Toward Alienation or Integration:

The Impact of the Western *Weltanschauung* on the Modern Middle East

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Our age is one of globalized society. Cultures interact with one another continuously. These interactions occur at the universal level of international relations, at the macro-level of communities or tribes within a geographical area, and at the micro-level between individuals within societies. However, regardless of the level at which these interactions happen there are three broad outcomes that may occur. First, cultures may be alienated from one another – they exist in opposition to one another with mutually exclusive aims. Second, cultures may be assimilated into other cultures – a cultural group will forgo common unifying traits (such as language or dress) so as to fit into a dominant culture. Finally, cultures may become integrated – two, or more, groups develop synthetic and symbiotic relationships where identic cultural traits are maintained by individual groups and respected by those of the other cultural group, while simultaneously forging a unified ethos that guides how the integrated culture relates, as a whole, internally and externally.[[1]](#footnote-1) This spectrum is especially important in a globalized, pluralistic world; societies and civilizations are not, and can longer be, isolated from one another.

With this in mind I would like to consider the role *Weltanschauung* – the knowledge and beliefs we use descriptively and normatively to understand the world – plays in shaping the outcome of cultural interaction. To boundary this task I will focus on the interaction between the Western Powers and the Middle East. In this case I regard the colonial and imperial powers of England and France as the Western Powers.[[2]](#footnote-2) To represent the Middle East I will treat with the Ottoman Empire, historically, and use examples from Palestine and modern Israel, Algeria, and Iraq to represent the Middle East.[[3]](#footnote-3) Within these boundaries I intend to answer two questions: first, how does the Western Weltanschauung shape policy in the Middle East; second, can dialectic examination of Weltanschauung offer us tools to foster integration among cultural groups.

To answer these questions I begin by defining Weltanschauung using the language of philosophy and suggest a tool, the cognitive model known as the Observe-Orient-Decide-Act (OODA) Loop, that facilitates critical analysis of Weltanschauung. I continue by focusing specifically on how the Western Weltanschauung has informed policy towards the modern Middle East, fostering alienation, assimilation, integration, or a mix of these conditions. To this end I summarize the evolution of Middle Eastern society from pre-colonial to post-colonial time to illustrate the interaction of Middle Eastern and Western civilizations. With this historical framework in mind I will suggest how the Western Weltanschauung both shaped political and social conditions in the Middle East, and, in turn, how the outcomes of policy have continued to shape the Western Weltanschauung. Finally, in light of understanding the impact of Weltanschauung, and anticipating at least one objection to my thesis, I suggest how we may proceed towards more effective cultural integration through explicit use of the OODA Loop as a tool to improve decision making among policy makers.

What is Weltanschauung?

Weltanschauungtranslates from the German as “world outlook” or “world view” and can be regarded as “[A] coherent collection of concepts and theorems that must allow us to construct a global image of the world, and in this way to understand as many elements of our experience as possible.” [[4]](#footnote-4) Weltanschauung is the medium through which reality is perceived and contextualized. As such we can regard Weltanschauung as a set of subjective qualities, experiences, and knowledge at work. Weltanschauungis a synthesis of the axioms of a system we use to understand our world and the results derived from applying the axioms. This is an interesting point to consider for a moment. As an axiomatic system Weltanschauung cannot be both complete and proven using only the axioms contained within the system;[[5]](#footnote-5) any attempt to do so will lead to a disconnect from reality by forcing the decision maker to apply her axioms inconsistently. For Foreign Policy Decision Makers (FPDM) this is an especially important concern. The outcomes of foreign policy decisions occur on a scale that effect whole nations or regions of the world. Because of the multivariate and non-linear responses that can be generated in response to the policies of a foreign power it is imperative that FPDMs approach decisions with an outlook that anticipates failure to achieve the intended outcome.Hence a conscious process of critical self-reflection, coupled with understanding the process of constructing and interpreting our Weltanschauung is important.

Clément Vidal, a philosopher of logic and cognitive science at the Free University, Brussels, observes that there are six principal questions that a Weltanschauungseeks to answer*:[[6]](#footnote-6)*

1. What is?
2. Where does it all come from?
3. Where are we going?
4. What is good and what is evil?
5. How should we act?
6. What is true and what is false?

For Vidal these questions capture our need for ontology, for explanation, for predicting a future, for axiology, for praxeology, and for epistemology. A seventh question, a metacognitive question for worldview construction, is “Where do we start?” this process.

Where to begin this process requires us to approach the philosophy of policy making from one of two principal starting points: from the ideal or from the non-ideal.[[7]](#footnote-7) Ideal Theory is a philosophical outlook that emerges from the Aristotelian tradition, which seeks to offer a description of what ought to be – in this case politically. It aims to define an ideal, i.e. optimal, system of political policy. In this way the definition provided by Aerts, et. al, of Weltanschauung may be regarded as Ideal-Theory; it presumes coherency in our understanding and an integrated world view. One problem with this approach is the perception that Ideal Theory either passively ignores or actively occults structural problems within a polity, or within our individual orientation to the world. Conversely non-ideal theory begins with a descriptive aim, it tells us what is, and shines a light upon inequalities rooted in the structure of a societal system.[[8]](#footnote-8) The goal of this process is to establish an inclusive structure that obtains a society, which is just for all. I define Weltanschauung non-ideally as “The collection of heuristics and biases we use to construct and contextualize a global image of the world; it may enhance or inhibit our understanding of experience.” Thus, the non-Ideal view of Weltanschauungaddresses implicit elements of our psyche that shape our beliefs about the world.[[9]](#footnote-9) While constructing and understanding Weltanschauungwill serve the FPDM well regardless of the philosophical position she starts from, I advocate beginning from the Non-Ideal position.

