2015
The Elliott School
Undergraduate Scholars
JOURNAL
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The Elliott School Undergraduate Scholars

JOURNAL

Issue VI

Editors

Samuel Klein
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Elliott School of International Affairs | Washington, DC
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Resolving today’s global challenges demands the dedication of a new generation of leaders: leaders with knowledge, leaders with skills, leaders with character. At The George Washington University’s Elliott School of International Affairs, our mission is simple—to build the leaders for the world. Academic preparation is a critical component of this process. The collection of articles contained in this edition of The Elliott School Undergraduate Scholars Journal displays the intellectual talent of our students as they prepare to take on the world’s challenges.

It is no small undertaking to contribute to a scholarly journal. Dedication, foresight, patience, and a commitment to scholarly research are vital elements. It takes a special individual to excel and follow through. The best of the best. The Elliott School’s Undergraduate Scholars Program provides some of our best students with a platform for major research projects that expand their expertise on issues they care about. It strengthens their research, analytic, and communication abilities.

The Elliott School Undergraduate Scholars Program supports independent research by providing undergraduates with a research stipend, a faculty advisor, a graduate student mentor, and a series of meetings focused on advanced research skills and effective writing. These efforts conclude in a Spring Conference, where the Scholars present their research findings. The Program and the Conference reinforce our academic community by
Sixteen Elliott School undergraduates participated in the Undergraduate Scholars Program in 2014–15. Their research and writing covered a wide range of international affairs topics including women’s rights, ethnic identity, social cohesion, migration, peace building, cybersecurity and sustainable development. These research projects span the globe—from Africa, Europe, the Americas, and Asia to the Middle East—while also crossing disciplinary boundaries—anthropology, geography, history, politics, and global health.

On behalf of the Elliott School and our students, I would like to thank the faculty advisors who shared their outstanding expertise with our Undergraduate Scholars: Lisa Benton-Short, Stephen Biddle, Nemata Blyden, Ingrid Crepell, Joseph Dymond, Eric Kramon, Dina Khoury, Marlene Laruelle, C. Dianne Martin, Melani McAllister, Robert Macguire, Henry Nau, Amria Roess, Robert Shepherd (two projects), and Daqing Yang. Your guidance and expertise are not only important for professional development but for the personal relationships being created.

I would also like to recognize the vital contributions of the Elliott School graduate students, who served as mentors to our Undergraduate Scholars: Allison Beresford, Nicole Catá, Amanda Conklin, Ivana Djuikic, Kelsey King, Sarah Lord, Clay Moran, Phoenix Mourning-Star, Christopher Paes, Md Saimum Parvez, Jennifer Prillaman, Ashley Reaves, Amanda Roy, Pirkia Salashvili, Christopher Scheidt, and Whitney Tallarico. Mentoring is critical to the development of our scholars and the creation of collaborative work.

A very special thank you to Annie Vinik, Associate Director of the Elliott School’s Academic Advising and Student Services Office, for spearheading and leading this outstanding program since its inception in 2009. I understand that this is the sixth edition of the journal which has showcased the best of the Elliott School. This is an important milestone and an impressive accomplishment. Her enthusiasm and dedication will be missed as she leaves the Elliott school for new endeavors. Congratulations and best of luck in the future, Annie.
It is my privilege to extend a final congratulations to the 2014–2015 Undergraduate Scholars. You should be proud to have completed such a rigorous program and produced research projects that are engaging, intelligent and tackle very relevant and timely questions. Bravo!

You are entering the world of International Affairs well-equipped and well-prepared. Most importantly you are entering with a deep curiosity, a fearless inquiry, and a future full of possibilities.

My very best to all of you.

Reuben E. Brigety II
Dean
Elliott School of International Affairs
The George Washington University
The 2014–2015 Elliott School Undergraduate Scholars cohort was an exceptional group. In addition to producing highly impressive pieces of individual scholarship, the students provided one another with unprecedented and invaluable feedback and support. They were a closely bonded, tight-knit group who were active in academic circles beyond the program itself—within the GW community and beyond. They presented their research at conferences on campus, around the country, and several even traveled to a United Nations council meeting together.

The students accomplished this and more through this remarkable program. Launched in 2009, the Elliott School Undergraduate Scholars is an exciting independent research opportunity for outstanding Elliott School juniors and seniors chosen through a selective application process. This opportunity opens doors for students to share their findings through publication and conference participation and to conduct further research through grants, fellowships, and graduate study. The year-long program promotes these goals by offering students support, resources, and guidance to produce polished and meaningful work. Beyond choosing an international affairs topic and working with a faculty advisor to research and write a paper, students in the program were paired with a graduate student mentor; met in a weekly class to develop their research skills; peer reviewed classmates’
rough drafts; received a research stipend; and presented their work at an on-campus symposium.

We would like to thank the 2014–2015 Elliott School Undergraduate Scholars for their hard work, commitment to their research, supportive collaboration with each other, and for the spirit they showed throughout the year. We are so proud of all that this group has already accomplished and look forward to seeing what the future holds.

We would like to echo Dean Reuben E. Brigety’s gratitude for the dedication of the faculty advisors and graduate student mentors who supported the Undergraduate Scholars. These professors and master's students play a crucial role in the program. We would also like to thank Dean Reuben E. Brigety and Michael E. Brown for their support of this program. This was the final cohort to participate under Michael E. Brown, who was a tireless supporter of this program from its inception. From securing funds for the budget to shining a proud spotlight on participants’ work, his commitment to the Elliott School Undergraduate Scholars was truly invaluable to the program’s development and success. Finally, we are appreciative of the efforts of the co-editors of this publication, Nicolás Pedreira, Ryan Melcher, and Samuel Klein.

We wish the 2014–2015 Elliott School Undergraduate Scholars all the best!

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THE RESEARCH PAPERS
FEMINISM ALONG THE FRONTIER: Using Religious Beliefs and Tribal Customs to Promote Pashtun Women’s Rights

Spogmay Ahmed

As US-led forces withdraw from Afghanistan, sustainable peace and development will depend on the protection and promotion of fundamental human rights, including those for women. Due to the rise of Taliban extremism and a flawed historical perception of Pashtuns, outside donors and development practitioners point to religion and tribal customs as the source of women’s oppression in this region. However, Pashtun society is built on Islamic and tribal principles; neglecting these standards will only further impede the development process. Therefore, this paper poses the question: How can religious principles and tribal customs promote Pashtun women’s rights? By analyzing Quranic verses and written works on Pashtunwali, I argue that religious principles and tribal customs are accessible tools for promoting women’s rights. The tribal regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan remain outside the reach of federal governance and formal laws. Because of this reality, promoting women’s rights requires actively working alongside local leaders and respected institutions—in this case, the informal justice system. Drawing upon an examination of civil society practices and interviews with regional experts and development practitioners, this research also analyzes and critiques current strategies for promoting Pashtun women’s advancement and ultimately makes recommendations for future reform. By using religious beliefs and tribal customs as a foundation for further advancement, development practitioners can channel Pashtun values and attempt to restore the social structure that has fallen victim to ongoing conflict in the region.

Introduction

May God destroy the Taliban and end their wars.
They’ve made Afghan women widows and whores.
God kill the Taliban’s mothers and girls.
If they’re not fighting jihad, why do they oil their curls?1

Spogmay Ahmed majored in International Affairs with a concentration in Conflict Resolution and a minor in Women’s Studies. After graduating from the Elliott School, she serves as a Program Assistant for the Gender Violence and Rights division at the International Center for Research on Women.

Between gunshots and explosions, decades of turbulence along the Afghanistan-Pakistan frontier produced an unlikely form of underground literature. Pashtun women caught in the midst of conflict recite these folk poems—known as landays—at their intimate gatherings. With themes of anger and frustration, they expose the harsh reality of war and its pernicious impact on women. In this particular landay, the author reveals her resentment for Taliban fighting and mocks the Taliban’s female relatives for their unwarranted pride. When the United States invaded Afghanistan in 2001, images of burqa-clad women pervaded Western media. These women were depicted as silenced, passive victims unable to defend themselves from their male oppressors. Contrary to these assumptions, landays convey a different persona. They articulate sharp themes of love, grief, separation, homeland, and war. This paper will challenge the narrative of hopeless Pashtun women and examine strategies to promote gender equality and women’s rights in a society long subjected to conflict and foreign intervention.

The Pashtuns, or Pakhtuns, are an ethnic group that has occupied the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region for over one thousand years. Estimated at about forty million members, the Pashtuns compose nearly half of Afghanistan’s population and about 15 to 20 percent of Pakistan’s total population. An overwhelming majority of them are Sunni Muslims, and their religious ideals make up a defining component of their individual and group identities. Pashtuns prescribe to the standards of Pashtunwali—an informal code of “doing Pashto.” As Aamir Jamal describes, “A tribal code, Pashtunwali is an unwritten law, a sociopolitical culture, and an ideology inherited from ancestors and carried on from generation to generation.” The core tenets of this unwritten code underlie what it means to be a respected member of Pashtun society. In rural areas lacking state institutions, Pashtunwali provides an accessible form of societal organization through the for-

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., 4.
5. Ibid., 15.
mation of *jirgas*, or local justice councils. The principles of *Pashtunwali* have developed into means of customary law and local dispute resolution mechanisms. This dependence on tribal customs crystallizes Pashtun identity, which has persisted in the face of ongoing conflict and foreign intervention.

When promoting women’s rights in a fragile environment, it is essential not to discount the primary voice—that of the women themselves. American development practices in tribal areas along the Afghanistan-Pakistan borderlands have pointed to religious beliefs and tribal customs as the source of women’s oppression, discounting their deep-seated role in Pashtun society and identity. In this paper, I focus on the impact of these development programs on promoting the rights and agency of rural, illiterate women living in these tribal areas. I primarily examine the Afghan side of the border, though I draw upon available examples from Pakistan, as well as my interview with the Pakistani Aurat Foundation for additional support. There may be some regional variation across these areas, but the social configurations and cultural traditions are comparable on both sides of the border. My motivation for writing on this topic lies in my own Pashtun background. Though my experience as a Pashtun woman is different from that of the demographic I am researching, it prompted my curiosity in exploring this topic.

Religious beliefs and tribal customs are not the problem, rather their misinterpretation is. American development programs have aimed to reverse this trend, but their approaches neglect religious beliefs and tribal customs instead of transforming their application. Since Pashtun society is built upon Islamic and tribal integrity, ignoring these standards will impede women’s advancement even further. Therefore, this paper poses the question: How can religious beliefs and tribal customs be used to promote Pashtun women’s rights? By using them as a foundation for further advancement, development practitioners can work within respected institutions to

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channel Pashtun values and attempt to restore the social structure that has fallen victim to ongoing conflict in the region.

In many Pashtun tribal areas, formal legal implementation is weak. Afghan national law and international rights frameworks, like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), struggle to gain traction. Though Afghanistan is a signatory to the UDHR, many of its tribal areas are highly marginalized and are still governed by religious and customary law. Abstract secular rights, such as those outlined by UDHR, may not have much meaning when it comes to these tribal Pashtun populations. Thus, this study aims to examine whether there are some rights that can both raise women’s status and be rationalized using religious or tribal principles. Though implementing international frameworks in society is desirable, their secular framing can hinder implementation in societies lacking formal institutions. Regarding women’s rights, as long as they are articulated in a secular framework, their implementation will stall in Pashtun tribal areas.

**Methodology**

To accompany my review of current literature surrounding Pashtuns, I conducted informal, open-ended interviews with a range of relevant actors. My in-person interviews included a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), representatives from the Gender and Peacebuilding department at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), a former advisor to USIP’s Kabul office, a board member at Pashtun Women Viewpoint, and a historian of modern Afghanistan. I also conducted a Skype interview with a representative of the Peshawar branch of the Aurat Foundation, a women’s rights organization based in Pakistan. I chose these individuals based on their relevant research and field experience working in Pashtun-dominated areas.

