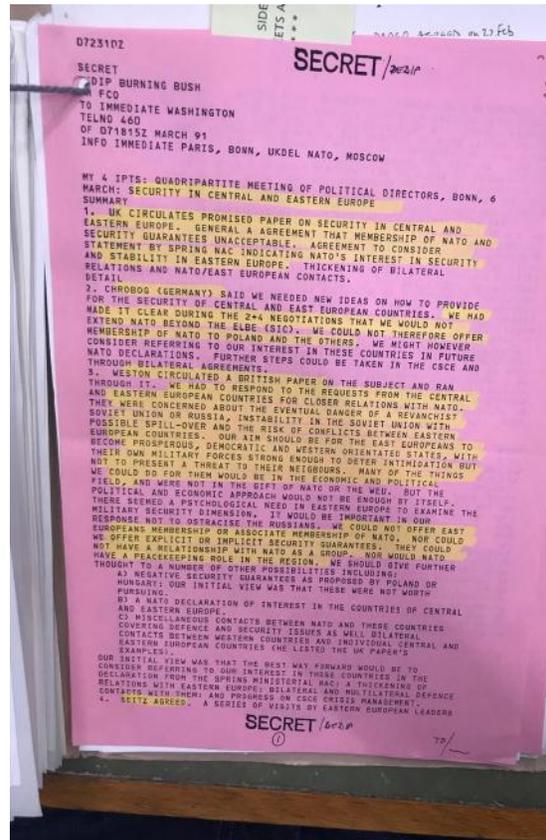
evidence – facts – they are looking, while (b) remaining open to the possibility that the evidence encountered may undermine prior predictions.

Preparation is the only possible solution, and involves two discrete tasks. The first is conceptual. Based on their underlying theories and arguments, researchers need to develop empirical predictions as to what bits of evidence are needed to measure variables or evaluate a

[13] Humphreys, M., De la Sierra, R., & Van der Windt, P. (2013). Fishing, Commitment, and Communication: A Proposal for Comprehensive Nonbinding Research Registration. *Political Analysis, 21*(1), 1-20.

[14] See, for example, Solomon, Daniel, Pre-Analysis Plan for "The Logic of Pogrom Violence: Evidence from Kristallnacht". June 4, 2021. Available from: https://osf.io/q74s3/ Solomon pre-registered a plan before undertaking new analyses with archival data he had collected and analyzed preliminarily.

causal mechanism of interest. And to do *this*, researchers need to spend ample time before stepping foot in an archive engaging the logic of their arguments and generating a sense of what sorts of evidence one is looking to find - for example, what sorts of claims mobilized by leaders or decisions by senior policymakers – in the archival record.

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The answers will largely be given by the theories and arguments one is engaging, but note that the questions themselves may not be easily resolved. After all, multiple theories may, e.g., point you toward looking at the sorts of arguments leaders use in private when choosing between rival policies, requiring researchers to theorize about the content of the arguments made (which themselves may not be all that distinct). Regardless, because facts do not speak for themselves, and archives contain a *lot* of facts, robust theorizing and concept development ahead of time is the only way to link individual facts together while knowing what the result means for the study writ large.

Note that this sort of preparation applies regardless of whether a researcher is interested in applying qualitative or quantitative methods of inference to data collected from archives. For qualitative methods, theory and concept preparation helps ensure that one can accurately use archival evidence in support of process tracing, to measure variables of interest, and so on; Brendan Green's recent study of the nuclear revolution, or Caitlin Talmadge's rigorous assessment of how changes in civil-military relations can affect military battlefield performance are illustrative of the options. For scholars using quantitative methods, meanwhile, concept preparation can help you either identify data of interest – say, privately-held records of economic performance – or generate a scheme to code evidence in order to make it subjectable to quantitative methods. Lindsey O'Rourke's study of covert action – whereby she went into archives with a theoretically-driven scheme to identify what qualifies as a covert action in order to generate a dataset of known U.S. covert efforts – highlights work of the latter type.