If we start from the Non-Ideal position we can apply an addition philosophical position, that of “Failure First.”[[10]](#footnote-10) In the Failure First concept we presume that human beings are autonomous creatures who seek to achieve their own aims and goals. However, we acknowledge humans set goals for behavior and thought that we often fail to attain. Thus I believe that approaching decision making, and the interrogation of our decision making process is best served by interrogating Weltanschauungfrom the non-Ideal position with the assumption that we will fail to anticipate and address the concerns of all parties effected by a given foreign policy. As such the FPDM looking to address policies that are already in place can begin by asking a series questions:

1. Did [the policy] achieve its objectives?
2. What unanticipated events came about?
3. Why were the events that occurred unanticipated?
4. What did [I/we/they] think was so that was not so?

For the FPDM formulating a new policy[[11]](#footnote-11) two principle questions serve to initiate the process of interrogating Weltanschauung:

1. What do [I/we] think is so?
2. Why do [I/we] think it is so?

While these questions are helpful starting points they are not illustrative of the kind of dialectic process that encourages interrogation of a concept from differing points of view. While such a process is often encouraged it is, I think, rarely taught in a manner that enables a FPDM to understand the depth and breadth of the philosophical, psychological, and physiological factors that shape our understanding. To address this I propose using the Observe-Orient-Decide-Act (OODA) Loop model as a guide for dialectic thinking.

The OODA Loop (fig 1) is the theory of the late John R. Boyd, Col., USAF (ret.) a fighter pilot, military strategist, and philosopher of human decision-making. [[12]](#footnote-12)

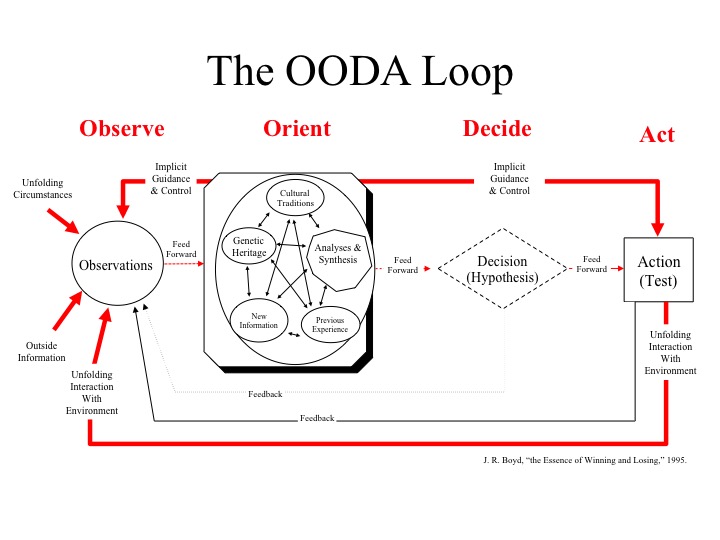


Figure 1 – The OODA Loop.[[13]](#footnote-13)

Central to the OODA Loop model is the Orientation of an individual, the cognitive and affective processes that shape and are shaped by our view of the world. Our Orientation is ontological – it provides meaning for our perceptions – and, in turn, shapes our actions. Inthis sense Orientation can be treated as analogous with the concept of Weltanschauung. The OODA Loop is a conceptual scheme[[14]](#footnote-14) that explains how an autonomous agent perceives and comprehends her environment – how she evaluates conscious and unconscious sense perception to form a decision – and the process of ongoing reassessment that occurs once she acts.[[15]](#footnote-15) It does not suggest how one ought to think; it describes how one does think. However, as a philosophical tool, the OODA Loop can serve a metacognitive purpose; it can help us to understand and refine our Weltanschauung.

Boyd’s model can help us answer our questions, “What do I think is so?” and “Why do I think so?” in a recursive way enabling a fuller understanding of how we judge information and make decisions. Our consideration of the OODA Loop model must begin with a brief introduction to the model itself, the language used and the essential mechanisms at work within it. To this end, I will focus primarily on Observation, Orientation, and the relevant feedback loops involved in each. This approach is useful because it places the function of the model before the audience without the risk of imparting the false impression that this is merely a cyclic (fig 2) or linear process (fig 3) whose principal advantage is derived from the speed of decision making. As such they fail to adequately grasp the importance of Orientation on decision-making.[[16]](#footnote-16)

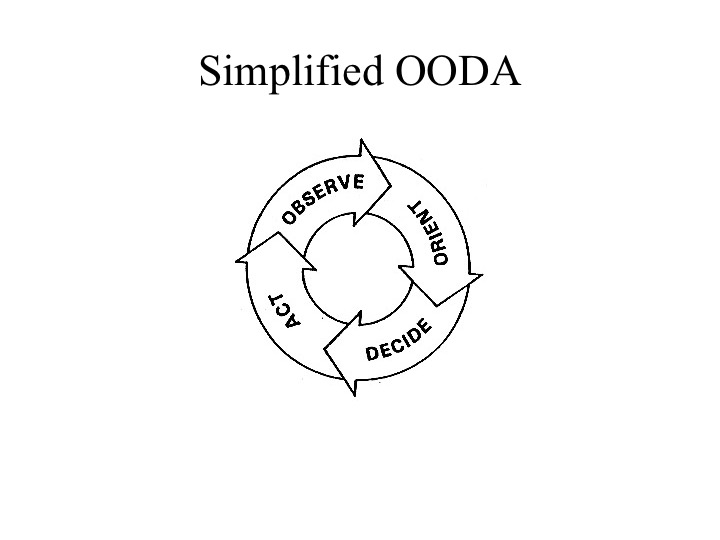


Figure 2 – The OODA Loop incorrectly portrayed as essentially a cyclical process.