**Background**

Disparities and Differences

When the US invaded Afghanistan in 2001, the Bush administration cited women’s oppression as one of the justifications for the war. In a radio address delivered just a month after the invasion, First Lady Laura Bush re-
called, “The fight against terrorism is also a fight for the rights and dignity of women.” She touted the intervention’s successes, proclaiming, “Because of our recent military gains, in much of Afghanistan women are no longer imprisoned in their homes. They can listen to music and teach their daughters without fear of punishment.” Despite her claims, women in Afghanistan have only experienced limited empowerment, and to a much lesser degree in rural areas. Anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod argues that the Bush administration heightened its interest in understanding Afghan culture yet misplaced such interest, choosing to focus on cultural differences rather than the culture’s historical development. In “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?” she explores the motivations behind this approach, arguing that women’s oppression was cited only for political needs. She writes:

The question is why knowing about the “culture” of the region, and particularly its religious beliefs and treatment of women, was more urgent than exploring the history of development of repressive regimes in the region and the U.S. role in this history. Such cultural framing, it seemed to me, prevented the serious exploration of the roots and nature of human suffering in this part of the world.

The overemphasis on women’s oppression offered a one-sided cultural explanation instead of a deep historical and political analysis. It misconceived women’s oppression as inherently rooted in Afghan tradition, rather than investigating where it actually originated. US intervention ousted the Taliban regime and brought international attention to Afghan women, but it overlooked their voices and called upon the need for a Western savior. Abu-Lughod criticizes this rhetoric of salvation. She argues, “When you save someone, you imply that you are saving her from something. You are also saving her to something.” The overthrow of the Taliban regime was

10. Ibid.
12. Ibid., 788.
monumental, but not nearly monumental enough to support women. Afghani women may have benefited from the fall of the Taliban regime, but they were not saved to any significant advances in their private and public lives. Following the collapse of their government, Taliban leaders regressed to the Pashtun borderlands, where they continue to preach their extremist doctrine and threaten the stability of local society.

As the new US-backed government in Afghanistan struggles to gain legitimacy, Afghan society remains divided. In response to Pakistani military offenses, Taliban sympathizers on the Pakistani side of the border formed the Pakistani Taliban. With the looming US troop withdrawal from Afghanistan and the ongoing fighting in the Pakistani borderlands, the threat of Taliban resurgence may once again place women’s lives in jeopardy. To prevent the Taliban from reasserting control, Pashtuns will need assistance from governments and civil society organizations that fully engage the local Pashtuns and recognize their interests.

Shortfalls of Development Efforts

Following the collapse of the Taliban regime, the US government’s development efforts in Afghanistan only had a limited effect on women’s advancement. A report by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) outlines expenses by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the State Department in the years following US intervention in Afghanistan. In 2003, $5 million were earmarked for the Afghan Ministry of Women’s Affairs, and $60 million for disaster assistance, which specifically prioritized girls’ and women’s education, health, legal and social rights, economic opportunities, and political participation. In 2004, $5 million were reserved for women’s training and women-led NGOs, as well as $60 million for women’s programming in technical and vocational education, prevention against trafficking and sexual abuse, humanitarian assistance for widows, shelters, and support for women’s rights programs and women-led NGOs. Lastly, in both 2005 and 2006, $50 million were earmarked for programs targeting Afghan women and girls and $7.5 million for women-led
According to the report, this funding significantly expanded education and job opportunities for women. With the passage of the new constitution, women also gained greater access to political participation. However, the report also recognizes several shortfalls. It references the difficulty of finding “culturally appropriate jobs” and facing “conservative attitudes in many rural areas.” The US government invested in building Afghan women’s facilities and training programs with the expectation that increasing access to services would change exclusionary attitudes about women’s place in society. However, the US government made little effort to understand or engage these attitudes. Instead, just as the report indicates, culture and attitudes were depicted as major hurdles to further development.

As a result, US development practices in Afghanistan sparked great criticism. Journalist Jennifer Heath ties US reconstruction efforts to Western feminism. Building off Lila Abu-Lughod’s argument that Western feminists felt responsible to “save” Afghan women, Heath points out the discrepancy between how Americans view Afghans and how Afghans view themselves. She argues that Western feminists, coupled with the Bush administration’s rhetoric, painted Afghan women as helpless, voiceless, and hidden beneath their burqas. The immediate response to the fall of the Taliban regime was to build up schools, clinics, and training programs for Afghan women, as the CRS report conveys. However, these initiatives failed to acknowledge or accommodate the diversity within Afghanistan, particularly the difference between rural and urban areas. As Heath argues, “The fetishizing and imposition of a one-size-fits-all Western style democracy and Western ideals and ideas are not necessarily appropriate for a tribal, dynastic society and have resulted in backlash.”

14. Ibid., 2.
17. Ibid., 3.
18. Ibid., 4.
about is Afghans’ deep distrust of Western actors, who attempted to build up facilities instead of actually seeking to understand Afghanistan and its people. My point is not to critique the entire development work or funding by the US government but to point out that Afghan women still lag immensely behind and that development programs ought to refocus their efforts toward engaging religious beliefs and tribal customs—those necessary, but often ignored aspects of Afghan society.

Shifting Views on Feminism

I seek to shift this emphasis on Western feminism to Third World and Islamic feminism. These latter theories view women’s rights as contextual to each time and space—a more appropriate means of understanding Afghan, or specifically Pashtun, women. Chandra Mohanty, the primary theorist of the Third World feminist movement, argues that Western feminists have viewed Third World women as a particular social category instead of as active agents themselves. Western scholars measure Third World women according to underdevelopment, oppressive traditions, religious extremism, and poverty. Though these conditions are found among Pashtun women, they cannot be used to isolate them. Mohanty argues, “While such descriptive information is useful and necessary, these presumably ‘objective’ indicators by no means exhaust the meaning of women’s day-to-day lives. The everyday fluid, fundamentally historical, and dynamic nature of the lives of third world women is here collapsed into a few frozen ‘indicators’ of their well-being.”19 In essence, she condemns the aloofness of Western feminism and urges scholars to dig deeper into each culture and examine how women move within its institutions.

Islamic feminism accomplishes this by offering another counter-narrative to conventional Western feminism. Contemporary female scholars started this movement to reengage the Quran from a more gender-inclusive perspective. As religious scholar Reza Aslan describes, “Beginning with the notion that it is not the moral teachings of Islam but the social conditions

of seventh-century Arabia and the rampant misogyny of many male Quran exegetes that have been responsible for women’s historically inferior status in Muslim society, these scholars are approaching the Quran free from the confines of traditional gender boundaries.” Islamic feminists argue that women’s rights can be articulated within an Islamic framework, using the Quran as textual support. In “Reconciling Islam and Feminism,” Iman Hashim first points to the significance of religion in many Muslim women’s lives. She argues that women whose identity and belonging is founded upon Islam will find little appeal in secular arguments. She then extends her analysis to development work, arguing that many women in the Muslim world will be unlikely to accept Western conceptions of women’s rights. Hashim explains, “Addressing these issues from within an Islamic perspective would prevent opportunistic accusations of cultural imperialism (intended to prevent feminism from entering an Islamic culture), and would be more likely to appeal to Muslim women.” In my analysis, I adopt these Third World and Islamic feminist perspectives to examine the potential for women’s rights and gender equality within Islamic religious beliefs and Pash-tunwali tribal customs.

Proposing Change from Within
Semi-Secular: Religion and Development

In the pursuit of women’s rights, adopting a religious framework presents a scope of opportunities unavailable to an entirely secular approach. However, religion is more commonly treated as the problem instead of as a possible solution. Nida Kirmani and Isabel Phillips of Islamic Relief argue, “The promotion of women’s rights has long been viewed as a ‘secular enterprise’ not only by Western development agencies but also by women’s organizations and activists based in the Global South.” Religions, particularly Islam, have been left out of the development process because of their

22. Ibid., 11.
wrongful perception as outdated, overly patriarchal, and opposed to women’s rights. In addition, development is regarded as a process of modernization, which entails “moving further away from religion and other traditional structures of authority towards a more economically advanced and secular system.” Due to overarching Taliban influence, religion along the Pashtun borderlands has been dubbed the source of women’s oppression. Islam is often treated as the antithesis to modernity and has therefore been neglected as a powerful tool for promoting women’s rights.

Women’s rights activists and development practitioners are becoming increasingly conscious of religion’s influence and are eager to learn how religion’s impact on identity and gender differences affects the success of their development goals. Many expected religious influence to gradually lose value to secularism, but it arguably has resurfaced in the past two decades. Nida Kirmani and Isabel Phillips of Islamic Relief argue that this shift runs parallel to a transformation in global feminism. Whereas women’s movements in many parts of the world emerged in defiance to traditional power structures, including religion, others have begun advocating for reform within these arrangements. Kirmani and Phillips explain, “Reformist feminist traditions have made great strides in reconciling feminism with faith in a variety of ways and are challenging long-held assumptions about the relationship between the struggle for gender equality and religion within conservative orthodox circles as well as among secular feminists.”

This reformation of conventional feminism to include religion has made its way into gender and development practices, offering an approach that incorporates local value systems.

In many Muslim communities, mullahs, or religious leaders, are the most respected, trustworthy sources of authority. They serve as gatekeepers who can harness widespread support and impact local decision-making. In contrast, Western or urban development workers are often perceived as outsiders and tools of an unfriendly government. They are mistrusted for wanting to impose reform instead of fostering cooperation. Therefore, sustainable change depends on a partnership between local leaders who have

24. Ibid., 88.
25. Ibid., 89.
the moral authority and capacity to encourage reform and development workers who have the knowledge and resources to support and fund such reform. The incentive for religious leaders to work with development workers is that promoting women’s rights reinforces the leaders’ power. When development workers approach religious leaders to spread messages of women’s empowerment, it acknowledges the authority of these leaders and reinforces their credibility among the communities. According to the Asia Foundation’s *Afghanistan in 2014: A Survey of the Afghan People*, the longest-running nationwide survey of over sixty-five thousand people, 70 percent of those polled expressed confidence in their religious leaders. In a report for the US Institute of Peace, Palwasha Kakar explains that religious leaders have the potential to initiate positive reform by understanding women’s rights through an Islamic moral framework. She also points out, “The right message coming from the right person makes all the difference. Some local NGO reports describe situations in which a human rights worker dressed in Western style was ineffective at training local religious leaders on women’s rights in Islam. By contrast, a well-known local religious leader giving the same training was accepted.”

Several organizations have incorporated similar approaches into their work. I interviewed a representative of the Aurat Foundation, an organization that promotes women’s empowerment and democratic governance across Pakistan. In the Haripur District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a Pashtun-dominated region, the organization worked with *ulemas*, or religious scholars, to discuss issues of women’s inheritance. They used religious language from the Quran to justify a woman’s right to secure her inheritance. The local mullahs were then encouraged to include this language in their Friday sermons, which are delivered to an entirely male audience. This complements the separate instruction offered to women and engages men in the pursuit of women’s rights. As a result of this project, many women successfully went to their families and claimed their inheritance.

Working with religious leaders still poses several challenges. First, development agents need to make sure they seek reliable people. To do so, they must use their community ties and social networks to identify mullahs who already promote women’s rights or might be open to engaging in dialogue. The success of programs by the Aurat Foundation and other organizations demonstrate that such credible voices do exist. By channeling moderate religious voices and adopting common goals, the pursuit of women’s rights can be treated as an internal reform movement. This builds trust between the community and the development agency while cultivating a sense of local ownership.\textsuperscript{29} The language of women’s rights will then permeate to more fragile parts of society. Reconciling religion and development is a complicated process but a worthy one.

Progressive Pashtunwali: Tribal Codes and Development

The legislative authority of \textit{Pashtunwali} is conceptualized in its \textit{jirga} system. A \textit{jirga}, or \textit{shura}, is a council of village elders that convenes to solve local disputes. As a form of customary law, the decisions of the \textit{jirga} are considered binding upon the parties involved. Only the most honorable members of society, or exemplary practitioners of \textit{Pashtunwali}, are permitted to sit on the council. These often include religious leaders. Restrictions on women’s mobility and security have prevented their active participation. Women’s exclusion from both formal and informal justice mechanisms hinders the full realization of their rights and perpetuates harmful customary practices, like \textit{baad} (forcibly exchanging brides to resolve feuds) and honor killings. Despite efforts to build formal courts, these traditional dispute resolution mechanisms are still the most efficient forms of justice accessible to tribal populations.

