"Another Munich We Just Cannot Afford"[1]: Historical Metonymy In Politics

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Abstract

The appeasement of Hitler and the Munich Agreement is a rhetorical comparison used commonly in international relations to defend politico-military action. On the basis of conceptual history and rhetorics, we examine cases of political speech in this paradigm. Firstly, we discuss time and conceptualize experience into first and second order experiences. Secondly, the roles of metaphor, metonymy and analogy in relation to thought and action are examined. We then contextualise Munich 1938, and present three cases demonstrating the political usage of this metonymy since WWII. These range from the Suez Crises to the Gulf War and on-going War on Terror. These cases show that "Munich" can be used in multiple contexts. Our hypothesis is that "Munich" has proved very instrumental politically; it has been a key element in the final push to use force on numerous occasions, and we conclude that it is a very dangerous form of anti-diplomacy.

Keywords: appeasement, analogy, metaphor, metonymy, conceptual history, rhetoric

"It is 1938 and Iran is Germany"
Benjamin Netanyahu (2006)

Introduction

At first sight historical analogy might seem old-fashioned, and its use banal, but if we consider history as a temporal metaphor it will be more fruitful. Moreover, as Oscar Wilde said, while few men can write history, any man can make it (at least in theory). And indeed there are many more history makers than actual historians themselves; and political tropes such as Putin=Hitler or Trump=Hitler are still commonplace[2]. This is because history itself is a very broad concept, which is not limited to its own self-definitions and representations.[3] It belongs to everyday life and is a constant presence. Certainly some historical dates and places are so well known that they have become metaphors such as "The Alamo", "Thermopylae" or "The Bastille". Indeed, post-1789 the French Revolution has been a model for different political movements from romantic nationalists to the brutal realism of Lenin.

The aim of the article is to apply conceptual history and rhetorics to international relations, and to study evocations of appeasement and their political usage. The phrase "another Munich" is, of course, a historical reference to the conference of 1938, and our concern is its possible reincarnations in politics, and we seek to make a more systematic study of the usage of this metonymy, which is, as such, a *cliché*, but one that is frequently used, and that must therefore be taken seriously. Based on cases from Suez to Iraq, we argue that the rhetorical analogy has been used as a template to legitimise a given policy, the ultimate, "of-the-last-resort" argument that presents war as the only realistic alternative.

We understand history as a temporal metaphor, which combines thoughts and action. In this sense our study corresponds to recent (re)turns to the study of history and of rhetorics in international relations (see e.g., Hobson and Lawson 2008: Post-Realism 1996). Indeed, we go so far as to consider international relations as a form of argumentation and Munich as one of the most familiar political analogies used, though not exclusively, in the West. Munich, that is, (most popularly and reductively) the appeasement of Hitler, is a frequently-used comparison, and one of the strongest rhetorical arguments, most especially in matters of military intervention. By referring to familiar contexts, in which this comparison was used after Munich, we chart how the topic has changed in political usage over the course of years and in different conflicts.

We argue that rhetorical analogies are powerful instruments in political communication and one indicator of the political skills of actors. Metaphors and their use in political science has been studied recently but we don't place full emphasis on the results achieved with the aid of these metaphors, rather

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we also concentrate on the *process*, that is argumentation and analogisation itself (see, e.g., Carver and Pikalo (eds.), 2008; Charteris-Black, 2008; Beer and De Landtsheer (eds.), 2004; Musolff, 2004); Beer and Hariman (eds.), 1996; Chilton, 1996).

This study combines ideas that have been presented in both political science and in historiography. Our study also conforms to conceptual history, which studies the use of a particular concept – in this case appeasement – diachronically in time. We believe that politics could even be defined as a battle of metaphors, in which the one who offers the best metaphor, wins. The *quality* of metaphors in such a contest matters, and must be assessed; at their best, they function as actual power resources: an argument in a specific context is always *more than a mere argument*.[4]

At first we discuss how analogy and metaphor have been deployed in political rhetorics and related action. Then we explore the origins of the Munich metonymy. For our empirical part we have chosen three examples, well aware that they are not the only ones but are, to a greater or lesser degree, familiar. The British reaction during the Suez Crises remains the classic example of the (mis)application of Munich. In addition there are more recent cases; the First Gulf War, and the later engagements in Iraq.

Our hypothesis is that "Munich" represents an objectively loose analogy, but one that nonetheless puts unique pressure on the evoker to act, and which can be used to justify almost any action by depicting the opponent in question as a new Hitler. Therefore by teliographed corollary the familiar divisions of the Second World War, with its heroes and villains are resuscitated to confer clarity and legitimacy. Not that we are denying that a timely intervention can, in fact, prevent a conflict from escalating; the world is haunted by many cases of stalled intervention, such as Bosnia. However, in preventing conflicts in advance, there are many means other than the military option available; the latter, however, is the focus here.