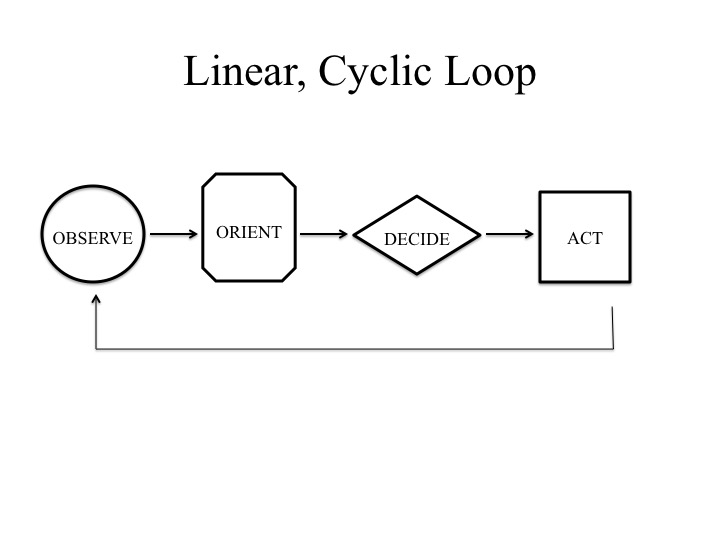


Figure 3 – The OODA Loop incorrectly portrayed as a linear, cyclic process.

We must bear in mind Boyd’s description of the loop as, “an ongoing many-sided implicit cross-referencing process of projection, empathy, correlation, and rejection.”[[17]](#footnote-17)

Observation is the mechanism of capturing sense perception of our environment, both consciously and unconsciously. In terms of Boyd’s model we ought to regard unconscious perception as experiences like perception of light causing the dilation of our pupils, the sense of terrain we are crossing through proprioceptive feedback, or the neurochemical signaling triggered by our environment that elicits a physiological response. These are not psychoanalytic concepts of the unconscious; rather, it is stimulation below the level of sensitivity where our conscious mind registers awareness.

Boyd characterizes this as happening through Unfolding Circumstances, Unfolding Interaction with our Environment, and Outside Information.[[18]](#footnote-18) Unfolding Circumstances are those acts occurring in the environment that we may be impacted by, but have not initiated ourselves; these are the actions of others. Unfolding Interaction with the Environment is directly observing the effects of our actions, enabling us to evaluate their efficacy. Outside Information is the perception of semiotic structures – such as spoken, written, or symbolic language – conveyed to us directly or indirectly by others that shape our understanding of what is occurring in the environment. Outside Information can be regarded as epistemic in nature – we use or ignore outside information based on the value we accord it for contributing to our knowledge. In this sense we can see how the Implicit Guidance and Control function of Orientation serves to shape our Observations. Our Weltanschauung shapes our acceptance or rejection of epistemic testimony,[[19]](#footnote-19) and how we understand and prioritize all forms of observation. Thus, what we perceive is affected by our Weltanschauungjust as our comprehension is. The totality of our Observations feed forward into our Orientation.

Orientation is the seat of dialectic engine of the OODA Loop :[[20]](#footnote-20) Analysis and Synthesis. The other components of Orientation: our Genetic Heritage, Cultural Traditions, Previous Experiences, and our access to New Information modulate the dialectic engine. I regard these facets as filters; they modify how we view the world and the judgments we form. Our judgments contribute to on-going efforts at sense making and to our actions. As a metacognitive tool the OODA Loop operates within the domain of cognitive and emotional reason – it helps the agent to understand and derive meaning from experience. As a decision making tool, the output of Orientation is expressed in Action – it is the impulse for behavior. My action may be implicit, illustrated in the Implicit Guidance and Control arm, or explicit, illustrated in the main axis of the model, feeding judgments forward to a Decision followed by Action.

For the FPDM the OODA Loop serves as a description, and a reminder, of the multiple facets – both conscious and unconscious – that shape our understanding of the world. Coupled with the philosophical view that we begin from a non-Ideal position and that failure is a probable outcome of our policies we are offered a mechanism to interrogate policy and our presumptions that underlie that policy. In this way we have a tool to aid in questioning if, and how, specific policies may promote alienation, assimilation, or integration of cultures.

I would like to turn now to an examination of the historical situation in the Middle East to illustrate examples of alienation, assimilation, and integration, as well as address the misperception of a polity where integration was presumed by Western decision makers but failed to obtain. With this brief historical overview I will broadly illustrate how policy is shaped by and shapes the *Weltanschauung* of FPDM.

Shaping the Modern Middle East

In order to turn a critical eye on the notion that cultures interact on a spectrum from alienation to integration I will examine three timeframes in Middle Eastern history: the pre-Colonial period, typified by the Ottoman Empire from the sixteenth century through World War I; the Colonial period, generally the interwar period but with some overlap with the Nationalist period; the Nationalist period, which begins in the wake of World War II and continues to the present day. I will consider specific cases of alienation, assimilation, and integration present during these times and how the Western Weltanschauungshaped and was shaped by the political and social conditions present.

The region we regard as the Middle East, principally North Africa, the Levant, Arabia, and Persia, has a history extending back as far as the first migrations of modern *homo sapiens* out of the Rift Valley. Tribes and nation states ascended to power and were overcome by conquest at least as long as history has been recorded. However, with the rise of Islam in the seventh century a theological Weltanschauung served to align the tribal and small national interests.[[21]](#footnote-21) Through the period of the early Universalist Islamic empires both diplomacy and conquest were means of achieving political aims, however my analysis of culture is focused on the flourishing of the Ottoman Empire in the wake of capturing Constantinople in 1453 to the present.[[22]](#footnote-22)

The Ottoman Empire of the sixteenth century forward was a heterogeneous mixture of ethnic and religious groups made up of Turks, Greeks, Arabs, Armenians and Slavs practicing Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.[[23]](#footnote-23) Flexible administration built upon a foundation of religious tolerance that extended from the earliest Muslim conquests enabled pluralism in the wider Ottoman Empire and, to a great degree, integration.