Many rights advocates argue that working with \textit{jirgas} and religious leaders stunts application of national law. They claim that it undermines the efforts being put into strengthening formal justice systems. Furthermore, critics of a religious approach argue that women’s rights cannot be seen through a singular perspective, and that an Islamic framework provides little

room for progression, overlooking feminist transliterations of the Quran as a stepping-stone to documenting women’s rights. These arguments make a clear point: formal law will eventually need to be implemented at all levels of society. However, this perspective is entirely state-centric. It neglects the multiple legal systems already existing throughout Afghanistan and Pakistan. Most importantly, these advocates fail to realize that national and international legal frameworks are viewed as illegitimate and untrustworthy among the tribal people who have faced a long history of conflict and foreign intervention. Implementing formal law cannot be rushed; it needs to develop organically. Development practitioners that enter a local society with the intention of imposing an outside legal framework or immediately changing cultural norms are destined for rejection.

A more promising approach to securing women’s rights among the Pashtuns, or any tribal society, is to recognize the locally accepted terms. Collaborating with council elders directly engages the most powerful sources of authority and demonstrates respect for Pashtunwali. A report by the International Crisis Group on women and reconstruction in Afghanistan reiterates the importance of this approach:

Any serious attempt to address women’s rights questions will have to reckon with all these factors. Previous attempts by the Afghan state to change women’s social and economic status, mostly failures, contain valuable lessons. In particular, they show the importance of dealing with traditional social structures, from village to tribal level, and the need to find culturally appropriate justifications for reform that can mobilise supportive constituencies.

The same applies for development agencies and human rights workers. Until they recognize the realities on the ground, their approaches will struggle to gain acceptance. Reviving traditional justice mechanisms in a way that is more conducive to women’s rights has the potential to propel great change at a local level. This method of “formalizing the informal” reconciles legal


systems and promotes rights at all levels of society. In a report for the US Institute of Peace, Sylvana Sinha explains, “Rather than strengthening shuras and jirgas themselves, donors should work to support linkages between TDR [traditional dispute resolution] and formal justice systems and to introduce legal accountability into the traditional bodies.”

My interview with the Aurat Foundation reiterated this approach. The representative acknowledged that government influence is not strong enough in tribal areas. Therefore, the organization works with jirgas and stresses their need to include women. The representative recognized that small cases can be settled in jirgas, but larger cases of murder and property rights should not fall under their jurisdiction.

Promoting women’s leadership in these local councils is necessary for securing formal rights.

Development agents must also support women’s efforts to organize on their own. In Pakistan’s Swat valley, a group of women assembled the first all-female jirga to resolve disputes mishandled by men. According to the 2014 Survey of the Afghan People, 76 percent of females and 66 percent of males agreed that there should be local women’s jirgas and shuras. In Swat, these women are working within a traditional framework and adopting norms of Pashtunwali to advocate for reform. Whereas the local male jirga was dismissive of their initiative (likely due to competition and fear of losing power), other local men expressed support for the women. A fruit seller even said, “It’s a very good thing. Women should know about their rights like men do, and they should be given their rights.” With this support network, women are encouraged to pursue justice in cases where they have been wronged or against family members they may have struggled to stand up to. Without government or civil society support, this activity can be risky. However, these women have proved their resilience. As the jirga’s

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35. Ibid.
founder affirmed, “Maybe I could be killed, anything could happen. But I have to fight. I am not going to stop.”

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

*Pashtunwali* may be a pre-Islamic code, but Islamic principles can be used to soften its strict applications. Likewise, the *jirga* system represents a mode of informal justice most accessible to the local people. Sustainable, positive change depends on development practices that engage these two frameworks. Based on my analysis, I offer the following recommendations to governments and civil society workers in the creation of development programs:

1. Work with religious scholars to promote an interpretation of the Quran that highlights gender egalitarianism and promotes women’s rights.
2. Transmit this interpretation to local religious leaders and encourage them to include it in their sermons. This will ensure that the information is properly disseminated to men in the community.
3. Guarantee that this information on women’s rights and gender equality is also conveyed to local women; some mediums include women’s gatherings, radio programs, and print media.
4. Pursue active engagement with tribal leaders of the *jirga* system. Increase their awareness of women’s rights in the Quran and encourage, but do not force, adherence to national and international law frameworks.
5. Support and encourage the formation of women’s groups or *jirgas*, as well as equal representation for women on *jirgas*.
6. Train female legal aid providers to assist these women in dealing with cases at either a local or national level.

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36. Ibid.
(7) Do not expect immediate results. Instead, accept that attitudes and tangible reforms will develop slowly. Listen to local partners and move at a pace that does not put their lives or credibility at risk.\(^\text{38}\)

The Pashtuns have been subject to war, poverty, and foreign intervention for much of their history. To ensure lasting change, development agents must work alongside the local people. Most importantly, they must engage the population’s most respected values and institutions; in this case: Islam and Pashtunwali.

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KDU-ČSL in the Czech Republic: The Resilience of a Christian Party in a Secular Nation

Anna Boadwee

The Czech Republic is often labeled the most secular country in the world with over 60 percent of Czechs claiming to have no religious affiliation and citizens ranking the “importance of God” lower than any other country in Europe. Despite this secular environment, a Christian Democratic political party, the Christian and Democratic Union-Czechoslovak People’s Party (KDU-ČSL), plays a significant role in the Czech Republic’s political system. While the KDU-ČSL is small, its moderate position has allowed it to join coalition governments dominated by parties across the political spectrum and to push through legislation on abortion and church property restitution. The party is also known for its resilience; the KDU-ČSL is the only party in the Czech Republic that has rejoined Parliament after losing all its seats. This study analyzes the development and survival of a Christian Democratic political party, the KDU-ČSL, in the increasingly secularized Czech Republic. This study has important implications for other European countries as religious views across the continent begin to resemble those in the Czech Republic. If this trend continues, religion’s influence on politics will likely come from small yet strategic parties such as the KDU-ČSL.

Introduction

As Europe becomes more secular, an interesting religious phenomenon persists: the success of Christian Democratic political parties. Only a handful of European countries report that 20 percent of their population attends religious services weekly, while most countries report that less than 60 percent of their populations rank God as an important or highly important part of life. However, Christian Democratic parties are still present in most European countries and hold important positions in both national

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governments and Brussels. Though Christian Democratic parties appeared to be in decline at several historical junctures, they have repeatedly regained strength and continue to be important players in European political life.

How have Christian Democratic political parties managed to remain resilient despite increasingly secular societies? This paper seeks to address this puzzle. Using the Christian Democratic party in the Czech Republic (KDU-ČSL) as a case study, I argue that cultivating tools for survival in adverse circumstances is one of the party’s foundational principles. The KDU-ČSL did not cultivate resilience late in its development, rather, this characteristic has always been a central part of the party’s identity. This paper aims to explain the resilience of the Czech Christian Democratic party using three theoretical frameworks: Kalyvas’ rational choice framework, Van Kersbergen’s reflexivist framework, and Lijphart’s consociational framework.

**What is Christian Democracy?**

The Christian Democratic phenomenon is a collection of center-right political parties that developed in Europe during the late 1800s. Variations of the party are present in most European countries (notable exceptions include France and Poland). The most powerful and well-known Christian Democratic party is the CDU in Germany—Angela Merkel’s party. The Christian Democratic parties are represented in the European Parliament under the European People’s Party (EPP). The EPP is “the largest political organization in Europe with seventy-eight member-parties from thirty-nine countries, the most heads of state and government (both, EU and non-EU), fourteen European Commissioners (including the President), and the largest Group in the European Parliament.”

Christian Democratic parties appeared to decline at several key historical junctures but managed to regain strength. In countries behind the Iron Curtain, Christian Democratic parties that flourished during the interwar period became little more than rubber stamps when communist leadership took over. In the 1980s, Christian Democratic parties experienced sharp

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electoral declines and even disappeared in some countries, most notably Italy. However, the movement as a whole has shown remarkable resilience.

Platform

Christian Democracy is a centrist political movement that generally combines support for traditional values with mostly liberal policy recommendations. For instance, a typical party might advocate for restrictions on abortion and gay marriage while supporting an expanded welfare state and environmental protections. Though they have some similarities to conservative parties, Christian Democratic parties are distinctive in their ties to trade unions and their emphasis on welfare and social programs. The EPP defines its mission as creating “a prosperous Europe through the promotion of a free market economy with a social consciousness.” Christian Democratic parties have their own leadership that is completely separate from the church hierarchy but retain religion as a part of their name and platform. Using religious policy justifications while acting in a political system divorced from the church hierarchy uniquely positions Christian Democratic parties between religious and political organizations.

Place in the Party System

Christian Democratic parties often become coalition partners with a wide variety of other political parties. Their moderate platform and commitment to mediation make them an attractive junior partner to both conservative and liberal parties. Though some scholars argue that regularly acting as a mediator reflects the lack of a coherent platform, Hloušek and Kopěček, two Czech scholars who examine the development and characteristics of East-Central European political parties, posit that Christian Democratic parties “came to terms” with liberal democracy much faster than other parties. Because the party was always a smaller political player, it quickly

adjusted to the power sharing necessary in a democratic political system.\textsuperscript{5} The party’s quick adjustment to mass politics allowed it to be more flexible as well as participate in coalition governments more frequently and for longer terms.

The Christian Democratic platform also often includes a strong opposition to communism. Because Marxist and communist ideologies excluded religion, Christian Democracy opposed these movements due to its religious roots. As a political entity separate from the church, Christian Democratic parties could only function within the context of a country with mass politics. It would not be possible for it to survive outside of a political system that involves political parties. Because Marxism rejected a national party system in favor of a transnational association of workers, Christian Democracy had no relevant place in its system. Despite this, in Czechoslovakia, the party continued to function as a rubber stamp after communists took control of the country.

Christian Democracy’s Religious Roots

Christian Democracy stems from the political Catholicism of the mid- to late-1800s. Developing around the same time as nationalism and secularism, Christian Democracy was a byproduct of class antagonisms as well as the strained relationship between church and state as Europe came to terms with the revolutions of the mid-1800s, industrialization, and the Enlightenment.

During the 1800s, the Catholic Church began to focus more on social issues. Papal encyclicals, such as the 1891 Rerum Novarum of Pope Leo XIII, were particularly influential in shaping the path of Catholic parties. The Rerum Novarum “outlined the church’s vision of resolving social issues and promoted the establishment of new associations and organizations, including political parties.”\textsuperscript{6} The Rerum Novarum’s social guidance directives gave rise to foundational Christian Democratic policy platforms,

\textsuperscript{5} Vit Hloušek and Lubomir Kopeček, \textit{Origin Ideology and Transformation of Political Parties: East-Central and Western Europe Compared} (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2010), 132.

such as the “social market economy.” While the encyclical rejected socialism, it also criticized the bad conditions faced by the working poor and called for Catholics to improve the welfare of those in need.

However, far from being a political instrument of the church, Christian Democratic parties developed as independent political actors with their own leadership, goals, and supporters. Younger clerics at the bottom of the church hierarchy often founded the Christian Democratic parties, which the Church leadership did not condone. New texts like the Rerum Novarum inspired young clerics who took it upon themselves to implement the new teachings in their communities. These clerics then partnered with unions and other local religious groups to organize into political parties.

The early Christian Democratic parties gained support in part because they rejected class-based allegiances that defined the liberal and socialist movements. Because religion appealed to all social classes, the parties were able to build a broader support base. This appeal was even more salient after World War II when fear of both communism and fascism encouraged many voters to support moderate parties.