We apply and reverse E.H. Carr's agenda, that is, we focus on the *politician* instead of the historian, and try to assess his or her conceptualisation of history. In this, we argue that one can classify experiences as first and second order experiences. Those who were born before a certain event itself, heard about it as contemporaries, or even participated in the events, belong in the first order experiences. In our case Anthony Eden[5] and George H. Bush[6] represent this category. Much of their personal experience was based on Munich and the subsequent war. In contrast, Tony Blair, George W. Bush and Gordon Brown do not have personal experiences from the war; it is for them part of their secondary experience. In fact, Blair's father had been a soldier, and had evidently had a good war, rising from a private to acting Major. Blair, like George W. Bush (a fighter pilot who never served in combat), may also have felt the need to compete with his father's military record.

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Politics with Analogy, Metaphor and Metonymy

In 1992 the psychologists Barbara A. Spellman and Keith J. Holyoak published an article on social roles, in which they wrote that it would not be a great exaggeration to say that the US went to a war over an analogy, i.e., that Saddam was Hitler (Spellman and Holyoak, 1992). This is a strong claim, as usually psychology does not sufficiently take into account the idea that politics is a deliberative action.

However, in the field of international relations there is growing agreement that much mainstream IR is fixed on the notion that international relations is repetitive, timeless and cyclical (Elman and Fendius Elman, 2008). The idea of state rotation comes already from antiquity, but Hegel and Marx noted the idea of repetition in world history. Marx famously noted a pattern between two events; the original was a tragedy and its reincarnation, a farce. Indeed, Marx witnessed Louis Bonaparte's *coup d'etat* as a first order experience. Thus, one can argue that history repeats when people *like* to repeat it: political dimensions are found in the way in which people deal with the past in concrete situations; whether they attempt to free themselves of it and dissociate themselves from it, or build continuities, remember and forget or even attempt to repeat and return to the past.

Reinhart Koselleck has studied the dissolution of the Cicero's topos *historia magistra vitae* in his *Futures Past*. Thus, until the late 18th century former experiences mattered, as readers could learn and repeat the success of the past instead of recommitting earlier mistakes. Since then history has also turned to be more than any one account made of it, and began to establish itself as a collective singular. Moreover, history became plannable, when – as Kant put it – the soothsayer himself shaped and formed the events he had predicted. (Koselleck, 2004). However there are still the moments of doubt in this "planning", and "repetition", as the plan can go wrong, as we try to show in this article.

Here we claim that rhetorical analogies, metaphors and their sub-category metonymy are important tools in this "repetition". Although metaphor has much in common with analogy, the latter has (surprisingly) not been given much attention recently in political language and in international relations. It is revealing that the concept does not even appear in Carver's and Pikalo's introduction in their *Political Language and Metaphor* (Carver and Pikalo, 2008). We are, however, particularly interested in the process, in which one particular event becomes a *concept* of its own.

For Aristotle every trope was a metaphor giving a thing the name that belonged to something else. For Chaïm Perelman metaphors are condensed analogies, due to a fusion of theme and *phoros*; analogy belongs to the theory of argumentation. For Perelman in particular, associative strategies of argumenta-

tion *combine separate elements and construct new elements*, which either increase or decrease the possibility of accepting the argument. It is important to note that here analogy does not posit the *equality* of two relations (here historical events) but rather affirms a *similitude* between them (Perelman, 1982). If we do not accept the analogy used, we either have to adapt the analogy so that it corresponds better to our own conceptions, or replace it with another that is more appropriate (Nyyssönen, 2006). Thus, we are interested in *use of analogies*, not whether two historical events are compatible as such.

As Carver and Pikalo (2008) indicate, metaphors can be discursive nodal points, and act as nodes transforming meanings across domains and thus freeing political science from any necessary adherence to linear models of causality (Carver and Pikalo, 2008).[7] In this sense metaphors can gain the upper hand regarding the present, and even the new unknown experience, which is not yet experienced. The analysis of a given case by metaphors, like the best argument, no doubt raises some points and but leaves others in the shadow.

In this sense, metaphor is the missing link between the "is" and the "ought", it generates new insight into a policy matter and even suggests one or more lines of action. They are at the same time models of prior- and not-yet-articulated understanding of the situation and models for taking action in that situation. For example, F. R. Ankersmit comments on Schön's classic example, seeing a slum as a disease, that "they [metaphors] invite us to see part of (social) reality from a certain point of view that automatically leads to a certain kind of action…predispose us to favour of a specific line of action…" (Ankersmit, 1996).

