

THE WORLD MIND

A Magazine for International and Public Affairs



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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the first issue of the second volume of the World Mind. We are excited to deliver the work of our dedicated undergraduate students, who have worked diligently to produce a thought-provoking, informative, and engaging magazine.

The cover of this issue features protesters from the city of York, England after Britain's exit from the European Union this past summer. A dystopian nightmare for some, and a symbol of hope and empowerment for others, the shocking results of this unprecedented referendum shook the foundation of Europe and sparked international debate on the meaning, purpose, and practicality of unity. The message "Leaders Not Liars" seems to speak to the zeitgeist of so many movements across the world today: from the UK's vote to leave and the US's hopes of making America "great again," to the rise of Germany, Brazil, and Venezuela's right-wing movements, a deep mistrust of national leaders plagues the international stage.

But in a world of political turmoil and civil unrest, a resounding message is clear: citizens want their countries to be stronger, safer. They want to break away from dysfunctional political systems that place bureaucracy over democracy. We are witnessing the emergence of new leaders, new political movements, and new visions for a better future. People are recognizing opportunities within moments of instability. The issue, however, is that these visions, hopes, and courses of action often speak past one another at best, and directly collide at worst.

Within the pages of this issue, our writers address all of these topics and more. While our broad theme remains international and public affairs, this particular issue focuses on the economic, militaristic, social, and political unrest of today. We analyze the current issues and, in many instances, offer hope for the future.

Thank you to the School of International Service, the School of Public Affairs, and Clocks and Clouds, American University's journal for undergraduate research, for making this magazine possible. With that, I leave you to enjoy the work of our talented students and future policy leaders in the World Mind: Volume 2, Number 1.

Emily Dalgo
Executive Editor



Israeli soldier during a company exercise

Photo Courtesy of Israel Defense Forces via Flickr

Understanding the Bellicosity of Israel's Defense Policy

How can Constructivist Theory and Jewish history help us understand Israel's modern military policies?

By Adam Goldstein

Israel is a state that inspires passionate debate, particularly surrounding its use of force, or, more specifically, its willingness to use violent force as a first option, as they perhaps most controversially did at the start of the Six-Day War. In early June of 1967, Israel responded to Arab troop build-ups with an effective pre-emptive strike against Egyptian airfields, launching what is now known as the "Six-Day War." International law, however, is murky on whether or not pre-emptive strikes are legal.

What could explain this bellicose military policy? Israel is far from a universally-accepted state, and thus has little political capital to spare on controversial military endeavors. This article proposes that the most fruitful way to comprehend the military policies of Israel is to utilize the theory of Constructivism. When using the lens of Constructivism, outsiders can peer into the Israeli, and Jewish, zeitgeist. The roots of Israeli military policy are found in the ways in which Jews, and thus the Israeli military establishment, understand certain threats. Due to the threat perception of the Israeli military establishment, the international system is viewed as a Realist one, suggesting that existential threats can only be circumvented through the accumulation of power, and the willingness to use it. While it is beyond the scope of this article to either defend or criticize Israeli bellicosity, reaching a peaceful solution to the cleavages plaguing the Israel versus Palestine paradigm

is dependent upon understanding the zeitgeists of all involved factions.

Constructivism: Understanding Israel's View Of Threats Through Stories, Violence, and Oppression

Constructivism is a theory of international relations positing that international actors "construct" their own identities and realities. The experiences, stories, and history of a people create a shared identity and a perceived context around different situations. In the political sphere, these constructed identities and perceptions synthesize to generate policies. To a nation, such as Israel, that possesses a history and identity imbued with persecution, less severe threats, such as a one-off stabbing, are viewed as existentially, demanding decisive and oftentimes, destructive, action.

One example of Constructivism's usefulness as an explanatory tool concerns the different attitudes toward intra-European war during the 1900s. Prior to World War II, war in Europe was the product of intense nationalism, realpolitik and imperial ambitions. After the horror of World War II shocked European society, new initiatives to integrate European states ensued because Europeans realized that they could not continue on such a destructive and divisive path. The constructed realities of nationalism and the subsequent warmongering gave way to the new realities of a fully-integrated community of Euro-

pean nations with the establishment of the European Union, forming a new body politic. The change from frequent wars to a genuine attempt at perpetual peace in Europe is best understood through Constructivism. An appreciation of different viewpoints and zeitgeists provides us with an explanatory model of an actor's actions.

Understanding Israel's actions in 1967 is predicated on acknowledging the recent and painful history of Jews and how it informs the state's military policies. The modern Israeli state is an ideological project, one created to provide a safe space for the Jewish people to prosper away from the existential threats that have historically tended to plague them. One of the fathers of Zionism, Theodore Herzl, promulgates in his famous pamphlet, *Der Judenstaat* (translated literally: The State of The Jews), notions of anti-Semitism as hatred of the Jews as a nation, not a religion or culture. In other words, to the wave of 1800s anti-Semites, Judaism was a biological race, not simply a religion. This new wave of hatred peaked with the Holocaust, in which the Nazis systematically murdered approximately six million Jews (as well as millions of others).

Yet, the Holocaust was not the only instance or type of recent anti-Semitism Jews experienced. Consider the Kishinev Pogrom of 1903, in which drunken rioters murdered 49 Jews and destroyed the Jewish quarter. In 1905, rioters killed or wounded 66 Jews and looted 125 Jewish owned homes and businesses in the Dnepropetrovsk Pogrom. The Dreyfus Affair in 1894 highlighted a less violent form of anti-Semitism, in which implicit biases against Jews forced the perception that they were inherently treasonous criminals. Jewish-French army captain Alfred Dreyfus was falsely accused and punished for revealing sensitive information to Germany. In 1893, Karl Leuger founded the anti-Semitic "Christian Social Party," and became the mayor of Vienna. Leuger and the Christian Social Party's political success brought anti-Semitism into the mainstream of political thought, normalizing extreme individuals such as Georg Ritter von Schonerer, who held a young Adolf Hitler as an ardent follower. The synthesis of anti-Semitic politics with the encouraged violence of the pogroms created a seriously inhospitable atmosphere for Jews. Yet, Jews were not altogether unaccustomed to such antagonism and, in many ways, the stories created in the time preceding this new race based anti-Semitism helped to inform the ways in which Jews, and eventually Israelis, perceived threats.

Several Jewish holidays either commemorate or mourn Jews who overcame or succumbed to genocide, diaspora, and enslavement. Purim, Passover, Sukkot, Hannukah, and Yom HaShoah are all concerned with different, and violent, events in Jewish history. The synthesis of the stories with the all-too-recent memories of oppression and genocide in the 1800s and 1900s facilitates the view that any threat is an existential threat to either the Jewish identity or Jewish lives.

Purim is a holiday that celebrates the defeat of Persian Prime Minister Haman. Haman had ordered all of the component nations living in the Persian Empire to bow to him, and when the leader of the Jews, Mordechai, refused, Haman sentenced all Jews to death. The emperor of Persia, however, was married to a Jew (unbeknownst to him), and when this information came to light, Haman was executed. According to this story, ancient Jews had successfully circumvented their genocide through strategic planning and clever manipulation of court politics.

Passover concerns the escape of Jewish slaves from Egypt. As the story goes, Egypt had enslaved Jews for many years, forcing them to build pyramids and lavish palaces for the Pharaohs while living in squalor. Moses, who eventually became one of the Jewish leaders, brought a message to the Pharaoh from God. When the Pharaoh refused to emancipate his Jewish slaves, God sent ten plagues, culminating in the deaths of Egyptian first-born sons. After the Pharaoh's son died, he freed the Jewish slaves (only to chase them through the desert immediately after). Jewish slaves were able obtain freedom through the use of overwhelming force in the form of plagues. In the aftermath of Jewish emancipation from Egypt, the former slaves wandered the Sinai desert for 40 years, living as nomads. This diaspora is remembered through the holiday Sukkot, in which Jews are encouraged to sleep and eat in

huts covered in branches in remembrance of their stateless history, placing further emphasis on the need for a home in which Jews may permanently and safely live.

Hanukkah commemorates the success of a violent guerrilla movement, called The Maccabees, over the Syrian-Greek Seleucid Dynasty, who ruled the land that became Israel. The Seleucids attempted to Hellenize the Jews, converting them to their religion and destroying Jewish holy places, especially the Grand Temple in Jerusalem. Antiochus, the leader of The Seleucids, was wary of an indigenous guerrilla movement and sent a general named Apolonus, along with (roughly) 40,000 soldiers, to eliminate the threat. Judah, the leader of the Maccabees, responded defiantly, stating "Let us fight to the death in defense of our souls and our Temple!" Eventually, and against all odds, the Maccabees won, restoring the Temple to its original glory. In this case, the desire to preserve the Jewish identity against either overwhelming odds or the threat of forced assimilation called for a fierce and incredibly brutal defense.

Yom HaShoah is both the day of remembrance for Jewish victims of the Holocaust, as well as a celebration of Jewish resistance to the genocide. On Yom HaShoah, all activities in Israel are centered on spreading knowledge about the Holocaust. Entertainment programs are canceled in favor of interviews with survivors, businesses are closed, and two sirens, one at 11 am and one at sunset, calls for complete silence throughout Israel. The Israeli educational system, perhaps wishing to assign a more hopeful message to the holiday, discusses two forms of Jewish resistance against the Nazis: Passive resistance insofar as many Jews retained their Jewish identity throughout the Nazi's rule; and active resistance such as the Warsaw Uprising (which shares the same date as Yom HaShoah). The dual focus on the preservation of Jewish identity as well as active resistance highlights the ultimate goal and primary method through which Israel intends to survive as a state: preservation of its Jewish character and a fiercely resilient and resolute defense.

The recent cases of anti-Semitism, such as the pogroms, Holocaust, and legal discrimination,

mixed with the stories told every year during holiday gatherings promotes the perception that unless Jews take matters into their own hands, they will be at the mercy of those that wish to do them harm. The product of these experiences promotes three beliefs, first: threats are everywhere; second: most, if not all, threats are existential; and third: the only way to survive in the face of these threats is through the strength and military power of the Israeli state. Famous Israeli general Ehud Barak stated, "Until the wolf shall lay with the lamb, we'd better be wolves", providing a key insight into how Israeli's view and understand threats.

Israel, as a state founded by Jews, views the international system in a way that is largely informed by the experiences and realities Jews faced throughout history. As Barak stated, Israel views itself as a lamb, neither inherently violent nor bellicose, but surrounded by threatening wolves nonetheless, suggesting that Israel should become more wolf like, willing to strike decisively to continue as a state.

This understanding explains the events of the Six-Day War, in which Israel attacked Egypt first. Although this might ostensibly make Israel the aggressor, consider Israel's viewpoint of the situation. Egypt announced hostility to Israel; set its military to its highest alertness level; expelled UN emergency forces from the shared Sinai Border; strengthened its forces on the same border; closed the important Straits of Tiran to Israeli ships; and fomented a more favorable balance of power by signing alliances with Iraq, Jordan, and Syria. To a state created by people with the shared history of subjugation and near destruction, this seemed to be a serious threat for the continued existence of Israel. The response to these threats was a swift and decisive attack, in which 90% of Egypt's air force was suddenly destroyed without warning. A similar attack was also conducted in Syria. The aftermath of the surprise attacks provided Israel with a prodigious air advantage, and allowed them to capture the Gaza Strip and West Bank in three days. What was perhaps the most powerful and overwhelming alliance in the history of the Arab world was completely defeated in six days as a direct result of Israel's threat perception and military policies.

The Israeli perception of threats promotes a view that the international system is a Realist one. Realists believe first that the international system is anarchic, in that there is no real central authority to regulate the actions of the state. Second, Realists believe states cannot be entirely sure of the actions of other states, which creates uncertainty and requires significant strategic planning. Finally, the way to ensure continued existence against such uncertainty is through power. States strive to be more powerful than other states because that is deemed the only way to deter unpredictable threats. Israel's Realist understanding of the international system mandates an assertive defense policy.

Conclusion

Israel is a state mainly populated by Jews, who, through stories and myths as well as all too recent memories of anti-Semitism and genocide, perceive the world as an inherently threatening and dangerous place. This zeitgeist is translated to the Israeli defense policy, which continually focuses on a twofold strategy centered on accruing and developing the newest technology and assertive and decisive responses to threats. While bellicosity certainly has its drawbacks, international condemnation, civilian casualties and accusations of warmongering chief among them, Israel feels the need to assert itself in such a way as to ensure its survival. The policies of the Israeli military are directly informed by the Jewish reality. The synthesis of these experiences and stories creates a hypersensitive threat perception, explaining the decisive actions and refusal to be bullied we saw enumerated in Israel's pre-emptive strikes in 1967.

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Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the 12th President of Turkey, has held his current office since 2014

Photo Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons



The Turkish Question: An Emergence of Opportunity in the Levant in the Moment of Turkish Instability

“A nation which makes the final sacrifice for life and freedom does not get beaten.” - Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

By Caroline Rose

The world watched with trepidation as military tanks rolled through the streets of Ankara the night of July 15th. Within a matter of hours, soldiers once loyal to President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan took the Chief of Military Staff hostage, attacked both the Turkish parliament and intelligence headquarters, exchanged gunfire in Taksim Square with loyalist forces, and commandeered media channels to announce a victorious overthrow of Erdoğan's government. Or so it seemed.

Turkey is no stranger to military coups d'état, having experienced four successful instances since 1960. President Erdoğan has also withstood barrages from political opponents throughout his 14-year hold on power. It has been assessed that the frequency of these strikes against the Turkish government have been somewhat of an experimental tradition in Turkey; a protection and preservation of Turkish democratic principles against minacious leaders. That said, the residuum of July's attempt has demonstrated to the Turkish citizens President Erdoğan's Achilles heel—a loose grip on the reins of power—and has tightened his grip on Turkey with government and military purges, a long-awaited military campaign in Iraq and Syria, souring the relationship with the European Union, agitating relations with the United States over the extradition of rival Fethullah Gülen, and a strategic pivot towards Russia in a

burgeoning joint-military and energy partnership. These policy tasks in just the two months following July 15th have brought scholars and analysts to question whether the light of the once-heralded beacon of Eurasia will dim or brighten under Erdoğan's tighter hold on power.

In this analysis, I will assess the questions that have been and should be asked during this moment of Turkish instability. These enquiries will assess Turkey's position moving forward into a post-purge state after nearly 58,000 Turkish citizens have been deposed of their positions, as well as the country's standing on the international stage and in regional institutions. The aftershock of Turkey's political earthquake has proved consequential—to the United States, the European Union, the Kurdish people, and of course, the Turkish constituents. While the achievement of internal stability will continue to ebb and flow, I predict the country will converge as a theater to play out geopolitical conflicts, and where invested actors will exploit opportune interests—particularly of the United States' struggle in the Levant.

Purging for Prepotency; Erdoğan's Grasp on Government

On July 15th, the Turkish nation awoke to a government shaken by force and a leader rattled by such events. In a widespread expulsion so colossal that many have considered it to be pre-con-

spired, Erdoğan imprisoned over 7,500 soldiers, 118 generals and admirals, 3,000 members of the Turkish judiciary, 1,500 state ministry staffers, and 100 intelligence officials. This widespread purge of lingering governmental opposition did not halt at the state level, but even seeped into the Turkish educational sector, religious institutions, and media outlets; 21,000 private school teachers, 1,577 university deans, and 100 journalists were dismissed. Of these, 9,000 remain in custody. This leaves all facets of the Turkish government and public services overwhelmingly understaffed across all fields and professions. This “counter-coup” signifies a newfound tenacity that will characterize a new era of the Erdoğan administration—one that will flex its muscle of control at home, while exercising defying the wishes of the West and appeasing the East.

Strongman rule is not new under Erdoğan. Since becoming Prime Minister in 2002, Erdoğan has been controversial in his pursuit to institute and champion political Islam in a traditionally secular political system, initiating a slew of experimental reforms that exacerbated the political differences between Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP), the Justice and Development Party, and other Turkish institutions of democracy. This development necessitated political partnerships, such as the alliance with a Sunni cleric, Fethullah Gülen, the founder of the Hizmet movement. Such a movement swept the nation with a message of religious tolerance and moderate policies of educational immersion and national service, prompting many followers of Gülen to become civil servants in Erdoğan’s administration. But political convenience steered the AKP, and a growing schism between Erdoğan’s political Islam and Gülen’s cultural Islam emerged, resulting in Gülen’s flight to the United States due to a rumored deposition plot and a governmental declaration deeming Gülenists a terrorist organization. In Erdoğan’s political reality, such political adversaries and connivances are commonplace—an intrinsic perspective that become intertwined with Turkey’s foreign policy platform abroad.

The NATO Question

This phenomenon has brought a series of questions to the assemblies, podiums, and cabinets of governments and regional organizations across the international system. The Turkish moment has not been taken lightly in the global order. Turkey’s relative instability, Erdoğan’s autocratic tendencies, combined with the geopolitical and strategic goldmine of Turkey’s location, is an important policy issue leaders will face in the next year.

In the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Turkey stands as the second-largest military in membership, and serves as host to 24 NATO military bases. Even before July 15th, Turkey’s membership had been criticized of its failure to uphold the principles of the Treaty’s first preambulatory clause that mandates members have “stable democratic systems, pursue the peaceful settlement of territorial and ethnic disputes, have good relations with their neighbours, show commitment to the rule of law and human rights, establish democratic and civilian control of their armed forces, and have a market economy.”

Erdoğan’s policies have had a dangerous downward trajectory in protecting constituents’ human rights, with intense discriminatory policies towards ethnic minorities and a reputation for quashing freedom of expression and assembly. Erdoğan’s discriminatory policies towards the Kurdish people, an ethnic minority dispersed throughout Turkey, Iraq, and Syria, have been reported to infringe on the rights and lives of the Kurdish people, including disproportionate charges on the basis of supposed “terrorist motives.”

Yet despite the series of perceived violations, the July 15th attack on the Incirlik air-base has become a fulcrum for NATO’s concerns about the Turkish military’s durability and their adherence to the treaty. The Incirlik base has been an invaluable asset in both the U.S. European Command and U.S. Central Command, as well as the anti-ISIS coalition’s fight in Syria and Iraq. The base is a bulwark in assisting air defense missions and generates significant intelligence cooperation with NATO allies, especially the United

States. The base's operations against Daesh were shut down as well as its commercial power and airspace the night of the attempted coup. Along with a five-day power outage, ten Incirlik officers and their commander, General Bekir Ercan Van, were detained in suspected coordination with anti-Erdoğan soldiers. While the base has regained power and operations have recommenced, the events of July 15th will continue to call into question NATO's reliance on the security of their own bases in Turkey and cause NATO members to second-guess Turkey's strategic capability under such an unstable political system. An air base forced to operate with backup generators while continuing to wage war against Daesh without access to their airspace is an inept one, which will pressure NATO into rethinking their reliance on Turkey.

This shift in relations between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Turkey is not equivalent to suspension or expulsion, contrary to the array of experts calling for the removal of Turkey as a NATO member. In fact, there is no official process or protocol of discharge regarding a member state within the NATO structure. Even if the organization were to establish a mechanism of expulsion, Turkey is too great a strategic treasure for such a consideration; Turkey is perched in the crossroads of the East and West; between NATO and its adversary, Russia, and between the Middle East and Europe.

The Turkish Moment Bears Inestimable Opportunity

How will the North Atlantic Treaty Organization deal with an incalculable Turkey? One scenario will involve maneuvering, rather than containing, Turkey's recent shift towards Russia. Both countries recently struck a renewed energy and military partnership in St. Petersburg, after a chilled six months of stalled relations and sanctions. Moreover, NATO members can either reinforce strained relations by deterring Turkish European Union candidacy and further deliberation surrounding the question of Turkey's NATO membership. Alternatively, NATO could incorporate the recovered Turkish-Russian relationship into their fight against Daesh in Syria and Iraq. Many have perceived this renewed alliance as a

betrayal of Turkey's responsibilities to NATO, as well as an example of Russian encroachment upon a vulnerable political system and paranoid leader. Yet, I argue that this is not a lost cause, but rather an unwonted opportunity.

President Vladimir Putin has provided military support to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, a policy fundamentally divergent from the United States and its allies, there has been rare proof of limited western-Russian cooperation against Daesh bears fruit. United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254 established a tentative timeline that incorporated U.S., Russian, and foreign cooperation, urging "all states to use their influence with the government of Syria and the Syrian opposition to advance the peace process." A failed 48-hour ceasefire sought to accomplish just that, brokered between the United States and Russian forces in Syria that attempted humanitarian assistance and civilian evacuation for nearly 275,000 people without the disruption of strikes from the Syrian government, Free Syrian Army, Syrian Democratic Forces, and foreign forces. The violation of the ceasefire and the continuation of air-strikes in Aleppo has emerged as a strained point of contention for the United States and Russia in both militaristic and diplomatic spheres. But co-operation is still a necessary feat in Syria, even after animosity between the two superpowers. The Obama administration extended a hand to Moscow this past year, with a proposed air campaign combatting Jabhat Fatah al-Sham, formally the al-Nusra Syrian branch of al-Qaeda, in addition to joint air-strikes expunging Daesh from its stronghold in Raqqa. From the established Russian front in Northwestern Syria and Turkey's northern position, the United States and its allies could arrange a strategic operation that targets Daesh from its western stronghold in Palmyra to the East in Markadeh. No individualized military effort could accomplish such a feat in the region.

Russia's position in Syria is one of immense strength and, while the United States' presence has been felt in the Levant, Putin has greater leverage with Iran and the dormant Syrian government. Scholars Gordan Adams and Stephen Walt have advocated this as well, reiterating that no single power can defeat Daesh nor establish political

stability in Syria. A united international coalition against the Islamic State continues to flounder without Russia's presence, and will continue to as the Levant unravels into political pandemonium. Yet collaboration does not guarantee Assad's deposition from power, just as cooperation with Erdoğan does not ensure Turkish avoidance of attacking Kurdish Peshmerga fighters in Syria and Iraq. It will be the United States' responsibility to make the precarious decision whether to take a sensitive, but necessary step in their fight against Daesh.

Conclusion

This past summer, Turkey became a Eurasian flashpoint that marked a new wave of uncertainty towards the cohesion of their political system, the dependability of their military and NATO membership, and the respect of their constituents as a democratic institution. These questions will persist, as Erdoğan enforces his paranoia through stringent reforms and purges of officials. The entry of Turkey into the war against Daesh too sends a message of strength; President Erdoğan strives to grip power tightly as his administration recovers from an ill-fated coup attempt against him.