**Historical Development of the KDU-ČSL**

**Political Catholicism in Hapsburg Austria-Hungary**

From the loss of the Battle of White Mountain in 1620 until the end of World War I in 1918, Bohemia and Moravia were part of Austria-Hungary under the rule of the Hapsburgs. During the 1840s, political Catholicism began to develop. Trapl, a leading scholar on the development of political Catholicism in the Czech Lands, defines political Catholicism as the “activities of the Roman Catholic Church which overstep its religious mission and lead to strengthening the Church’s positions in the political, social, and cultural life of the society.”

Two main streams of political Catholicism existed during this time: a conservative, traditional wing with stronger ties to the Church and a rural,
The populist wing consisted of lower level clergy who wanted to help workers and discourage them from embracing socialism. For example, in Bohemia, two priests and an editor attempted to expand the populist wing of the party by creating programs for workers under an organization called the Vlast Cooperative. Similarly, in Moravia, a populist group of enlightened priests known as the Susil’s Suite established welfare and education groups. Tensions between the conservative and populist wings of the party intensified in the years before World War I. The populist wings of the fledging political parties generally won out because they were able to appeal to a much wider constituency, including the working class.

Development of Mass Parties in the Interwar Period

During the interwar period, political Catholicism coalesced into true mass political parties with the foundation of the Christian Democratic Czechoslovak People’s Party (ČSL), the precursor to the KDU-ČSL. At this time, Czech nationalism often took the form of anti-Catholic sentiment due to Catholicism’s association with Hapsburg rule. During the first weeks of Czechoslovakia’s existence as an independent nation, nationalist leaders tore down Catholic monuments in public spaces in Prague and preached a national narrative of Protestant patriots versus Catholic oppressors. Hloušek and Kopeček note that overall Czech feelings about Catholicism ranged from ambivalent to hostile, which caused the Christian parties to take “on a defensive character.”

To mediate these tensions, the ČSL appointed Monsignor Jan Šrámek as their leader. Šrámek was the president of Czechoslovakia in exile during World War I and a strong proponent of Czech nationalism. The appointment of Šrámek signified a break with pro-Austrian elements in the political

Catholicism movement. Šrámek worked to integrate the Christian Democrats into mainstream Czech politics, participating in nationalist activities such as the drafting of the Czechoslovak declaration of independence. Šrámek’s moderation, nationalism, and willingness to work with other parties angered some of the more conservative elements in the party, particularly the church hierarchy. However, he gained the trust of the leading political parties at the time, allowing the Christian Democrats to participate in all interwar coalition governments. Šrámek cultivated strong relationships with the other parties and advanced the Christian Democratic party’s goals. For example, due to his efforts, a close associate to the president of Czechoslovakia publicly condemned anti-clerical violence and the “religious struggle.”

Party Politics under Communism

At the end of World War II, the ČSL joined a coalition of parties forming an interim government. When the communist party took over the Czechoslovak government in 1948, the ČSL became part of a collection of puppet parties that deferred to the communist party leadership. Membership in the ČSL dropped. Due to restrictions by the communists, the party focused on organizing voluntary work, pilgrimages, and cultural events. Religion played an important part in the anti-communist struggle in the Czech Republic. Underground churches hosted dissident meetings, while underground training programs for priests defied the state’s crackdown on religion. However, the ČSL was not affiliated with this movement.

Post-Communist Transformation

The ČSL’s deferral to the communist party leadership produced an awkward situation when the communist period ended. With communism discredited, political parties could only survive by distancing themselves from the old communist regime. Though the ČSL survived the communist period, the party did not immediately have a clear place within the post-

13. Paces, Prague Panoramas, 94.
14. Ibid., 103.
The party faced two problems: shedding its association with the communist period and competing with a newly formed Christian Democratic party, the Christian Democratic Party (KDS). The ČSL dealt with these challenges by merging with the KDS and using the name change to create a new identity.

KDS was similar to the ČSL in terms of its platform, but the party had its roots in the dissident intellectual groups of the communist period and emphasized its desire to associate with Western Christian Democratic parties. In 1990, the KDS agreed to integrate with the ČSL to form the KDU-ČSL. Though the name change and merger with KDS helped solve some issues, shedding previous associations with the communists remained a challenge. The KDU-ČSL’s chairman, Josef Bartončík, was accused of cooperating with the secret police, causing significant internal struggle within the party. The party also struggled to create a unique identity that was distinct from the Civic Democratic party (the conservatives).

The party consolidated in the second half of the 1990s under the direction of chairman Josef Lux, who attempted to reorient the party to have good coalition-building potential with parties on both the left and right. Its participation in the Quad Coalition, a grouping of left-leaning parties, helped move the party away from its image as a junior partner to the Civic Democrats.

After Lux’s death in 1999, the KDU-ČSL suffered from internal tensions at the elite level, which the party attempted to solve by often rotating leadership. However, in 2009, a branch of the KDU-ČSL split off to form a new conservative party, TOP 09. In the 2010 election, TOP 09 gained forty-one seats in parliament and became part of the governing coalition. The KDU-ČSL did not meet the 5 percent threshold needed for representation, losing all thirteen of its seats. However, in 2013 the KDU-ČSL rebounded and gained thirteen seats in Parliament.

Methodology

In order to examine the KDU-ČSL’s resilience, this paper applies three analytical frameworks explaining the formation of Christian Democratic political parties to the KDU-ČSL. These theories have been used to explain the rise of Christian Democracy in Western Europe, but have not been applied to the Czech context. This section will evaluate the resilience of the KDU-ČSL by using the theories of Kalyvas, Van Kersbergen, and Lijphart to explain the formation and resilience of the party.

Application of Theories of Analysis of Christian Democratic Parties

Kalyvas’ Rational Choice Model

In his analysis of the development of Christian Democracy, Stathis Kalyvas, a political scientist at Yale who focuses on conflict, utilizes a rational choice theory based on the motivations of political actors. For each actor, he uses a cost-benefit analysis as well as historical information to determine the actors’ preferences. Kalyvas notes that most accounts of the formation of the Christian Democratic parties take the leap from a Catholic social identity (religious belief, church attendance) to a Catholic political identity (formation of confessional parties, application of religious principles to political issues, advocacy) for granted. He argues that the growth of political Catholicism was not a natural, inevitable movement, but instead the result of conscious decisions by particular political actors.

At first glance, Kalyvas’ use of rational choice theory to explain Christian Democracy’s development appears counterintuitive, since key political actors at the time, such as the Catholic Church and conservative parties, largely did not want mass Christian parties to form. The formation of mass Christian parties would not only undermine the Catholic Church’s hierarchical control over lay people and priests, but it would also create competition for existing conservative parties. How, then, could rational choice explain the development of mass Christian parties if their creation negatively impacted key political actors?

Kalyvas argues that political actors in one period of time may make rational choices that subsequently influence the choices of later actors. These later actors then may make rational choices that are in their own interest, but against the interests of the original actors. In the case of Christian Democracy, this occurred when the church hierarchy began participating more actively in politics to counteract anti-clerical attacks from the liberal parties. To gain voters, the church allowed some mass political organization to form. Though the church intended to control these organizations, the success of these organizations gave more power to the lay people. These actors—the lay people—then pursued their own interests, which were at odds with the church hierarchy. In turn, these actors went on to create the platform of Christian Democratic parties that exists today.

Application of Kalyvas’ Model

Kalyvas’ framework helps to explain the resilience of Christian Democratic parties by demonstrating that these parties can develop even in unfavorable environments. His argument that later actors pursue policies at odds with those of previous actors provides a mechanism for the formation of a party in unsupportive circumstances. Though this explanation does not explain the continued resilience of the party, explaining the party’s ability to begin in an unfavorable environment is important context for its continued ability to survive in an unsupportive environment.

Kalyvas’ rational choice theory provides a good framework for the historical development of the KDU-ČSL. As Kalyvas posits in his theory, the church hierarchy in the Czech Republic initially involved itself politically, but later had different interests than the populist groups that laid the foundation for Christian Democracy in the Czech Lands. The tensions between the conservative wing and the populist wing of Christian Democratic parties in both Bohemia and Moravia illustrate this point. The development of the mass organizations that came to dominate the Christian Democratic parties were lower level priests and lay people, such as the founders of the Vlast Cooperative in Bohemia and the Susil Suite in Moravia. Though the church hierarchy’s participation in politics may have opened the door for these actors to emerge, they ultimately had different interests than the church hierarchy. Kalyvas’ theory shows that while the initial founders of
political Catholicism may not have wanted Christian Democratic parties, the formation of a Christian Democratic party makes sense due to the interests of the populist leaders that came later to dominate the movement.

Van Kersbergen’s Reflexivist Theory

In opposition to Kalyvas, Kees Van Kersbergen, a Danish political scientist, argues that the unique set of specific values held by Christian Democratic parties drove their formation. He argues that the platform of Christian Democratic parties is “a consequence of the application of a consistent political ethic, that resulted in a specific political project which aimed at social integration, class compromise, political mediation, accommodation, and pluralism” and that “religion accords the movement an unparalleled opportunity to adapt to changing circumstances.”17 According to Van Kersbergen, “The religiously inspired politics of mediation” accounts for the development of Christian Democracy’s particular political and economic platforms. The application of these values makes Christian Democratic parties successful.

Application of Van Kersbergen’s Theory

Van Kersbergen’s theory explains the resilience of Czech Christian Democracy to some extent. Based on religious ethics, the party’s platform encouraged mediation and conciliation, which allowed the KDU-ČSL to adapt to new circumstances, stay relevant, and ultimately survive. However, Van Kersbergen’s theory does not explain the forces or timing behind Christian Democracy’s development. Whereas Kalyvas accounts for the impact of the church hierarchy’s opposition to mass party formation on Christian Democracy’s development, Van Kersbergen ignores the role of the Catholic Church—and communism—in the development, treating it as simply a natural occurrence. As a result, Van Kersbergen’s theory seems insufficient to explain the reasons for the rise of the party. Though ethics and platform are important, a comprehensive theory of Christian Democracy

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should also consider other forces influencing the development of Christian Democracy, such as perceptions of Catholicism and communism.

Lijphart’s Consociational Theory

Arend Lijphart, a Dutch political scientist who focuses on democratic institutions and voting systems, developed his consociational theory of democracy to explain the existence of moderate parties in fragmented democracies. Lijphart states that “the essential characteristic of consociational democracy is not so much any particular institutional arrangement as the deliberate joint effort by the elites to stabilize the system” and to form a “union of oppositions.” Factors conducive to consociational democracy include: elites’ ability to accommodate divergent interests and demands from the subculture, elites’ ability to transcend cleavages and join in a common effort with the elites of rival subcultures, elites’ commitment to maintain the system and improve its cohesion and stability, and elites’ understanding of the perils of political fragmentation. Steven Van Hecke and Emmanuel Gerard, two scholars who compiled a book of essays on Christian Democracy, claim that Lijphart’s theory can explain the rise and development of Christian Democracy in Western Europe, arguing that Christian Democratic parties share similar principles with consociational democracy.

Application of Lijphart’s Theory

Lijphart’s theory helps explain KDU-ČSL decisions made at the elite level and KDU-ČSL cooperation with parties across the political spectrum, two factors that contribute enormously to the resilience of the KDU-ČSL. While internal cleavages in the KDU-ČSL hurt the party’s ability to accommodate diverse interests and transcend differences, the KDU-ČSL has still remained an accommodating and resilient party.

Jan Šrámek’s leadership illustrates how the KDU-ČSL elite embraced the principles of consociational democracy. Šrámek sought to accommodate diverse interests within his party as well as cultivate strong, productive rela-

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tionships with the leadership of other parties. He prioritized the success of the system over the interests of specific factions. For example, he chose to participate in the coalition government rather than accommodate the conservative wings of his own party that were not willing to compromise. Lux was another KDU-ČSL leader who worked to accommodate diverse interests and strove to make the KDU-ČSL a viable coalition partner with parties on both sides of the political spectrum.

However, the KDU-ČSL has not always been perfectly accommodating. Though the KDU-ČSL represents a homogenous group, its internal tensions reveal that its elites do not have high regard for stability as Lijphart’s theory suggests. In the party’s early development, the conservative and populist wings were in opposition; in recent history, TOP 09 split off to form a separate party. This contradicts Lijphart’s idea that Christian Democratic elites successfully brought groups together and retained unity within the party and the political system as a whole.