The second kind of preparation, meanwhile, is functional. After using theory and conceptualization to determine what kind of evidence one is looking for, researchers still need to ascertain *where* they will look for archival evidence. This, as Marc Trachtenberg shows in his exemplary *The Craft of International History*, is no mean trick. Archives are, at root, depositories of materials offering an incomplete record of the past. Indeed, just as it is impossible to capture all that occurred or was discussed in any temporal period, different archives – and different elements of different archives – at best capture portions of prior events. In attempting to track down the data one wants, scholars need to therefore know (a) what archives might be relevant to study, and (b) whether particular records within said archives are particularly valuable.
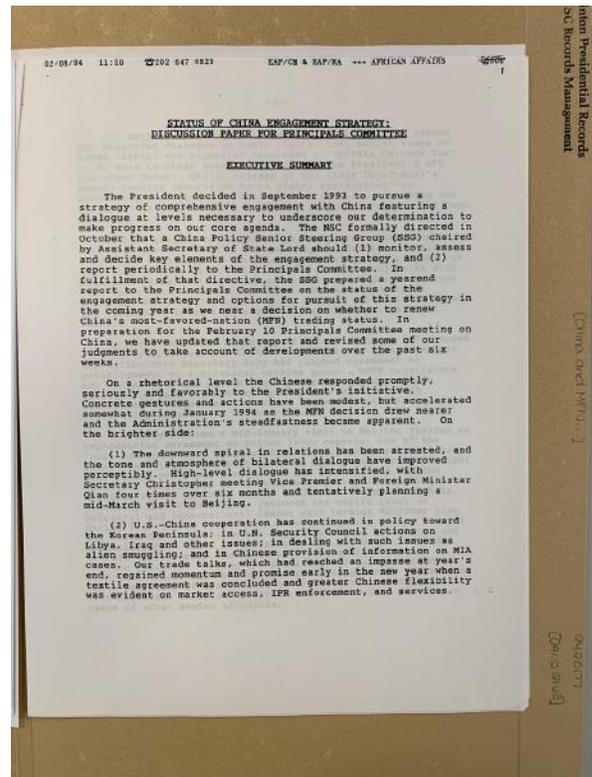
Researchers therefore really need to prepare by mining existing scholarly, journalist, and primary source (e.g., interview) accounts to get a handle on actors, organizations, agents, and so on relevant to one's empirical problems. By then

examining whether other scholars have cited archives that look promising, checking document compendiums that may point in the direction of key holdings (e.g., the Foreign Relations of the United States series published by the U.S. State Department), and running a range of online searches, researchers should at least be able to identify what archives may be worth a visit and some particular collections that look to be worthwhile. And having done so, one can then check any finding aids posted online, talk to researchers familiar with the archive, contact archivists or archive administrators to ascertain ahead of time what sorts of materials may be available – remember, just because an archive is found does not mean all documents therein are accessible!

Still, by working systematically through the list of archives and/or particular files of interest and relating these back to the evidence one needs for theoretical/conceptual purposes, you can at least make headway on the research. In fact, the more you prepare by going into the archives with a plan informed by preparatory work, the more you can get out of a one- or two-week jaunt. After all, few things are more dispiriting than coming back from a costly archival visit and spending weeks organizing your documents…only to discover that you checked an esoteric file or one's digging is well-covered in existing scholarship!

These tasks may seem daunting and the act of archival research – flying somewhere for a few weeks in hopes of finding critical research, to the tune of at least a few thousand dollars – intimidating. It was certainly this way for me! Like any skill, however, it gets easier with practice. Over time, most archivally-focused researchers develop a rhythm and way to figure out what they want out of archival research and what sorts of materials might be out there. It's just part of the process. Ultimately, archival research is an important path for gaining data of all sorts – one that international relations and political science would do well to focus more upon.

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