Yet while the global order has reason to lament over a clear shift in Turkish foreign policy, the moment of Turkish instability presents as many opportunities as it does challenges. A renewed energy and joint-military partnership struck between Erdoğan and Putin in St. Petersburg can serve as an opened door to the United States and NATO allies in their fight against Daesh in the Levant. International coalitions against the terrorist organization have proven weak and lacking in unity, and while the scarce cooperative efforts between the two hegemonic powers have not yielded success, U.S.-Russian collaboration could be the key to securing the Levant from Daesh.

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U.S. Army Soldiers shuttle trucks in support of a combat operation near Baghdad, Iraq, a major city for ISIS attacks
Photo Courtesy of The US Army via Flickr

Al-Qaeda's Looming Operational Comeback: Why al-Qaeda is Still More Dangerous Than the Islamic State

While both organizations are violent and extreme, is ISIS really the most pressing threat?

By Jesse Lyons

The Islamic State is currently the hot topic in regards to global terrorism, surpassing the infamous al-Qaeda, and for good reason. Al-Qaeda has been slowly diminishing in power, and the death of key leaders, including such notable personalities such as Osama bin Laden, Anwar al-Awlaki, and Nasir al-Wuhayshi, as a result of United States drone strikes and special operations raids, have been a huge factor towards this. Also adding to the overshadowing of al-Qaeda is the fact that the Islamic State's brand of violence is sensational and captures violence in a way that al-Qaeda hasn't. While al-Qaeda has conducted its fair share of gruesome and public executions (mostly through recorded beheadings), the Islamic State has done that and much more. The violence of the Islamic State crosses boundaries, literally and figuratively. However, this status is temporary. Al-Qaeda is set to make a comeback once the Islamic State fails, and indeed the Islamic State's failure is inevitable, leaving its legacy and existence short lived. Territory that was previously gained is now being lost at a steady pace, and the group's funding is becoming more and more difficult to find. The Islamic State's recent and sudden rise to fame came very quickly, setting upon the global stage seemingly out of nowhere. Al-Qaeda, on the other hand, has been operational for almost 30 years, and its fame and notoriety was brought about through literally decades of determination

and commitment. The very nature of the group as a whole has enabled al-Qaeda to remain formidable, and because of this, al-Qaeda will again become the most dangerous international terrorist organization in the coming years.

First, it is necessary to acknowledge the histories of the two organizations and their relationship with each other. Al-Qaeda has its origins in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s. Osama bin Laden was one of many Salafist Jihadists who traveled to Afghanistan in order to fight with the Mujahedeen, a loosely organized affiliation of Jihadists all wishing to fight the Soviet invaders and the Soviet-supported Afghanistan government. Learning from his experiences from fighting with the Mujahedeen, bin Laden sought to permanently change the way Jihad was fought.

By targeting the Western nations that continue to prop up the corrupt or un-Islamic governments throughout the Middle East, the "Far Enemy" (as bin Laden referred to them) would eventually lose interest in meddling with Middle Eastern affairs and withdraw their support from the governments there. The "apostate" governments that plagued Muslims throughout the world would inevitably fall, paving the way for another great Islamic Empire and a new political order, akin to the global political environment of the 7th

century. His answer on how to make this happen was the creation of a small, elite force of Jihadist fighters who would conduct the necessary attacks that would help topple these governments. In 1988, bin Laden gathered his followers from the Mujahedeen and created al-Qaeda, which literally translates to “the base,” referring to their Salafist ideological desire to return the Muslim world to a political order based on what they view as Islam’s fundamental roots. It wasn’t until the mid-1990s that bin Laden refocused al-Qaeda to start conducting attacks solely against Western targets.

The Islamic State has its origins as a Jordanian militant jihadist organization by the name of Jama’at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad, or JTJ. The group was founded in 1999 by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who later focused the group’s attention to Iraq after the U.S invasion in 2003. Zarqawi, already an associate of bin Laden from their time together in Afghanistan, eventually pledged allegiance to Osama bin Laden and officially changed the group’s name to al-Qaeda in Iraq, or AQI. This new partnership allowed al-Qaeda to more effectively organize and conduct attacks as part of the growing insurgency in Iraq.

It wasn’t long, however, before friction between the two groups began to arise, despite Zarqawi’s pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda. Severe ideological differences and conflicts began to plague the relationship soon after the alliance was formed. Bin Laden wished for Zarqawi to focus solely on attacking government and Western targets in Iraq, particularly the United States. However, Zarqawi insisted on creating a massive sectarian conflict in Iraq by targeting “apostate” Shia Muslims as well. While not completely counter to his own ideology, bin Laden thought that this tactic was counterproductive to the more immediate goals of the organization and would eventually lead to a drop in popular support.

In January 2006, Zarqawi initiated the merger between AQI and another large insurgent faction, the Mujahedeen Shura Council, which was itself a collection of various Sunni militias. The merger greatly increased AQI’s capabilities and manpower, but also made the group an

even larger target. The following June, Zarqawi was killed by a U.S airstrike. The previous leader of the Mujahedeen Shura Council, Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, and an Egyptian born al-Qaida veteran, Abu Ayyub al-Masri, both took over as the new leaders of AQI and renamed the organization the Islamic State of Iraq, or ISI. When they were both killed in the same U.S ground operation in April 2010, a prominent yet reserved jihadist named Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi took over, taking on the daunting (and increasingly dangerous) role of keeping the group functional and focused despite huge setbacks. Soon after the Syrian Civil War broke out in 2011, ISI expanded operations into Syria as well, changing the name of the organization once more into the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham, or ISIS, with al-Baghdadi declaring himself the Caliph, the sole authority of Islam on earth. It was in this expansion that Al-Baghdadi’s leadership conflicts within al-Qaeda reached a climax. Al-Zawahiri, the successor to bin Laden, cut all ties with ISIS after al-Baghdadi refused to disband the organization and fall in line behind the al-Nusra Front, the primary al-Qaeda organization operating in Syria. In response, al-Baghdadi declared al-Nusra as yet one more enemy to be fought.

Aside from ideological disparities, operational differences also played a role in the rift between the two organizations. Al-Qaeda remains focused on targeting the Far Enemy and striving for collective unity amongst jihadist groups, hoping that this will lead to the eventual collapse of corrupt apostate regimes. The Islamic State, on the other hand, views itself as a leader among other jihadist organizations and seeks to obtain actual territorial ground and exert influence organically while directly targeting apostate regimes on the battlefield.

This involves not only a more conventional kind of warfare, but also extremely sensational violence to set itself apart from other jihadist groups. Shia Muslims, Yazidi’s, Christians, and other ethnic and religious minorities were all victims (and still are) of this new approach, suffering a brutal genocide that plagued any territory under ISIS control. Multitudes of Iraqi government workers were executed. Thousands of cap-

tured Iraqi soldiers were blindfolded, marched to a field, and massacred all at once. Suspected homosexuals were forced to leap off of multiple story buildings. Women were shot in the street without hesitation for suspected prostitution, or even for merely wearing red, and were tortured for breastfeeding in public. Minority women, when they weren't killed with their families, were sold into sex slavery. Children were crucified for taking pictures or having phones. A captured Jordanian pilot was locked in a cage and set on fire. All of these atrocious incidents and more are confirmation of the truly outstanding sensational violence that distinguishes ISIS from other like-minded groups. Even al-Qaeda, a group which infamously conducted the single most sensational act of terrorist violence the world has ever witnessed on September 11th, 2001, were put off by these practices and admonished them for being too extreme.

Aside from the Middle East, the Islamic State has been able to successfully conduct attacks throughout Europe. The multiple deadly attacks in France and Belgium illustrate the Islamic State's goal of also targeting the Far Enemy. However, there is a key distinction to be made here. Al-Qaeda's reasoning for targeting the West is ultimately more political than the motivations for the Islamic State. While al-Qaeda attacks the U.S and Europe in order to convince the West to stop attacking Islam and meddling in Middle Eastern affairs, the Islamic State's motivations are more religious in nature and are actually meant to provoke the West into persecuting and attacking Muslims, which they believe will create the conditions necessary to bring about the prophesized apocalypse. Regardless, both motivations and strategies rely on only a small number of operational cells and radicalized lone wolves.

Attempting to wage a conventional war means that the Islamic State must be able to capture and hold territory, as well as maintain a continuous source of funding. Although the Islamic State has the ability to directly tax residents in its territory and have its own oil trade thanks to its seizure of strategic oil fields, these sources of funding hinge on the Islamic State's ability to hold territory for a prolonged period of time. So when land or cities are lost, so is funding. And with the

exception of early successes, the Islamic State is quickly losing its grip on important territory. Pressure from the U.S-led coalition airstrikes and special operations actions, as well as the gaining momentum and successes of the Iraqi Army and Kurdish forces, are slowly dwindling the Islamic State's control. As territory continues to be lost and resources run dry, the Islamic State will have to revert back to unconventional warfare. Members will go underground, blend back into society, and continue to plot deadly terrorist attacks. Recent trends show that this is already beginning to happen.

Since al-Qaeda is already operating in the underground realm in many of the same regions as the Islamic State, it is able to take advantage of an already established and effective operational flow, which itself is boosted by the decreased competition due to the Islamic State's decline. To fund its operations, al-Qaeda relies primarily on international donors, ransoms, charity scams, and other miscellaneous financial crimes. While this may not add up to much, al-Qaeda's decentralized nature actually limits the fallback from this, as many al-Qaeda cells depend on personal relationships and other forms of self-funding. As Islamic State fighters continue to face both operational and financial defeats, many of them will eventually gravitate towards al-Qaeda and take advantage of its willingness to work with other groups, involving themselves in these underground networks. Over time, they will eventually commit and defect back towards al-Qaeda.

Not only that, but al-Qaeda is doing more to win the "hearts and minds" of the Muslim population. This is best exemplified by the drastically different approaches the two organizations have taken in operations across the Middle East. When the Islamic State was destroying ancient Syrian temples and smashing timeless pieces of art, the al-Qaeda affiliated al-Nusra Front opened up a "Relief Department," helping to provide food, healthcare, and even children's playgrounds to the Syrian people affected by the civil war. When al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, or AQAP, acquired an additional \$100 million through a bank robbery in Yemen, they used the money to improve the infrastructure and eliminate taxes for

the Yemeni citizens living under their control.

Al-Qaeda could have very easily invested that money to fund a large sensational attack, as the Islamic State has done, but instead used it to improve the lives of Muslims. Al-Qaeda recognizes the value of winning the hearts and minds of people who may be wary of giving support to an overt terrorist organization. The Islamic State, on the other hand, is largely in the practice of mass executing those who do not immediately pledge support and allegiance to their self-proclaimed Caliph.

Despite recent operational hindrances, al-Qaeda strives on and remains determined to conduct attacks around the globe, and is seeing some successes. Operations in the Arabian Peninsula are ongoing and successful. AQAP has successfully been exploiting the current conflict in Yemen with little to no resistance, while also continuing to build public support as a legitimate source of governance in an otherwise unstable country.

Operations in Syria are steadfast, despite constant engagement with multiple formidable opponents including the Islamic State, the Syrian Government, various Syrian rebel groups, Iranian-backed militias, and Russian and American airstrikes. The al-Nusra Front has displayed excellent organization as well as operational and logistical prowess at a level that the Islamic State fails to match, and exhibited the ability to attract support and cooperation from groups who do not necessarily agree with its ideology.

In Africa, new surges in recruitment and a violent wave of attacks in Libya and Tunisia show an increase in capabilities and gaining momentum in the region. Al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda affiliated organizations, such as al-Shabaab, are conducting a steady stream of attacks on government officials throughout other parts of Africa, particularly in Somalia and Kenya. Competition with Islamic State affiliated organizations, such as Boko Haram, is existent but dwindling as the Islamic State loses its ability to send support to such factions. Al-Qaeda has even begun to exhibit limited cooperation and pooling of resources with Boko Haram and al-Shabaab, further increasing their

own capabilities.

Al-Qaeda's structure and strategy has always been decentralized, especially since 9/11. This poses operational challenges, but the group has been able to overcome them despite leadership failures. It also serves as a strength, and helps the group maintain longevity. Unlike the Islamic State, al-Qaeda has never attempted to claim an exclusive authority on global Jihad, but rather seeks to act as a unifier of jihadist groups towards a common goal. Some of these groups, like AQAP or AQI, currently use or have used the "al-Qaeda" brand name. Others, such as al-Shabaab, do not, and were even instructed by bin Laden not to adopt the name, as an attempt to avert Western attention.

Another example of this is when al-Zawahiri sanctioned Jabhat al-Nusra's official split from al-Qaeda as part of a deliberate global strategy. Operationally, this split did nothing. The relationship still exists and al-Qaeda still functionally acts as a supporter to Jabhat al-Nusra, which has recently rebranded itself and changed its name to Jabhat Fatah al-Sham. This was done purposefully as an attempt to thwart international attention since it is no longer "officially" linked to al-Qaeda.

However, because of the rebranding, other small groups that are fighting the Syrian government may now be more willing to create pacts and align themselves with the group. This complements the already existing attitude among these Syrian groups that the al-Qaeda affiliated organization is much more inclusive, cooperative, and easier to work with than the Islamic State. This speaks towards the heart of and truly exemplifies al-Qaeda's broad global strategy: unify jihadists everywhere in order to effectively dismantle the apostate regimes. The Islamic State's more forceful and conquering strategy is starkly different.

As ISIS falters and loses credibility as the mantle of global Jihad, al-Qaeda will jump at the opportunity to reap any benefits to be had. Financiers, foreign fighters, and radicalized recruits will begin to turn their attention towards al-Qaeda once more. Al-Zawahiri certainly isn't as charismatic or adept a leader as bin Laden, but

the decentralized nature of the organization limits any direct fallout from this. Al-Qaeda has essentially transformed itself into a series of loosely organized movements fighting under the al-Qaeda name. And because of the broad disposition of al-Qaeda's ideology, nearly every independent movement is able to align itself with al-Qaeda very easily.

The United States and its allies have mostly focused efforts on the Islamic State, and while they maybe haven't completely ignored al-Qaeda as a threat, it certainly seems that way. While this is understandable, it's also a mistake. Al-Qaeda has benefited from the distracted attention generated by the obnoxious activities of the Islamic State. The Islamic State certainly remains a critical threat to stability in the Middle East and U.S interests abroad, but it is al-Qaeda that remains the greater danger against the United States homeland. Their determination to strike at the Far Enemy, their willingness to pool resources and cooperate with other terrorist groups, and their projected growing capability to do so, puts al-Qaeda in a prime position to strike.

The Islamic State is indeed an extremely violent organization and remains a serious threat to global security, and deadly attacks in France, Belgium, Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, Kazakhstan, and elsewhere are testament to its determination to wage Jihad despite setbacks on its home front in Iraq and Syria. However, the future of the Islamic State looks bleak. The Islamic State is extremely intolerant of other jihadist groups if their ideology differs in any measure, and seeks to be the sole authority of Jihad, and therefore sees themselves as the only legitimate Jihadist group. Not only is this very polarizing (you are either part of the Islamic State or you are their enemy), but it eliminates the possibility of forging important alliances. This is crucial if they wish to grow and make significant expansions outside of the Middle East (and even so within the Middle East). If the momentum from the U.S-led coalition and the Iraqi Army holds, the Islamic State will continue to lose territory, popular support, resources, and manpower. Without any allies to turn to, the more moderate-leaning Islamic State fighters and leaders will take what resources they have left and eventually find their

way back towards al-Qaeda and its affiliates (specifically Jabhat Fatah al-Sham), creating an even stronger and more robust al-Qaeda organization.

Al-Qaeda has been operational for almost 30 years, despite fighting two separate and prolonged wars against two different superpowers and their allies across the globe, as well as major leadership deaths and failures. As an organization, al-Qaeda isn't going anywhere, and only seeks to benefit from the dismantling of the Islamic State. Its continued determination to strike at the Far Enemy makes this expectation even more concerning.

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Portrait of a woman in the Democratic Republic of Congo, a Central African country with a long history of sexual violence during wartime
Photo Courtesy of United Nations Photo via Flickr

A Weapon or a Consequence? Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict

“We know now, as we knew even before the passage of this resolution, that rape is a kind of slow murder.” —Slavenka Drakulic on the UN Security Council’s Resolution 1820

By Emily Dalgo

Sexual violence is not merely an unfortunate side effect of war, but a deliberate tactic used to humiliate, dominate, disperse, and instil fear in women and their communities. This essay evaluates several key examples of sexual violence being used against women during wartime including the Bosnian War, ongoing conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and United Nations peacekeeping missions, with the goal of discussing the validity and consequences of the categorization of sexual violence as a “weapon of war.” While males and gender nonconforming people also suffer from sexual violence, and while men are not exclusively the perpetrators of rape during war, this paper focuses on sexual violence against women and girls since they are disproportionately targeted by the use of sexual violence. Although this paper incorporates evidence from scholars who believe sexual violence is only a consequence of war, or as I will refer to them, “Consequence Theorists,” it focuses on their challengers, “Weapon Theorists,” who believe sexual violence is a deliberately used weapon. This paper focuses on Weapon Theory since the passage of United Nations (UN) Resolution 1820 shifted the dominant paradigm in its favor in 2008. This paper does not consider conflict actors as homogeneous and recognizes that while sexual violence is, overall, a weapon of war used by most conflict actors (e.g.,

states and non-state groups), it may be an unfortunate side effect in other conflict actors’ operations (e.g., inter-governmental organizations and peacekeeping forces). I first review each theory by considering the validity and consequences of each, as perceived by differing scholarly opinions. I then test the theories against the historical record. I conclude by demonstrating that sexual violence is most appropriately and accurately categorized when it is defined as a weapon of war.

Weapon Theory

Weapons: guns, knives, swords. Weapons: emotion, gender, power. The way the international community—civilians and governments alike—has redefined what constitutes a “weapon” of war has dramatically changed since the turn of the twenty-first century. Today, many forms of sexual violence such as rape are considered war tactics that threaten international peace and security. This outlook was established for the first time in the UN Security Council’s 2008 Resolution 1820, which stated that sexual violence during conflict was an international threat. Weapon Theory scholars argue that sexual violence is a weapon of war due to its intentional use, its systematic nature, and its strategic execution. Hillary Margolis, leader of the International Rescue Committee’s sexual violence program in North Kivu, claims

that rape is a deliberate (not a random) tactic. Dara Kay Cohen also attests that rape in wartime is intentional; however, she maintains that rape is not only used officially as a weapon against women, but is also used passively to promote bonding within a militia group. Wartime sexual violence is often systematic in nature, while side effects are not predictable. Weapon Theorists emphasize that male sexual desire fails to explain patterns of sexual violence because most men, given the opportunity, do not rape. Historian Antony Beevor says that rape during war has been used strategically to achieve political or military objectives by humiliating and terrorizing since ancient times. Even ancient academics believed wartime rape to be as old as war itself; Saint Augustine called it an “ancient and customary evil.” Elisabeth Wood shows that rape is used strategically, to terrorize people and force them to leave an area. She also says that militia leaders’ claims that they lack control over their troops are groundless, because a commander with enough power to direct military operations has enough power to stop his soldiers from raping.

Weapon Theory: Consequences

Anna Hedlund argues that the labeling of rape as a weapon of war is often inadequate, simplified, sensationalistic, and stereotypical. Kerry F. Crawford, Amelia Hoover Green, and Sarah E. Parkinson believe that classifying rape as a weapon causes inaccurate rape claims to be made out of hopes for case money, disincentivizes programming focused on other types of suffering during conflict, and makes other wartime crimes harder to prosecute. All four scholars believe that the selective media narratives that focus entirely on women, compounded with calling rape a “weapon,” create challenges for non-visible survivors. “Media narratives about Iraq and Syria are almost exclusively focused on women, concealing and marginalizing male and LGBT victims who may be equally in need of help,” write Crawford, Hoover Green, and Parkinson. They also write that calling rape a weapon of war gives outside states a disingenuous justification to intervene due to the “impulse to ‘save’ Syrian and Iraqi women from sexual violence.”

However, interventions in the name of “saving” women are not new phenomena. In 2001, Laura Bush advocated for the intervention of Afghanistan under a humanitarian front to fight “brutality against women and children” in the name of “our common humanity.” Categorizing rape and sexual violence as a weapon of war in 2008 did not give rise to this neo-imperialist façade. The goal of classifying rape and other forms of sexual violence during wartime as “weapons of war” is to bolster international accountability and eradicate the culture of impunity that supports sexual violence. Of course international policies could do more to help male and LGBTQ survivors of sexual violence. But this is beside the point; identifying rape as a weapon of war—and thereby creating legal mechanisms to hold military commanders accountable to the law—puts international law on a path to combat sexual violence that can be developed to include all victims. Having a system of accountability designed to affect deterrence is a better option than accepting the violence and allowing it to continue due to a lack of sufficient legal labelling. Furthermore, calling all forms of sexual violence—including rape, sexual slavery, and sexual humiliation—weapons of war legitimizes the suffering, pain, and damage that it inflicts on survivors and their communities. Associating traditional instruments of war and sexual violence with the use of the word “weapon” is an important shift in discourse that has helped to break stigmas and the silence attached to rape. Lastly, the weak argument that women might lie about rape in exchange for money is historically unsubstantiated and, frankly, the product of a patriarchal, victim-blaming mentality. These critiques do little to negate the importance and usefulness of recognizing sexual violence as a weapon of war.

Consequence Theory

Consequence Theory holds that sexual violence is not a weapon intentionally and strategically used during war, but rather an inevitable or unfortunate side effect of war due to a culture of rape that war often creates, the increased opportunities to execute sexual violence, soldiers’ sexual desires that cannot be satiated by consensual sex during wartime, and because poorly-trained soldiers do not realize sexual violence is wrong. Rich-

ard Malengule states that years of fighting have resulted in a culture of rape in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where sexual violence is accepted as a by-product of the conflict. Susan Brownmiller, author of *Against Our Will*, wrote, "War provides men with the perfect psychologic backdrop to give vent to their contempt for women." This belief suggests that sexual violence is an inevitable result of war due to an increased opportunity for men to perpetrate violence against women. Consequence Theory holds that soldiers see sex by rape as a "spoil of war," and when sexual violence occurs it is a randomized result of an individual's sexual desires. Military leaders in Japan and the DRC have argued that rape is not a weapon, but a consequence of male desire and a substitute for consensual sex. As evidence, Japanese commanders instituted the system of "comfort women," who were forced into sexual slavery, to satiate soldiers' desires. Leaders in the DRC have said that an inability to pay sex workers during warfare is what leads to rape. Others hold that sexual violence is not a weapon but a result of young, ill-trained men who do not understand their wrongdoings. Dearbhla Glynn argues that perpetrators are oblivious to their actions' harmfulness because they are often part of the cycle of violence that has normalized rape and sexual violence. Similarly, Antony Beevor claims that it is the "indisciplined soldiers," free from religious and social constraints, who commit sexual violence.