Nevertheless, the KDU-ČSL generally cooperates well with other parties and manages to maintain enough internal cohesion to gain votes to stay in the governing coalition. The party’s ability to form coalitions with both left and right parties supports Lijphart’s idea that, in consociational systems, elites from different parties should be able to work together. Lijphart’s theory explains the KDU-ČSL’s decision making at the elite level quite well, despite the party’s occasional internal struggles. Lijphart’s framework maintains that the KDU-ČSL’s resilience depends on the ability of the party’s elites to accommodate diverse interests and stay committed to stability. Because elites can work with so many other parties, the KDU-ČSL can maintain a position within coalition governments, advocate for its interests, and survive.

**Conclusion**

By examining the KDU-ČSL through the lens of these theories, it is clear that multiple factors have contributed to the resilience of the KDU-ČSL. The choices of a second group of elites with differing interests from the original group accounted for the initial formation of the party, despite unfavorable circumstances. Religious ethics emphasizing accommodation and mediation allowed the party to justify its identity changes, though ex-
ternal forces, such as the Catholic Church and communism, also played a role in Christian Democracy’s development. Finally, elites who stressed compromise and stability over dispute and fragmentation provided a mechanism for Christian Democratic principles to be translated into policy. The convergence of these factors created a party that has resilience interwoven into the core of its identity. If the party’s ethic of accommodation and consociational elite motives remain in place, the KDU-ČSL and other Christian Democratic parties are likely to remain a force in European politics for years to come.

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COMMON GRIEVANCES OF A DIVIDED GENERATION:
The Impact of Ethno-National Discourse on Youth Civic Engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina
Sarah Freeman-Woolpert

This research examines the broad impact of a divided social and civic sphere on collective youth engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina today. Through analyzing qualitative interviews conducted in Bosnia with students and youth activists, this paper explores the landscape of youth activism and how these efforts are constrained in a society where young people’s political agency is largely tied to ethno-national identity, from the politicians they elect to the universities they attend. While many frustrated youth disengage from the political realm altogether, those who try to foment institutional change face resistance from their communities and stigmatization of political involvement as a whole. Although it is important to many young people for their generation to unite towards changing Bosnia’s socio-political structure, they face numerous social pressures against this cooperation. Youth perspectives on these issues in Bosnia examine the intersection of ethnic identity and youth activism in a post-conflict context. Understanding youth mobilization within an ethnically divided context offers insight into the complex elements of youth agency in the post-conflict state and carries broader implications for the factors that influence the next generation of civic actors who, in turn, will shape the country’s future for years to come.

Introduction

Twenty years after wars of secession tore apart the former Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) remains politically, socially, and territorially divided among its three main ethno-national groups: Bošniaks (Bosnian Muslims), Bosnian Serbs, and Bosnian Croats. The system established by

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the Dayton Peace Accords in 1995 created a democracy based on power sharing and decentralization. The country was to be led by a shared executive with three presidents representing the three main ethno-national groups and rotating power every eight months, a system which remains in effect today.\(^1\) Post-war decentralization divided BiH into two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS), each with their own representative bodies of governance and independent jurisdiction over healthcare, education, labor policies, and police forces.\(^2\) The FBiH was further decentralized into ten cantons, each with its own administrative government and autonomy over education and healthcare policies. This created a highly complex system of government in which Croats, Serbs, and Bošniaks are socially and structurally separated in many aspects of everyday life. This decentralized system, while successful in preventing the resumption of violence, has marginalized political moderates, enabled corruption, spawned bureaucratic deadlock, and undermined economic growth.\(^3\) In 2009, the European Court of Human Rights ruled the ethno-nationally divided political system a violation of fundamental human rights as it does not provide for political representation of ethnic minorities, like Roma and Jews, but the constitutional structure has not been reformed to date.\(^4\) Dayton may have ended the war, but it did little to address the underlying conflict or its lasting effects.

The younger generation faces significant challenges to earning a living and building a viable future for themselves in BiH today. Young people are disproportionately affected by the lack of economic opportunities, with formal youth unemployment skyrocketing to over 60 percent in 2013, the

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highest recorded rate in the world.\textsuperscript{5} While many frustrated youth adopt an attitude of apathy and defeatism towards reforming the current institutions in BiH,\textsuperscript{6} growing disillusionment and economic desperation compel others to agitate for change at the local and national levels. In the past two years, Bosnians have staged several large-scale demonstrations to protest government ineffectiveness and economic injustice that affects the lives of ordinary citizens. In recent movements like the Bebolucija or “Baby-lution” held in June 2013,\textsuperscript{7} and widespread anti-government protests against corrupt privatization practices in the spring of 2014, students and citizens of all ethno-national groups have expressed anger and disillusionment with the current state structure.\textsuperscript{8}

Young people play a unique and important role in fomenting social change within transitioning societies. In gauging a country’s socio-political climate, the younger generation often serves as what Palestinian Christian leader Ghassan Andoni calls “the most sensitive compass in any nation.”\textsuperscript{9} Yet while youth hold the potential to mobilize collective civic action, Bosnia’s younger generation remains ethnically, socio-economically, and structurally divided. From hearing narratives of fear and prejudice passed down by their parents, learning nationalist history lessons in school, and growing up without encountering the “other” in everyday life, youth are not united around a shared generational identity in Bosnia today. This disunity detracts from the development of a “political generation,” or the basis for collective youth action deriving from shared experiences and common grievances.\textsuperscript{10}

\textsuperscript{7} Bebolucija was a series of street protests after the government’s failure to pass a law providing citizen ID numbers to babies and preventing several babies from leaving the country to obtain medical treatment abroad. Two newborn babies died while awaiting issuance of a passport that required a valid citizen ID number (Armakolas and Maksimovic, 2013).
Drawing upon interviews with students and youth activists in BiH, this research explores the degree to which certain young people consider a generational approach to be a feasible or desirable means of achieving overlapping social, political, and economic goals in BiH today. Understanding youth mobilization in a post-conflict society provides insight into the ways in which young people challenge or adopt the dominant discourse of division present in their everyday lives. My informants’ experiences demonstrate how these barriers are sometimes permeable, but often become self-reinforcing against attempts to cross them. In a broad sense, this research thus provides a thorough and timely analysis of the conditions affecting youth activism in BiH and addresses how a divided civic and social landscape impacts the younger generation’s attempts to reform structural divisions in BiH today.

**Methodology**

This project employs a qualitative analysis of fourteen in-person, semi-structured interviews conducted during the two weeks I spent in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the winter of 2014–2015. The study population of this research is young adults, both male and female, of Bosnian citizenship, between eighteen and thirty years old. As these interviews usually incorporated multiple people, I interviewed a total of eighteen individuals during my time in Bosnia (ten men and eight women), some of whom are actively involved in local youth organizations and others who are disengaged from activism altogether. Their perspectives shape a small window, however limited by a lack of time, funding and the language barrier, into the lived experiences of Bosnian youth today and how these young people conceptualize civic agency, express structural grievances, or traverse social divisions to develop common demands and methods for collective action in the future.

**Ethno-National Identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

“We are here all first Serbs, then people, or Bošniaks, then people.”

— Adrijana, twenty-seven years old, East Sarajevo
Leaning over a low coffee table, Lejla, Haris, and I stirred small cups of Turkish coffee as a tiny heater blew warm air into the otherwise unheated living room. Lejla, a 23-year-old student originally from a small town in central Bosnia, has been renting this apartment from Haris’ family in Mostar for about a year while studying English at the university. Haris, an economics major, is twenty-one years old and the only son of four children in the Muhović family. He introduced me to Lejla when I told him I wanted to interview young people in Mostar.

Sitting on the couch in Lejla’s apartment, the three of us began to discuss my research topic and youth identities in BiH. Translating for Haris, Lejla said, “We want, Bosnian people, want our country…” Haris interrupted, “[Not] Bosnian, Bošniak. How Bosnian people say.” Lejla looked confused, and they discussed this in Bosnian for several minutes. Lejla asked Haris what the difference was between the terms “Bosnian” and “Bošniak,” and she finally turned to me and said, “Okay, there is no direct translation for… Bošniak in Bosnian.” Haris interjected, “But it’s not…it’s not [Croats] and Serbs, it’s Bošniak, a nationality.” Even within the same ethno-national group, their conversation illuminated a disparity between how young Bosnians understand their individual and collective identities.

This initial interaction demonstrated the power of language in shaping collective identity, and how ethno-national categories fail to sufficiently encompass the diverse, conflictual ways in which Bosnian youth perceive their own identities. Identities in BiH are constantly changing in response to internal or external conditions, hardening or becoming more flexible within the context of mixed marriages, falling birth rates, and many young people leaving the country to seek opportunities abroad. The complexity of how young people understand their ethno-national identity is significant given how it shapes much of their civic identity in BiH today.

Ethno-national divisions in BiH have a substantial impact on Bosnia’s younger generation. Division is central to the early socialization process.

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youth undergo in BiH, both through informal influences of their families and instruction in the formal education system.\(^\text{13}\) The lack of contact between youth of different ethno-national groups in BiH allows fear of the “other” to develop, and a divided social landscape to take root early in children’s lives, affecting how they will identify and conduct themselves in relation to the “other” as adults. This is reinforced by a segregated education system in BiH\(^\text{14}\) and narratives of division passed down by members of the older generation.

These divisions shape the way youth are socialized to understand and relate to the “other” in everyday life and the spaces in which these young people grow up. Many of my informants struggled to articulate their views on building relationships across ethno-national divisions. A young Bośniak couple in Mostar, Lejla and Edin, alternated between claiming there were no problems or differences between ethno-national groups (“We are all the same people”) and citing mistrust and “mental barriers” that kept them separate. In one example, Edin described living in an apartment building in Bugojno, where he has “a lot of neighbors who are Serbs, Croats, and we all live together. It’s a big building but …we [are] all using the same garden.” When I asked if they would address a problem together as a group, Edin said they collaborate and pool money together to make repairs to the building when necessary. But later in the conversation, when I asked what the Bośniak students in East Mostar and the Croat students in West Mostar have in common, Lejla shrugged her shoulders and laughed as she looked at Edin and, in Bosnian, said, “\textit{Studenti}?” He replied, “Only the books!” These moments in our conversation reflect the contradictions and uncertainty of youth who attempt to build relationships across ethno-national lines.

Yet in spite of the divided social and educational environments, several studies suggest that some youth in Bosnia are gradually beginning to challenge the dominant discourses of their parents’ generation and to find ways, however small, to challenge the existing system of institutionalized ethnic

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divisions. Political anthropologist Azra Hromadžić explored ethnic mixing among youth in educational settings in her study of “bathroom mixing”\textsuperscript{15} between Bošniaks and Croats in Mostar, in which young people encounter each other outside the formal, divided structure. Hromadžić found these youth often challenge boundaries and demonstrate openness to socializing with members of the other group, pushing against the segregated system in which they have grown up.

**Fieldwork Findings: Common Grievances, Divided Response**

In a national context in which many youth of all ethno-national groups hold common political and economic grievances, this research examines how my informants shape their own discourse regarding these boundaries and attempts to mix across ethno-national lines in the realm of civic engagement and activism. The first objective of my research was to identify common grievances held by youth of all ethno-national groups in BiH today. These included, but were not limited to: high youth unemployment, corruption of government officials, lack of political freedoms including freedom of the press, and the divided and ineffective education system. Despite many cross-cutting concerns, young people differ in their response and approaches to addressing or disengaging from efforts to develop solutions to these issues. Many of my informants are involved with a formal organization that engages in civic issues and youth activism, though some work directly with the government while others operate outside the formal system. My informants mentioned different motivations for youth to get involved with these organizations, including frustration and desperation, influences from peers, as well as a self-serving desire to benefit from free travel or attending conferences abroad.