Thus, metaphors can organize knowledge and suggest action on the basis of temporal similarities, but do they also lead to the proper action? As here causation takes place in human mind, we may have some doubts that the connection is never automatic, the human mind is not like physics and the Munich-analogy does not possess a Pavlov-like intention of eliciting action. Nevertheless, we should not underestimate metaphors either, and – here there is a strange resemblance to hate speech – to think that all speakers could take it as a starting point that someone is taking their metaphorical words literally. Here we argue the politics of analogy is an instrument that contextualizes and changes objective time into experienced human time.

First Time Tragedy: Munich 1938

Hobson and Lawson (2008) have reframed E.H. Carr's famous question by applying it to international relations: "What is History in IR?" For them there are four ideal types, and the answer varies according to where the researcher is located on the continuum, plus the degree of willingness to generalise. At

first "history without historicism", like its neo-realist version, generalises most, whilst "radical historicism" and "traditional history" avoid generalisations and represent the other pole. To give an example, in "history without historicism" *appeasement* becomes a universal battle cry for the necessity of confronting dictatorial regimes across time and place, in much the same way that the US withdrawal from Iraq is related to the retreat from Vietnam. Finally, there is "historicist historical sociology", which overlaps with the three others. Although to us this category looks somewhat loose, we locate ourselves there with the knowledge that it includes such formidable figures as Quentin Skinner, Carr and R.G. Collingwood. We also accept the idea that world politics is historically Janus-faced, gazing both into the past and the present (Hobson and Lawson, 2008).

Thus, the negotiations that took place in Munich in 1938 can be considered as a tragedy and a lesson of wishful thinking. In international politics Munich has become a synonym of a tragedy and betrayal, in which no mutual trust was found. The most tragic image has originated from Neville Chamberlain, who waved the agreement in his hands and declared it to be "Peace for our time". No doubt the failure was tragedy for Chamberlain himself, but the popular image is too simple. Less remembered is that it was also Chamberlain who declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939, when Hitler had attacked Poland. Furthermore, Chamberlain led the country until May 1940, when he was forced to resign. It was his tragedy to be replaced by a unique wartime leader, who would become (and remains) one of the most admired men of the modern world, Winston Churchill.

Moreover, Munich is a general lesson of power politics and the school of political realism, which we use in its classic IR meaning. Even nicknamed the Father of Realism, Carr, published his famous *Twenty Years Crisis* in September of 1939, shortly after the war's outbreak. For Carr appeasement in the 1930s was realism as he felt that serious mistakes had been made in Versailles 1919. In 1939 Carr's main argument was that crisis was inevitable and it was better to carry out peaceful change through negotiations than by other means. He even criticized Czechoslovakia for its minority's policy. For Carr "peaceful change" was a fully acceptable principle.[8]

In the 1945 edition Carr, nevertheless, blames Hitler for not having used the opportunity presented by Munich to build a new improved relationship with the other great powers (Cox 2001, lxxix). To some extend Carr could therefore be accused of bandwagoning and the hindsight bias of 1945. However, in his important *Vergangene Zukunft* (*Futures Past*), Koselleck reminded us how former futures were once open. Thus, we claim that the Munich agreement is usually understood from all its *consequences* up to 1945, and *not as an attempt to avoid a war*. There are at least two other questions, which the original "Munich" dealt with: a (failed) possibility for a peaceful change and an at-

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tempt to deal with historical injustices. From this point of view Munich means negotiations in relation to military action. The Saarland case had been solved by a referendum in 1935, as more than 90% supported the annexation to Germany. Unlike for Crimea in 2014, an international organisation, the League of Nations, decided to transfer the area. Munich was different, as four great powers were the actors and agreed *over* the Czechoslovakians, who were not even invited to the conference. As a result, the Sudeten parts of Czechoslovakia were annexed to Germany, as later Teschen to Poland, as in 1938 and 1939 parts of Slovakia to Hungary.

Second Time Farce: Suez 1956

It is a constructivist claim that the identities and interests of actors are constituted by social structures, inter-subjective ideas, beliefs and values. Here the construction of "history" takes place on two levels, on one hand politicians constructed their own view of history; on the other hand scholars focusing on these actors construct it in retrospect. Thus, the present study is Skinnerian in the sense that it tries to locate a specific time, thus the intention seems to be plausible when knowing the current context; and Koselleckian in a sense that experience is a category that matters in analysis of the future. Moreover, we agree that the use of political language is the proper object of the history of political study (Tribe, 2004).