However, Consequence Theory's claims are widely disputed. First, wartime sexual violence is not inevitable. There is a high level of variation of sexual violence across countries, conflicts, and armed groups. Perpetration is also heterogeneous among groups within the same conflict, proving that many armed groups can and do limit their perpetration of rape when commanders choose to prevent it. In El Salvador's civil war, insurgents rarely committed rape. Likewise, sexual violence was virtually absent from the strategy of the Sri Lankan Tamil secessionist group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Since some groups do not engage in sexual violence in war because their leaders do not condone it, it is not inevitable. If it is not inevitable, there are therefore

"stronger grounds for holding responsible those groups that do engage in sexual violence." This also defeats the argument that rape in war is opportunistic. It is a misconception that given the opportunity, men will rape, and it is over-simplistic to believe that all perpetrators, as Brownmiller implies, do so out of "contempt for women."

Margot Wallström, UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict said, "There are no rape cultures, only cultures of impunity." Critics of the Weapon Theory claim that a rape culture is produced as a side effect of conflict because even when wars end, rape continues. However, wartime rape used as a weapon often goes unpunished, thus creating a culture of impunity that sanctifies its continued perpetration. Rape and sexual violence do continue after the guns are put down, but this further exemplifies rape as a weapon of war. A culture of rape is a necessary but not sufficient condition for sexual violence's use as a weapon. In other words, sexual violence perpetrated with rape culture and with strategy is a weapon, while rape culture without strategy is merely a side effect of wartime rape impunity.

The myth of uncontrollable male sexual desire also fails to explain sexual violence as an unfortunate side effect of war. Oftentimes, widespread rape of civilians is committed where soldiers have full access to sex workers or sexual slaves. Furthermore, sexual temptations cannot explain the extreme brutality of gang rapes or sexual torture that many women and girls suffer. Instead, participation in rape is often a way to build internal ties when armed groups are not cohesive, as seen in The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone. When fighters have been forcibly recruited, they are more likely to commit rape, particularly gang rape. Soldiers are usually not lacking in women to appease whatever sexual desires do exist; therefore, Weapon Theory more accurately explains this violence due to its intentional, systematic nature, and the internal strategies behind these rapes.

Finally, the claim that sexual violence is only a side effect of war committed by poorly trained soldiers who do not understand the

evil of their actions fails to account for (i) the ill-trained insurgent groups that do not perpetrate this violence, and (ii) the highly trained and educated groups that do commit sexual violence in wartime. Perhaps only child soldiers who are born and raised in violent conflict zones, and where rape is common, are immune from this critique. The prisoner abuse scandal at Abu Ghraib in 2003, in which Iraqi prisoners were sexually abused and humiliated by U.S. soldiers, is a key example of sexual violence being used as a weapon of war by a highly trained military. Many Iraqi prisoners were made to perform homosexual acts. While dehumanization is unacceptable in any culture, homosexual acts are against Islamic law and have been punished by execution in Iraq. In the case of Abu Ghraib, as in many others, the three tenants of Weapon Theory were clearly present: the use of sexual violence was intentional, systematic, and calculated, and was constructed based on cultural dynamics to humiliate, dominate, and instil fear in the prisoners.

As a Weapon of War: Bosnia and DRC

Several historic examples give credit to the Weapon Theory of sexual violence in war. The war in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Bosnia) from 1992 to 1995 was the first to gain international attention for the use of systematic rape as a weapon of ethnic cleansing during war. While numbers remain highly controversial, it is estimated that between 20,000 and 50,000 women were raped during this war. Women's bodies were widely seen as another battlefield where violent, ethnic conflict could be fought. Rape by Bosnian Serb forces was ordered by head military figures, with the goal of wiping out particular ethnic groups. As in many conflict, sexual violence in Bosnia was used as a weapon against a particular people. The use of rape during the Bosnian War is considered genocidal because the objective of the perpetrators was to forcibly impregnate women to create "more babies with the perpetrator's ethnicity and through this to destroy and erase the ethnic, religious and national identities of their female victims." Sexual violence in the Bosnian War was a weapon of war due to its intentional, systematic, and strategic nature.

Wartime rape can also be used as a way to deliber-

ately instil fear, displace communities, and spread sexually transmitted diseases. Raped women are often stigmatized by their communities or blamed for their rape. In eastern DRC, which has been called the rape capital of the world, brutal and systematic sexual violence has plagued the region for almost two decades, leaving tens of thousands of victims enduring some sort of sexual violence. Essentially all sides of the conflict perpetrate sexual violence, including civilians, militiamen, armed groups and members of the Congolese Armed Forces. During one of the largest instances of mass rape in eastern Congo, three armed groups raped at least 387 civilians in 13 villages between July and August 2010. The indiscriminate, widespread nature of these mass rapes support the Weapon Theory, which holds that sexual violence is systematically used to impart fear on the victims and their communities. Since rapes in DRC are carried out regularly from village to village, women, girls, and their families often feel afraid to leave their homes to obtain food and water, go to school, or work in the fields. In contrast, some families are so afraid of staying in place (or are directly threatened with rape) that they flee their homes. This forced displacement breaks up communities that are often grouped on ethnic lines, giving perpetrators and armed groups power, as well as the resources that villages leave behind. Carrying out mass rapes is a strategic weapon of this particular conflict because it allows military objectives to be met and provides perpetrators with terror-based power.

As a Consequence of War: Peacekeeping Missions

While the majority of reported sexual violence during wartime is used as a weapon by state militias or non-state armed actors, Consequence Theory holds weight in the context of UN peacekeeper perpetrators. These operations involve military personnel but do not have enforcement powers, and are based on the cooperation of the parties to the conflict. As UN peacekeeping operations increased, a major problem emerged: peacekeepers were found to be sexually abusing or otherwise sexually exploiting local populations during missions.

Peacekeepers have been found guilty of sex-traf-

ficking, soliciting prostitutes, forcing children into prostitution, and having sex with minors. This has occurred among both military and civilian UN personnel across a wide range of countries. Sexual exploitation and abuse is not tolerated by the United Nations, and as former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan said, it “violates everything the United Nations stands for.” In 2001, allegations of sexual violence emerged, and after refugee communities in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone were monitored, confirmation of these crimes was reported. In 2004, the UN reported 121 allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation. Forty-five percent of these reports involved sex with minors. In 2005, 340 cases were reported; in 2006, 357 cases. In a Côte d’Ivoire mission in 2007, 800 peacekeepers were suspended on allegations of having sex with minors.

Many scholars have speculated (like Consequence Theorists) that the conditions of the missions allow the exploitation of local girls and women. Peacekeepers are seen as powerful figures in the areas they inhabit during missions, and are likely to believe they can get away with sexual abuse. One UN employee on a peacekeeping mission in eastern Congo who admitted to having sexual relations with 24 girls said he committed these crimes because, “Over there, the colonial spirit persists. The white man gets what he wants.”

The imbalance of power—along ethnic, cultural, and institutional lines, and a culture of impunity provide increased opportunities to execute sexual exploitation. This gives weight to the Consequence Theory: peacekeepers perpetrate sexual violence without gaining strategic political or military power and without a systematic agenda. When governments and non-state armed groups commit sexual violence, it is a weapon. In peacekeeping missions, however, sexual violence is a consequence of war. Nevertheless, these instances are the exception to the international norm, not the rule.

Conclusions

Not every incidence of sexual violence during wartime is a weapon of war; in some instances, it is a consequence of war or conflict. Typically, however, the use of sexual violence

in conflict zones is widespread. It is deliberate. It is systematic, strategic and calculated. In these cases and for these reasons, it is a weapon of war. Women and girls have endured physical and psychological trauma in conflicts across the world. The current culture of impunity needs to be eradicated and international support should be fervently thrown behind the sentiments in the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820. Sexual violence is as much a weapon against international peace and security as it is on the bodies and minds of the women and girls who have endured it.

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One of the world's most iconic symbols of liberty and freedom, the Statue of Liberty in New York City

Photo Courtesy of CestLaVibe.com via Flickr



What's Wrong with Liberty?

Theories and dangers of libertarian thinking

By Bill Kakenmaster

Or, as a former professor of mine phrased it less presumptively, is anything wrong with liberty? Specifically, I should ask what—if anything—is wrong with the libertarian conception of justice. Robert Nozick's emblematic libertarian argument in *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* posits liberty as a sure-fire means of achieving justice. Nozick ultimately argues for a “minimal state” that does not infringe on individual property rights, thereby protecting its citizens’ liberty as a result. However, Nozick assumes that liberty results primarily, if not exclusively, from individual action. In excluding consideration of our liberties which depend on others’ actions for their fulfillment, Nozick wrongly conceives of the state as the principal violator of people’s freedoms. Rather, the state can also enable people to be freer than they would otherwise be without its influence.

In order to arrive at his conclusion, Nozick draws on classical state of nature theory. In the state of nature, Nozick suggests that “several different protective associations or companies” arise in order to enforce individuals’ rights. With the help of an invisible hand, a dominant protective association enters into the business of selling its protective services, crowding out all other competitors and becoming what he calls the minimal state. The minimal state is that protective association which retains a monopoly on the legitimate use of force and imposes taxes only to the extent

required to maintain the infrastructure that prohibits individuals’ from limiting the freedoms of other individuals. In other words, the minimal state is justified in taxing its citizens at the lowest rate that will fund a military, police, courts, and other similar such institutions.

But how are individuals justified in owning and making decisions about their property? Philosopher Will Kymlicka identifies three explanations for this in Nozick’s theory. First is the principle of transfer, where individuals are allowed to freely transfer whatever they acquire legitimately. Second is the principle of just initial acquisition, which accounts for how people originally come to own things. Third is the principle of the rectification of justice, dealing with the things that may have been unjustly acquired or transferred. In essence, these principles amount to the following: as long as individuals acquire goods justly in society, then Nozick’s minimal state would be unjustified in coercively redistributing goods from some people to others. If Jordan stole Pamela’s blowtorch, then Jordan did not acquire that blowtorch legitimately and therefore has no legal right to own it, let alone decide what to do with it. Thus, the minimal state has a right to confiscate Pamela’s blowtorch and return it to her using the bare amount of force necessary to do so.

Nozick's theory relies, moreover, on the primacy of individuals' rights as Kantian self-owners that represent ends in themselves. Individuals are said to be "inviolable" because they possess existences independent of other people. According to Nozick, there is no social entity that undergoes sacrifice for its own good; there are only people within the bounds of the state. Therefore, because there are "only individual people, different individual people," each person is entitled to his or her individual rights, which may not be sacrificed as means for another person's ends. Kymlicka suggests that, while the premise that individuals are ends in themselves is valid, Nozick's property-ownership conclusion does not necessarily follow. Instead, Kymlicka argues that the goods that result from the exercise of self-owned powers cannot adequately be traced to a reliable position whereby they were initially acquired legitimately, thus violating either the premise that individuals are self-owners, or that individuals legitimately owning property means they necessarily obtained that property legitimately in the first place. For instance, land was—for the most part—initially appropriated by force. Generals of olden times, bullies, bandits, barbarians, and so on raided, pillaged, and stole land from people long ago. Thus the assumption that buying land means that that land was initially acquired legitimately does not hold. One could easily claim that, if Alex legitimately bought a plot of land that was stolen from John's family long ago, then John's descendants also deserve that land. In other words, any transfer of that land is illegitimate to some degree since that land was not acquired legitimately in the first place. So, true enough that individuals are ends in themselves, but that does not imply their absolute right as property owners.

At least two kinds of freedom constitute liberty, although Nozick accounts for only one. Liberty consists of simple freedoms (what Nozick's conceptualizes as the entirety of liberty) and complex freedoms. Simple freedoms are, essentially, the freedoms people enjoy from others' restraint on their actions. In other words, I can freely study in the library because no one stops me from doing so. But liberty also consists of a

series of complex freedoms that depend on the actions of other people for them to take shape in the real world. I am free to study in the library not just because no one stops me, but also because someone built the library in the first place. As consisting of both simple and complex freedoms, liberty results from both top-down constraints such as society's laws and rules, as well as society's bottom-up structures and public works.

Nozick assumes that liberty only results from top-down, simple freedoms. Take his argument for minimal taxation, for example. According to Nozick, just uses of tax revenue include maintaining the police to prevent against theft, a judicial system to enforce contracts, a military to protect the state's external borders, and so on, because these uses protect individuals from other people's attempts to restrain their freedom to transfer their (supposedly legitimately acquired) property as they see fit. In contrast, government expenditures on public works like roads, hospitals, or schools "involve coercive taxation of some people against their will." Nozick famously gives the example of Wilt Chamberlain to illustrate how, as long as an individual acquires his or her property legitimately, the state is unjustified in anything more than minimal taxation.

Wilt Chamberlain's contract pays him twenty-five cents for every ticket sold in a home game. Chamberlain, in Nozick's example, ends up with a hypothetical \$250,000 after the season. Nozick argues that any tax on Chamberlain's income unjustly violates his absolute property rights if it pays for anything except the infrastructure required for protecting others from stealing Chamberlain's money, or otherwise causing him to transfer it to another person against his will. However, Chamberlain's freedom to spend his income however he deems fit does not just depend on the state minding its own business; it depends on fans paying tickets to come see him play. Fans who, presumably, drove to games on government-funded roads, or became fans by playing varsity basketball while attending government-funded high schools. Without Nozick's so-called "coercive" taxation, Chamberlain's freedom to spend his income is contingent upon market forces—as opposed to state protection—to

generate a fan-base through private high schools' basketball teams and private toll roads that bring people to the stadium. Whether or not the private market would build enough roads and high schools to supplement Chamberlain's hypothetically lost income through "coercive" taxation is unexplored here, though my hunch is that it is highly unlikely. What I believe confidently, though, is that when the model of liberty consists of both simple and complex freedoms, people's ability to acquire and transfer wealth freely expands greatly.

Furthermore, in conceptualizing liberty merely as a set of simple freedoms, Nozick glosses over violations of liberty by individual market actors and downplays the validity of people's complex freedoms. Consider Kymlicka's example of hypothetical individuals Ben and Amy's land-owning relationship, which he gives in the context of Nozick's Lockean proviso. (Nozick's Lockean proviso states that people can legitimately acquire property rights over a disproportionate share of the world's material resources as long as no one is left worse off.)

Ben and Amy work a plot of land collectively. Amy, however, appropriates so much of the land that Ben can no longer live off the crops produced by his share. Thus, Ben comes to rely on Amy to provide a wage to compensate him for working a portion of the land for her. This satisfies Nozick's Lockean proviso because both Ben's and Amy's shares of the land's crop increases through the division of labor, though his increases less than hers. Despite the widening inequality, no one is worse off than they were before. For Nozick, the logical conclusion of the Lockean proviso stipulates a free market of labor and capital in order to protect both individuals' private property rights. Nozick's free market conclusion assumes the state to be the primary violator of individual property rights as Amy, a private market actor, fairly compensates Ben through consensual wage labor. According to Nozick, if the state were to regulate either Ben's ability to contract with Amy or Amy's willingness to provide a minimum wage, this would infringe upon both parties' absolute property rights. However, by emphasizing the state's violation of property rights, Nozick ignores Amy's illegitimate appropriation of Ben's land rights. Moreover, Nozick

takes Ben's consent to the wage-labor arrangement as given. More likely, Ben is left with two options: sign the contract and take Amy's buy-out, or die of starvation since he has no land upon which to grow crops, nor any money to buy food—hardly indicative of freely given consent. In terms of simple freedoms, Nozick's justification of free market capitalism only protects against violations of freedom committed by the state, not violations that occur amongst individual market actors.

In addition to this tacit legitimization of simple freedom violations by individuals, Nozick's theory endangers complex freedoms. In the libertarian view, the minimal state is unjustified in coercively taxing citizens in order to redistribute wealth from rich people to poor people. As in Nozick's Wilt Chamberlain example, individuals' self-ownership leads to ownership over their talents and, by extension, the fruits of their labor. However, individuals only own themselves to the extent that their liberty depends on simple freedoms. Individuals' freedom also depends more or less equally on the actions of others. Chamberlain's income depends on publicly funded roads that brought fans to his games. Therefore, the taxation required to build public infrastructure contributes to Chamberlain's ability to make money rather than detracts from it.

If we are to accept Nozick's view that the state is never justified in taxing people for things like roads, then we have to accept that our complex freedoms cannot be guaranteed, but only hoped for. Simply put, the endangerment of complex freedoms represents the legitimization of non-minimal state in contrast to libertarians' viewpoint. Humans' lives depend on certain freedoms that depend in turn on someone to provide them, but which have no guarantor in a totally free market. For example, a family living in northern Alaska depends on heating, which requires someone (whether the government or an energy company or whomever) to take active steps to ensure that the family's need is fulfilled. If Chamberlain plays a basketball game in northern Alaska, then the family's freedom to see his performance relies on their not freezing to death. If an energy company charges a higher price because they cornered the market on heating in northern Alaska, then indi-

viduals face potential hypothermia and cannot freely see Chamberlain play, let alone live. Not to mention that now, because the family's lack of heating limits their ability to see Chamberlain play, Chamberlain's own freedom to spend his money is limited as he has just lost paying customers. Ultimately, the libertarian reliance on simple freedoms undermines their own premise that the state should not intervene in the individual transfer of property lest it infringe upon such freedoms—without the state, both our simple and complex freedoms may be in jeopardy in an unregulated free market.

Nozick, as a libertarian, privileges simple freedoms and private property rights in a free market system unregulated by a minimal state. People who hold the preponderance of wealth and influence in society are justified so long as they acquired both honestly. Therefore, government regulation, including things like coercive taxation, baseline health and safety standards, or publicly funded infrastructure unjustifiably forces the wealthy to give their property to those in society who have supposedly not earned their fair share. However, simple freedoms make up only one element of liberty, with complex freedoms making up another. Ironically, libertarians ignore at least half of what liberty means.

By claiming that complex freedoms violate individual property rights, libertarians apologize for a system that denies some members of society the freedom to attain even simple freedoms. Libertarian philosophy crucially implies a system where rights and freedoms founded on the rational, self-interested part of humanity triumph, while those founded on empathy and altruism enter into consideration as distinctly subordinate. Under libertarian assumptions, we remain subject to a narrow and dangerous view of freedom predicated on our baser instincts towards individual self-interest. In modern society, these primal instincts no longer hold as we have developed empathy and recognized our role in promoting others' liberty.

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Dilma Rousseff, former President of Brazil, was removed from office in August of 2016

Photo Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

A False Sense of Democracy: Dilma Rousseff as a Scapegoat in Brazil

Corruption may not be the most critical concern for Brazilians

By Laura Thompson

The recent impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil may be a step toward anticorruption, but it is the wrong one to be focusing on if there is to be hope for a purer version of democracy in Brazil.

As Dilma Rousseff steps down from her position as the first female President of Brazil, some speculate that this is a victory for democracy and a step in the right direction. The removal, instigated by an impeachment trial and shrouded by rumors of corruption and fiscal violations, comes after a two-year process headed by the former president of the Chamber of Deputies, Eduardo Cunha. Rousseff was the primary choice of former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, a man now facing corruption charges of his own. And at the time, she had taken up the mantle as leader of the leftist Workers' Party, her election proving to be an enormous exercise in democratic election.

By appearances, Rousseff is being brought down from a legacy of corruption during a period of significant economic turmoil and a lack of consistent popularity—so what's the issue? Perhaps this victory is only a superficial one; although Rousseff is not a pure or innocent figure in this mess, she is hardly the larger culprit—and what does it mean for the future when the bigger criminals in the game are the ones orchestrating the legal efforts?

A Troubled Foundation

Although Rousseff's election was democratic, it was hardly a unanimous event. According to a Huffington Post account of the vote, she won with 54.5 million votes of the 143 million possible; however, competition against candidate Aécio Neves of the Brazilian Social Democratic Party lost her roughly another 50 million votes. According to that same report, if one accounts for abstentions, blank, null, and protest votes, as well as those voting for Neves, then Rousseff did not win by a majority at all.

At the same time these voting numbers were taking place, Brazil was under the impression that, following Rousseff's term, the Workers' Party would continue to see dominance in the 2018 campaign of Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who is Rousseff's predecessor and arguably one of the biggest icons of the Workers' Party. 2014 has since passed, however, and the situation is far darker. Currently, Lula da Silva—affectionately known as Lula—is now the subject of his own investigation. Federal prosecutors have filed corruption charges against him on several accounts, and in particular corrupt kickbacks and donations in relation to the Brazilian oil giant, Petrobras.

Lula and Rousseff have quite a bit in common when it comes to problems with Petrobras. Prosecutors in Lula's case claim that he did not

pocket illegal funds during his presidency, but rather gave it to oil executives, Workers' Party leaders, and lawmakers, all with the intention of sustaining the strength of the Party. Rousseff, on the other hand, has claimed that the nature of her impeachment is uncalled for, and akin to a coup; her crime was a series of budgetary tricks to hide the growing economic deficit. These allocations amounted to some \$11 billion borrowed from state banks to fund social programs associated with the Workers' Party.

Rousseff's involvement with Petrobras is a bit more complicated, and requires a timeline. Rousseff was chairman of Petrobras between 2003 and 2010, when plenty of the corruption in Petrobras recently revealed by Operation Car Wash took place. Operation Car Wash, pursued by Brazilian law enforcement to pursue and discover bribes in R\$6.2 billion, is currently leading to massive internal upheaval in Brazil as dozens of significant figures are implicated. In the larger picture, Rousseff's fall is far, but she is one of many.

Behind the Curtain

The question is not whether or not Dilma Rousseff has done anything wrong—that is almost certainly true. Although her impeachment rests on the grounds of her decisions surrounding budgetary reallocation, Petrobras's vast corruption allegations also largely took place under her purview. What makes the impeachment trial tenuous, and subsequently makes its value and contribution to the advancement of democracy questionable, is the driving force behind it. The face of the impeachment trial thus far has been Eduardo Cunha, an evangelical Christian radio commentator and former speaker of the lower house. Accompanying Cunha is Mr. Michel Temer, the interim president and former vice president of Rousseff, a member of the centrist Brazilian Democratic Movement Party.