To be sure this period was not idyllic. Arnakis observes that, “One may be lead to thinking that [the Ottomans] much-spoken-of policy of religious toleration was of an erratic, haphazard nature and was conveniently ignored when new circumstances seemed to suggest a different course of action.”[[24]](#footnote-24) Further, while “The conquests would not have been so swift or so durable without the existence of a combination of social, economic, and religious factors that facilitated the local populations acceptance,” there remained discriminatory practices that disadvantaged non-Muslims. [[25]](#footnote-25) However, I argue that, despite these non-Ideal aspects, for a 400-year period the Ottoman Empire functioned as a pluralistic society and can serve as an example of what integration might look like. This effectively continued until the start of World War I.

The Ottoman Empire entered World War I on the side of the Central Powers in 1914. With the Ottoman territory of Egypt poised across a major lane of communication, the Suez Canal, there was incentive for the Allies to open a Southern Front. This brought British and French Troops into the region. With the defeat of the Central Powers in 1918 the colonial empires of Great Britain and France began an occupation of the Middle East that would last over three decades.

Several key communications and agreements during and in the wake of World War I set the stage for the map of the Middle East we recognize today. The McMahon-Hussein Correspondence, the Sykes-Picot Agreement, and the Balfour Declaration constitute promises to the native peoples of the area, carved up the territories of the former Ottoman Empire between France and Great Britain, and promise a Jewish homeland in Palestine to European Zionists, respectively.[[26]](#footnote-26) “The year 1920 [after the San Remo conference] marked an epoch and the birth of the modern middle east,”[[27]](#footnote-27) as we see it even today.

The first step of the Inter-war Period was to distribute territory between the French and British: with France claiming control of the newly delineated nations of Syria and Lebanon, and retaining their North African colonies, and Great Britain assuming responsibility for Palestine, Transjordan, and Iraq.[[28]](#footnote-28) It is this period where we see the mark of the Western Weltanschauungbegin shaping, and being shaped by, the Middle East in earnest. The late Edward Said described this Weltanschauungas *Orientalism*.[[29]](#footnote-29) For Said, “Orientalism… [is] a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based upon the Orient’s special place in European Western experience.”[[30]](#footnote-30) It was, and is, an extension of the colonial and imperial policies of the European Empires, which viewed the native population as, “gullible, ‘devoid of energy and initiative,’ much given to ‘fulsome flattery,’ intrigue, cunning, and unkindness to animals… Orientals are inveterate liars, are ‘lethargic and suspicious,’ and in everything oppose the clarity, directness, and nobility of the Anglo-Saxon race,” in the words of one Colonial official.[[31]](#footnote-31) Edward Said’s work is not without its detractors.[[32]](#footnote-32) However his scholarship is supported not just by the general tone and tenor of literature about the “Orient”, but by the words of Colonial and Mandate officials themselves. The result of this Weltanschauungwas, “fundamentally a political doctrine willed over the Orient because the Orient was weaker than the West, which elided the Orient’s difference with its weakness.”[[33]](#footnote-33)

The Orientalistview answers the six principal questions asked during construction of a *Weltanschauung*. It describes the people, explains the situation, predicts a model of the future, assigns moral value, prescribes action, and establishes what, within the Orientalist view, is true and false. Orientalism as a Weltanschauung shaped policy within and toward region. The impact of this exploitive and marginalizing Orientation is, localized and suppressed, until the post-Colonial shift toward Independence in the Nationalist period.

We might describe the Nationalist period as beginning with the independence of Iraq in 1921, but this may be disingenuous. British and French troops remained in the region and colonial government officials had substantial sway in their former colonies and protectorates, hence the appellation of Empire by Treaty that is often used to describe the earliest phase of independence in the region. Hence I regard the Nationalist period, principally, as beginning with the independence of Lebanon in 1943 and culminating in 1962 when Algeria became independent from France.[[34]](#footnote-34) With the historical record clear and a foundational understanding of the operative Weltanschauungdescribed I will use three examples to show how the OrientalistOrientation fomented conditions for alienation or assimilation, and, in one case, a faux-integration that has continued to have a destabilizing influence on the region.

Palestine, French North Africa, and Iraq

I think the role Western Weltanschauung has played in the Middle East can be best illustrated by describing how the Orientation of Colonial and mandate officials promoted conditions that led to violent alienation in Palestine, a period of assimilation followed by alienation in Algeria, and a faux-integration that was present in Iraq until Saddam Hussein was deposed by the United States in 2003. These are by no means exhaustive examples. Nor is it within my scope to analyze the conditions fully. However, I hope concise examples will serve to describe these conditions and allow the discussion of how awareness of Weltanschauungcoupled with the OODA Loop model can serve the FPDM.

From the beginning of the British mandate in Palestine conditions have existed to promote alienation. Between disparity in the promises made in the McMahon-Hussein correspondence and the effect of Sykes-Picot, to the Balfour Declaration’s promise of British support for a Jewish homeland regardless of the indigenous Palestinian population, governance by an imperial power caused the alienation of the local population. This was exacerbated by the British posture in the wake of World War II towards the establishment of Israel, a lack of substantive effort to develop a consensus government, and the hasty withdrawal of British forces from the region after partition. The Orientalist/Western Weltanschauungpresumed that the European Zionism had a claim to the region, and further, that a one state solution was not possible.[[35]](#footnote-35) While the Weltanschauung and divergent political aimsof the Palestinian diaspora and, to a much greater extent, the Israeli government has perpetuated conditions of alienation there is little room for doubt that the seed for this alienation was planted by the British mandate.