In a strictly British context, the first time that "Munich" was systemically evoked was during the Suez crisis of 1956. Despite fairly feeble diplomatic efforts, the British made a covert agreement with France and Israel and attacked Egypt in late October; however they were forced to back down due to Superpower pressure. In the lead up to the military showdown, Anthony Eden's Conservative government, but also the Labour opposition, plus the overwhelming majority of the print media all spoke in terms of the politics of the 1930s. Even figures opposed the Government's rush to military action still used the same mode of argumentation, using the same historical defaults, the same cyclical repetition; appeasement, the Rhineland, and Munich. In the memoirs of Eden, Lloyd and Macmillan there are literally dozens of references to Hitler, appeasement, the Rhineland, Munich, *Mein Kampf* etc., all while in fact discussing Suez.[9] At that time, only 18 years after the conference, and hardly ten years after the war itself, Munich no doubt played a first order experience for vast majority of British politicians. No particular rhetorical strategy was needed to stress similarities and to combine them to the present situation. In the horizon of expectation, the World War was very familiar. Adam Sisman wrote that the British "have become dangerously and self-destructively fixated

on a few years in their history. On the one hand, the 'finest hour'; on the other Munich" (Sisman, 1994).

History can be a burden and lead to a potential overreaction, which is the core of the Suez case. Analogy could be a notorious trap, particularly for the unwary, to use a famous example: the Bolsheviks knew that the history of the French Revolution had ended in a Napoleon. Therefore they mistrusted Trotsky, who looked most like a Napoleon figure but not Stalin, who looked least like one (Carr 1961). The point is not only that you know history, but that you are also aware of your own conceptualizations i.e., how and for what purpose you use them.

The Labour opposition leader Hugh Gaitskell called Nasser "Hitler", while ex-Prime Minister Clement Attlee, then Labour leader in the House of Lords, described Nasser as an "Imperialist Dictator" (Documents on International Affairs, 1956, London Times, 1956). Another Labour member of the Commons, Reginald Paget, described the nationalization of the canal as "a threat to strangle the whole industry of Europe… what we had to get used to in Hitler's day" (Documents on International Affairs, 1956).

Yet from any critical distance, the circumstances were utterly different; Nasser's Egypt was an undeveloped, impoverished ex-colony, in no way could it resemble the militarised, industrialised might of the Third Reich. Furthermore there was a new international system; in 1938 the League of Nations was morally bankrupt, but by 1956 there was a new Superpower rivalry and an active and expanding United Nations. Britain's leadership and political class should have taken this into account; they didn't, and somehow lived in the past. In fact, the analogy loosely referred only to one person and individuals role in history, whilst the remaining similarities or differences were unanalysed. Had the policy and opinion makers been more alert, they could even have found a recent precedent, that is, the nationalization of Iran's foreign-owned oilfields by its Prime Minister Mossadeq, which presented them with a fairly precise analogy. But instead, Nasser was demonised as a new Hitler, which was very unusual in a colonial context: after all, this was demonising Nasser in distinctly *European* terms. The European colonial powers had long experience in racial/religious scaremongering; why not depict Nasser as some secularised, modern version of a "Mad Mullah". But is seemed Munich – however inaccurate – was much more powerful analogy.

Fearful of the accusation of appeasement, Eden, his Chancellor Harold Macmillan, and Defence Secretary Selwyn Lloyd all quickly decided on using force against Egypt. As early as 31 July, the American ambassador in London cabled the Department of State, saying, "Eden, Macmillan and Lloyd…are flexible on procedures leading up to showdown but insist over and over again that whatever *conferences, arrangements, public postures and manoeuvres might be necessary, at the end they are determined to use force*"(our italics). As Macmillan

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wrote in his 1971 memoir *Riding the Storm 1956–59*: "This was the supreme issue. He (Eden) seemed quite determined. It was 1938 over again. He would not be party to any new appeasement."(Macmillan, 1971).

Anthony Eden wrote and published his volume of the relevant years *Full Circle* in 1960, while Nasser was still in power: his preface states that "the lessons of the 'thirties and their application to the 'fifties…are the themes of my memoirs" (Eden, 1960). However, both Macmillan and Lloyd wrote and published later, in 1971 and 1977, and had therefore seen the course of events over the 1960s and early 1970s. These events would have included Nasser's defeats and his death in 1970. So one might imagine that Lloyd and Macmillan might drop the Nasser-was-Hitler argument, but on the contrary, they will not let it go. Lloyd seemed obsessed with the events of the late 1930s; indeed, his fear of being called an *appeaser* is explicit in his book:

> As to the British political scene, our critics on the left would claim that it was they who had forced us to back down, but if we took no action those same people would very soon be crying "Munich again". We would be the "guilty men" who had failed to stand up to Nasser, just as, according to them, the conservatives in 1937 and 1938 had failed to stand up to Hitler.