Since his vigorous assault of Rousseff's qualification to retain her position, Cunha has faced legal charges of his own. The lower house of Congress in Brazil, of which Cunha is a former speaker, has since voted to expel the lawmaker on the grounds of graft charges. The vote was peril-

ous to Cunha, coming in at 450 to 10; this sudden change means that, amongst other things, Cunha will lose the legal privileges of a federal legislator and can now face imprisonment. Mr. Temer, meanwhile, has so many ties to Rousseff and the Workers' Party that he already stands on a perilous edge, and holds approval ratings as low as Rousseff's due to his conservative inclinations and racial biases.

In fact, the men who have accompanied Mr. Temer in his rise to power have already begun to resign: his anticorruption minister and his planning minister, ironically, have forcibly resigned due to allegations that they attempted to use their powers to stifle investigations surrounding Petrobras and Operation Car Wash. Mr. Temer is technically set to hold his position for the duration of Rousseff's original term, through 2018, but with the increasing scandal it is unclear if he will stay in power.

But Wasn't This Democratic?

Brazil's current situation is representative of a few things. The first, that when a state has a significantly diverse population, multiple candidates, and a voting populace who also submits null or blank votes in droves, the democratically elected candidate is not necessarily always the one that the greatest majority of the state actually desired. Now, this is as much a criticism on the system as it is the behavior of the people. Voter apathy is nothing new, though—nations around the world who identify as democratic regularly contend with the struggle to elect the most largely desirable and representative candidate, and to combat issues such as voting numbers, turnout, and legitimate nominations (i.e., null votes over fake names, fictional people, etc.). Brazil's situation is critical because, amidst these democratic struggles, hidden layers of corruption are constantly shifting and maneuvering to take control of resources.

Eduardo Cunha's position as a leader in Rousseff's impeachment immediately calls it into question not only because of possible political machinations (rather than simple integrity-based questioning), but because Cunha himself is a culprit of corrupt dealings. And although Rousseff

has made mistakes, her errors are by no means the most damaging—she is but a fish in the sea, so far as corruption in Brazil is concerned. However, the time for questioning the validity of Rousseff's impeachment is past; Mr. Temer has taken up her seat, so to speak, and now the future of Brazil is in question, particularly given the fragility of its economy.

The curiosity here is that this has all been regarded as democratic. If we define democracy in general terms, in that it promotes majority rule with prioritization of values such as justice and liberty, and a representation of equal minority rights, then it is hard to say that any of this has really been democratic. By numbers, it is exciting to say that a country with 143 million eligible voters engaged in a democratic election to vote for a woman to be president. However, the reality is far more complicated: Dilma Rousseff was the pre-selected choice of former president Lula de Silva, a man who had championed the Workers' Party, a larger body that has dominated much of Brazilian politics over the last decade. That Rousseff won, then, was no real shock; although she clearly had competition, it would be foolish to say that she won standing on her own two feet, or that her efforts were purely her own.

Furthermore, Mr. Temer's failure to name a single woman or Afro-Brazilian to his cabinet of ministers, as well as his own recent legal troubles—having been found guilty of violating campaign finance limits—is hardly a nod in the right direction either. Rousseff did not have a significant or decisive victory, but it seems unlikely that Mr. Temer would be president at all had he not succeeded based on the claims afforded him as vice president. What ought to be a purification of corruption from the leading ranks of Brazil is instead a very tired case of 'more of the same'.

The trouble with Brazil's corruption is not simply a question of judgment by the people, a case of apathy in the voting populace, or even any grand exercise in stealth by corrupt financiers in the biggest companies in industries such as oil. Rather, the issue is that the degree of corruption, and its incessant presence, is practically old-hat to the people of Brazil. Rousseff's impeachment and

Operation Car Wash ought to be a sigh of relief felt around the world, and particularly amongst the Brazilian people, but it is not. There is a sense of complacency amongst those in charge in Brazil where corruption is concerned, and those who might claim to feel relief that Rousseff is on her way out are only fooling themselves—Rousseff's absence offers no real relief, because her impeachment solves very little in the grand scheme of things.

The very man who urged on Rousseff's impeachment has undergone his own trial, and the man who has replaced her as president has also been convicted of a campaign finance crime that makes it illegal for him to even attain the presidency via proper election. It is, in some ways, a stroke of luck for Temer that these circumstances came to be.

That Dilma Rousseff was caught borrowing funds to support social programs that largely benefited the poor so early into her presidency is simply unusual in a country where corruption so often goes unnoticed. Petrobras's belated investigations, and Rousseff's implications in it, are just one example of that chance likelihood. And although arranging funds for social programs seems altruistic—if altruistic politics are an accepted concept—the method behind the action was certainly illegal. Rousseff borrowed money from public banks, such as the Banco do Brasil and the Caixa Econômica Federal; this type of loan is illegal according to fiscal responsibility law in Brazil. Why? These loans can, unfortunately, be used to manipulate public accounts—which, on a governmental scale, can be critical. What does seem to ring true is that, by allowing Rousseff to be the face of this slew of anticorruption efforts, people are being potentially misled as to the intentions of the government. The implication here is that Rousseff is not a political heavyweight being brought to justice; she is, instead, a scapegoat to distract from everything else happening around her. Men like Temer and Cunha are not rare finds in Brazilian politics, after all—they are entirely typical.

Where Is This Coming From, and Where Are We Going?

Corruption is hardly new in Brazil, both

internally and concerning its international reputation. Ultimately, although Rousseff did make a mistake, it is important to note that her impeachment is not a victory against corruption. That false sense of security some may sense—though it is important to note that disillusionment is no stranger to the Brazilian people—is at the cost of incredible political maneuvering. Rousseff was left vulnerable by the Petrobras investigations, as well as economic downturn, and opposition such as Cunha saw a golden opportunity to take her down, as well as the Workers' Party, from the leading position.

When a majority of Brazilian Congress is facing corruption charges, it is foolish to assume that good intentions rest anywhere in between. A problem with dynasties is that people can rest too much confidence in the value of a name. For example, it seems likely that former president Lula, when he backed Rousseff, put too much confidence in his own national affections, as well as the strength of the Workers' Party, rather than on Rousseff's genuine qualifications as president. This possibility is certainly plausible, given that Rousseff's primary previous experience is with Petrobras, not with major governing. Furthermore, intimate reflection on her character reveals further problematic qualities unsuitable for a tense position: "her blustery arrogance, her refusal to listen to even her closest aides and her apparent inability to understand just how much trouble she was in, right to the very end." In many ways, Rousseff was a downfall waiting to happen in Brazilian politics.

If one considers the number of corruption charges in current government, as well as the sheer depth of it all, it is hard to see a cheery future. These problems are not new to Brazil, but the intensity of the spotlight on them is something newer: people go on trial, yes, but often are able to get by under-punished and unnoticed. It may not be the case this time for everyone, which is not a perfect outcome, but is certainly a step in the right direction. Corruption itself is not the most critical concern for Brazilians, but its outcomes are—the people face economic peril, governmental incompetence, and with the current leadership of Mr. Temer, racial tensions. In a

country wrought with complicated racial diversity based around notions of equality dating back to the colonization of the New World, and economic tensions between extremely divided classes, it is hard to see a future that doesn't put the endurance of corrupt politicians to the ultimate test.

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The symbol of the United States government: the US Capitol Building in Washington, DC

Photo Courtesy of Phil Roeder via Flickr

Cuffing the Invisible Hand: Private Industry's Failings in the Pursuit of Profits

Does the government always do it better?

By Andrew Fallone

In terms of making the product, the magical invisible hand of the free market can take its course. Consumers can buy the product that they think tastes the best, has the most compelling packaging, or has a new, intriguing variation on the established norm. When it comes to the production of people's lives, we have no incentive to protect the ability for private industry to profit off of people's necessities. In industries like healthcare, education, even transportation, we should not bow our heads as subjects to the supposedly-omnipotent private industry.

We have ample evidence government is not only better at meeting the needs of its citizens, but it also is morally justifiable. Governments should be providing for the health and education of its people. When we make such industries public, we eliminate those looking to profit off of our necessities. The government should be competing with private industry to provide our energy, transportation, and other industries where people's lives or livelihoods depend on the successful provision of the service – then it can provide the best possible services for its people and incentivize private industry to innovate and provide better services for people if they want to profit. The primary role of the government is to provide for its people, as opposed to a corporation whose primary goal is to make profits. If people are a source of profit, we can be squeezed and cramped into a more effi-

cient airplane seat to create larger profit margins. The source of the disparity in the quality of service between private and public industry stems from the conditions for their relative successes; a company succeeds when it generates the largest profit, whereas a government succeeds when it provides for the needs of its people. In the interest of profit, the service or product provided by private industry has often been brought to the cutting block, yet that can change if private industry is forced to compete with the government. The government should be used to ensure that there are options for consumers that meet their needs without exploiting that necessity for extravagant profits. We have no reason to trust this supposed paternal invisible hand that will always guide the economy to take care of our needs. It is that same invisible hand of the free market that led to rat feces ending up in breakfast sausage and necessitated the creation of the FDA because private industry was trying to cut costs to maximize profits. We already know that we cannot allow our workers to be subjected to the ungloved hand of private industry. From child laborers to seven-day work weeks and 20-hour days, the federal government had to create regulations to protect workers from being abused and exploited by private industrialists in the pursuit of profits. Thus, after having to protect our health and happiness from private industry, why would we still falsely believe that private industry would

provide a better service than the government could in cases where necessity instead of quality drives consumption? It is a fallacy to believe that we must protect the for-profit industry's propensity to exploit and capitalize on the necessities that can be better provided by the government.

Let us take, for example, air travel. Which would provide better air travel, private or public industry? It is important to note that I am not discussing a new Ghana Airways Limited or any of the other small failed nationalized state airlines; I am talking about the full potential of the United States federal government being utilized to create the best airline they possibly could to compete with private industry to provide the best service possible. In the current situation, it doesn't matter if we get to our destination as quickly as possible, it just matters how cheaply we can be brought to our destination while still paying extravagant ticket prices for the privilege to be crushed along with less than 24" of our belongings into the sweaty armpit of the passenger next to us. Private industry doesn't care about providing the best service possible, it cares about providing the most profitable service possible. When private industry has a monopoly on a public responsibility it operates like a cartel, where all companies are so blinded by profit that they forget what service they are even supposed to be providing and just look to cut weight and space and streamline the profit margin as much as possible. How clean does the airplane really have to be? Because the consumer has no better option so they'll sit right on that pile of crumbs left by three passengers prior. Furthermore, if the government is a competitor to airlines, it will incentivize them to provide a better service to consumers if they want to profit off of them. As long as there is no other option passengers are captives to the hand of the free market taking another bill out of their wallets.

Airlines are not interested if it's faster to go straight from Chicago to New York as long as people are still willing to pay for their ticket – even if that ticket only buys them a seat barely as large as their body and the trip takes 8 hours with a 6-hour layover in Saskatchewan. We think that competition in the economy will always de-

liver us the best product, but as commentator Jim Hightower editorializes, "...oops — the bottom line of thinking you can simply apply corporate methods and ethics to public responsibilities is that very bad things can happen." Instead of choosing whether or not to buy a product, in our modern society almost all Americans have to take an airplane at some point, and that necessity means that no matter how low the quality of the service provided is, passengers will still fly. Yet, why should we allow some already-rich executive to profit off our discomfort and the substandard unsatisfactory service provided? Public responsibilities can be better served by the government, and competing against the government can force private industry to heighten the quality of their service. The federal government can map flight plans and times so that there are quick and regular flights all over the nation. While many Americans will need to fly somewhere in their lives, only a small portion profit in our current system. Why should the profits of the vast minority of Americans necessitate the lack of quality and affordable service to the majority?

As of now, if a company develops a new innovation to get you from coast to coast in the nation in an hour, they would put an exorbitant price tag on it and limit the seats as to ensure that demand is always high, guarding the technology with their life in the interest of profit. If the government administered an airline with the interests of the people at its heart then technology could be used to benefit Americans the instant it is developed. The government's intentions are to provide the best service to its citizens, as opposed to the airline whose only goal is to make more money than their competition. Ever since the Nixon and Reagan administrations, privatization has been the vogue in America; where we can cut federal spending and involvement we have, yet there is little evidence that private industry actually benefits the regular citizen, while there is ample that it benefits the rich executives. The New Economics Foundation elucidates that "[p]rivate sector dynamism versus public sector inefficiency has been the dominant political narrative of the last few decades. It has supplied the excuse for repeated, one-directional upheaval in

many of the services that we rely on, and which are essential to our quality of life." The pursuit of profits has perverted the goals of providing necessary services. The current government, even without entering into the industry, could easily force airlines to better provide for the public good, but it currently pulls in \$116 billion in tax revenues yearly off of the compromised public good from airlines. Instead of paying extravagant ticket prices for something that almost all of society uses, we could split the cost between all of us and create a government airline. A federal airline could have ticket prices low enough to force private industry to either lower their prices to be competitive or provide substantially better service to merit the price. When we are paying for a service that we will see the direct benefit of, we have ample examples of how Americans don't mind paying for it. That is because the government is not like a company that is going to abuse us to shave decimals off costs. The public good is not a public resource that we have to protect the propensity to benefit off of; instead, government should be a competitor forcing private industry to do a better job providing for citizens' needs than the government can to make a profit.

A democratic republic government like the one we have in the United States exists by the people, thus it is accountable to them and holds the interest of the people as its first priority. Take hydraulic fracturing, for example. Many Americans are firmly against the practice, despite it being a monumental technological advancement, which could open the door to potentially more than a century of resources, as President Obama said of the innovation in 2011, "...the potential here is enormous." Yet, Americans are understandably opposed to fracking because in its current manifestation it exists for the profit of already-wealthy energy executives. Instead of seeing lower energy costs and a majorly energy self-sufficient nation, Americans might see rivers catching on fire. If the government were to facilitate fracking, being accountable to the American people opposed to shareholders and executives, there would be increased transparency and less cost cutting. The goal of an energy corporation is to profit off of a resource, thus the cheaper it can procure that re-

source, the more it profits. This results in fewer safety measures and environmental considerations because public safety is a public good, existing unprotected to be exploited by the business for profit. The government, on the other hand, has the primary goal of extracting the resource to benefit its constituents. Thus, it will not be looking to exploit the public good for profit because the public goal is in its best interests. Take the example of the sale of narcotics. When it is not regulated, it exists only for the profit of the drug dealer, with no consideration of the customer. Yet, in Colorado, where the government put limits and regulations on the sale of marijuana, its sale has been widely successful. Indeed, the regulation of the industry has been a further boon to citizens for beyond protecting their safety, the taxes collected from the industry in Colorado have gone towards funding education. Fracking exists in the exact same vein. Without government intervention, there is no incentive for consumer considerations, as the end goal – profit – is the primary interest. If the government were to step in, even if simply competing against private industry instead of taking full control, it could still forcibly protect the best interests of its people. Even simply regulating the practices of private industry and taxing their profits can help ensure that citizens health is protected and their needs are better met. President Obama is referenced in Daniel Yergin's book on modern energy policy *The Quest* to say that fracking holds "...enormous potential to provide economic and environmental benefits for the country," yet in its current manifestation we sacrifice efficiency and environmental considerations to allow individuals to cut costs and destroy the environment for everyone for their own personal benefit by surrendering control of the industry to the free market.

We further surrender the good of the American people to line the pockets of executives by giving up on our own problems and throwing them to private industry to profit off of instead of addressing them. Charter schools are the premier example of this complacency. It is easy to take something that is flawed and difficult to rectify such as our education system and toss it off to the free market, telling ourselves that it will be better than our government at fixing its problems. But since

when has the education of our young people been something worth capitulating and giving up on. Instead of actually believing that private industry will do a better job of educating our youths, politicians simply tire of searching for solutions. Instead of investing in our education system they delegate the task to the free market. Yet, what is lost is the end goal of the process. When the government facilitates education, they have no incentive to do anything but provide students with the best education possible, as it should be. Private industry, on the other hand, is a racketeering business. When corners are cut in our children's education futures are lost. The education of the future leaders of our nation of our nation should never be a source of revenue, and their education is not something that we can risk entrusting to ventures that have ulterior motives. A report from the National Education Policy Center elucidated the problems of running education like a business, explaining that "when we begin to think of schools as business, then test scores are a measure of profitability. Indeed, students of teachers who get high achievement scores are rewarded in the same way that employees earn bonuses. But when scores are low, it is analogous to an unprofitable business, which might mean layoffs, store closings, and fired staff." Indeed, these are not abstract fears, they are concrete realities that have lasting ramifications for the young people whose education is put in jeopardy by lackadaisical politicians reticent to address the problems in our education system and too quick to pass it off to become someone else's problem. In Florida, from 2008-2014 119 charter schools closed, 14 of which never even made it through an entire school year. One charter school was repeatedly kicked out of buildings that they rented classroom space from. Perpetually plagued with a lack of ample space, they took students on daily field trips to ensure that students were not in classes that lacked the room to accommodate them. The desire of the executives to make a profit overshadowed the desire of the executives to properly educate the students they were given. Their wallets were filled at the price of the education of students because, like a business, as long as someone is buying the product, the quality of the product, or the education, doesn't matter (in this case states that don't

want to deal with education students themselves and consistently feed charter schools customers). Yet education isn't a Hot Wheels car; if the wheels fall off, students' futures are lost. Education motivated by profit, not by the desire to educate the students, leads to corners being cut where they cannot afford to be. The Harvard Business Review made the argument in 1991 that "a profit-seeking operation may not, for example, choose to provide healthcare to the indigent or extend education to poor or learning-disabled children." In the more than two decades since, we have seen ample examples that further support this claim. Charter schools have spearheaded attempts to cut the cost of education, which have only succeeded in cutting into the education of our young people. The only reason that charter schools have seen a rise in prevalence is the propagation of the false idea that our education system is struggling because of some inherent failing in government. While there is still work that remains to be done, our government is the most effective actor we have at addressing the problems that exist. It not only has the funds to invest without fear of sacrificing profit margins in our children's education, but it also has the most integrous motivation to do the work. Private industry can be a player on the field of education, but we should not be supplanting public education with profit-motivated education. Private industry is an important part of the equation only when it provides a better education than the government can, which charter schools clearly do not. Instead of taking a problem we don't want to address and sacrificing the education of our young people for the privilege of not having to deal with it and for the profit of private industry executives, we should reinvest in public education.

The entire argument against privatization can be summarized by the maxim: You cannot risk the good of the public to allow for profit. When major government failings exist, they stand out because they are anomalies, not the norm. That is because the government has the resources it needs to be effective at its primary job – providing the best services possible for its people. Look at examples such as the national parks, or the U.S. Institute for Peace; when we aggregate the funds

of all citizens the government can afford to invest in creating the best institutions it can to provide for its people. Take prisons and healthcare, for example, by allowing for both to be privatized we are allowing for individuals to profit off of the institutions without any direct benefit, as the private manifestations of both provide no better quality of service at significantly higher overall cost. When prisons are a source of profit, their goal ceases to be rehabilitating offenders into society, for they profit off of filling their prisons and thus are incentivized to encourage recidivism and systematically-broken justice systems. The same is true, as discussed above, of oil and education, where privatization has only benefitted the gross minority without providing any benefit to the populous as a whole. Prisons and healthcare are just two examples of industries where the public good depends on quality of the services provided, and they government competing with private industry can force an adherence to high standards of quality. As highlighted by The Atlantic, "Each side of the divide has strengths and weaknesses, but in every case the public sector is providing something the private sector cannot: A backup that's there if and when you need it; a benchmark for private providers; and a backstop to make sure costs don't spin out of control." We should welcome government's entrance into private sectors so that it can compete against private industry with its superior budget and sound motivation. That is not to say that it can always provide the best service, but it can keep private industry accountable by providing for the public good without looking to profit off of it. Then, if private industry is capable of competing to provide for the public good better than government, it can be allowed to profit off doing so. Instead of sacrificing the public good to allow for profits, the government can incentivize private industry to compete to profit by innovating to provide for citizens better than the government can. Government competition with private industry does not eliminate the propensity to profit, it simply changes how private industry can profit for the better. Instead of attempting to profit by cutting corners when they know people are forced to give them business, private industry can compete to do the best job of providing for the people.

The government has the potential to provide for the good of its people better than private industry because it is not looking to profit off of doing so and it has the budget to fund the most effective services possible. Yet, too often we protect the potential for profit because of the fallacy that all Americans can profit. In reality, only a fraction of a percentage of Americans will benefit while all of the rest lose out to give them the opportunity to do so. We see ourselves not as a nation of haves and have-nots, we see ourselves as a nation of haves and maybe-someday-could-haves. We protect private industry's right to profit off of the public good because we hope to one day profit too, ignoring the major failings of the free market in the interest of profits. By using power of the federal government to invest in providing the best service possible we will not eliminate private industry but instead will alter how it can profit. Instead of profiting off of Americans forced to use their service, they can still profit by achieving the same thing the government looks to: providing the best service possible for Americans. Instead of supplanting government with private industry to eschew problems we do not want to work to fix, we can allow for competition between government and private industry to provide the best result for American citizens and protect the integrity of the public good.

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Zarif and Kerry talk nuclear deal

Photo Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

The Economics of Sanctions: Half Measures, Tit-for-Tat Strategies, and Why North Korea is Not Iran

The theory and practice of economic sanctions

By Samuel Woods

On September 9th, 2016, North Korea conducted what South Korean and Japanese estimates called its biggest nuclear test to date, with a nuclear yield equivalent to approximately 10 kilotons of TNT (the bomb dropped by the U.S. on Hiroshima had a yield of about 15 kilotonns). The international community, including the United States, was quick to condemn the test, and calls for new rounds of sanctions came immediately, almost reflexively, and as if it was understood exactly what these calls were requesting. The actual mechanics of sanctions, however, are often hidden behind catchphrases such as “snap back,” “tough,” “tightening,” or “loosening.” While these phrases give one a general idea as to what a sanction is and how it works, an explanation of the actual workings of any given set of sanctions would certainly go further in explaining their severity and meaning.

The term “economic sanctions” refers to the deliberate withdrawal of economic activity that, in the absence of the sanctions, would have probably occurred. The intent, essentially, is to change policy via the punishment of an individual or group. However, the effectiveness of sanctions in achieving their goals has not received unanimous support following the Second World War, and it is not clear whether their success rate should be considered anything beyond marginal.