If we shift our view of the Middle East from consideration of Palestine and alienation we might consider the conditions of the French colonization of Algeria as an example of assimilation.[[36]](#footnote-36) For its part France advanced a desire for assimilation of 100 million Frenchmen whether continental or global, “white and colored” [[37]](#footnote-37) as the preferred outcome of its mission of civilization. As such colonial possessions were viewed as extensions of French soil and were regarded as *départements* in kind with the administrative territories of continental France.[[38]](#footnote-38) This policy developed over time and was not dominate at the time of French conquest. Further, even before the move toward Nationalism after World War II, the Algerian population had engaged in revolution against the colonial power.[[39]](#footnote-39) While a sizeable number of Algerians, the *Harkis*, pledged allegiance to France and fought to remain part of France during the Civil War of 1954 to 1962 ultimately, as Deming Lewis observes, “assimilation proved wanting.”[[40]](#footnote-40) While coerced assimilation failed to be an effective strategy for France to maintain its North African possessions it is instructive of how Weltanschauung can promote assimilation.

Lastly I turn to Iraq. Established under British mandate in 1920 Cleveland finds that, “[T]he boundaries of the post-Ottoman Arab world were at their most arbitrary in the case of the new state of Iraq.”[[41]](#footnote-41) In drawing the borders of what became Iraq the British officials bound together three distinct groups of Muslims: Sunni Arabs, Shi’a Arabs, and Sunni Kurds. What had been a decentralized territory under the Ottomans was now to be a centralized state operating under a monarchy installed by the British Crown. Following a coup, in 1958, a Sunni minority led Iraq. Two more coups ensued in the next decade, which culminated in the rise to power and rule of Saddam Hussein from 1978 until he was deposed in 2003 by the United States.[[42]](#footnote-42) However, under the dictatorship of Hussein the global community might have thought that Iraq was an example of an integrated state. The domestic policy of Hussein’s Ba’thist party nationalized the oil reserves, commenced agrarian reform, and promoted a secular outlook that enabled women to acquire education and employment.[[43]](#footnote-43) However any perception of integration on the part of onlookers was mistaken; the force of Hussein’s authoritarian regime was the source of any unity in Iraq. Ever present sectarian divisions among the Arab Sunni and Sh’ia populations, the Kurds, and the militancy of the Islamic State in Iraq are illustrative of how any perception of integration within Iraq was predicated on a Western *Weltanschauung* that failed to understand the internal political dynamic.[[44]](#footnote-44)

From a general historical perspective and in the three particular cases offered above I suggest that the social and political conditions that have obtained in the modern Middle East are a result of the Western Weltanschauung. I’ve aligned this Weltanschauungas principally, though not exclusively, rooted in a European exceptionalism that Edward Said calls Orientalism. While my analysis has been concise, befitting the scope of this paper, I shall address one principal objection to my position.

Poliheuristic Decision Making

Analysis of the decision making process that establishes governmental policy is a widely studied phenomenon. According to Alex Mintz, “The leading decision paradigm in international relations is the rational actor, expected utility theory.”[[45]](#footnote-45) As such, the assumption is that a decision maker has access to sufficient information to determine expected utility,[[46]](#footnote-46) and she is a rational actor who, “[determines] what options are available and then [chooses] the most preferred one according to some consistent criterion.”[[47]](#footnote-47) However, Mintz offers an alternative explanation for decision-making: Poliheuristic (PH) Choice Theory. PH theory “postulates a two-stage decision process in which the menu for choice is narrowed initially by a non-compensatory analysis that eliminates options by use of one or more heuristics (cognitive shortcuts). Remaining alternatives are then evaluated in an attempt to minimize risks and maximize benefits.”[[48]](#footnote-48) The non-compensatory analysis serves to remove from consideration options, which would threaten the political survival of the decision maker.

Carly Beckerman-Boys argues that PH theory refutes the allegation that the *Orientalist* bias was a significant factor in the British approach to the Palestinian Mandate and the eventual support for an autonomous Jewish nation within Palestine.[[49]](#footnote-49) She observes that:

Contrary to the established literature on Mandate Palestine, British high policy reflected a stark lack of viable alternatives that left little room for consideration of personal biases, allegiances or sentimental attachment to either Zionism or Arab nationalism during the decision-making process, revealing that decisions made about the future of Palestine were frequently more concerned with fighting narrow, domestic or broader, international political battles than preventing or dealing with a burgeoning conflict in a tiny strip of land on the Mediterranean.[[50]](#footnote-50)

Backerman-Boys’ analysis, in the form of four case studies, presents the idea that the impetus for a Jewish homeland in Palestine was to provide political legitimacy to the British aim of securing Palestine militarily as a strategic asset. Further that attempts to, “roll back the ‘accidental’ policy that was causing unrest among Palestine’s majority Arab population,” failed because of the weaknesses of the British Labour government of the time. [[51]](#footnote-51) However, this seems to disregard the support for Zionism espoused by the Labour party beginning in 1917.[[52]](#footnote-52) Further, Beckerman-Boys own analysis acknowledges that, “Early British negotiators had really lacked a sympathetic understanding of Arab complaints.”[[53]](#footnote-53) While she asserts that this lack of awareness resulted in a brutal response to Palestinian revolt she does not attribute it to bias on the part of the decision-makers. Rather, it is a portrayed as a series of missteps and strategically myopic decisions motivated by a desire for the Westminster government to maintain stability and, in the long term, secure the financial backing of the United States during post-war austerity.[[54]](#footnote-54)

Undoubtedly Beckerman-Boys analysis addresses the British approach to the Palestine mandate in a new light. She highlights specific bureaucratic turf battles and failed attempts at modification of policy generously. In the ongoing discussion of the Weltanschauungof decision-makers her application of PH choice theory certainly has a place. Yet, she fails to render moot the notion that exceptionalism and racial bias were not factors in the decision-making. Said’s Orientalismis not excluded by the PH perspective. Rather, a failure to acknowledge that the Weltanschauungof the FPDM must be regarded as part of the overall zeitgeist limits the effectiveness of the PH model overall.