"Munich again?" Lloyd concluded, "Was that an exaggeration or an obsession?" (Lloyd, 1978). Surely it was both. Lloyd and Macmillan thought of history as a simplified continuity, unwilling – or unable – to distinguish past and present.

Munich versus Vietnam: Gulf War I

Hayden White has implicitly offered an interesting answer to the question of "repetition". In his book *Figural Realism* there is an engaging idea, which is that a later event could be a fulfilment of an earlier one, much like the Old Testament in relation to Christianity. However, this relation is not *causal* but *metaphorical*. Marx did not suggest that the 1848 revolution was a *consequence* of 1789. The genealogy between these two is the way in which people in the latter era would like to see their role in *fulfilling* the former. The historical event itself remains open, a later epoch might use it for their own purposes and projects (White, 1999).

In our case of politics George W. Bush could easily be seen as an example of fulfilling an event, the war, which for his father remained unfinished. Already when Bush senior was in office, hawks in the US insisted that Saddam Hussein was an emerging Hitler, who had to be stopped, whilst doves warned that the Persian Gulf was a trap like Vietnam. Spellman and Holyoak (1992) have

argued that this kind of analogical mapping may be a major cognitive mechanism. Debate of a proper temporal metaphor has continued later in the US as well: the administration of George W. Bush used first an image of the 1945 mushroom cloud, i.e., the menace of an atomic bomb, hoping to make its case to go to war against Iraq. Later Edward Kennedy called Iraq "George Bush's Vietnam", a comparison debated in *Foreign Affairs* in 2005 (Baglione, 2006).

However, it is important to note that later Bush turned his opponent's allegation upside down: only withdrawal would lead to parallels with Vietnam. Thus, at first the case was debated under different temporal metaphors and then under the same metaphor and its temporal contents. For those to whom Iraq resembled Vietnam, it referred to a failure and as illocution to implement withdrawal. In the next phase only Vietnam was the issue and its content was contested with various time periods i.e., before and after the withdrawal. The opponents had "real" factual history in their argumentation, whilst Bush supporters had a "what if" speculative history in their background: had the US funded its allies in Vietnam after it withdrew its troops, the allies would have won the war.[10]

During the build-up to the first Gulf War of 1991, President George H. Bush, who possessed first order experience to the WWII, evoked the 1930s both publically and privately. At that time, the Munich analogy had become quite familiar already, had taken on a life of its own, and displaced its original situationality (*chronos*). Both of the examples discussed above show Munich's flexibility, ability to be claimed as relevant to new contexts.

In 1998 George Bush (Sn.) defended his actions in his and Brent Scowcroft's volume *A World Transformed*, in which he tells us he was reading "a book on World War II by British historian Martin Gilbert. I saw a direct analogy between what was occurring in Kuwait and what the Nazis had done" (Bush and Scowcroft, 1998)[11]. Preparing a speech for television on 8 August 8 1990, Bush wrote, "I tightened up the language to strengthen the similarity I saw between the Persian Gulf and the situation the Rhineland in the 1930s, when Hitler simply defied the Treaty of Versailles and marched in. This time I wanted no appeasement" (Bush and Scowcroft, 1998).

Bush pushed the Saddam=Hitler formula in much the same way as Eden et al. pushed the Nasser=Hitler during Suez. John MacArthur too was aware of the "Saddam-is-Hitler theme that proved so very useful to the White House" noting the Bush "had begun to model himself after the wartime Winston Churchill" (MacArthur, 1992). Interestingly, when assembling his "allies" Bush encountered another analogy, though one not soaked in the glory of World War Two: senior diplomat Richard Haass suggested that "We may be able to do something along the lines of the Korean War model of a US-led multinational force" (Bush and Scowcroft, 1998). Korea, which ended in a stalemate that still exists, was never going to be as sellable as Munich. At a

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meeting between himself and Gorbachev in Helsinki in September 1990, Bush recorded how he used this associative strategy of argumentation in his disagreements with Gorbachev over how to deal with Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait: "If we had offered Hitler some way out, would it have succeeded?" Gorbachev replied, not unreasonably, "Not the same situation" to which Bush replied "Only in personality" (Bush and Scowcroft, 1998). Gorbachev's position, as he articulated it, was cautious, but *analogy-based*, he told Bush at a meeting on November 19; "On some things, of course, we have different ideas, but on this we must be together. In my heart, as yours I am sure, the preference is to solve this without blood. It can all turn out very badly, worse than Vietnam" (Bush and Scowcroft, 1998).