A recurrent theme in my informants’ responses was the barriers or challenges to engaging in youth activism in BiH, namely the lack of a political tradition encouraging young people to challenge the state or engage in

politics, since political involvement is often stigmatized as engaging in corruption. Two Sarajevo activists, Elma and Kerim, offered their own examples of how their efforts have been discouraged and dismissed within their own home communities. Elma described the reaction of her family and peers to her engagement with social activism. “They’re like, ‘If you want to lose your energy, go ahead, just don’t bother us.’ So it’s not like really rejecting but it’s more making fun of it.” Disengagement can also stem from a fear of disrupting the status quo, a mentality that leads many parents to discourage their children from engaging in political activism and civic organizing. In relation to her work as an activist, a Sarajevo activist named Ella described how her parents discourage her from actions that might call unwanted attention or disrupt the social order. She said young people are taught, in school and by their parents, to “stay low, don’t raise your voice.” This mentality reflects an underlying pressure of social conformity and political pressures not to step out of line.

Eight of my informants cited a widespread culture of civic disengagement and apathy among Bosnia’s youth by stating, “[Y]oung people in Bosnia [are] lazy.” This broad application of a self-stereotype against one’s own in-group evokes the notion of “cultural intimacy” established by Michael Herzfeld (1997), which offers a lens through which to examine my informants’ perceptions of their own in-group’s behavior. Through this framework, the discourse surrounding youth “laziness” must be understood as a simultaneous self-deprecation of youth culture in BiH and a statement of collective identification, at once defiant and dismissive, of how young people respond to problems facing their country today. The discourse of youth apathy thus reflects a degree of in-group solidarity measured through the common act of disengagement and collective withdrawal from the civic realm.

Understanding these challenges frames my final conclusions, which examine inter-ethnic cooperation in the realm of youth civic engagement and activism in BiH today. Several informants cited the importance of enabling young people to meet each other and develop friendships in order to foster a more unified generational approach to addressing civic issues in BiH. Adrijana in East Sarajevo explained that in her view “the best strategy is to put people in the same room.” She described a youth retreat she helps
facilitate that mixes Bosniak, Croat, and Serb youth for a weekend of organized activities. At first, Adrijana said, there is a palpable “cold space” between these young people. “You could see some groups saying, ‘Is that a Serb or a Bosniak?’” she recalled. But after some time passed and the young people met each other, Adrijana said they were inseparable. “In the evening they had a party and we were freaking out, like ‘Go to sleep!’” she laughed. “But they just didn’t want to spend one minute sleeping because they wanted to meet other people.”

These programs do not always develop lasting bonds, however, since they operate for a limited time and young people return to segregated communities where inter-ethnic friendships are often discouraged. One anonymous NGO worker in Sarajevo recounted the time a young Bosnian Serb boy told him, “We like it when you’re here, because when you’re here we have a reason to be together. When you’re not, it kind of goes back to the way it was.” He continued, “If the NGO is there, they [young people] have almost an excuse to gather together in the environment, and when the NGO is not there they don’t have that means that allows them to easily do something.” While inter-ethnic youth organizations can offer a space for young people to meet and collaborate towards achieving common goals, these groups face the challenge of fostering enough community acceptance to help youth sustain these friendships after the program ends, funding runs out, or the youth participants move on to new activities.

Inter-ethnic youth programs are also often self-selecting towards young people who already come from more open and accepting families. German researcher Tobias Greiff cautions that these programs do not always demonstrate a representative sample of Bosnian youth because organizations engaging young people under eighteen years old require parental approval, and parents from nationalistic families would be reluctant to allow their children to participate in an inter-ethnic youth program to begin with.16 Youth participants in these programs have thus already undergone a screening process whereby those involved will naturally come from families with more moderate, open-minded parents, those who have spent time

abroad, or were born into mixed marriages, and this is not representative of the country as a whole.

Elma told a story that challenges this notion of self-selection with an example of a youth participant who pushed back against pressure from his family not to develop a close relationship with the “other.” She described a situation during a youth conference where a boy from Maglaj left his jacket with his Serbian roommate on purpose, so he would have an excuse to meet him again, “so that he would have a reason to justify it in front of his parents,” Elma explained. Young people like the boy Elma described challenge the norms of separation established in their communities and push back against social stigmas in order to engage with youth from different ethno-national groups. It is therefore not solely youth who are raised to be open and accepting of the “other” who participate in these programs, although family and peer discouragement often plays a role in hindering their involvement.

For some, developing a common generational approach is an important step towards unifying Bosnian citizens to address grievances that affect all ethno-national groups. Adrijana, an activist in East Sarajevo, explained, “[We] in Bosnia can’t go forward if we don’t try together. Because if we have three sides and each of them is pulling on their own side, we can only pull apart and not go forward ahead and make some progress.” This reflects the sentiment that common problems merit cooperation in devising common solutions.

Division within the younger generation, however, extends beyond ethno-national identity and encompasses socio-economic status, educational background, financial independence, ideological upbringing, and whether one plans to stay in the country long term or seek economic opportunities abroad. Bosnian cultural anthropologist Azra Hromadžić writes that for the numerous youth who want to leave Bosnia, they adopt a “social life of waiting,” a deliberate act of “hibernating” in order to conserve their “political and economic energies for a better life elsewhere” in the future.17 Planning

to leave the country may hinder youth from feeling that they hold a stake in Bosnia’s future and inhibits the formation of a strong civic identity among this segment of Bosnia’s younger generation.

Economic motivations that compel young people to leave the country illuminate a larger division among Bosnia’s youth: a growing disparity between rich and poor. Many of my informants mentioned the importance of socio-economic factors and indicated that in some cases, wealth was an even greater dividing factor within their generation than ethno-national identity, a view supported by the findings of several recent surveys conducted in BiH. The prevalent socio-economic divisions in Bosnian society shape the grievances and sense of urgency adopted by young people in BiH. Sarajevo youth activist, Nane, described her personal experiences to illustrate the influence of financial pressure on youth activism. Her language expressed frustration at the wealthy, upper-class youth in her own generation who cannot relate to the challenges she faces coming from a modest background. “I know there are a lot of young people who are in a similar position as mine, but I know there are a lot of people on the other side,” she mused.

So I’m always facing this dilemma, how to approach these people who can spend ten euros per day. How am I going tell somebody who has everything he needs that this system doesn’t work? For him I’m an idiot and a liar, and for me [these people] are living in a bubble.

Young people who hold greater economic security and are often financially supported by their parents cannot relate to Nane’s sense of urgency. Ella described financial dependence as indirectly linked to Bosnian cultural norms of family support, something many of her peers take for granted. “That’s something let’s say in our culture,” she told me. “It has its good sides and bad sides, but I think the bad side is you always know you can count on somebody. Even if you lose your job, you are like, ‘Oh yeah, but I’m living with my parents, I don’t have to worry about it, I will not be

hungry.” Nane’s experiences counter the notion that this is an inherent part of Bosnian “culture,” however, and her language painted a stark contrast to this statement when she told me, “I can’t expect anything from them [my parents]. Either I’m going to do it on my own or I will starve.” Employing a vocabulary of hunger and starvation, Ella and Nane’s discourse depicts their disparate experiences with feeling secure, both in the financial sense and in knowing where their next meal will come from. For Nane, the very real fear of facing material poverty translates into a deeper, more profound hunger for change, a longing that cannot be truly felt by those for whom physical comfort has always been guaranteed.

Structural divisions based on ethno-national identity have created a lack of a shared civic space in BiH for young people to meet one another, debate current issues, and formulate a unified approach to address these concerns. When the majority of a country’s political parties, universities, and government institutions cater to one ethno-national group alone, any attempts to engage with the civic realm across ethnic lines will be met with a broad set of challenges from the outset. Furthermore, divisive rhetoric leads children in BiH to feel less affinity and loyalty to the Bosnian state than to their own ethno-national group or their respective national “homeland.” When children are taught not to identify with the Bosnian state from an early age, this weakens the degree to which young Croats and Serbs feel they hold a stake in shaping the future of the country.

These conditions combine to create a situation in which many youth in BiH become fed up and choose to disengage from the civic realm altogether. Bosnian scholar Jasmin Mujanović explains the trend of frustrated youth leaving the country: “Think of this as a grand social opting out.” He says that this is how youth convey the message of, “I don’t have anything to say anymore … What exists, I can’t do anything with. I can’t eat Bošniakhood. I can’t work on the basis of Serbdom, so I’m gonna leave.” Ethno-national discourse may hinder youth from engaging in collective civic action, but these divisions may also compel them to take part in a different form of youth mobilization, asserting their civic agency to leave the “debate” without waiting to see how it will end.
Conclusion

While my research set out to analyze the impact of divided ethno-national discourse on methods of youth civic engagement, my predominant finding was how ethnic divisions have led many of Bosnia’s youth to throw up their hands in resignation and walk away from the current political debate altogether. Mujanović offered a poetic example of how youth grapple with love for their homeland and awareness of the profound way it has failed to provide them with any promise of a future. He described a social media campaign to promote Bosnia and Serbia joining the visa-free Schengen Area, which facilitates free movement between many European countries.19 Two Facebook pages were created to support this movement, one for Bosnia and the other for Serbia, yet both used the same slogan on their page: “Whoever leaves last, turn off the light.” This sentiment creates what Mujanović called an “evocative image of how young people feel about these societies,” in which youth are making a “tragic and strangely beautiful statement” about leaving their countries to seek employment abroad. “You turn off the light in a place that you love, like when you leave your house,” Mujanović explained. “If you’re leaving a bar, you don’t turn off the light. There’s this notion of, ‘Leave it be. It’s still where you’re from, but there’s nothing there, there’s nothing left.’”

As their parents’ generation has struggled with letting go of the past, trying to move on from the losses of war, Bosnia’s youth face the converse dilemma of whether to give up on their country’s future. Without any viable economic prospects to build a life for themselves in Bosnia, many see no alternative but to pack their bags, close the door, and turn off the light on the land of their forefathers, leaving their homeland behind.

However, it remains to be seen whether those who remain in BiH, educated in an ethnically divided system and often raised with a deep mistrust of the “other,” will push for greater ethno-national cooperation in shaping a generational approach to resolving socio-political issues, or forge even stronger boundaries as nationalist politicians and foreign actors capitalize

19. Joining the Schengen Area has been an important element in the political discourse employed by many Bosnian leaders, framed as a crucial component in gaining greater freedom of movement and higher status as part of Europe.
on widespread frustration and fear. As young people explore different methods of asserting themselves in the civic realm, the younger generation’s engagement with challenges facing Bosnia as a whole will contribute towards shaping the country’s future political leadership, economic policies, and social cohesion, and youth will therefore play an integral role in Bosnia to set the tone for opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

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Understanding Democracy in Africa: The Impact of Popular Definitions of Democracy on Democratic Legitimacy in Select African Countries

Jennifer Anne Hamilton

This study examines the impact of varying definitions of democracy on democratic legitimacy using public data collected from surveys conducted in Africa. It finds a significant and positive association between preference for definitions of democracy that emphasize political structure and civil liberties and belief in democratic legitimacy. To reach this conclusion, this study analyzes Afrobarometer data from thirty-three African countries collected from 2011 to 2013. The study outlines construction of indices to measure preference for definitions focusing on political inputs (political structure/procedure and civil rights) and outputs (governance quality and socioeconomic guarantees), as well as belief in democratic legitimacy, at the nationally aggregated level. In multiple regression models, preference for input-oriented definitions of democracy proves a robust predictor of democratic legitimacy. These models control for other variables thought to influence democratic legitimacy, such as education and institutional trust.

Introduction

Political scientists have studied causes of democratic legitimacy for years, yet they often overlook one simple, yet consequential explanation: popular definitions of democracy. Through analysis of survey data that Afrobarometer gathered in thirty-three African countries from 2011 to 2013, this study demonstrates that popular definitions of democracy constitute a significant determinant of democratic legitimacy at the nationally aggregated level.\(^1\) Afrobarometer asks respondents to identify the “most essential” characteristics of democracy, which I classify into two response

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1. Within this paper, the term national level refers to currently recognized countries. It does not refer to ethnic groups with nationalistic aspirations.
types: (1) input-oriented responses, which focus on political structure and procedure as well as civil rights; and (2) output-oriented responses, which focus on governance quality and socioeconomic guarantees or rights. Using regression analysis, I find a significant and positive relationship between preference for input-oriented definitions of democracy and belief in democratic legitimacy. These findings may have practical applications for enhancing democratic regime stability and also clarify the stakes in normative debates over how to define democracy.