However, despite their dubious track record, one should not expect the use of sanctions to cease for the foreseeable future, as the enforcement of economic sanctions carries political benefits for powerful world leaders. Retaliating against a perceived wrong with sanctions offers displeased leaders an option that is more coercive than a one-off statement of protest, but less antagonistic than direct military action. Playing this middle ground is domestically popular, and allows a country to convincingly declare its displeasure with a given government or set of individuals without getting their military’s boots dirty.

As a way of modelling the process of sanctions, one can think of the threat of sanctions as a game played between two countries; the sender and the target. Consider the following, where the numbers to the left of each comma refer to the payoffs realized by the sending country at a given outcome, and numbers on the right refer to the payoffs of the target country at the same outcome. For example, at the outcome in the top left where each country cooperates (C,C), the sending country receives a payoff of 5, and the target country a payoff of 1. Of course, the exact numbers of 5 and 1 are not tied to any specific real world measurement, but rather just show that both parties prefer to be in the cooperative stage than in, say, the punishment stage (C,D) in the bottom right.

	Target Cooperates (C)	Target Defects (D)
Sender Cooperates (C)	(5,1)	(-1,3)
Sender Punishes (P)	(-1,-2)	(0,0)

If this were a one shot game, we would expect a result akin to the prisoner's dilemma, as the target of sanctions would benefit more by defecting, regardless of the strategy of the sender. Knowing this, the sender will choose a punitive strategy to receive a payoff of 0 instead of cooperating for a payoff of 1. However, assuming multiple iterations of the game, both the sender and target country would seek to maximize their payout over an indefinite time horizon, rather than just grabbing as much as they can in one shot. This requires both players to consider the effect that their actions today have on payouts in the future when evaluating the costs and benefits of a given action.

If the sender's threat of indefinite punitive action in response to deviation is credible (and in this case it is, as the payout of punitive action is preferable to continued cooperation, so long as the target country continues to defect), and the costs that this punitive action inflicts upon the target country will be greater over an indefinite time horizon than the benefits from deviating once, then it is not in the interest of the target country to defect. Given the payoffs in the game above, so long as the game is played more than 3 times after the target country's deviation, it is not in the interest of the target country to deviate.

This strategy of cooperating until the other player defects is referred to as a "tit-for-tat" strategy, named after the sender's strategy of only punishing the target when they deviate from the status quo. Economic sanctions are a "tit-for-tat" game between a (usually more powerful) sender country and a target country, where the sender threatens to punish the target via two principal methods: upsetting the target's trade balance and impeding the target's financial infrastructure. Upsetting the target's trade balance is perhaps the more straightforward example, given that this

strategy simply aims to either limit the target's exports or impede its ability to import certain resources. In so doing, the sender attempts to deny the target either the raw materials or tax revenue that it otherwise would have received, thus raising the costs of the target's disliked policy. In theory, trade sanctions will work if these costs outweigh the benefits of the target's disliked policy.

However, this type of sanction requires a limited market for the goods that the sender wishes to restrict. If other countries are willing to buy the target's exports, or if the sender does not own a significant market share of the good that it wishes to keep the target from importing, then the effectiveness of these sanctions will be limited. Additionally, the coercive power of trade sanctions is inversely related to the price of the good the sender is restricting. If the price falls by half its original value six months after the sender country begins sanctions, the target may replenish their original supply at half cost, severely limiting the coercive influence of the sanction. Similarly, if the price of the target's export rises significantly during sanctions, the target will better be able to accommodate the sanctions.

Impeding the target's financial infrastructure however, presents a more flexible sanctioning strategy. Financial sanctions generally involve either the freezing of assets of particular individuals involved in the sanction-triggering activity, or the termination of subsidies from the sender previously sent to the target country. Financial sanctions are more difficult for the target to evade, particularly if the target country is embroiled in political or economic instability, or for some other reason may find it difficult to establish new lines of credit. Additionally, deploying financial sanctions allows the sender to better target particular individuals who are either involved in the action that triggered the sanctions or who have a direct ability to address the action, such as politicians and business elites.

Sanctions enforced as a punitive response to the development of nuclear weapons function the same way, as the sanctions aim to raise the overall costs of pursuing the development of nuclear weapons above the overall benefits that that

country would receive if they did develop nuclear weapons, all while minimizing the effect of those sanctions on third parties and the economy of the sender country. In game theoretic terms, the target deviates by pursuing nuclear weapons, and the sender country looks to punish this deviation harshly enough to keep the target from choosing the deviation strategy now or in the future. It is important to note that there are certainly non-economic benefits at play in these scenarios such political prestige or regional hegemony, but the punishment strategy of economic sanctions looks to raise the economic costs of the deviation high enough to override whatever benefits might come from an active pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Contemporary U.S.-Iranian relations represent a high profile, and tentatively successful example of economic sanctions being used to punish the pursuit of nuclear technology. The United States assumed the role of the sender country after then-President Ahmadinejad chose a strategy of deviation by lifting the suspension of Iran's uranium enrichment program. The U.S. punishment came in two waves, one in 2005 with Executive Order 13382, which froze the assets of individuals connected with Iran's nuclear program that were held in the U.S., and one in 2010 with the passage of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act (CISADA), which further targeted individuals connected with the nuclear program, but also limited US reception of some of Iran's key exports. After 2010, the U.S.'s sanctions targeted both the financial and trade sectors, draining the pockets of Iranian elite, and seeking to diminish Iranian exports of goods like oil, pistachios, and rugs. While effective due to the close ties the Iranian economy had to the sanctioned goods, the newly limited access to the U.S. market hurt third-party Iranians as well as those involved with the uranium enrichment program.

Nevertheless, despite the collateral damage of CISADA's trade sanctions, it would be difficult to argue that they did not help to bring about the correction that the U.S. demanded, as the current President Rouhani's victory in 2013 and positive reception to news of the lifting of sanctions in 2015 indicate a displeasure with the

Ahmadinejad administration's continued pursuit of nuclear weapons in spite of the effects of the sanctions. Though perhaps imperfect, the U.S. eventually got the deal they were looking for. For its part, Iran has begun to reintroduce itself to world markets to the tune of a forecasted 5 percent overall GDP growth in 2016, despite the low worldwide price of oil. In game theoretic terms, the game has returned to an equilibrium of cooperation, with both players receiving nonzero payoffs greater than in the punishment equilibrium.

However, all is not well with the rest of the world. Like Iran, the U.S. (along with much of the international community) has targeted North Korea with both financial and trade-focused sanctions. The assets of North Korean elites held abroad have been frozen over again and again, and the "direct or indirect" importation into the United States of any North Korean goods is prohibited as of President Obama's Executive Order 13570 in 2011. However, while the U.S. and the international community have found new financial holdings to freeze and trade restrictions to impose time after time, North Korean officials have not shown any sign of relenting.

Of course, major differences exist between the domestic atmospheres of Iran and North Korea that may play a role in the international community's inability to correct the deviation of the latter in the same way they have the former. Most importantly, Iran holds presidential elections every 4 years, where the public may voice their displeasure at the current government's nuclear ambitions and remove them from office, replacing them with someone who opposes nuclear capabilities in favor of economic growth and a better reputation among its peers. North Korea, of course, does not have this luxury, and, short of a coup, Kim Jong-Un and his nuclear ambitions are here to stay so long as he wants them to. Additionally, the Iranian government is hurt more by trade-based sanctions than North Korea, as the Iranian government cannot function via black and grey markets as efficiently as Kim Jong-Un's regime has proven to be able to.

A key difference, however, is that Iran

can feasibly become a world player at some point down the road. As of right now, Iran controls the 4th largest reserve of oil in the world, is located in an enviable geopolitical location, and has taken advantage of the chaos of the region since the fall of Saddam Hussein to extend its influence. For many, a far-reaching imagination is not necessary to see Iran's future as a serious player on the global stage at some point in the foreseeable future. By continuing its nuclear program, Iran jeopardized this capability by becoming a target for sanctions from the international community, contributing to minuscule or negative economic growth. In the end, the overall benefits of a return to the cooperative equilibrium were obvious, as this equilibrium better suited an Iran who wished to realize its international potential.

Given its limited land area, limited natural resources, and its lack of technological development compared to its peers, North Korea does not have a realistic chance to realize a similar level of global or regional influence. In fact, given the permanent nature of the regime and its apparent willingness to operate on the periphery of the world stage, financial or trade-based sanctions may offer very little additional costs for the North Korean government. In fact, fostering a scenario in which the whole world works against North Korea may serve Kim Jong-Un's agenda quite well, substantiating his claims that the Western world is conspiring against North Korea. While it is tempting to simply "impose sanctions" on North Korea as punishment for their nuclear ambitions and play the middle ground between a statement of protest and military action, a closer look into what those sanctions would actually entail offers a bleak picture of their effectiveness. Granted, dealing with Pyongyang is a difficult task with no obvious answers, but instead of reflexively calling for another round of sanctions in response to the next successful nuclear test, one should offer a clear and comprehensive understanding of the truly unique situation that one finds in North Korea, and an explanation as to how exactly the next round of sanctions will stop or slow the development of a nuclear North Korea.

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The Euro is the official currency of the European Union and was introduced to unite EU countries

Photo Courtesy of wfabry via Flickr

The Euro: A Win or Loss for Poland?

A detailed look at the implications of the accession of the Euro in Poland

By Daniel Lynam

The Euro, currently in circulation in 19 of the European Union (EU) member states, first came into physical circulation in 2002 following the electronic adoption in 1999. The introduction of the euro was originally manufactured as part of the Union's broader plan to limit extreme nationalism following World War II and the fall of the Soviet Union. Caps on nationalism and closer economic interdependence would limit the likelihood of war breaking out again on the European continent. While originally introduced in 6 of the member states, the Euro's rollout has extended due to the requirement, as spelt out in the Maastricht Treaty, of all member states to join. The treaty, however, does not spell out an exact timetable for accession into the Eurozone.

Accession into the Eurozone is contingent on 6 convergence criteria. The criteria as spelt out by the ECB include:

1. Low inflation: max 1.7%
2. Less than 3% budget deficit
3. Debt-to-GDP ratio less than 60%
4. ERM II Membership for minimum 2 years
5. Stable interest rates
6. Stable long-term interest rate max 6.7%

Once it has been determined a country satisfies the convergence criteria, a vote is taken in Council to permit the state to join the Eurozone. Since its conception, 8 member states have completed the

accession process bringing the total membership to 19. The Euro was most recently introduced in 2015 replacing the Lithuanian lita.

In this article, I will discuss the economic basis of the euro, introduce theory behind Eurozone accession, and apply the two discussions to the current debate over Poland's accession to the Eurozone and address some of the major concerns of citizens.

Economic Basis and the Theory of the Optimum Currency Area

Euro accession begins with the alignment of a country with the convergence criteria which cover conditions from inflation, deficit, and debt. Additionally, the national Central Bank must be independent of political control as it will be folded into the structure of the European Central Bank.

The economic benefits of switching a country's currency to the Euro are undeniable: elimination of transaction costs of converting currencies and allowing for further integration of Eurozone economies. It contributes to the development of the single market's free flow of goods, labor, and people which can be facilitated even easier with common currencies.

However, there are very clear economic disadvantages of joining the Eurozone. Accession to the Euro means the member state gives up its control over its monetary policy to the ECB. While that member state's central bank will have a vote

in the ECB, policies and positions contrary to that country's interest could still be voted upon and carried out. Additionally, the ECB's sole-mandate of price stability might play contrary to the needs of particular member states such as achieving full employment, the two of which sometimes can seem mutually exclusive.

For the majority of this paper I will be discussing the economic situation of Poland vis-à-vis accession into the Eurozone. To chart this discussion, I want to begin by discussing the economic basis of the Euro as theorized by the so called 'Optimum Currency Area' (OCA). The OCA theory, as developed and attributed to Robert Mundell, stresses the need to be able to control asymmetric shocks in order to build a currency union. The four main criteria he lists as needed to achieve a successful currency Union are:

- i. Labor mobility across the region
- ii. Open capital mobility; price and wage flexibility across the region
- iii. A risk sharing system (such as a taxation redistribution)
- iv. Similar business cycles across the region

If a region can meet these criteria, then Mundell stipulates it very well may be an optimal currency area. It is interesting to note that these currency areas don't need to be multiple countries, but in fact a single country could have several optimal currency areas—but are tied under a single currency system for geopolitical reasons rather economic.

The Case of Poland

The presence of a resistance to Euro accession in Poland is clearly evident through the results of the Flash Eurobarometer 418 (FEB418). The FEB was conducted in April of 2015 in the 7 non-Euro member states with legal and treaty obligations to accede to the Eurozone. The goal was to measure public knowledge, perceptions, support, and expectations of the Euro.

In response to the question "Do you think the introduction of the Euro would have positive or negative consequences for (OUR COUNTRY)?"

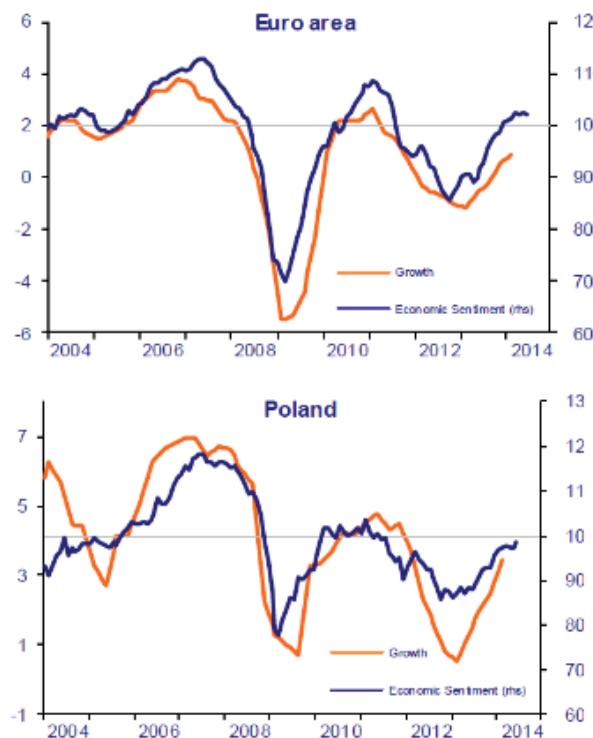
54% of Poles said 'negative'. When asked about the consequences on a personal level, 53% anticipated 'total negative' consequences. These results reveal that a majority of Poles see Euro introduction as a negative event (however the wording of the question does not indicate exclusivity of economic impact). This perceived negative impact, however, seems to be a native phenomenon as in the same FEB, 53% of Polish respondents indicated they believed Euro introduction has had an overall positive impact in other countries that have already introduced it versus a minority of 34% stating it was negative. The disparity in results suggests that in fact Poles do not have negative perceptions of the Euro as a whole, they just have negative perceptions about implementation of the Euro in place of the Polish Złoty.

Prior to the recent October 2015 election, Poland was under political pressure from the ECB and in particular Germany, to push towards meeting the convergence criteria, in particular officially joining the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM II). Political attitudes were split at the time, with justifiable economic concerns about speculation driving down the value of the złoty. However, with the outright majority victory of the right-wing, euroskeptic Law and Justice Party in the October national elections, discussions about the Euro are now a non-starter, politically speaking.

This shift in the Polish political regime has halted progress towards accession to the Eurozone. It also raises the question of whether Poland should join economically. When I posed this question to my International Economics Professor Steven Silvia at American University, he argued the most important indicator in determining the economic vitality of accession to the Eurozone (or any shared currency regime) is understanding the business cycles of the currency regime and the country in question—the fourth of Mundell's principles. This information can be found in DG Economic and Financial Affairs' 2014 Report in European Business Cycle Indicators. The below graphs compare growth with the Economic Sentiment Indicator (ESI).

The below graphs show the disparity of the economic conditions that struck the Euro area in

the 2008 downturn versus the less dramatic recession in Poland. It is important to highlight how dramatic the disparity is: Poland's growth rate never went negative, which cannot be said for the Eurozone. Poland's ability to remain above the red line while the rest of Europe succumbed into recession is due to many reasons, but the main being the successful exercise of monetary policy of 'Narodowy Bank Polski' (National Bank of Poland).



Accession to the Eurozone, as stated earlier, means the National Bank would lose its monetary policy autonomy, and rather the country would be subject to the decisions taken at the ECB. Often portrayed as "giving up sovereignty" to Brussels, many opponents to the Euro like to leave out the fact that the National Bank will have a voting seat in the ECB. On the other hand, Poland is a single vote, and can be easily outvoted. The National Bank representative sitting on the ECB will take an oath stating that he will put the economic interests of the Eurozone as a whole before national interests. And at the end of the day, what is best for the Eurozone might not necessarily be best for Poland and vice versa.

The graphs above regarding the business cycle are telling because any central bank makes

its monetary policy decisions based on the business cycle. In general, (along with other policies as well): when growth is slowing down, they will buy back bonds and infuse more money into the market, and when inflation gets too high, they will sell bonds to restrict money flows. The ECB follows the same basic logic and premises. So, with that in mind, if the Polish business cycle aligns closely with that of the Eurozone, it is safe to say we will see a history of similar policy actions taken by the ECB and the Polish National Bank. And theoretically, if Poland were to accede into the Eurozone, we should continue to see the two business cycles stay similar and thus ECB policies will continue to help the Polish economy grow.

On the other hand, if the business cycles did not align, it makes a very clear case to not accede. If the ECB sells bonds at the same as the Polish business cycle is at a peak and inflation is increasing, the ECB decision would wreak havoc on the Polish economy with high inflation. The same goes for buying bonds at a low in the business cycle: the constriction of cash will mean even less growth will occur, and the economy could experience negative growth and even go into recession if the adverse policies are sustained for a prolonged period of time.

Looking at the above graphs of Poland and the EU, there is visually a generally similar trend of business cycles. There were disparities in growth from 2004-2006(ish) but then the trends seemed to converge. This is very much likely due to business cycle synchronization which can be achieved through strategic trade. 2004 marked Poland's entry to the single market, and thus trade between the Eurozone (and the EU as a whole) has increased dramatically, allowing for convergence to be achieved through trade.

To address the issue of business cycle synchronization, the EU has a long-standing Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM II) which is designed to help move a country's economy towards convergence with Eurozone trends in terms of inflation, long-term interest rates, fiscal deficit, public debt, and exchange rate stability. The goal of business cycle convergence explains why membership in the ERM II for at least 2 years is one of

the 6 convergence criteria a state must reach to accede to the Eurozone. Poland has not yet joined the ERM.

The remaining three ‘criteria’ for an OCA are all semi-related. They are labor mobility, capital mobility, and a risk sharing system. These three elements are seen as necessary in forming an OCA as they are essentially for “promoting balance-of-payments equilibrium and internal stability”. BOP instability was a major concern of Mundell’s as well as concerns over balancing inflation and unemployment. He argues “the pace of inflation is set by the willingness of central authorities to allow unemployment in deficit regions”—essentially one region benefits at the expense of another in a common currency area in a monetary policy decision. In order to limit these type of situations, the three criteria are needed.

If unemployment rises in one region due to higher inflation in others, it is essential that labor has free mobility to move within the currency area. If labor can move, then the region can maintain full employment without having to enact monetary policies that might decrease unemployment in one region at the expense of another. Eventually, ideally, as the economy recovers, employment levels will balance back out across the region. The single market (all EU-28 member countries) allows for the free movement of goods and labor. Within that market, the Schengen zone allows for the free movement of peoples. Poland is part of both.

Capital mobility coupled with openness of wage and price flexibility acts part of a natural economic mechanism to redistribute supply and demand across the region. This ensures that should there be any supply or demand shocks, the impacts of such will not be isolated to one area of the currency region. If it were to be isolated as such, it would result in a disparity in BOP, which can cause undue stress and uneven economic development in the currency region. Free mobility of capital and flexible prices and wages will allow the economy to naturally adjust to those shocks and the whole region will be affected similarly. The Eurozone (as well as the EU as a whole) has these sorts of mechanisms.

The last component: a risk sharing system. The ideal example of a risk sharing system would be an automatic fiscal transfer mechanism; think government bailouts or tax redistribution. The idea is that the governing authorities should be able to reallocate resources (money) to areas and sectors that are falling behind. The EU’s cohesion funds could have been seen as a sort of risk sharing system, as it redistributes money from wealthier regions to poorer less developed regions, but it is not an ideal example. EU law forbids state aid to business, including bailouts. However, bailouts were given out in April 2010 during the Eurozone crisis. Poland is a major recipient of cohesion funds; and has not been in need of any bailouts.

Analysis

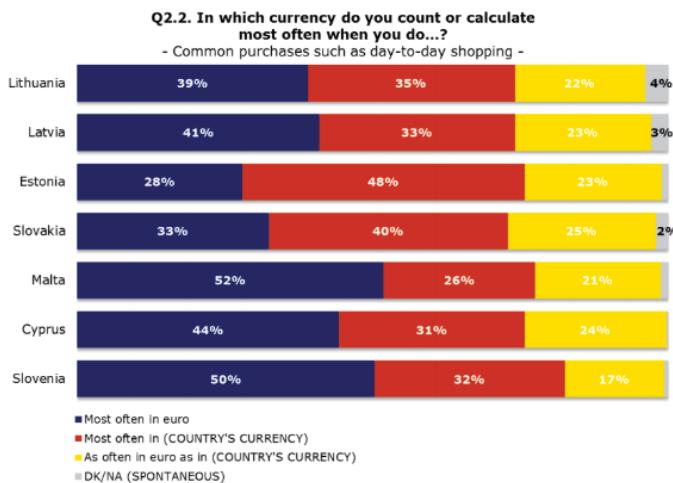
Looking at the four factors often used in considering OCAs, Poland and the current Eurozone seem compatible on all four components. In fact, the National Bank of Poland released a report in 2004 following its EU Accession about the status of Poland’s accession to the Eurozone. The Bank indicates “there is a relatively low risk of monetary policy of the ECB being inappropriate for economic conditions prevailing in Poland after euro entry”. In reaching this conclusion, the authors of the report cite several reasons including the role that free movement of capital will have on stabilizing the exchange rate, high levels of cyclical convergence due to high trade volumes, and reductions in government debt will allow for stronger fiscal stabilizers.

Economically, the transition to the Euro makes sense in theory. The people of Poland themselves have acknowledged the benefits the Euro has. So what is the problem? In talking informally with several of my colleagues and friends in Poland, a common concern kept emerging: switchover would trigger a rise in prices, which would hurt the people. More formally, they are concerned about losing their purchasing power parity (PPP). I initially suspected this concern has emerged out of Polish people’s interactions with the Euro taking place in countries where price levels are higher compared to those in Poland (such as Germany, Belgium, and other western European countries) leading to false connotations that “euro = expen-

sive".