Not that, on the evidence of this book, Bush was very interested in *situations* as such, precedent and analogies were very important to him too. Furthermore, Bush showed took a jaundiced view of diplomacy, which he wasn't sure had developed all that much since the era of appeasement. "I knew what had happened in the 1930s when a weak League of Nations had failed to stand up to Japanese, Italian, and German aggression. The result was to encourage the ambitions of those regimes." (Bush and Scowcroft, 1998). This coupling of Munich and a lack of faith in diplomacy was very reminiscent of the British in 1956; diplomacy was only to be *seen* to be exhausted, so the real business of military action could take place.

Privately, Bush wrote to his family from Camp David on 31 December 1990:

> My mind goes back to history: How many lives might have been saved if appeasement had given way to force earlier on in the late 30s or earliest 40s? ...sometimes in life you have to act as you think best – you can't compromise, you can't give in, even if your critics are loud and numerous. (Bush and Scowcroft, 1998.)

In this argumentation, Bush sought justification in the past and defended new action, of which he had to convince people. "Not everyone in the Administration yet shared my feelings that it might be time to consider using force." However another historical precedent haunted Bush; "I did not want to repeat the problems of the Vietnam War" (Bush and Scowcroft, 1998). Bush one suspects, was torn between the *drive* factor of Munich and the *restraining* factor of Vietnam. In hoping for a "provocation" (which would justify using force) he was even envious of Lyndon Johnson's exploitation of the Gulf of Tonkin incident; "I knew that the Vietnam War was different, but his efforts made a big impression on me, and I began to think about seeking a similar congressional vote of support." (Bush and Scowcroft, 1998). One might guess that at that stage he *hoped* the Vietnam War would be different. Political space was framed between Munich and Vietnam, and Munich proved to be the stronger.

Blair: Gulf War II

As Tony Blair readied his country for war, he unsurprisingly plunged back into the 1930s. *The Guardian's* Richard Norton-Taylor wrote that; "Blair similarly evoked ghost of the past. He could not endure the 'shame' of appeasement, he said a few days before the Iraq invasion. Britain would face a 'living nightmare' if it appeased Saddam Hussein." (*Guardian*, 2006)

When addressing the House of Commons on 18 March 2003, the day prior to the attack, Blair said: "And now the world has to learn the lesson all over again that weakness in the face of a threat from a tyrant, is the surest way not to peace but to war." He continued:

> What would any tyrannical regime possessing WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction) think viewing the history of the world's diplomatic dance with Saddam? That our capacity to pass firm resolutions is only matched by our feebleness in implementing them. (Blair, 2003)

Without doubt we may suppose that he and his advisors knew that "Munich" has been used before. Shrewdly, Blair then denied that he was manipulating the very historical analogies that he was manipulating. This verbal method is worth pausing to note: In April 1998 he had given his most famous – and cringeworthy – soundbite, "the hand of history upon our shoulders" after listeners were assured that, "A day like today, it's not a day for soundbites". Like Lloyd and Macmillan on Suez, Blair strenuously defends his record on Iraq in his memoirs, at one point stating; "There is no moral judgment that can or should be based on mathematics, here's the number Saddam killed; here's the number that died after his fall. Such a calculation is necessarily invidious" (Blair, 2010). Have stated this, Blair then fills two pages with exactly a "judgment based on mathematics", (his final figures are "112,000 too many, but a far cry from half a million.") (Blair 2010) To revert to his speech:

> There are glib and sometimes foolish comparisons with the 1930s. No one here is an appeaser. But the only relevant point of analogy is that with history, we know what happened. We can look back and say: there's the time; that was the moment; for example, when Czechoslovakia was swallowed up by the Nazis – that's when we should have acted…

> Naturally should Hitler appear again in the same form, we would know what to do. But the point is that history doesn't declare the future to us so plainly. Each time is different and the present must be judged without the benefit of hindsight. (Blair, 2003)

We understand the temptations felt by many politicians to be seen as Churchills, but who also fear to be seen as Chamberlains. For Koselleck, the future, as such, is unfinished and therefore is depicted by a metaphor of a horizon. Expectations and experiences are present in the current moment: "person-specific and interpersonal, expectation also takes place in the today; it is the future made present; it directs itself to the not-yet, to the non-experienced, to that which is to be revealed" (Koselleck, 2004). No doubt Blair – or his spin doctors, though he states in his memoirs that he alone wrote the speech – seemed to be at least aware of the risks of such an analogy. Interestingly, he had doubts about the Hitler passage, but nonetheless left it in the speech;

> In one passage, which I regretted and almost took out, I made reference to the 1930's and to the almost universal refusal, for a long time, of people to believe Hitler was a threat. I was careful not conflate Saddam and Hitler and specifically disowned many of the glib comparisons between 2003 and 1933. (Blair, 2010)