Background: Conceptualizing Democracy

Defining Democracy

This section reviews the various attempts to conceptualize democracy. The information it contains frames measurement of the key independent variable: popular definitions of democracy.

Western Political Scientists. The task of defining democracy receives much attention in Western scholarship. Political scientists Joseph Schumpeter and Robert Dahl are the most commonly cited scholars on this subject. Writing in the 1950s, Schumpeter took a minimalist approach, defining democracy simply as an “institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote.” This definition drew pushback because regimes not commonly considered democracies met its standards, leading other scholars to draft more comprehensive definitions.

In 1971, Dahl described democracy as a political system that allows “continuing responsiveness of the government to the preferences of its citizens, considered as political equals.” To achieve this responsiveness, all citizens must have opportunities to formulate and signify their preferences, and “to have their preferences weighed equally in the conduct of govern-

2. Please note that this study focuses on political culture, which consists of peoples’ beliefs, attitudes, and judgments regarding political objects or systems. For a more detailed definition, see Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations (Newbury Park: Sage, 1989), 13. While both political culture and institutions are important for democratic consolidation, this paper focuses only on the former.

ment.” Dahl enumerated eight “institutional guarantees” required to ensure these opportunities: freedom to form and join organizations, freedom of expression, the right to vote, eligibility for public office, the right of political leaders to compete for support (votes), alternative sources of information, free and fair elections, and policy-making institutions that depend on votes and other expressions of preference.⁴

When defining democracy, Schumpeter and Dahl created a legacy of input-oriented definitions. They placed significant emphasis on political institutions (inputs) designed to ensure a citizen’s ability to conduct political activity, while paying little attention to—or in the case of Schumpeter, completing excluding—the political goods (outputs) that democracies intended to achieve. Moreover, neither mentioned socioeconomic goods or outputs, just political ones. This emphasis on inputs when defining democracy echoes throughout more recent scholarship.⁵ A tendency toward input-oriented definitions carries some advantages, such as making it easy to systematically study regimes. However, critics of this approach contend that neglecting democracy’s outputs robs democracy of deeper meaning.⁶

African Political Scientists. Some African scholars think in similar terms to their Western peers, including Emmanuel Gyimah-Boadi, a prominent Ghanaian political scientist, and Michael Chege, a leading Kenyan political scientist. In speaking of African countries’ commitment to democracy, Gyimah-Boadi emphasizes inputs familiar to Western political scientists: elections, constitutions, term limits, checks and balances, independent media, and vibrant civil society. He also refers to political outputs, such as government accountability, although they receive less attention.⁷ Gyimah-Boadi’s writing reflects the dominant discourse discussed above.

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⁵ For instance, see Larry Diamond, Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 12.
⁶ Discussions of political outputs are not completely absent from Western discourse. Nonetheless, the outputs that democracy is supposed to achieve are easily lost in the emphasis on input systems designed to achieve those goods.
Chege’s writings similarly reflect the dominant discourse. In discussing democratic gains in African countries, Chege emphasizes inputs such as a free and independent press, free and fair elections, civilian control of the military, civil and human rights, and constitutions. These institutions should deliver political outputs like accountability and tolerance. Chege discusses economic growth, but as a prerequisite to rather than a product of democracy. Again, the discourse revolves around political inputs thought to achieve some political outputs, with greater emphasis on inputs than outputs.

On the other hand, the late Nigerian political scientist Claude Ake heavily criticized the emphasis on political inputs. Ake considered the guarantee of socioeconomic outputs vital to an African concept of democracy. Ake argued that 1990s democracy movements in Africa represent a quest for a “second independence” following disappointment from the independence of the 1960s. The demand for democracy springs from economic dissatisfaction, and as such, “ordinary Africans do not separate political democracy from economic democracy or for that matter economic well-being.” Africans will not be satisfied with multiparty elections, but harbor “democratic aspirations” that aim for “material betterment.” Essentially, Ake maintained that an African conception of democracy must contain provisions for economic outputs.

Popular Opinion in Africa: Previous Evidence. Sustainable democracy depends not only on elites, but also on ordinary citizens. This section reviews previous evidence regarding popular conceptions of democracy in Africa. Looking across multiple cultures, the most robust data comes from Afrobe-

10. As evident in the writings of Gyimah-Boadi and Chege, conceptions of democracy that emphasize political inputs, with some emphasis on political inputs like participation and responsiveness, are not monopolized by Western political scientists. As such, I shall henceforth call them “mainstream” rather than Western. I shall call approaches that diverge from these emphases “alternative.”
rometer. Earlier Afrobarometer survey rounds included open-ended questions on the meaning of democracy. In the twelve countries studied in the first round, a majority of respondents (54 percent) offered “procedural” definitions of democracy, whereas a minority (22 percent) offered “substantive” definitions.13 In this context, “procedural” definitions consist of what this paper refers to as inputs. In contrast, “substantive” definitions consist of outputs. Among responses focusing on outputs, political outputs were more common than economic outputs (14 percent and 4 percent of total responses respectively).14 From this evidence, it would appear that Africans concur with mainstream notions of democracy, stressing inputs over outputs and political outputs over economic outputs.

Other efforts have examined notions of democracy within specific cultures. For instance, Schaffer’s *Democracy in Translation* contrasts the conceptions of democracy that francophones and monolingual wolofones hold in Senegal.15 *Démocratie*, the French translation, carries meanings similar to Western conceptions of democracy discussed above. Yet *demokaraasi*, the common Wolof translation, carries a significantly different meaning: “[D]emokaraasi is best realized through the attainment of collective economic security via mutuality, or at a minimum through the achievement of consensus, solidarity, or evenhandedness.” Thus, *demokaraasi* and *démocratie* promise different political outputs. Moreover, *demokaraasi* also implies economic outputs. Both concepts include inputs like elections, but use them to achieve different ends.16

In Uganda, Mikael Karlström conducted a similar study of Baganadan conceptions of democracy.17 In discussing *eddembe ery’obuntu* or democracy, Bagandans emphasized some inputs like freedom of speech, but made in-

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15. French is the lingua franca of Senegal, while Wolof is the most commonly spoken vernacular language. French speakers generally come from the elite class, as they have achieved higher levels of education. They are typically also fluent in a vernacular language as well.
17. Baganda is an ethnic group in southern Uganda.
frequent mention of others, including political structure or procedure. Moreover, the concept of freedom of speech differed from mainstream notions; it carried “no conception of a reversal or equalization of authority relations between subjects and rulers,” but rather recognized and maintained hierarchical power structures. The Bagandan concept of democracy diverges from mainstream definitions insofar as it focuses only on select inputs. Specifically, it does not imply political participation of the average citizen or political equality among all. Later surveys confirm these findings.

**Within this Paper.** This paper eschews formally delineating correct and incorrect definitions of democracy. Instead, it divides popular perceptions of democracy into two orientations: (1) input-oriented definitions emphasizing political inputs required for democracy, such as political structure and procedure and civil rights, and (2) output-oriented definitions emphasizing the goods or outputs that democracy can produce, such as socioeconomic guarantees and governance quality. I elaborate on these definitions in the section below entitled, “Measurement of Key Independent Variable: Popular Definitions of Democracy.”

Understanding Democratic Legitimacy

For the purposes of this paper, I define democratic legitimacy as the belief that democracy is the best form of government under all circumstances, including the present circumstances of a given country. Democratic legitimacy is a necessary element of democratic consolidation, along with establishing democratic institutions. Consolidation is important be-

18. The loose Lugandan translation of democracy is *edembe ery'obuntu*, although Karlström suggests that this more accurately translates civil liberties or human rights than democracy.
21. Due to data limitations, it does not consider abstract political goods such as accountability, solidarity, or equality.
cause more consolidated democracies are more stable political regimes. Specifically, belief in democratic legitimacy serves as a form of insurance that allows democracies to weather periods of poor performance, such as economic downturn or political gridlock.

The origins and causes of democratic legitimacy served as the basis for much scholarship throughout the twentieth century, and scholars continue to debate them. Leaders in the field include Seymour Martin Lipset, Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, Larry Diamond, and Robert Putnam. In explaining democratic legitimacy, these scholars variously point toward economic development, education, inequality, subjective political competence, experience and satisfaction with democracy, perceptions of fairness, institutional trust, social capital, and historical events. Findings from this previous research frame the choice of control variables, which I discuss further below.

**Hypothesis**

Definitions of democracy should be a significant determinant of democratic legitimacy. Definitions of democracy create expectations for what it can or should achieve, which shapes whether or not citizens are satisfied with democracy. Satisfaction in turn shapes citizens’ evaluation of democracy as legitimate or illegitimate. Within this framework, I expect that preference for input-oriented definitions of democracy will produce greater satisfaction with democracy than preference for output-oriented definitions.

**Methodology**

**Data Sources**

This paper employs two types of data: public opinion data taken from Afrobarometer’s Round 5 surveys and national development indicators drawn from the Afrobarometer, the World Bank, and Freedom House.

Afrobarometer is “an independent, non-partisan research project” that regularly administers standardized surveys in African countries in partnership with local research institutions. Its questionnaire was locally developed and designed to avoid hollow, unreflective responses by providing choices between concrete alternatives.24 These choices force participants to prioritize among alternatives, making clear the relative weight of participants’ beliefs and preferences.25 While Afrobarometer translates the questionnaire in an intensive process to ensure accuracy, the term democracy remains in the European lingua franca. Survey administrators only provide a local language translation if the interviewee requests it.26

Afrobarometer collected Round 5 data between October 2011 and September 2013 using a “clustered, stratified, multi-stage, probability sample design,” with random selection at every stage and probability proportional to population size at least PSU selection.27 Afrobarometer then weights samples to create nationally representative data.28 The minimum sample size (1200) allows for a 2.8 percentage point margin of error at a 95% confidence level.29

Measurement of Variables

Measurement of Key Dependent Variable: Democratic Legitimacy. This paper assesses levels of democratic legitimacy through an Afrobarometer survey question that asks respondents to choose from three statements:

1. Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.

25. Afrobarometer’s approach does pose some limitations, however. Particularly, it limits the possible responses of participants in defining democracy to pre-provided choices.
28. Ibid., 54.
29. Ibid., 25.
In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable.

For someone like me, it doesn’t matter what kind of government we have.

The first statement indicates belief in democratic legitimacy, often referred to merely as ‘democratic legitimacy,’ the second statement indicates opposition to democratic legitimacy, and the last statement indicates indifference to democratic legitimacy. I measure democratic legitimacy as the percentage of respondents choosing the first statement in each country.

Figure 1 displays data pertaining to democratic legitimacy in the thirty-three countries studied. The graph sorts countries by ascending prevalence of belief in democratic legitimacy, displayed in blue. Democratic legitimacy varied considerably, with over twice the proportion of Zambians as Malagasy preferring democracy to other forms of government (90 percent versus 39 percent, respectively). The green column shows opposition to democratic legitimacy. The graph demonstrates variation substantial enough for meaningful analysis.
Measurement of Key Independent Variable: Popular Definitions of Democracy. This paper measures popular definitions of democracy using four Afrobarometer questions that ask respondents to identify the “most essential characteristic of democracy.” Each question provides four possible responses: one focusing on political procedure and structure (PS), one on civil liberties and rights (CL), one on government quality and performance (GQ), and one on socioeconomic performance and guarantees (SE). I divide these responses into two categories: input-oriented definitions, which includes characteristics concerning political structure and procedure, and civil liberties and rights; and output-oriented definitions, which includes characteristics concerning government quality and performance, and socio-

Figure 1 Democratic Legitimacy by Country

31. These categorizations are original to this paper; they are not a product of Afrobarometer.
economic performance and guarantees. Table 1 displays this categorization. To measure preference for input-oriented definitions of democracy, I take the mean percentage of respondents in each country who chose input-oriented answers (PS and CL).