This concern, however, is not unique to Poland. Giovanni Mastrobuoni of Princeton University discusses how incomplete information led to similar "euro-biases" as they are generally referred to in other Eurozone states. In Lithuania, the most recent country to switch to the Euro, Flash Eurobarometer 412, taken in the weeks following the dual-circulation period, revealed that 58% of citizens felt the Euro has increased inflation with only 26% say it maintains stable prices. Models revealed that inflation during change-over was higher for cheaper goods, which are purchased more frequently by consumers, like food and drinks. Therefore, they make overall assumptions about the status of the economy on that limited piece of information, making it seem like there is overall greater inflation than actually present in the economy.

But, why are there different inflation rates? It turns out it is a vicious cycle. Mastrobuoni extends his model to include price uncertainty. He argues that on-the-spot conversions of the new price (in Euros) to the old currency involves a level of uncertainty "about the old-currency-equivalent of the price in euros [which] is higher the higher the price in euros is". The graph below illustrates the vast effect of this problem as more than half of citizens in new Eurozone states still thought about prices in their own currency following switchover. Each of the results are from surveys taken in the weeks after the dual-circulation period.



This phenomenon creates an artificial demand curve by consumers, which yields a higher

general equilibrium. The table below, borrowed from Mastrobuoni's paper illustrates the difference between actual and perceived inflation pre- and post- accession to the Eurozone. He also includes Denmark, Sweden, and the UK in the chart as a means of comparison to nations that were not included in the Euro switchover and consequently did not adopt the Euro. Mastrobuoni concludes that once consumers begin to think in Euros rather converting to their old currencies, the effects of the artificial inflation will be reduced if not eliminated.

Table 1: Mean difference between standardized perceived and actual inflation and perceived inflation before and after the euro changeover. Source: own calculations based on Eurostat and Consumer survey.

	Perceived-actual inflation		Perceived inflation	
	pre	post	pre	post
Austria	-0.15	0.85	-5.77	33.11
Belgium	-0.09	0.62	22.42	40.94
Denmark	0.31	-0.02	-19.63	-16.28
Finland	-0.09	1.12	-14.40	-2.17
France	-0.09	0.67	-0.38	43.61
Germany	-0.31	1.23	19.63	63.83
Greece	-0.43	0.89	23.70	43.94
Ireland	0.27	0.32	28.35	55.33
Italy	0.11	0.36	17.40	48.06
Luxembourg	.	-0.56	.	35.11
Netherlands	-0.29	1.18	23.07	74.44
Portugal	0.15	0.40	23.38	46.44
Spain	0.04	0.50	13.00	49.39
Sweden	-0.16	0.75	-28.05	-15.33
United Kingdom	0.41	-1.44	2.65	-8.44

Returning to the case of Poland, the phenomenon of "euro-biases" and price hikes is founded in a widespread economic phenomenon. While citizens are rightfully worried, the EU has taken steps to try to reduce such effects. During euro switchovers, a period of "dual price display" occurs in which stores and firms are required to display prices of goods in both euros and the former currency for a designated period of time. This is an improvement from the original switchover in 2002 where dual price display was not mandated. Mastrobuoni remarks that surveys in Belgium indicated only 50% of stores participated in the dual price display, and all for varying amounts of time during the two-month switchover process. The room for error in converting currencies was much higher under those conditions. During dual price display it limits the number of conversion errors that may occur.

However, some have expressed concerns that the dual-price display may be harmful in the long-term, as displaying prices in the former local

currency encourages citizens to continue to rely on that price marker rather than that of the Euro. This means that once the dual display period (usually 2 weeks for new member states) ends, consumers will have to go through the same process of conversion miscalculation as discussed prior. The EU also now provides a currency calculator to citizens of new Euro member states to help them make more accurate conversions on the spot. This enables citizens to continue to gauge euro price levels in their former national currencies beyond the dual display period.

Drawing Conclusions

The case of Poland is nothing unique from an economic aspect. We saw similar concerns in other countries including Lithuania only last year in 2015. However, the political conditions of the country simply do not permit for Euro accession to happen in the next couple of years. Will we see Poland in the Eurozone? Absolutely, but it very well may be 5-10 years down the line. Poland has a legal obligation to do so under the Maastricht treaty, and no one is denying that. Concerns are about when is the best time to join.

Poland first needs to join the ERM II to bring stability to its exchange rates, and it will have to remain in the ERM II for at least two years (unless the ECB and Council waive the requirements—which the political will to do so seems present). However, Poland will not join the ERM II under the current euroskeptic government, which will remain in power for nearly another three and a half years, and then we will have to wait for the election results.

While citizen's fears of price increases very well may come true: we have to remember that any shocks to the economy will be borne by the Eurozone as a whole and limit the impact on Poland. Joining the Eurozone will also only increase high levels of trade between Poland and other countries. This small economic stimulus may be essential for Poland as it struggles to keep its young population from moving to other countries and create more jobs at home to keep them.

To ultimately answer the question of whether the Euro is a potentially win or loss for

Poland: I argue that it will someday be a "win". It is hard to draw a conclusive conclusion now due to the simple fact that we don't know what will happen were Poland to accede to the Eurozone. While the country is close to converging on the requirements for Eurozone accession, there are valid concerns about the state of the economy and how Eurozone policy will be appropriate for the economy. The government should continue to develop the economy in order to catch up with other Eurozone countries to ensure a smoother transition.

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International leaders gather in China at the G20 Summit

Photo Courtesy of OECD photostream via Flickr

The 2016 Hangzhou G20 Summit Meeting: A Success for Anyone?

The winners and losers of the Group of 20 gathering

By Erin Bovee

Dubbed “the political equivalent of the Olympics,” this year’s G20, or Group of 20, summit was held on September 4-5 in Hangzhou, China, and brought together the heads of state of the top 20 economies in the world. Together, participating nations make up two-thirds of the population and 85% of the global economy. The G20 has grown in influence and importance since member states’ response to the 2008 global financial crisis, when the G20 organized fiscal stimulus packages and “rebuilt confidence in the international financial system.” Since then, G20 meetings have been an opportunity to focus not only on the economy but on other international issues. The theme in Hangzhou this year, opened by President Xi Jinping, was “Towards an Innovative, Invigorated, Interconnected and Inclusive World Economy.” Yet as much as the Hangzhou Summit wanted to promote international cooperation, the reality of the diplomatic tensions between key members led some heads of state to leave less successful than others.

Before the Summit: Sherpas and Media Build-up

The official summit meetings take place between heads of state, but important discussions and negotiations are made prior to the actual

conference. Nations send representatives called Sherpas who meet in order to discuss and produce preliminary agreements. This year’s Sherpa meeting was focused on climate change, a uniquely important aspect of the Hangzhou summit. Before the official Summit even started, the Sherpa meetings resulted in praise and promise to follow the Paris Agreements on the environment, drawn up earlier this year. The Sherpa meetings set a hopeful tone regarding the commitment to react to climate change at the Summit. While this seems like quite the accomplishment considering the amount of work done to even recognize climate change as a relevant global issue, the vast majority of that work was already accomplished in Paris. Heads of state were likely hopeful about, if unsurprised by, the agreements made in the Sherpa meetings and the subsequent expectation of this year’s G20 summit to produce good news in regards to the fight against climate change.

Media reporting up to the summit varied in tone. Chinese news sources focused primarily on looking forward to summit agreements regarding international trade and investment as well as the Chinese emphasis on “green financing,” which is a focus on environmentally-friendly and sustainable technology and development practices. The Chinese government also placed an emphasis on

the economy as the main topic, instead of, for example, the tensions between China and Japan over the South China Sea. That dispute was recently complicated by the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague ruling in favor of the Philippines and against China's territorial claims. The careful emphasis on the economy by the Chinese government is not just due to the economy being the main point of G20 summits, but also in response to the extreme diplomatic tension over the uncertain future of the South China Sea dispute. Considering even Chinese news sources noted the less than friendly atmosphere between Japan and China, it is clear there was fear the Hangzhou Summit could have derailed into a debate on security and aggression. The Chinese government clearly wanted to avoid that outcome and instead focus on constructive and positive economic outcomes at the summit.

Lead-up to the 2016 Summit was not all focused on what agreements heads of state would produce or what topics would be discussed. China's image and reputation were also on the line. The New York Times insisted one of China's main goals, on a very basic level, was to successfully organize the gathering itself, quoting Matthew Goodman from the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Further than just being a successful host, nearly all news sources agree China had a keen desire to be seen less as a low-cost manufacturing state and more as a high-tech, modern economy driver. Hangzhou was not chosen at random to host the country's first G20 summit; Hangzhou is not only a beautiful tourist destination but also the home of internet giant Alibaba and many other internet-based companies, which have drawn young entrepreneurs and international business to the city. The goal of the Hangzhou summit was to not only produce agreements regarding the global economy, but also to successfully and safely host one of the most influential political gatherings in the world while projecting China's modern high-tech image.

Despite the carefully chosen location and determination to be a successful host, China did not escape media speculation or criticism. Controversy already surrounded the summit meetings before heads of state arrived. China prepared

Hangzhou to receive the conference by extending worker's vacation periods, cutting hours during the week of the summit, and giving incentives for citizens to leave the city altogether, citing traffic and security concerns as motivation. Restrictions on shipping and receiving packages forced many places in Hangzhou, especially restaurants, to close; in at least one case, Uighurs, a Muslim minority, were restricted from cooking. Security was also heavy throughout the city, limiting movement. These concerns were, of course, highlighted by mainly Western journalists.

Accomplishments of the Hangzhou Summit

G20 summits typically result in a series of agreements and affirmations by member states, and the Hangzhou Summit produced a number of positive outcomes centered primarily on the economy put forth in the G20 Leader's Communique, which outlines the Hangzhou Action Plan. The White House released a report highlighting a number of positive developments, including that world leaders "reaffirmed their commitments to refrain from competitive devaluations" of their currencies. Key issues like China's flooding of the steel market were also addressed and the G20 agreed to a Global Forum to address the issue. Positive statements on inclusive growth policies and promises to ratify the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement were included in the economics-heavy summit. Also present in the Communique are themes of effectiveness and efficiency regarding global financial governance, sustainable development, open global trade, and stability in the economy.

Unique to and of particular interest regarding the 2016 Summit was the emphasis placed on the environment and sustainability. The Hangzhou Action Plan put in place through the Communique lists member states' support for the Paris Agreement on climate change as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing sustainability and development matters. Specifically, six out of 48 total clauses in the Action Plan specifically referenced and voiced support for key aspects regarding the environment. These agreements, including clause 21 on the development of

green financing and clause 23 on developing efficient energy sources, were agreements highlighted by the Chinese government and the Sherpa meetings as critical focal points of the Hangzhou Summit. The other clauses included the commitment to sustainable development through the 2030 Agenda and in areas like agriculture. Leaders also voiced support for agreements on transport efficiency, including the Montreal Protocol, and on building a 'green' global economy, including the Environmental Goods Agreement. Overall, the affirmations made by member states are representative of the goals set forth by President Xi Jinping at the beginning of the Summit as well as the broader G20 commitment to improving and cooperating on the global economy, with the new focus on sustainability and the environment.

Aftermath of the Summit and China's Goals

The Hangzhou Summit produced a communique that focused on an interconnected world economy with a special focus on sustainability and the environment; however, the conference was not a total success for all. From the US perspective, there were few real victories: the pledge to ratify the Paris Agreement and cut greenhouse gasses is arguably the most successful aspect of the conference, even though the conference also included consensus on a number of economic issues. However, the Action Plan, despite being the resolution of the conference, was not at all the main focus of media coverage, and according to some the actual economic and environmental issues were not even the focus of the summit itself. The 2016 Summit was a veritable whirlwind of tense diplomatic incidents, beginning for Obama before he even exited his plane. Obama met with Putin which resulted in no agreements on the Syrian crisis or cybersecurity concerns, and Obama assured that sanctions against the Russians would not be easing anytime soon. He also had a tense meeting with President Erdogan of Turkey. US relations with host country China are also incredibly tense for multiple reasons, including but not limited to the South China Sea dispute and the proposed US-South Korean Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) Antimissile system, which China strongly dislikes. While these issues did not distract the US and

China from collaborating on economic measures, it is also true that the summit did nothing substantial to warm or significantly change relations. The Hangzhou Summit was also the first of a few stops made by Obama in Asia, and the outcomes of the Summit was overshadowed by the tense meetings in Hangzhou and the controversy involving a cancelled meeting with the Philippines over statements made by the Philippines' president. These diplomatic tensions made for a more dramatic story than the economic and pro-environmental outcomes, which distracted the media and the public from the positive aspects of the conference.

In contrast to the US, China should be satisfied with the outcome of the Hangzhou summit. There were no serious security concerns, and only a mild, initial focus on the effective emptying of the city and the degree to which city life was disrupted to present a better view of Hangzhou. Most importantly, the G20 meetings were successful in highlighting the commitment of China and the global economy towards 'green financing' and environmental sustainability. The prioritization of the environment and sustainability by summit participants is made explicit in the Hangzhou Action Plan, an aspect of the summit emphasized as a key topic for the G20 following the Paris Agreement. This was accomplished without explicitly addressing the serious diplomatic problems plaguing China at the moment – most notably, of course, the security issues around and legal legitimacy of China's heavily contested claim to the South China Sea. Instead, most diplomatic tension gathered between President Obama and states like Turkey and Russia, effectively keeping China out of the spotlight during and after the summit. Other victories for China's image include Canada's submission to join the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, a recently created international organization designed to be in league with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. On the whole, the Hangzhou Summit reinforced China's leadership in the regional and global financial sector.

Whether or not the successful completion of the G20 meeting owes more to heads of state willingly ignoring the South China Sea controver-

sy in favor of other diplomatic tensions or to the concentration on truly dire environmental matters as a priority is up for debate; either way, China should celebrate the relatively smooth Hangzhou Summit and the progress made there. Unfortunately for the US in particular, the economic and environmental successes of this year's G20 gathering were overshadowed by other concerns.

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Hugo Chavez with the presidents of Argentina and Brazil

Photo Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Crisis in Venezuela: The Fall of the Left in Latin America

A look at the past, present, and future of Latin American economies under the control of the far-right

By Gretchen Cloutier

Venezuela is in crisis. Falling oil prices have severely stunted the state-run economy, where petroleum products account for roughly 96 percent of total export goods. Government revenue has taken a deep plunge as the world price continues to fall, and printing money in attempts to offset decreased income has resulted in high inflation – projected to hit 480 percent in 2016 and top 1,640 percent in 2017. There are also chronic shortages of basic goods and food; store shelves remain empty, and people line up for hours with the hope of receiving necessities such as rice, medicine, and toilet paper. To make matters worse, desperation has turned violent in recent months, with incidences of protests, riots, and looting reaching into the thousands.

Venezuela's economic crisis has been exacerbated by low oil prices, however the roots of the current situation stem from Chavismo policy implanted under the populist leader Hugo Chavez, who held power in Venezuela from 1999 until his death in 2013. As with most socialist revolutions, Chavez's aim was to redistribute wealth and land, and improve poor Venezuelans' quality of life. The cornerstone of Chavez's economic policy was petroleum-funded state spending on social services and human development projects. Chavez also implanted price controls to keep the cost of ba-

sic goods affordable for everyone. In theory, these practices seem as though they would transform Venezuelan society for the better. However, while they did some good for Venezuela's poor, in practice the long-run economic consequences of these policies proved severe.

Price controls decreased profit incentives for the increasingly shrinking sector of private businesses, discouraging them from stocking the forcibly under-priced basic goods. While a boom in the oil market meant that the government could prop up a supply of these goods in state-run stores with artificially low prices, as discussed previously, the country's dependency on revenue from petroleum exports and high rates of government spending was unsustainable in the long run. The drop in oil prices meant government spending was forcibly slashed, and the artificially high supply of goods at artificially low prices have vanished. The official private sector is weak due to nationalization that occurred under Chavismo, and goods on the black market are being sold for hundreds of times more than their official prices. For example, a recent report found that milk, which is capped at 70 bolivares, is being sold on the black market for upwards of 7,000 bolivares. The same is true for other staple goods such as flour, sold at 3,000 bolivares instead of its capped price of 190 boli-

vares, and pasta, sold at 3,000 bolivares instead of its usual 15. As inflation spirals out of control, the problem is likely to get worse.

Nicolás Maduro, Chavez's successor, has had little success in finding a solution while maintaining leftist economic and social policy in Venezuela. Maduro's approval rating, currently hovering just above 20 percent, has plummeted along with the country's economic stability. In December, the opposition won control of the national assembly for the first time in 17 years, demonstrating Venezuela's discontent with the status quo of socialism. More recently, the national electoral council has announced that they have collected enough signatures to begin the process of holding a recall referendum, and polls show that over 60 percent of the public would vote to remove Maduro from office.

Maduro has accused the opposition of organizing a coup d'état against his regime, while the opposition maintains that they are solely seeking a recall referendum to replace him. In attempts to quell the opposition, authorities have carried out numerous arrests under direction from Maduro. Other repressive techniques employed by the regime amid recent protests include deployment of military in Caracas and creating a no-fly zone above the capital. As public unrest and economic insecurity grows, Maduro will face increased challenges remaining in power. Although the military is still on his side, the opposition is gaining strength in numbers.

The case of Venezuela, though extreme, is not unique in South America. Recently, the region has experienced a falling political left and a rise of the political right. It seems that the so-called pink-tide of socialist Latin American governments is subsiding. Although this phenomenon may be observed across the continent, the most relevant cases to be discussed in this article, in addition to Venezuela, are those of Argentina and Brazil. By analyzing the political and economic situation of Argentina and Brazil, which are further along in developing center-right policies, one can consider possibilities for Venezuela's future, and learn from the policy mistakes of other administrations.

Brazil's senate recently impeached presi-

dent Dilma Rouseff, ending thirteen years of leadership by the socialist Worker's Party. After the 61 to 20 impeachment vote, a center-right politician from the PMDB party, Michael Temer, has replaced her. Dilma was the Worker's Party successor to Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who was President from 2003 to 2011. Under da Silva's leadership, Brazil thrived.

Although also involved in a corruption scandal, da Silva was fortunate enough to enjoy high approval ratings that stemmed from a booming economy. He focused on improving the micro-economic situation of Brazilians, and thus created the Bolsa Famila conditional cash transfer program. Consequently, 36 million Brazilians were lifted out of extreme poverty and the middle class expanded rapidly during da Silva's two terms in office. Brazilians also witnessed real wage increases, expansion of credit, and increased employment during this period. For da Silva, socialist policy worked.

However, Rouseff's policies were far less successful. She was unable to sustain the healthy economy seen under da Silva, which caused social unrest and tension between the government and its people. Rouseff's involvement with a corruption scandal involving her party and contract bribes with the nationalized oil company Petrobras, along with violation of state budget laws, led to her final demise. Rouseff was impeached on the latter charges, although she has pledged to appeal the impeachment, which she has called a parliamentary coup – despite parliament carrying out the impeachment proceedings in accordance with Brazil's constitutional framework. With Rouseff's impeachment, it appears that socialism has come to an end in Brazil.

Temer, Brazil's new President, has vowed to restore the state's political and legal credibility. Additionally, he is planning to enact austerity measures to improve Brazil's credit rating – which was downgraded to junk status under Rouseff – and reduce the deficit. Temer also plans to overhaul the state pension system and transition national infrastructure projects to the private sector by auctioning them off to foreign investors. However, he will need Congressional support to pass

these tough measures that have made him deeply unpopular with the public. With Temer's term just beginning, it remains to be seen how successful Brazil's swing to the center-right will be.

In late 2015, Mauricio Macri, a center-right politician from the Republican Proposal party, was elected president of Argentina, ending 12 years of leftist leadership by the husband and wife team Nestor Kirchner and Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner. Macri is both fiscally and socially conservative; he is anti-abortion and opposes marijuana decriminalization. In fitting with his party's center-right platform, Macri is also a proponent of free-market economic policy, and has cut energy and transport subsidies in order to reduce government spending. However, he has promised to continue and improve upon welfare programs started in the Kirchner era.

The largest challenge facing Macri is reigning in fiscal policy enough to lower the deficit and reduce inflation without letting social programs and infrastructure suffer, and while also continuing to grow the economy. Inflation in Argentina continues to rise; when Macri was elected it stood at about 25 percent, and it topped 40 percent last April. The Central Bank has raised interest rates to 38 percent, hoping to increase savings and decrease spending that contributes to inflation. Macri has also announced that the government is unlikely to meet its year-end goal of 4 percent deficit reduction, which stood at 5.4 percent of GDP when Macri took office.

However, the Central Bank expects recession recovery to begin soon, predicting that GDP will rise 3 percent next year. Macri's is also seeking to attract investors and new business to the country to help bolster the economy. Recently, Argentina held a conference in Buenos Aires for global investors and received over \$32 billion in corporate pledges, signaling that the reforms are being taken seriously by multinational industries.

Despite an 18 percent drop in approval ratings this past summer – down to a moderate 46 percent approval rating – Macri has remained committed to his economic reforms. While Argentinians are feeling the squeeze of austerity

measures, they are necessary to get the economy back on track, decrease inflation, and balance the budget. However, with legislative elections set for October 2017, Macri will need to demonstrate to the people that these measures work in order to avoid the government swinging too far back to the left and halting economic reform.

As demonstrated by these cases, the fall of the Left and subsequent rise of the Right is not a singular occurrence but rather a marked phenomenon in recent Latin American politics. The region has experienced a number of political and economic ideologies since its independence from Spain and Portugal was won in the 1800s. In the last half-century alone, the region has shifted from inward looking import substitution industrialization, to socialist and communist regimes, and later responded with neoliberal economic policy. It is only expected that countries and regions undergo economic and political reform as ideology changes and people look to restore balance after moving too far in one direction. The economic policies necessary to get the economy back on track will be painful in the short term, as seen in Argentina and Brazil. If these policies are not met with political stability and social welfare programs, the people may push out these new governments just as swiftly as they ushered them in. As nascent center-right regimes take hold in Venezuela, Brazil, and Argentina, only time will tell how large, and successful, the shift will be. For now, the pink tide of Latin America is receding.

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Street art of Russian President Vladimir Putin

Photo Courtesy of Vladimir Putin streetart via Flickr

Maskirovka and Predicting Kremlin Actions in the 21st Century

Can we predict impending Russian invasions?