Toward Integration

A question that ought to be asked of any theoretical framework is of course, “Is that so?” However we must not stop there. The follow up question: “If so: so what?” must also be answered. I aim to briefly offer how critical examination of Weltanschauungthrough the OODA Loop model can serve as both an analytical tool for scholars of Foreign Affairs and Political Science, and as a tool for FPDM to seek an objective view of proposed or extant policy. For the FPDM I assume an objective or *ideal*[[55]](#footnote-55) view will aim to promote integration.

Boyd, observes that, “In a real world of limited resources and skills, individuals and groups form, dissolve and reform their cooperative or competitive postures in a continuous struggle to remove or overcome physical and social environmental obstacles.”[[56]](#footnote-56) I believe we can see, even if only through the brief examples I offer here, that cooperation or competition are the only two conditions that obtain from the interaction of human beings.[[57]](#footnote-57) The relative degree of cooperation or competition is what is being addressed in the concept that cultures can be alienated, assimilated, or integrated.

Alienated cultures may compete with one another on a spectrum from a relatively low-level, such as negotiations about resources where competitive advantage is the primary goal, all the way to open warfare. For Assimilated cultures a mélange of cooperative and competitive behaviors arise with cooperation being, perhaps, more the norm, and competition being limited by the hegemony of the dominate culture. Integrated cultures ought to, it seems, promote and seek principally cooperative strategies with the aim of securing resources and overcoming environmental challenges.

Competitive and cooperative interactions are a fundamental fact of human life; we are a social species. A significant body of research has emerged addressing both our pro-social and autonomous natures.[[58]](#footnote-58) It is apparent that our cooperative and competitive strategies, at a minimum, coevolved with our cognitive capacity, and may well be a vector in our evolution. Hence, any study of decision-making in general, and foreign policy decisions in particular, ought to take this uncertain, but evidentially apparent, evolutionary history into account. The OODA Loop model provides us with a tool for studying decision-making with these factors in mind.

The OODA Loop model enables interrogation of our both our explicit and implicit decision-making and aids identification of heuristics and biases that affect us. This begins within the Orientation phase of the model. While dialectic thinking is represented by Analysis and Synthesis we must seek to understand how the filters of Genetic Heritage, Cultural Tradition, Previous Experience, and access to New Information modulate the dialectic.

If a hypothetical FPDM were considering a new policy toward the Palestinian-Israeli conflict she would be well served to ask how the various facets of Orientation have shaped, and are shaped by, the historical and present situation. For example, regard for Genetic Heritage ought to prompt consideration of how to address fundamental human needs for water, food, bodily integrity, and social affiliation, and in turn how actual or perceived scarcity primes the sympathetic nervous system to fight or to flee.[[59]](#footnote-59) Due regard for Cultural Traditions will prompt a thoughtful, though not necessarily exhaustive, understanding of the ideas and attitudes that have been engender by previous policy decisions and the beliefs that have arisen about threats to the individual or their culture. An examination of Previous Experience must treat with the conditions and decisions of all decision makers, again, thoughtfully, and within an appropriate span of history. Addressing the access to, and use of, New Information is a mechanism to avoid dogmatic thinking and the inevitable cognitive entropy that dogmatism promotes.

As stated previously the Orientation facet of the OODA Loop is, as a whole, analogous to Weltanschauung. Coupled with the questions: “What do I think is so?” and “Why do I think it is so?” we have a powerful tool for interrogating both our personal Orientation and one that can enhance the second, and higher, order thinking needed to anticipate the mental states of other agents. In this way we can anticipate, and circumvent or mollify likely areas of resistance to our policy. When this dialectic process is conducted in a manner that is empathetic to all parties, with advocates for all parties as part of the process, I argue that policy decisions are more likely to have the effect of promoting integration of interacting cultures.

Conclusion

Returning to the two questions I set out to answer: “How does the Western Weltanschauung shape policy in the Middle East?” and, “Can dialectic examination of Weltanschauung offer us tools for improving the integration of differing cultures in a pluralistic world?” I have applied the language of philosophy and a specific model of human thinking, the OODA Loop, in pursuit of answers. I have shown that we can view the colonial/imperial project of the Inter-war Era as an OrientalistWeltanschauung that shaped the modern Middle East in a manner that alienated both cultural groups within the region from one another and the region as a whole from the West. Further, I have demonstrated how the OODA Loop model can serve as a tool for analysis of historical policy decisions and as a recursive tool for contemporaneous decision makers by promoting awareness of the heuristics and biases that girder rational decision making theories.

As a global society isolation is no longer a feasible option for cultures. We interact continually through a transnational economic system, through the sharing of information and attitudes, and through the shared resource of the global environment. Given this, cultures will either trend toward cooperation or competition with one another. The degree to which policy promotes either cooperation or competition will shape the tendency toward alienation or integration of cultures. Empathetic, critical reflection that interrogates the Weltanschauungof interacting cultures can serve to address the advantages and limitations polices create for disparate social and political cultures.

This ought to serve as the starting point for policy makers. By functioning within the realm of non-Ideal theory, and with a presumption of failure as the outcome of dogmatic or myopic interaction, FPDM are empowered to deal with conditions as they are, rather than focus beliefs about what ought to be. Examination of Weltanschauungand the use of the OODA Loop model can serve as a precautionary principle and help us keep in mind the maxim that one person’s Utopia is another’s Dystopia. As such, integration will only come about through understanding and addressing the facets of Orientation, how they have shaped and continue to shape the social and political environment, and setting policy that promotes cultural integration.