On the basis of the hindsight-bias postulate Tetlock et al. (2006), argued that people begin to reorganize their mind when they know the final result of the given process. Here the association strategy was clear: the entire tone on Blair's moral crescendo was to present a familiar moral/existential dilemma, to which there could be only be one choice. Having very disingenuously told the House of Commons that; "No one here is an appeaser", Blair concludes by drawing his lines in such an illocutionary way that *not* to act with him *is to appease*. Though he does not even need to use the word, so embedded is it in his argument:

> Tell our allies that at the very moment of action, at the very moment when they need our determination that Britain faltered. I will not be party to such a course... This is the time for this house, not just this government or indeed this prime minister, but for this house to give a lead, to show that we will stand up for what we know to be right, to show that we will confront the tyrannies and dictatorships and terrorists who put our way of life at risk, to show at the moment of decision that we have the courage to do the right thing. (Blair, 2003)

The most obvious connection is the fact that both Bush Senior and Blair were committed to war against the same country, Iraq, but what is of importance is that in both cases there was a *negotiation* process taking place, in which neither Bush or Blair had any faith but to which they had to pay lip-service, while the process failed and they could finally use force, as they wanted all along. The 2003 Bush Junior /Blair Iraq War Memo stated that Blair really only wanted diplomatic "cover" for military action; "a second resolution would give us international cover, especially with the Arabs" (BBC, 2006). The summary of the memo, which recorded a two-hour White House meeting between

both leaders in late January 2003, says: "Our diplomatic strategy had to be arranged around the military planning." (BBC, 2006) Military option *first*, diplomacy *second*, with Munich playing the role of legitimizing argument.

In this sense, Munich becomes a form of *anti-diplomacy*. After all, goes the argument, negotiation failed in the 1930s, and look what happened, therefore negotiation is a waste of time, there are no longer any options but the military one, as was indeed the case in 1956 when a doomed negotiation was also present.

Conclusion

According to the old cliché, history repeats itself. An equally well-known claim is Santayana's that those who do not know history are committed to repeat it. Both refer to learning from history, but history's role in relation to the unknown future is more complex (Koselleck, 2004). According to Tetlock et al. (2006), the question is not whether or not people learn from history but rather, is hindsight bias inevitable in politics? They tend to say yes to the latter as people usually do not remember how unsure the actors were in the past. For example, Dieter Segert has argued that in autumn 1989, two of four collective actors in the GDR aimed for nothing more than democratic reform of their country; German unification, which seems inevitable in retrospect, was not desired or even imagined at the time (Segert, 2009).[12] Thus, in this historico-cultural approach we have not studied *history* or historical events as such but rather their use in the context of international relations and the ways in which *history* is constructed, manipulated and turned into politics.

In this article we have concentrated on the process how "Munich" i.e., the evocation of appeasement, has become a concept in international politics. From the point of conceptual history, to become established a concept requires not only its usage in different temporal contexts but also acknowledging of its metaphorical nature. In our case, a particular historical event has become a metaphor. Instead of essentially absorbing radically new meanings this relatively new, (ca. 80 year old), event has established a life beyond its original usage.

We have argued that a rhetorical analogy is an instrument that changes objective time into experienced human time – we even think that politics is about a battle of proper metaphors. Thus, one can argue that history repeats when people like to repeat it: political dimensions are found in the way in which people deal with the past in concrete situations; whether they attempt to free themselves of it and dissociate themselves from it, or build continuities, remember and forget. At the same time we remind readers that politics is both temporal continuities and discontinuities to avoid overreaction.

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We contend that what we have called "Munich" is a uniquely dangerous form of political speech. It was chosen to prove that continuity existed, and this continuity was harnessed to legitimate current aggressive political purposes. In effect, it is an applied *anti-diplomacy*, which implies that negotiation is a useless, cowardly, even a treasonous activity.

Several other cases could have been presented in addition to the ones above, ones that we have discussed elsewhere (Humphreys, 2013); Margaret Thatcher's rhetoric in regard to the Falklands' War ("we were defending our honour as a nation, and principles of fundamental importance to the whole world – above all, that aggressors should never succeed") (Thatcher, 1993)[13], or of Madeline Albright in the build up to the Kosovo war; ("This is London remember, not Munich!", quoted in Ignatieff, 2000) each conflict that made pretensions of negotiation when the military option was always going to be favoured over a political/diplomatic option. In this sense, "Munich" has often been the final and most loaded rhetorical pitch that has allowed countries – justly or unjustly – to go to war.