By Tanner Holland

The word Maskirovka might not be familiar to many of us post-9/11 international affairs wonks but the word is all too familiar to our predecessors, namely the Sovietologists of yore. Maskirovka was a tactic born in the Russian Civil War that followed the October Revolution of 1917 and became official Soviet strategy not only in war but also in all manners of foreign statecraft in the Cold War. The concept emphasized the need for stealth, concealment and misdirection in all things in order to confuse one's enemy, and though many Soviet ideas have fallen out of favor in modern Russia, Maskirovka remains very fashionable. Russian president Vladimir Putin was born and raised under the doctrine and has become one of its best contemporary practitioners, as he holds nearly all of Russia's foreign policy decisions in his hands. Putin has demonstrated his mastery of the doctrine in Ukraine with constant misdirection, concealment, and stealth most recently with his military escalation in Ukraine after the death of a Russian security officer near the Crimean border, not to mention his equally rapid de-escalation.

This time, however, Russia's de-escalation was perplexing for nearly all observers. Signs of the Kremlin's escalation into open war were all there; an incident shrouded in secrecy that made Russian troops appear as the victim, an increase

in Russian-backed separatist violence in the east, Putin's statement of withdrawal from talks to end the conflict, and many others that Russian experts saw as classic Maskirovka tactics. What could've gone wrong? The problem lies in the indicators being used by observers in media and academia. If peace and stability in Europe are to continue, a better set of indicators must be composed to monitor Russian aggression not just for Ukraine, but for all of Eastern Europe. If a line can be drawn between the realm of Kremlin disruption and imminent Russian invasion then European governments can tailor their response appropriately. Failing to understand the nature of Maskirovka and when it is being used for disruption versus invasion could mean a drastic miscalculation on the part of the local government that allows the Kremlin to capitalize on the situation. For example a scenario many scholars and defense writers think of is a crisis in a Baltic country that usually begins with an ethnic Russian protest that draws a harsh response from the local government. Seeing an opportunity to disrupt stability, Russia deploys large troops near the border and sends intelligence officers into the area to increase disruption. If the host country misreads these tactics and concludes that the military is needed to protect this region instead of routine riot police, the situation could easily spiral out of control thus allowing the Krem-

lin to appear as if it is forced to act on behalf of its Russian brethren. In this case, and many other cases of Russian Maskirovka, miscalculations can be fatal. This means discerning between indicators of Maskirovka that signal an impending military confrontation and indicators that are simply signs of Russian attempts to destabilize and disrupt.

Among the most often-cited indicators of an impending invasion is a Russian troop movement to a given area, but using troop movements to convince your reader of an impending invasion has proven recently to be no more than alarmism. Russia routinely moves troops in large numbers as a tool of political leverage. This is not to say that monitoring troop movement is useless, but to use it as an indicator of impending invasion will more than likely lead to incorrect conclusions and bad advice for NATO states and local partners. While Russia used troop build-up in Georgia prior to the 2008 invasion, recently Russia has moved troops in response to NATO announcements, used troop movements and exercises to exert political pressure in Moldova, and in response to Turkish actions along the Syrian border.

Yet the Kremlin did not open hostilities against these countries and most likely had no desire to—the objective was political pressure and intimidation, not invasion. While it is difficult to know for sure, as the Kremlin constantly seeks to redefine its Maskirovka tactics, it is safe to assume that Russian troop movements are tools of disruption, not indicators of imminent invasion.

Another flawed indicator of invasion is increased violence in separatist regions in Ukraine and other former USSR states where the Kremlin holds sway. This is flawed, since the Kremlin uses upticks in violence for the goal of political pressure in the same way it does with formal military movements. In the case of Ukraine, a rise in violence has now become a tool for political persuasion at pivotal moments such as the 2015 Ukrainian local elections when violence on the front line rose. However this uptick in violence was not the worst a sign of impending invasion as there were no reports of direct Russian involve-

ment as in earlier parts of the conflict. Unfortunately, escalation at key moments has continued to imply that this routine escalation pattern is not a sign of impending invasion but rather of routine political pressure. The Kremlin uses this same tactic throughout the former USSR to exert pressure on local governments such as in Moldova and Georgia. Many times, these escalations in separatists regions have been cited as signs of impending invasion and have been inaccurate.

Yet some indicators recently cited as pretext of Kremlin invasion are worth retaining, namely, abandonment of peace talks, snap military exercises, and most importantly an incident (a bombing or gunfight) that ends in the death of Russians or Russian security personnel often shrouded in secrecy by the Russian government but still seemingly points clearly to a responsible party (a hostile government or terrorist organization) and thus puts the Kremlin on a defensive footing.

For the Kremlin, exiting negotiations is generally a very significant decision and is not usually taken lightly—even as the battle to capture the city of Debaltseve raged in Ukraine at Russian behest, the Russians remained in Minsk to sign a ceasefire deal with the Ukrainian government and as bombs rained down in Aleppo Russia remained at the negotiating table as well. Furthermore, snap military drills and inspections are classic Kremlin tactics used to disguise the deployment of troops as they did in Georgia in 2008, and shortly before and during the Russian military intervention in Syria. Unfortunately this indicator is tricky as snap military drills can also represent a Kremlin tactic of disruption, however if forces involved remain on alert or are kept out of their normal base of operations—as was the case in Georgia—the drills take on a different meaning. In this case in order to determine whether the Kremlin seeks to destabilize or invade, the focus must be on a micro level—watching how troops move after or during a drill—rather than a macro level. Lastly, a major incident that kills or harms Russians is the allowance of the Kremlin to appear to be in a defensive stance. This tactic was utilized in the run-up to the Georgian invasion when South Ossetian separatists baited

Georgians into an attack by striking into Georgian territory with artillery—it's important to note that Russians see Ossetians as a brother nationality. Additionally many believe the Russian security apparatus conducted alleged terrorist attacks in Russia, leading to the Second Chechen War, and thus are themselves an indicator of impending war. The Kremlin seeks to put itself on a defensive footing in order to justify its actions to the Russian public and make it seem like their actions are justifiable by international law as a part of their information warfare, a major aspect of Kremlin Maskirovka tactics that set the stage for greater Russian intervention and invasion.

However, to truly discern between Kremlin operations to disrupt and those pre-empting an invasion more new layers of analysis must be applied to the Maskirovka tactics we observe. Analysts and observers should rely on some traditional methods such as looking at operational level indicators of a Russian invasion; for example, the lack of field camps for Russian soldiers as pointed out by Nolan Peterson. Peterson, a journalist who has covered the Ukrainian conflict extensively, also notes that Russian troops only had enough fuel for one day of operation—another indicator of a lack of preparation. After the extensive reforms carried out by the Kremlin following the under-performance of Russia's military in the Georgian invasion, it is safe to assume that if Russian forces were preparing to invade another country they would not be undersupplied. Other indicators that can be taken from the Kremlin's preparation for the Georgian invasion include the deployment of separatists far beyond the theater of battle as Ariel Cohen and Robert Hamilton point out in *The Russian Military and the Georgian War: Lessons and Implications* in order to assist in laying the operational groundwork for an invading force. Cohen and Hamilton state that Russia used irregular forces from separatist states in Georgia to conduct advanced reconnaissance inside Georgian territory, a move that could easily be replicated in Ukraine. In Ukraine, "sabotage teams" from the separatist side occasionally attempt to break through Ukrainian lines, but if they were sighted farther inside Ukraine it would be a cause for serious concern.

The Kremlin, and Putin especially, pride themselves on being expert practitioners of Maskirovka and thus will always seek to confuse their enemy and change tactics. Unfortunately that means that the nature of the new age of Maskirovka is constantly changing and including more tactics of concealment, misinformation, and confusion. As the Kremlin seeks to conceal its intentions, the West must seek to pull back the curtain by analyzing more completely. As the Kremlin seeks to misinform, the West must seek to properly inform its decisions and ensure it has considered the consequences. Lastly, as the Kremlin seeks to confuse, the West must seek to understand Russian actions in order to more appropriately counter them. Western observers and analysts must have a more rigorous set of indicators to determine Kremlin goals, based on a tried and true study of Maskirovka tactics. Once again, the understanding of the goal of Maskirovka in the 21st century, whether it is simply to disrupt or to lay the groundwork for a large-scale conflict, is crucial in ensuring that the West appropriately responds to counter Kremlin objectives. The difference between an appropriate and inappropriate action has life or death consequences and could mean destroying the post-WWII peace that has become the European norm.



A sunset in Botswana, which has been dubbed an "African Success Story" in response to its economic policies

Photo Courtesy of David Schenfeld via Flickr

Combatting the Dutch Disease: Learning from Botswana's Success

What makes Botswana different from other resource-abundant nations?

By Deborah Carey

Modern-day International Political Economy literature employs various theories to explain the rate of economic development in some countries versus others. A common quandary within these studies is the underdevelopment of nation-states with a large endowment of lucrative natural resources. The continent of Africa has received a lot of attention in this field. Why are living standards so low in many African countries when diamonds, oil, and other natural resources are abundant throughout the continent?

In 1977 The Economist named this dichotomous effect of natural resources on a nation's economy the "Dutch Disease." Their case was named for the Netherlands, after its oil abundance was the causal mechanism to the decline in its manufacturing sector. The Dutch Disease (also called "the resource curse") contends that if a nation-state is abundant in natural resources, its economy will center around that industry and not diversify in other sectors. As a result, the revenue from natural resources will be concentrated in a small portion of the population and stagnate other economic ventures, creating underdevelopment.

Social scholars have verified this theory using many case studies, but Botswana consistently acts as the exception to the Dutch Disease. Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson have even labeled Botswana an "African Success Story." Since

its independence in 1966, Botswana has boasted peaceful, democratic institutions, high growth rates, decreasing child mortality and development of non-extractive sectors. Why has Botswana achieved this success while other resource-abundant nations have faced internal conflict and low growth rates? Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson report, "There is almost complete agreement that Botswana achieved this spectacular growth performance because it adopted good policies."

Defining a 'good' versus 'bad' policy is a sub-debate within this literature that offers more insight for similarly-endowed African states. Jerven asserts that 'good policy' refers to the absence of bad policies, namely nationalizing the resource industry. After diamonds were discovered in 1987, DeBeers was created by Cecil Rhodes to manage diamond trading. Private investment developed the infrastructure in this sector, so public funds were not diverted in the process of diamond exploitation. While a small political elite often manages the revenues from resource extraction, DeBeer's management prevented political leaders from having control of the diamond industry in Botswana. As a result, rent seeking and corruption were disincentivized and government revenues focused on national development.

Other exogenous factors led to Botswana's growth success. Its regional trading partnerships, especially with South Africa, allowed the agricul-

tural and manufacturing sectors to continue growing rather than being replaced by the diamond export industry. Inflation was avoided since the South African Rand backed Botswana's currency. Regardless of these other factors, Botswana's government responded to their challenge of resource management with foundational policies for long-term growth.

Government policies

While the Botswana government's lack of involvement in diamond trading is beneficial from a free-trade perspective, policies have also been established by the government to maintain a high expectation of corporate social responsibility (CSR) with De Beers' "Central Selling Association." The Mines and Minerals Act of 1999 was established to ensure that the Botswana government ultimately manages the resources it was endowed with, and works in the interest of the people to act as oversight to diamond trading. As Robb points out in "A Diamond's Wealth is Forever," the Department of Mines, not the president, has jurisdiction over licensing. Additionally, the government revenues from diamond trading are fixed percentages of sales, rather than changing at the discretion of individual leaders. Robb also reports that the tax rate is moderately low to encourage investment, and royalties are tax-deductible. However, there is space for negotiation within these tax rates.

In terms of revenues, Hillborn writes that the government has a 50/50 deal with DeBeers, and has used this income to provide social programming and develop other industries. As mentioned previously, the private sector's management of Botswana's mines allows public capacity to be utilized in other endeavors.

Modern-day implications

The phrase "natural resources" often creates mental imagery of gold, copper, oil, and other lucrative luxury goods. However in our modern-day globalized supply chains, lesser-discussed natural resources have gained new attention.

In 2015, Newsweek revealed that the tantalum needed to produce iPhones often comes from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in

areas that may be managed by warlords. Tantalum could potentially provide large government revenues that, when managed effectively, would result in overall development per capita. However, the lack of governance in areas of DRC where Tantalum is abundant marks another missed opportunity for resource revenues. New technologies such as iPhones offer renewed opportunities for resource management. Minerals and gasses used in modern technologies have higher values and greater market revenues.

While these resources are finite, in many places deposits are still being discovered. These new discoveries give governments, especially in lesser-developed parts of Africa, incentives to change their policies. Botswana's government approach of allowing private investment while offering oversight for its revenues is exemplary for modern-day cases.

In June, scientists in Tanzania discovered a large amount of helium below its surface. While helium does not appear to be a luxury good, it is highly lucrative in today's world. According to BBC's report of this new discovery, helium is needed to operate MRI machines, rocket engines, and even laser scanners at grocery stores. Tanzania—a resource-rich country that still faces low living standards—has the opportunity to follow Botswana's example and employ policies that will invite private investment, oversee the equity of these companies, and invest the revenue in sustainable development practices.

In combating the resource curse, Botswana does not have to be the "miracle" that social scientists idealize in development literature. Discoveries of natural resource deposits and the increasing value of minerals used in modern-day technologies offer two unique channels to combat the resource curse through responsible governance—for states and multinational corporations alike.

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Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany since 2005

Photo Courtesy of Metropolico.org via Flickr

Merkel's Far-Right Conundrum

A look at the current political status and what to expect next in Germany

By Erik St. Pierre

Recently, Germany held two regional elections that may foretell doom for Angela Merkel's Christian Democrat (CDU) party in Germany's 2017 federal election as well as for Merkel's open-door refugee policy. The CDU's two setbacks in the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Berlin elections can be explained by the recent rise of the rightwing populist party, Alternative for Germany (AFD). AFD has been campaigning on a platform opposed to Merkel's open-door refugee policy, which faces the enormous task of integrating over a million refugees into German society. In early September, the Christian Democrats placed third in Merkel's own regional constituency, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. CDU placed behind the Social Democrats (SPD) in first and the three-year AFD in second, which gained 30.5% and 20.9% of the vote, respectively. While CDU's loss in this region won't impact the current administration's composition, it has been largely seen as a symbolic victory for AFD and its anti-refugee rhetoric, especially considering Mecklenburg-Vorpommern makes up Angela Merkel's own constituency. Despite this blow caused by AFD's symbolic victory, the Christian Democrats experienced an even larger wake

up call a few weeks later in Berlin, a notorious stronghold for the Social and Christian Democrats, where AFD, with 12.2% of the vote took third behind the Christian Democrats with 17.8% of the vote and the Social Democrats with 22.8% of the vote. While both the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats claimed victory in Berlin, many are calling it a meager win. For AFD, a fledgling and fringe political party, to do so well in Berlin signals that the far-right now has an opportunity to jump onto Germany's national stage in its next federal election.

AFD's victory over the Christian Democrats marks an impressive rise for the right-wing populists. They are now represented in ten state parliaments and show no sign of stopping or slowing down. AFD leaders state that their victories in Berlin and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern amount to a de facto referendum on Germany's open-door policy to refugees. Prime Minister Merkel has been steadfast in defending her open-door policy. However, as her party bleeds voters to AFD, she has begun to signal that she may begin walking away from asylum seekers. As much of Europe

becomes weary of the refugee crisis and dubious of its capacity to accept more, it now appears that Germany has also reached its limit. However, the question remains just how much Germany's recent regional elections will impact the Grand Coalition between Merkel's party and the Social Democrats that have defined German politics since 2013. If the far-right continues to surge as it has in Germany and other European countries then surely this Grand Coalition will falter. Currently, the world is looking to Angela Merkel to see whether she will accept the backlash against the open door policy or if she will stand strong and continue championing Germany's dedication to refugees. Both stances will have profound effects on German and European politics.

AFD was founded in 2013 as a response to the Eurozone debt crisis and Angela Merkel's policies towards it. At its founding, it was primarily composed of liberal academics and economists who opposed Merkel's Eurozone bail out policies. In September of 2013, AFD were not able to win the 5% of the national vote needed to secure seats in the German parliament, however those days have largely changed with AFD now polling at more than 10% in national opinion polls. This remarkable surge of support since 2013 is no accident. Party leaders of AFD purposely focused at wooing xenophobic voters through the use of fear and paranoia during the peak of the refugee crisis. This is evidenced through the party's link with the Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the West (Pegida) movement, which has recently created a political party of its own, and is further exemplified by their shared commitment to work together to bring their anti-refugee platform to the federal level within Germany. Pegida is famous for its right-wing and hateful rhetoric that often electrifies the many protests against refugees and Islam it carries out in Europe. More recently the group attempted to boycott Kinder chocolate after the company began a marketing campaign that contained pictures of two children of African and Middle Eastern descent. Little did members of the movement know, the boys were actually German footballers. This illustrates just how quickly this movement's Islamophobia and xenophobia can take hold. In addition to being affiliated with xe-

nophobic groups, the leaders of AFD themselves have been accused of both Islamophobia and anti-semitism. The newly-elected AFD senator from Berlin, Kay Nerstheimer has recently taken fire from critics for both calling civilian victims of the Nazi regime "guerrilla fighters" that were not protected under international law and downplaying the atrocities of the Nazis. Nerstheimer has also referred to Syrian refugees as "disgusting vermin" and as "parasites that feed off the juices of the German people." Despite AFD originally arising as a response to the Eurozone bailouts, they have now pivoted to scapegoating refugees as a way to power; and it's working. The only question is exactly how much it will change the political landscape of German politics, and subsequently, that of the European Union.

Immediately after the Berlin elections, it appeared that Angela Merkel began backpedaling on her open-door refugee policy due to the rise of AFD in what was traditionally a bastion for the Christian and Social Democrats' Grand Coalition. In a press conference, Chancellor Merkel expressed regret for Germany's open-door policy stating, "If I could, I would go back in time to be better prepared for the refugee crisis in 2015, for which we were rather unprepared." She's also signaled that she is willing to be flexible regarding the policy's future by stating, "If I knew what change in refugee policy the people in Germany want, I would be prepared to consider it." This shows just how Merkel, who has previously been a staunch defender of the open-door policy, has been taken aback by the unexpected potency of the AFD. It also subtly shows just how much of a threat the AFD is for the Grand Coalition of the Christian and Social democrats in Germany's federal elections. However, after these statements Merkel has continued on to say that she does "not see a change of course, but coherent work over many, many months" in regards to Germany's refugee policy. These opposing statements make it unclear exactly how Merkel will move forward concerning refugees and AFD's challenge to the Grand Coalition, however, Merkel's stance will certainly have implications for Germany's 2017 federal election.

The rise of the AFD has many questioning whether Chancellor Merkel will lead the Christian

Democrats as their nominee for chancellor next year. Merkel has not yet publicly stated whether she will “stand again in next year’s general election,” and the growing disquiet around her chancellorship could create many challengers for her in the election, not just from the AFD, but even within her own party. If Merkel stands by her refugee policy and the AFD continues to surge it would not be surprising to see a candidate within the Christian Democrats challenge her for the chancellorship. This would be incredibly damaging for the Christian Democrats and would all but guarantee the fracture of the Grand Coalition and victory of the AFD. However, Merkel may still back down as the AFD gains political power in a move to win back voters and lick the CDU’s political wounds. The Grand Coalition may still survive, but it would concede a symbolic AFD victory as the country shifts right on refugee policy. Lastly, Merkel may concede her leadership and let her party choose a new standard bearer. This would allow her to continue standing strong on her refugee policy while at the same time let her party distance itself from the policy to save the Grand Coalition.

Regardless of Merkel’s next steps and the outcome of Germany’s 2017 elections, the surprising power of AFD’s challenge to the Christian and Social democrats spell a dark future for German politics, but also for European politics as other European countries also deal with their own far-right political party challenges. Racist politics have once again made their way into Europe’s most progressive policies and the unfortunate victims will be war-weary men, women, and children looking for an escape from violence.

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Flags of the European Union

Courtesy of Pete Lambert via Flickr

A Tale of Two Memberships: Scotland and Northern Ireland's Possible Paths to EU Membership as Independent States

What happens after Brexit?

By Claire Witherington-Perkins

The Brexit referendum on 23 June 2016 brought 30 million voters (with a 71.8% voter turnout) to the polls to decide whether the United Kingdom (UK) would stay in the European Union (EU). The “Leave” campaign narrowly won with 52% of the vote; however, when split by countries in the UK, Wales and England voted to leave while Northern Ireland and Scotland voted to remain by much larger margins. Additionally, demographics with a higher income, more education, and younger age generally voted to remain. Although the referendum was not legally binding, the new Conservative UK Prime Minister, Theresa May, stated that she has committed herself to the will of the people and will guide the UK leaving the EU. However, Prime Minister May also said that she will not invoke Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty, which gives the country two years to negotiate its exit with EU members, before the end of 2016. Thus, the UK would remain a full member of the EU until Article 50 is invoked and the UK begins negotiations to leave. Once negotiations are fully over, the UK will officially no longer be a part of the EU; however, until that time, the UK is a full-fledged member. When the UK leaves the EU, it will need to negotiate a new trade deal because it will no longer be a part of the EU single market.

Thus, there is a possibility that the EU would instate trade tariffs because the UK would not be part of the single market.

Since Scotland and Northern Ireland both voted overwhelmingly to remain, one or both of the countries may leave the UK in order to stay in the EU. However, there are two paths for the different countries. Scotland only has one option if it wants to remain in the EU: secede from the UK and join the EU as a separate country. Northern Ireland has two options: it can unite with the rest of Ireland in the EU and become part of the EU by joining an EU member state, or it could leave the UK and try to become a member of the EU member. The best option for Northern Ireland to remain in the EU is unification. Otherwise, Ireland would go through the same accession process as Scotland, which will have a long, difficult road to EU membership, if it gets in at all.

Accession Process

As the UK now has to negotiate its exit from the EU, there are talks of Scotland and Northern Ireland leaving the UK to join the EU. If Northern Ireland were to join independently, it would join Scotland in the EU accession process.

The EU has strict criteria for membership: a country must have stable institutions that represent and ensure democracy, human rights and minority protection, and rule of law, a functioning market economy capable of dealing with competition in the EU market, and the ability to effectively implement membership obligations and to adhere "to the aims of political, economic and monetary union". The first step to membership is an application for candidacy. Negotiations can only begin with a unanimous decision in the EU Council.