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1. Herbert J. Gans, “Acculturation, Assimilation, and Mobility,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30, no. 1 (2007): 152-164. Bill Ong Hing, *Beyond the Rhetoric of Assimilation and Cultural Pluralism: Addressing the Tension of Separatism and Conflict in an Immigration-Driven Multiracial Society*, *California Law Review* 81, no. 4, (1993): 863-925. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. I believe the analysis present here extends into the current era of US hegemony in world affairs, however this paper focuses predominately on the historical roots of modern policy to the Middle East. Middle East. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. I acknowledge delineating a small set of cases for consideration, however, in the interest of providing depth to this project I must forgo breadth. There is a larger project to be undertaken in analyzing the impact of *Weltanschauung* on cross-cultural and intra-cultural alienation, assimilation, and integration. I hope that project can be built upon the theoretical foundation and analysis offered here. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Diederik Aerts, et al., *World Views: From Fragmentation to Integration*, (Brussels: VUB Press, 1994/2007). *Weltanschauung* translates from German to “world outlook.” I elect the German principally the connotation of *Weltanschauung* is a comprehensive, integrated philosophy that enables action while the English “world view” implies, to me, a more exclusively cognitive process that fails to integrate the affective; second, Boyd uses German terminology in his work to expand upon nuance that isn’t captured in direct English translation, hence my use of *Weltanschauung* is in keeping with Boyd’s language. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Here I am applying Kurt Gödel’s Incompleteness Theorem. See Panu Raatikainen, "Gödel's Incompleteness Theorems", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*,Winter 2013 Edition, accessed April 3, 2016, http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2013/entries/goedel-incompleteness. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Clément Vidal, “Wat is een wereldbeeld? (What is a worldview),” in *Nieuwheid denken. De wetenschappen en bet creatieve aspect van de werkelijkheid*, eds. H. Van Belle and J. Van der Veken (2008), 4. Vidal cites Aerts, et. al. as the original source for these questions. I have used Vidal’s language to delineate these concepts in the interest of clarity. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. John Rawls *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement*, (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2001). Charles Mills, “Ideal Theory as Ideology,” *Hyptia* 20, no 3 (Summer, 2005), 165-184. A. John Simmons, “Ideal and Non-Ideal Theory,” *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 38, no 1, (Winter, 2010), 5-36. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Mills, 166. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, (New York: MacMillian, 2011). Anthony G. Greenwald and Linda Hamilton Krieger, “Implicit Bias: Scientific Foundations, *California Law Review*,945 (2006), accessed on April 4, 2016, <http://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/californialawreview/vol94/iss4/1>. Christine Jolls and Cass R. Sunstein, "The Law of Implicit Bias" (2006). Faculty Scholarship Series. Paper 1824, accessed on April 6, 2016, http://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/fss\_papers/1824. The idea of pure objectivity on the part of human beings has been dismissed by the cognitive science community. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Miranda Fricker, “Epistemic Contribution as a Central Human Capability,” (2015) forthcoming in *The Equal Society*, ed. George Hull (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. No policy begins in a vacuum; previous decisions and policies have shaped the environment and *Weltanschauung* of decision makers and the population the policy effects. However, in cases where a policy is a radical departure from the old we can view this as a “new” policy. The obverse is also true however. Simple modifications to existing policy or implementation should not be regarded as a new way of addressing the problem because FPDM may be disinclined from deeper consideration of the effects of previous policies seeing their approach as a “fresh start.” [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Robert Coram, *Boyd: The Fighter Pilot who Changed the Art of War*, (New York: Little, Brown, 2002). Grant Hammond, *The Mind of War: John Boyd and American Security*. (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2012). Both Coram and Hammond’s biographies are excellent introductions to John Boyd. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. John R. Boyd, “The Essence of Winning and Loosing,” unpublished presentation, 1986/2015, accessed March 24, 2016, <https://fasttransients.files.wordpress.com/2010/03/essence_of_winning_losing.pdf>. The above is my illustration based on Boyd’s original. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Donald Davidson, "On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme," *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 47, (1973), 5-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Throughout this text the words act or action, as applied to the mechanism of the model, will be synonymous with both the active process of doing something, and the passive process of doing nothing. While it can be useful to delineate commission from omission in regards to action, in a dynamic environment we must regard both conditions as influencing the environment. Whether I choose to throw the switch and send the trolley toward the fat man on the tracks or abstain from throwing the switch I have, effectively, acted, especially from the position of the two groups on the tracks. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Frans P.B. Osinga *Science, Strategy and War: The Strategic Theory of John Boyd*, (New York: Routledge, 2007), 6-8. Osinga’s book is adapted from his PhD dissertation of the same title. His is the first substantive scholarly work on Boyd’s theories. The illustrations in figures 2 and 3 are mine and have appeared in numerous unpublished presentations on Boyd’s work. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Boyd, (1986), 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Major Paul Tremblay, Jr., “Shaping and Adapting: Unlocking the Power of Colonel John Boyd’s OODA Loop,” (masters thesis, United States Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 2015), accessed January 1, 2015, https://fasttransients.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/tremblayshapingadapting.pdf. I am thankful to Major Tremblay for a refining my expression of the aspects of Observation. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Miranda Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice: Power and Ethics of Knowing*, (London: Oxford University Press, 2007). Fricker, (2015). While it is sensible enough to see how rejecting valid information might lead to a negative outcome for me as an agent, I might fail to accept a critical warning or miss an opportunity, less commonly considered are the effects of epistemic injustice. Fricker’s work focuses on this and is instructive from the perspective of understanding and constructing our worldviews in a manner that maximizes our ability to parse epistemic testimony successfully. I emphasize this point here because Implicit Guidance and Control (IG&C) may shape our view of Outside Information to a larger degree than occurs, commonly, for Unfolding Circumstances or Unfolding Interaction with the Environment. I should note however that in high risk, high tempo situations, where the stakes of decisions are high and the timeframe for decision-making is severely limited that the impact of IG&C on our perceptions of what is Unfolding may be more diminished than our access to Outside Information. See Brennan, 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. John R. Boyd, “Destruction and Creation,” unpublished manuscript, 1976/2015, accessed March 24, 2016, <https://fasttransients.files.wordpress.com/2010/03/destruction_and_creation1.pdf>. Boyd uses the expression “dialectic engine” to describe what would later become the components of Analysis and Synthesis within the overall framework of Orientation. I continue the use of his terminology for consistency and clarity. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. William L Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 5th ed, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2013), 14-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State*, (Berkley, CA: University of California Press*,* 1995), 1-18. Cleveland, 35-38. The four centuries of rule by the Ottomans, coupled with the on-going interaction between the West and the Ottoman Empire, makes this, I think, a reasonably point of departure for this discussion. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Gregory Harms with Todd M. Ferry, *The Palestine Israel Conflict: A Basic Introduction*, (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2005) 40-43. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. G. Georgiades Arnakis, “The Greek Church of Constantinople and the Ottoman Empire,” *The Journal of Modern History* 24, no. 3 (September, 1952), pp. 235-250. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Cleveland, 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. I recommend Harms’ (2005) concise overview of these communications and their broad impact. See his Chapter 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Gregory Harms, *It’s Not About Religion*, (Santa Monica, CA: Perceval Press, 2012), 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Harms (2005), 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism,* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979). Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Said (1979), 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Said (1979), 38-9. Here Said expands upon and quotes in line the descriptions of Evelyn Baring, Lord Cromer, from Cormer’s *Modern Egypt*. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Justis Reid Weiner, “The False Prophet of Palestine,” *Wall Street Journal,* August 26, 1998 A18. Tahrir Khalil Hamdi, “Edward Said and Recent Orientalist Critiques,” *Arab Studies Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (2013), 130-148. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Said (1979), 204. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. I acknowledge this distinction limits the scope of inquiry and ignores the present Nationalist, revolutionary, and imperial projects that continue, principally, in Iraq and Syria involving disparate ethnic, religious, and ideological groups. The contemporaneous situation warrants further analysis to determine the applicability of my thesis. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. I acknowledge a significant simplification of process, however I believe I capture the *Geist* of the situation. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Assimilation is compromising aspects of cultural identity in response to hegemony of an external culture. The *Weltanschauung* of the U.S. places a value on assimilation, emphasizing a Cultural Tradition of American society as a “melting pot.” Viewed through the lens of ideal theory this seems on the whole positive; viewed non-Ideally though it exposes a disparate power relationship that presumes the dominate culture has a claim to its identity while the non-dominate must sacrifice their identity. Imposed assimilation is a precarious condition, which inevitably leads to revolt. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Martin Deming Lewis, “One Hundred Million Frenchmen: The ‘Assimilation’ Theory in French Colonial Policy, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 4, no. 2 (January 1962), pp. 129-153. This policy, pursued in Algeria, Tunisia, and throughout the French Empire stands in contrast to the approach taken in the mandate of Syria and Lebanon where, most significantly in Lebanon, a policy of minority Christian rule over a majority Muslim population promoted an undercurrent of divisiveness from 1943 foreword. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Ibid., 132. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. John Wansbrough, “The Decolonization of North African History,” *The Journal of African History* 9, No. 4 (1968), pp. 643-650. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Deming Lewis, 149. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Cleveland, 189. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Ibid., 304-07; 414-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Ibid., 428-429. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Harith Hasan Al-Qarawee, *Iraq’s Sectarian Crisis: A Legacy of Exclusion*, (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Middle East Center, 2014), accessed April 1, 2016, http://carnegieendowment.org/files/iraq\_sectarian\_crisis.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Alex Mintz, “How to Leaders Make Decisions: A Poliheuristic Perspective,” *Journal of Conflict Resoultion* 48, no. 1 (2004), 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Philippe Mongin, “Expected Utility Theory,” in *The Handbook of Economic Methodology* eds. John B. Davis, D. Wade Hands, and Uskali Mäki,(London: Edward Elgar, 1998), 342-350. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Jonathan Levin and Paul Milgrom, “Introduction to Choice Theory,” (Standford, CA: Stanford, 2004), accessed April 1, 2016, http://web.stanford.edu/~jdlevin/Econ%20202/Choice%20Theory.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Mintz (2004), 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Carly Beckerman-Boys, “British Foreign Policy Decision-Making Toward Palestine During The Mandate (1917-1948): A Poliheuristic Perspective” (doctoral dissertation, University of Birmingham, 2013), accessed February 26, 2016 http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/4565/1/BeckermanBoys13PhD.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Ibid., 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Ibid., 277. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Paul Kelemen, “Zionism and the British Labour party: 1917-39,” *Social History* 21, no. 1 (1996), 71-87. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Beckerman-Boys, 280. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Ibid., 282-83. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. In this case the *ideal* view is not an optimal method of seeking one’s objective. Rather, I use *ideal* in the Hegelian sense of an Absolute reality which is unattainable by human actors, but which the pursuit of an objective understanding of reality which stands outside a view and its antithesis. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Boyd, “Destruction and Creation.” [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Isolation is a third condition, however, this implies no interaction, and therefore it is not a factor in the present matter. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. See Michael Tomosello *A Natural History of Human Thinking* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Thorough examination of the physiological and psychological factors of threat response is beyond the scope of this paper. However I advocate viewing all human decision-making as an effort to control scarcity of essential resources. See Brennan (2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-59)