Endnotes

1   The title refers to a line in a rock song "Highwire" by Mick Jagger and Keith Richards. The song was banned by the BBC during the 1991 Gulf War.
2   In the midst of the Crimean crisis Hillary Clinton and the former Czech Foreign Minister Karel von Schwarzenberg, for example, compared Putin's actions to Hitler's in the 1930s (*Global Post* 3 March 2014; *The Washington Post* 5 March 2014). Two years later China's *Global Times* (14 March 2016) evoked the problem of Donald Trump's populism, which is opening a Pandora's box in US presidential elections: "…he is a perfect populist that could easily provoke the public… He has even been called another Benito Mussolini or Adolf Hitler by some Western media. Mussolini and Hitler came to power through elections, a heavy lesson for Western democracy. Now, most analysts believe the US election system will stop Trump from being president eventually."
3   For example, Gordon Carper compiled some 3000 definitions of the term from the perspective of politicians, researchers, writers, etc. See Gordon N. Carper, *The Meaning of History. A Dictionary of Quotations* (New York, 1991). See also the *Historia magistra vitae* and the different meanings of the concept history by Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past. On the Semantics of Historical Time* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, 2004).
4   For example, at a recent conference, one of the authors of this paper traded analogies with a Serbian delegate, and stated that Southern Ireland accepts the loss of Northern Ireland, and France that of Algeria, and Finland that of Karelia, Germany of Gdansk; when will a Serbian leader be able to admit the obvious, that is, that Kosovo was "lost"? The Serbian delegate replied "you might as well ask an Israeli when he would give up Jerusalem". In this sense historical analogies can be-

come powerful metaphors; Jerusalem, as a metaphor, was King; the dreary spires of Belfast and Gdansk simply couldn't compete.

5　Eden was an officer in the First World War, (he may even have fought against Hitler at La Fere). Later as a politician he had firsthand experience of Hitler, dating from 1934.

6　Bush senior was a bomber pilot in the Pacific theater.

7　As Carver and Pikalo (2008) indicate, there are different ways to understand metaphors. In the most conventional, Aristotelian way, they are substitutes between one concept and another, figures of speech or matters of words rather than thought or action. Secondly, in the sense of Max Black's interaction view, they render a certain nuanced meaning by emphasizing some details and de-emphasizing others. They are results of interaction and have a meaning-giving action. Metaphors, which turn out to be successful, establish a privileged perspective, constitute the object and disappear as metaphors. They inform and structure thinking as being boundary-drawing, boundary-maintaining, ordering "mini-narratives", and could bring new ontological information.

8　Michael Cox (2001) says that the issue became so delicate in retrospect that Carr made some changes to the new edition in November 1945. According to critics, those "some alterations" and a new index were "crucial". For Cox the real issue is whether Carr would have done that in 1939, when he saw that appeasement was in tatters (Cox 2001, lxxii–lxxiv). From our point of view it is highly important that they are dealing with the Munich Agreement and the fate of Czechoslovakia. Cox estimates that there are one or two blunt changes in the 1945 edition. Thus, from 1945 perspective it was not inevitable anymore that power relations of Europe 1938 made it inevitable that Czechoslovakia should lose part of its territory, and eventually her independence. If this were to happen, Carr stated in 1939, it would be better that this should come about as a result of discussions around a table in Munich rather than as a result of war. (Cox 2001, lxxvi, cf. Rhetorical turn… 1996).

9　Lamentably, Macmillan's famous diary had little on this as Macmillan destroyed the relevant entries on Eden's request.

10　Melvin R. Laird (2005) argues that "another Vietnam" is used to mould an isolationist American foreign policy. Implicitly there is a kind of "what if" argument, as if the US had funded its allies in Vietnam after it withdrew its troops in 1973, according to Laird, the allies have won the war. As a perspective Laird mentioned also his own experiences and even a shrapnel in his body from a kamikaze attack.

11　Here the depiction, Bush finding an analogy, has an interesting parallel, which we call a preventive analogy: during the Cuban missile crisis President Kennedy read *The Guns of August*, a book dealing with a chain reaction in the beginning of the WWI. After a potential connection to current events, Kennedy aimed to act in a manner that such a volume like *The Missiles of October* will not be written (cf. Tosh 2008).

12　Interestingly, during the recent Arab Spring, some commentators tried to map the uprisings onto those of Eastern Europe in 1989. By contrast, some threatened Arab leaders spoke of the uprisings in terms of another Western "crusade".

13　Thatcher's preference for military action over a diplomatic solution was transpar-

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ent; "there were clear signs that what they (the Americans) were contemplating was a negotiation between the two sides....But in practice the Haig negotiations, which flowed from all this, almost certainly worked in our favour by precluding for a time *even less helpful diplomatic interventions from other directions, including the UN*" (Thatcher, 186,188, emphasis added).

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