Accession involves 35 chapters relating to policy areas such as environment, rule of law, human rights, energy, and transportation. These chapters are non-negotiable, but candidates can determine how and when to adopt and implement them. Meanwhile, the EU receives guarantees on completion and effectiveness from the candidate country and from the Commission, which monitors implementation and benchmark requirements. Outside the 35 chapters, candidate countries also negotiate financial and transitional arrangements. The negotiations occur between representatives and ministers of the EU and the candidate country at what is called an intergovernmental conference. For each chapter, in a process called screening, the candidate country must meet the opening benchmarks before the chapter can be opened. Then, for each chapter, the candidate country must submit a position for negotiation while the EU adopts a common position and sets closing benchmarks for the chapter, which must be met before closing negotiations for that chapter. Some chapters have interim benchmarks that must be met. Thus, the length of negotiations may vary depending how prepared the country is to join the EU.

In closing negotiations, all negotiations for individual chapters must be finished. Details of membership, arrangements and deadlines, financial arrangements, and potential safeguard clauses are all in the Accession Treaty. The treaty has three steps to becoming a binding agreement: it must have the support of the EU Council, EU Commission, and European Parliament; the candidate and all EU member states sign it; the candidate country ratifies it according to their

constitution. Once ratified, the candidate becomes an acceding country and will become a full member on the date agreed in the Treaty.

Scotland

In the event that Scotland secedes from the UK, the EU headquarters in Brussels stated that Scotland has to exit the EU with the UK and cannot remain on its own. Additionally, if Scotland were to secede before the UK leaves the EU, it would be leaving an EU country and thus be leaving the EU. Therefore, Scotland will have to go through the accession process as an independent country.

The accession process poses a number of problems for Scotland, mainly the length of the negotiations and its financial burdens and obligations. Due to the lengthy negotiations, Scotland would be on its own, neither in the UK nor the EU, for some time, which would hinder trade and investment. Additionally, Scotland's projected country deficit is three times that of the UK, and Scotland would have a higher deficit than the UK does now. The EU limits the amount of debt and deficit its member states can have, and since the economic crisis and the Eurozone crisis, it will likely oversee these requirements more closely and ensure that its members adhere to them. Thus, Scotland might have to reduce their deficit in order to become a member of the EU. Additionally, as reported in 2015, Scotland has 6.2% unemployment, compared to the UK's 5.1%, and GDP growth of 1.9%, compared to the UK's 2.3%. In addition to these potential economic problems, EU membership would be vastly more expensive for Scotland than it was under the UK because Scotland would lose the UK membership contribution opt-outs that Margaret Thatcher negotiated during her time as Prime Minister.

Another potential problem for Scotland's EU membership is the potential problems regarding its referendum to leave the UK. The EU values democracy, rule of law, and human rights; however, many Scots were ineligible to vote in the referendum. Anyone who is a citizen of a Commonwealth country, the EU, or the UK living in Scotland was able to vote; however, Scots residing outside of Scotland were unable to register to vote. This could call into question whether the

process was truly democratic, as some Scottish citizens could not vote in the referendum. This issue must be addressed during negotiations, and Scotland would have to comply with EU democratic ideals, as many Scots were unable to vote in a decision. Thus, looking at all of the problems with Scotland's independent path to EU membership, it would take years, if not over a decade, to negotiate membership.

Northern Ireland

Given the difficulties that Scotland will face if they try to become an EU member on its own, Northern Ireland's best path to EU membership is through unification with the rest of Ireland. Using the case of German unification after the fall of the Berlin Wall as a precedent for EU accession, if Northern Ireland becomes part of Ireland, it will enter the EU as part of a member state.

When East Germany and West Germany united, East Germany gained from joining the EU because it "could rely on the tried and tested rules and institutions, the West German social market economy and immediate access to large amounts of financial resources". Unification inspired high expectations, and East Germany gained advanced, sophisticated institutions and administrators. Unification eliminated most of the legal barriers regarding sovereignty, which usually delay establishment of institutions and full EU membership. However, there was a cultural difference between the two Germanys, and institutions were established on top of East Germany's previous institutions.

There is still a divide between the two sides of Germany in terms of economic prosperity. After ten years of membership, labor productivity was still 60% of that of West Germany. There has been moderate improvement since unification, though. In 1991, East German income per capita compared to West Germany was 40%, and in 2016, East German income per capita compared to West Germany reached two thirds. Due to Soviet occupation for over forty years, East Germany has a higher level of social distrust than its Western counterpart, which plays a role in its development and integration in the EU. Overall, the eco-

nomic gap between Germany and East Germany has significantly decreased despite remaining differences.

Although the German unification was successful, it highlights potential problems for Northern Ireland to light. Aside from cultural, religious, and historic tensions between Ireland and Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland might not be as developed because it would not go through the negotiation process or receive EU funding for meeting set benchmarks. However, Northern Ireland has been a part of the EU as long as the UK has, so it has the infrastructure required. Additionally, Northern Ireland was not under Soviet rule and has been developing alongside the rest of the UK and Ireland. Given the minor economic differences between the two countries, Irish unification would be the best option for Northern Ireland to remain in the EU.

Conclusion

Although Brexit will likely have a negative economic effect on the United Kingdom, the country is large and developed enough to thrive regardless of its EU membership status. However, if Scotland opts for independence, it will struggle while if Northern Ireland unites with the rest of Ireland, it will continue on its path in the EU. In particular, Scotland trades more with the rest of the UK than any other country, dwarfing its exports to non-UK countries by comparison. Looking at other economic indicators like deficit and debt, Scotland's independence would likely increase borrowing and decrease economic stability and security. As Scotland relies heavily on its robust banking sector, the decrease in stability would lead to less investment and fewer banks in the country. As a result, Scotland would regret leaving the UK because the UK would remain stable and prosperous, as it could get products that usually come from Scotland elsewhere. In addition to economic instability, the likely lengthy amount of time it would take to join the EU, if at all, should dissuade Scotland from independence. With neither the UK nor the EU, Scotland would be a small country of just over 5 million with an unstable economy and decreased trade, investment, and movement of human capital.

These consequences should, if Northern Ireland were to pursue independence, persuade Northern Irelanders to unite with the rest of Ireland and join the EU upon unification. Northern Ireland has a simpler path out of the UK and into the EU than Scotland, so it would likely not have a major effect on the economy other than changing currency.

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On June 23rd, 2016, British citizens voted to exit the European Union

Photo Courtesy of Iker Merodio via Flickr

Britain and Immigration: Before and After the Referendum

How Brexit has shifted immigration discourse

By Fifi Baleva

When citizens of the United Kingdom headed to the polls on June 23, they became the first group in history to opt out of the European experiment by popular vote. While many reasons prompted the British exit, growing migration was a prominent justification given by the Leave campaign. Boris Johnson and Nigel Farage, leaders of the Leave campaign, stated that there was no consent for the scale of migration witnessed in the past few years. They promised to bring migration to the normal levels of the 1990s when more people were leaving the UK than entering.

In the past few years, British citizens have continuously voiced their desire to halt or at least reduce the influx of migrants. After failed attempts by Prime Minister David Cameron to fulfill these requests, Brits decided that leaving the EU was the only viable way to control their borders.

Now that Brexit is a reality, immigration continues to be a complicated issue as many EU citizens in Britain remain uncertain about their future in the country. Anxiety about growing migration is intricately woven into the decision to leave the EU and will remain a defining issue in the post-Brexit world. To understand Brexit, then, one must first understand migration.

United Kingdom Migration Laws:

The European Union has adopted an open border policy to facilitate traveling and working

throughout the continent. The Schengen Area is a zone of twenty-six European Union countries that have agreed to ease travel requirements with other Schengen Area members. The agreement allows EU citizens within the Schengen Area to travel throughout the area only using an identity card. It also allows non-citizens within the Schengen Area to acquire one visa and move throughout the twenty-six countries.

There are different types of Schengen visas including work and student visas. Work visas, for example, are acquired by individuals who would like to work in one or more of the Schengen area countries. The student visa is used by students who have secured a place to study within an educational establishment in a country in the Schengen Area.

The two European countries which have opted out of the Schengen Agreement are the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom. According to laws in the United Kingdom, migrants are divided into non-visa nationals and visa nationals. Non-visa nationals encompass a variety of groups including EU citizens. These non-visa nationals do not require a visa to enter the UK at ports or other points of entry. However, if migrants want to remain the country for longer than six months they must receive entry clearance. Additionally, European Union nationals travelling to the United Kingdom must show a passport or identity card which is strictly scrutinized against

security databases.

Around 3.2 million people living in the United Kingdom in 2015 were citizens of another European Union country. European Union migrants make up half of the migrants in the United Kingdom, most of whom hail from Poland, Ireland and Germany. European Union nationals are more likely than UK citizens to participate in the labor market. Currently, 78% of European Union citizens are working in the United Kingdom compared to 74% of UK citizens.

Although foreign born citizens are employed in a variety of sectors, their presence is most prominent in low skilled sectors. In 2015, 59% of EU born workers were in a low skilled job compared to 45% of UK-born citizens. Conversely, 41% of EU born workers were in a high skilled job compared to 55% of UK-born citizens. The presence of EU workers in low skill sectors shows that EU workers are more likely to take on jobs that may be undesirable to those born in the UK.

So if the United Kingdom is mostly benefitting from European Union migrants why did the country choose to leave the European Union?

The Referendum and Immigration

While the Leave campaign presented several justifications for leaving the EU, a persistent theme was an emphasis on national sovereignty and the reduction of migration. In 2015 the United Kingdom welcomed 630,000 migrants and in 2016 thus far the UK has welcomed 333,000 more. This influx of migrants, prominent throughout Europe, has prompted 77% of Brits to declare that there needs to be a reduction in migration. In fact, 50% of Brits believe that immigration is the most important issue facing Britain, compared to 27% who say the same about the economy.

This anxiety over booming migration played a major role in the Leave campaign's justification for a European Union exit. The UK Independence Party, led by Nigel Farage, focused on the threats of migration leading up to the Brexit referendum, and anti-immigrant rhetoric persisted throughout European Parliament debates over the Syrian refugee crisis. Like U.S. presidential can-

didate, Donald Trump, UKIP painted migrants as potential criminals and terrorists taking over the United Kingdom. Nigel Farage even used a poster to emphasize that if the UK remained part of the European Union, the country would be flooded with migrants. The poster displayed by Farage leading up to the referendum depicts a long line of Syrian refugees on the Slovenian border with a caption which reads "Breaking Point: The EU has failed us all." The poster also cautions readers that Britain must break free and take control of its own borders. Now that referendum results are in, the country has "broken free" but what does that mean for its borders?

Immigration after Brexit

The Leave campaign proposed an Australian style point-based immigration system which would apply to all migrants, even those from the European Union. Under this system, the more in demand the skills and qualifications of an immigrant, the more eligible the immigrant is for a visa.

As resentment over Brexit mounts in Europe, it is likely that European countries will use migration as a concession for any future trade deals with the UK. In fact, Germany, Portugal, and the Czech Republic say the UK must accept free movement of people in return for access to the single market. The EU single market is an association of countries which trade with each other without restrictions or tariffs.

There are three main models for the UK's post-Brexit relationship with the EU proposed by the Leave campaign. The first option is the Norwegian model whereby the UK exits the European union to join the European Economic Area which is what Norway did in 1994. Under this model, EU policies not covered by the EEA Agreement such as agricultural and fisheries policy would not apply to the UK. The UK would need to retain a range of EU legislation, however, including the free movement of people. So, under this model the promise of curbing migration would not be fulfilled because the UK would be forced to maintain the free movement of people.

The other alternative is the Swiss model. Under this model, the UK would join the Europe-

an Free Trade Association but not the European Economic Area. The Swiss model is unique because Switzerland enjoys some access to the single market through bilateral agreements. In order to maintain access to the single market, Switzerland was required to allow the free movement of people, which would likely be a prerequisite for any bilateral agreements with the UK as well.

The last alternative is a total exit from the EU and the single market. Under this model the UK could join a Customs Union. The EU does not impose tariffs on goods traded from Customs Union countries in exchange for those countries' compliance with EU single market regulations. The UK could also rely on the World Trade Organization rules on nondiscrimination whereby trading partners are not treated any less advantageously than others, unless there is a separate free trade agreement between the members. Under WTO rules, the UK would be treated as a third country that does not have a free trade agreement with the EU. The last option is the negotiation of a completely new free trade agreement with the EU. Even with a new agreement, however, there is a chance that free movement of people would be a prerequisite for any access to the EU market.

Implications

As European Union and British politicians continue to negotiate, European migrants in the United Kingdom are living in uncertainty. While those who have lived in the UK for more than five years are afforded permanent residence, no one knows if the EU migrants who have been in the UK for less than five years will be asked to leave. Additionally, there has been no clarification as to when European Union migrants will be forbidden from freely entering the United Kingdom.

The United Kingdom was never fully integrated in the European Union system of free movement but the country has welcomed EU migrants for decades. With growing hysteria about migration, however, Britain was unable to sustain its open border policy any longer. Capitalizing on anxiety, the Leave campaign framed migration as a threat to both security and sovereignty. The consequences of this fear mongering were

grave—Britain became the first and only nation to leave the European Union by popular vote. Anxiety about migration led to a catastrophic decision which will have lingering effects for years to come.

So, as the world prepares to assess the state of geopolitics in 2016, it must consider the impact of Brexit. As individual nations and as a collective, we must not let anxiety about migration be a leading factor in any future elections. We must pick leaders who can unite us as a global community which can tackle the problems of the 21st century, not leaders who will divide us into fragmented nations living in fear.

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Cars in East Germany, 1988

Photo Courtesy of Lary via Flickr

Life Without the Flashing Lights: the Reality of Living in East Germany

Were the West's perceptions of East Germany the reality?

By Olivia Valone

November 9, 1989: East and West Germans broke through the Berlin Wall, coming together to celebrate the dissolution of the Deutsche Demokratische Republik (DDR) after 44 years of separation. As SED (Socialist Unity Party) officer Günter Schabowski announced that the citizens of the DDR were allowed to cross the border into East Germany, Beate Lukas was sleeping. People buzzed about the news in the Straßenbahn (tram) on the way to work, and when she arrived she realized that several of her coworkers decided instead to travel to West Berlin. A few days later, she made her way to West Berlin for the first time and encountered bright neon lights and colorfully lit signs. Flashing lights advertising products she had never heard of, shopping centers crammed with people, Cadillacs driving around instead of the usual Trabbits - she had never seen anything like it. At some point it becomes too overwhelming, and she returns to East Berlin. "When I returned to Alexanderplatz, everything was suddenly terribly gray - something which I had not noticed before."

On the surface, these starkly contrasting images present a lively West Berlin and melancholy East. Although the strong wave of anti-communism that accompanied the Cold War has receded, it continues to affect the way we see communist and socialist societies, and these images may be taken to be indicative of the general senti-

ments within the respective governments. However, despite close surveillance, various restrictions, and a struggling economy - which, to Americans, is inconceivable - Beate and her colleagues recall a sense of security, community, and simplicity. Coming from the simple, unquestionable reality of the East, it was difficult for the Ossis (East Germans) to get used to the bright lights of the West, which drew them into a harsh, competitive world.

Following the surrender to the Allied powers in 1945, Germany was divided into two separate entities: the Bundesrepublik Deutschland (BRD) in the West and the Deutsche Demokratische Republik (DDR) in the East. Beate's colleague Olaf describes the DDR as "a political entity that arose from German soil in the outcome of World War II and as a result of the Cold War." And as it existed behind the 'Iron Curtain,' "the DDR was never a fully sovereign state, but always a part of the occupied territories of the Soviet Union, and treated as such." Under the "benevolent eye" of the Western powers, the BRD adopted a democratic government with a market economy, "whereas in the Soviet zone the occupiers raided all the industrial equipment and confiscated private property" (Romano 145). In the DDR's state-controlled economy, there were often shortages. When Beate turned 18, she received a form to apply for a car; the usual waiting period for a Trabant was about 10 years. When her family was remodeling their

house in 1983, they were forced to trade items they had in order to get the material they needed.

Italian historian Sergio Romano's obvious distaste for the command economy established by the U.S.S.R. was also shared by the United States. The U.S. government viewed the BRD as the only legitimate government and the future of Germany (Office of the Historian). While reading from Romano and the State Department's website, I noticed that their arguments were relatively one-sided. It is true that the U.S.S.R. confiscated East German property, but it was used simply as a repayment for the damages sustained by the U.S.S.R. during the Second World War (Lindemann 328). The State Department focuses solely on the fact that the DDR was not a legitimate country in their eyes, and that its collapse was an inevitable victory – a triumph of light over darkness.

Beate grew up in an environment where the grim aspects of the DDR were not as apparent to her. There was always heavy Überwachung (surveillance) and a certain pressure, but she did not feel it personally. "Those who, in any way, 'stepped out of line,' for example, did not want to work, spoke out against the State, wanted to leave the DDR, watched television from West Berlin or West Germany (and listened to Western radio messages) felt [the pressure] quickly." For disobedience, punishment ranged from losing the right to an education to being sent to jail. She recalls that a classmate, Susanne, did not receive a place in a university despite having high marks, because her father left for a business trip and did not return. Beate and her colleagues note that it was difficult to follow one's desired career path. Without relatives who held high positions, worked internationally, or were members of SED, Beate did not receive a place at Humboldt University in Berlin. Instead of pursuing Ethnography, her preferred career, she only had the opportunity to study economics. Her brother was prevented from being a pilot on the basis that their father was a pilot. "It was feared that they would not return to the DDR and the rest of the family would also want to leave." Similarly, her colleague Olaf was prevented from studying because only one to two students were accepted into Erweiterter Oberschule (EOS), a school which extended high school edu-

cation after completing the eighth grade. He could not attain his preferred career as a geologist unless he enlisted in military training for three years, so he decided on job training. "No real performance or payment system existed in the economy, so one as a trained worker has earned partially less than his colleagues."

Although the DDR restricted and controlled the outputs of its citizens in many ways, the government provided many benefits for its citizens. "The DDR was a state that, on one hand, offered its people a lot which is not typical today – work, support, free health care, free places in Kindergarten and schools, affordable houses. On the other hand, the economy was a Mangelwirtschaft (economy of scarcity). In the GDR, there was a persistent unpredictability of supply, which often expressed itself in shortages of chocolate, meat, butter, and other consumer goods. "There were many items which we did not have or rarely had – one often had to improvise or trade." She remembers going to visit her grandma and getting the chance to eat a whole banana herself, the nicest thing she had ever eaten. The memories of scarcity, however, are not as compelling as those of security and simplicity in her childhood, along with the sense of community. She remembers being able to let her four-year-old brother walk the rest of the way to school alone without having to worry. As a society that valued community, or Gemeinschaft, everyone watched out and cared for one another regardless of status or financial standing. People typically associate socialism with oppression and constant misery, but that is not the case; Olaf contests that "otherwise the suicide rate would have been higher. Certainly one is often upset about certain inadequacies and restrictions, but one must also partially engage and adapt. Just like in every social system." Initially following the reunification, the economic disruption caused a drop in life satisfaction in East Germany. Olaf believes the feeling he experienced in the DDR was the same as other young people in the BRD; the surveillance, pressure, and scarcity did not affect him as much as one would expect based on denunciations of socialism. In the current integrated society, former West and East Germans now display equal levels of happiness, which are far greater than the years

directly after the reunification.

"I have predominantly good memories of the DDR. Sometimes I miss it." Beate clearly displays the Ostalgia, nostalgia for East Germany, which many Ossis who grew up in the DDR experience despite higher levels of happiness under the current system (Lindemann 394). After the fall of the DDR, life was very different. The anticipated "swift and peaceful" German reunification was not feasible (Lindemann 393). Although Wessis and Ossis celebrated together when the Wall came down, it was still many years until the entire Berlin Wall and the psychological barriers separating them would be removed. The economy of East Germany was far behind the West and proved difficult to reintegrate (Lindemann 394). Regional inequalities still exist, leaving the East behind the West with higher unemployment and poverty rates, population decline, and scarcity of large companies. Unemployment in the former West Germany is at 5.6%, whereas in the former East Germany it is above 9%. Despite the economic difficulties, the United States viewed the fall of the DDR as a victory; Beate, however, had a different experience. "Life was totally different. There was no more security. I lost my job half a year after the Wende, something which would not have happened in the DDR." After going through a retraining course and getting a new job, she was out of work for an operation. While there, she received a letter from her coworkers. Thinking it was a get-well-soon card, she was surprised to discover a termination notice. She repeats, "Such a thing was inconceivable in the DDR. People worked and held together. If someone was sick, then they were helped." Olaf recalls that during DDR time, his wife received a year of paid maternity leave and still had her job at the end of it. Focus had shifted from collective well-being to profit. Beate also had to repeat her studies, because her credentials were not recognized under the new regime. The individualism of the new capitalist economy proved to be a lifestyle that was difficult for East Germans to adopt. Olaf appreciated that performance and skills became more important than belonging to a certain political party, but Beate resented the superficiality of the bright lights and flashy images. "People pay more attention to the outside, and

to present yourself well is more important than a person's character or to do something good... People have become ruthless, selfish, and superficial."

After the fall of the Berlin wall, socialism in East Germany offered people a security which they had not felt since hearing Hitler's promises. A 2009 poll found that 57% of East Germans still defend and glorify the DDR. Citizens knew what was expected of them and what to expect of the government. Choice was mostly taken from the hands of the individual, but to some people, the simplicity and lack of many responsibilities was a sort of freedom. They may not have had the democratic rights to vote or openly express their opinion, but they were ensured the rights to basic necessities and security. Opinions about communism and socialism tend to focus on the negative aspects without mentioning the benefits, because it is seen as a great threat to American capitalism. Helmut, another colleague of Beate, said "socialism is an idea which also has to do with – somewhat philosophically – a common good. The theory can be difficult to implement, and in the DDR there was not truly socialism but actually a dictatorial state with Mangelwirtschaft." It is difficult to put a finger on the concept of the DDR, but for some it represented a period of simplicity and togetherness.

Like the other DDR citizens, Beate received 100 Deutsch Marks as Begrüßungsgeld (welcome money) on her first trip to West Germany. Combined with her savings, she and her friends use this money to plan a trip to South Tyrol. They were the first citizens of the DDR to ever be greeted there. As they walked along the shore of a lake, some loud Italians tried to sell them leather jackets. "When we did not want to buy anything, they asked us where we were from – East Germany or West Germany. After our answer – from East Germany – they went away, because they knew we had no money. I can remember their disparaging look well."

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