**Table 1 Coding of Popular Definitions of Democracy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response Option</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  People choose government leaders in free and fair elections</td>
<td>PS</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  People are free to express their political views openly</td>
<td>CL</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  Government does not waste any public money</td>
<td>GQ</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  Government narrows the gap between rich and the poor</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Multiple parties compete fairly in elections</td>
<td>PS</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Media is free to criticize things the government does</td>
<td>CL</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Government ensures law and order</td>
<td>GQ</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Government ensures job opportunities for all</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  The legislature closely monitors the actions of the President</td>
<td>PS</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  People are free to form organizations to influence government and public affairs</td>
<td>CL</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Public services, such as roads, water or sewerage, work well and do not break down</td>
<td>GQ</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Government provides basic necessities, like food, clothing, and shelter, for everyone</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  The court protects ordinary people if the government mistreats them</td>
<td>PS</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  People are free to take part in demonstrations and protest</td>
<td>CL</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Politics is clean and free of corruption</td>
<td>GQ</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  People receive aid from the government, such as food parcels, when they are in need</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As Figure 2 shows, national populations vary in how they define democracy. It displays countries in ascending preference for input-oriented definitions. A plurality of the population chose input-oriented definitions of democracies in ten countries, whereas a majority of the population chose input-oriented definitions in seven countries: Benin, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, Tanzania, and Zambia. Tanzania had the highest proportion of citizens with input-oriented definitions of democracy (60 percent); Morocco had the lowest proportion (21 percent).
Control Variables. In addition to the key independent and dependent variables, the regression models include variables to control for other conditions thought to impact democratic legitimacy. Table 2 displays information on these variables. In reference to the year of assessment, “exact” means that assessment occurred the same year as the Afrobarometer’s Round 5 Survey.32 “Nearest” means that the measure was not available every year in every country, in which case I used the assessment for the closest year, which may have fallen before or after.

---

32. Recall that this year varied by country, ranging from 2011 to 2013.
Table 2 Explanation of Control Variables (National Level)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Year Assessed</th>
<th>Mean (st. dev.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>Proportion of respondents who indicate that they are “fairly satisfied” or “very satisfied” with “the way democracy works” in their country</td>
<td>Afrobarometer Round 5 Survey</td>
<td>Exact</td>
<td>0.494 (0.168)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Percent of persons aged at least fifteen years who are literate</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>Nearest</td>
<td>0.628 (0.208)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media penetration</td>
<td>Percent of population that owns a radio</td>
<td>Afrobarometer Round 5 Survey</td>
<td>Exact</td>
<td>0.699 (0.085)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanization</td>
<td>Percent of population living in urban areas, as defined by the national government</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>Exact</td>
<td>0.400 (0.155)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inequality</td>
<td>Gini index</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>Nearest</td>
<td>0.433 (0.089)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective political competence</td>
<td>Proportion of respondents who disagree or strongly disagree with the statement: “Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me cannot really understand what is going on.”</td>
<td>Afrobarometer Round 5 Survey</td>
<td>Exact</td>
<td>0.203 (0.056)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent/quality of democratic institutions</td>
<td>Freedom Rating</td>
<td>Freedom House</td>
<td>Exact</td>
<td>3.712 (1.469)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youthfulness</td>
<td>Percent of population aged zero to fourteen years</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>Exact</td>
<td>0.394 (0.075)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wealth</td>
<td>Gross domestic product per capita, purchasing power parity</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>Exact</td>
<td>4712.43 (4650.51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrialization</td>
<td>Percent of the labor force employed in agriculture</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>Nearest</td>
<td>0.485 (0.236)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social trust</td>
<td>Percent of respondents who indicate that “generally speaking, most people can be trusted,” rather than “you must be very careful in dealing people”</td>
<td>Afrobarometer Round 5 Survey</td>
<td>Exact</td>
<td>0.193 (0.106)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional trust</td>
<td>Mean percent of respondents who indicate that they trust the police, army, courts of law, and tax department either “somewhat” or “a lot”</td>
<td>Afrobarometer Round 5 Survey</td>
<td>Exact</td>
<td>0.550 (0.116)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33. This represents the mean and standard deviation of national averages across the thirty-three countries studied.
Results

The data seems to support my initial hypothesis that countries with a higher preference for input-oriented definitions of democracy would also have more widespread belief in democratic legitimacy. Figure 3 shows a simple scatterplot of the key independent and dependent variables. Points within the scatterplot represent individual countries. The observations tend to move from the bottom left of the plot to the upper right, representing a positive association between preference for input-oriented definitions and democratic legitimacy. The trend line represents a simple linear regression of preference for input-oriented definitions against democratic legitimacy, excluding any control variables. Its slope of 0.816 implies that a 10 percentage point increase in preference for input-oriented definitions produces an 8.16 percentage point increase in democratic legitimacy.

**Figure 3** Input-Oriented Definitions of Democracy versus Democratic Legitimacy by Country

The positive association between input-oriented definitions of democracy and belief in democratic legitimacy implies that consensus does not independently impact democratic legitimacy. In *Political Man*, Seymour Martin Lipset suggests that media penetration facilitates democratic consolidation because it generates cross-cutting cleavages, which allow ideas to spread throughout society. Given this line of reasoning, cross-cutting cleavages could be a confounding variable causing both higher levels of consensus and democratic legitimacy. If this were the case, the particular definition of democracy that was most popular would not matter; rather, consensus would be the most important variable in determining legitimacy. This would result in a scatter plot that would be U-shaped, rather than the upward slant depicted in Figure 3. The absence of this U-shape implies that consensus does not have an independent impact on democratic legitimacy. The particular meaning that citizens prefer matters, too.

Table 3 displays the results of several regression models that also consider control variables. The first row displays the key independent variable, preference for input-oriented definitions. I conduct a stepwise regression using backward selection. The regression for Model 12 is the trend line that Figure 3 displays. Appendix 1 contains additional regression models. Preference for input-oriented definitions of democracy is the most robust predictor of democratic legitimacy; it is significant at $\alpha=0.05$ in twenty-two out of the twenty-five models that included it, and at $\alpha=0.01$ in nineteen out of twenty-five regression models.

---

34. Lipset, *Political Man*, 79.
35. Industrialization was excluded from these models because it severely limited observation inclusion.
Table 3 Regression Models for Democratic Legitimacy, National Level (Models 1–12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
<th>(8)</th>
<th>(9)</th>
<th>(10)</th>
<th>(11)</th>
<th>(12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preference for input-oriented definitions</td>
<td>0.666** (0.258)</td>
<td>0.566* (0.281)</td>
<td>0.593** (0.261)</td>
<td>0.569** (0.237)</td>
<td>0.587*** (0.206)</td>
<td>0.572*** (0.201)</td>
<td>0.606*** (0.195)</td>
<td>0.656*** (0.191)</td>
<td>0.680*** (0.190)</td>
<td>0.816*** (0.201)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>0.403** (0.152)</td>
<td>0.283* (0.173)</td>
<td>0.283* (0.164)</td>
<td>0.282* (0.157)</td>
<td>0.287* (0.152)</td>
<td>0.288* (0.149)</td>
<td>0.290* (0.148)</td>
<td>0.350** (0.130)</td>
<td>0.258** (0.099)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective political competence</td>
<td>0.119 (0.290)</td>
<td>0.340 (0.333)</td>
<td>0.349 (0.321)</td>
<td>0.352 (0.313)</td>
<td>0.343 (0.307)</td>
<td>0.350 (0.294)</td>
<td>0.354 (0.293)</td>
<td>0.340 (0.291)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.307 (0.290)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional trust</td>
<td>0.174 (0.253)</td>
<td>-0.132 (0.255)</td>
<td>-0.144 (0.239)</td>
<td>-0.158 (0.215)</td>
<td>-0.169 (0.206)</td>
<td>-0.161 (0.197)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.193 (0.185)</td>
<td>-0.205 (0.183)</td>
<td>-0.199 (0.182)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent/quality of democracy</td>
<td>0.023 (0.020)</td>
<td>-0.008 (0.019)</td>
<td>-0.009 (0.018)</td>
<td>-0.009 (0.018)</td>
<td>-0.011 (0.016)</td>
<td>-0.010 (0.016)</td>
<td>-0.013 (0.014)</td>
<td>-0.012 (0.014)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-0.169 (0.145)</td>
<td>-0.078 (0.140)</td>
<td>-0.075 (0.136)</td>
<td>-0.083 (0.122)</td>
<td>-0.071 (0.110)</td>
<td>-0.082 (0.086)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.065 (0.079)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media penetration</td>
<td>0.286 (0.251)</td>
<td>0.124 (0.266)</td>
<td>0.133 (0.255)</td>
<td>0.125 (0.244)</td>
<td>0.122 (0.239)</td>
<td>0.122 (0.234)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wealth</td>
<td>-0.016 (0.041)</td>
<td>-0.015 (0.042)</td>
<td>-0.012 (0.038)</td>
<td>-0.009 (0.033)</td>
<td>-0.004 (0.025)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youthfulness</td>
<td>-0.254 (0.579)</td>
<td>-0.095 (0.543)</td>
<td>-0.083 (0.526)</td>
<td>-0.115 (0.471)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanization</td>
<td>0.279 (0.205)</td>
<td>0.035 (0.214)</td>
<td>0.031 (0.207)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social trust</td>
<td>-0.100 (0.212)</td>
<td>-0.039 (0.242)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inequality</td>
<td>-0.090 (0.279)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observations 31 33 33 33 33 33 33 33 33 33 33 33

Coefficient (standard error)
*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

I measure many of the control variables on the same scale used to measure preference for input-oriented definitions of democracy: 0 to 1 as a proportion of the population. A standard scale enables direct comparison of coefficients for these variables. On the whole, preference for input-oriented definitions of democracy tends to account for more variation in belief in democratic legitimacy than similarly scaled variables, as reflected in its relatively high coefficient.

The significant relationship between preference for input-oriented definitions of democracy and democratic legitimacy does not necessarily indicate causation. Some other variable may cause variations in preference for input-oriented definitions and belief in democratic legitimacy simultaneously. For instance, exposure to Western ideas might encourage both liberal-procedural understanding of democracy and faith in democracy. This exposure could have occurred through education or media penetration, but neither proved significant in any of the regression models. Transmission of Western ideas may have occurred through more direct exposure, such as a United Nations peacekeeping force. However, as shown in Table 4, UN peacekeeping forces did not prove significant as a control variable, or as determinants of either preference for input-oriented definitions of democracy or democratic legitimacy at $\alpha=0.05$.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4 Regression Models Testing for Effects of UN Peacekeeping</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regression Model</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic legitimacy: Preference for input oriented definitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic legitimacy: UN peacekeeping presence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic legitimacy: UN peacekeeping presence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference for input-oriented definitions of democracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Conclusion

At the national level, preference for input-oriented definitions of democracy—definitions that favor emphasis on political procedure and structure and civil liberties—are significantly and positively associated with belief in democratic legitimacy. This relationship is robust across multiple models that include controls for other variables traditionally thought to impact democratic legitimacy, such as economic development.

This finding has substantial implications for the stability of democratic regimes. Legitimacy serves as insurance that can help democratic regimes survive periods of poor performance, discouraging regime turnover. Ideally, regime legitimacy should be relatively high in order to protect regime continuity. Sustaining and increasing legitimacy is an especially important goal in budding African democracies, which often backslide or fail. Knowing which conceptions of democracy encourage greater democratic legitimacy can enhance efforts to stabilize young or precarious democratic regimes. If civic educators work to promote input-oriented definitions of democracy, they might increase satisfaction with democracy and enhance security. In addition to practical applications, this finding clarifies the stakes in scholarly and public debates over how to define democracy. Although many people favor output-oriented definitions of democracy, this preference could imply negative implications for stability.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my faculty advisor, Professor Eric Kramon, and my graduate student mentor, Amanda Roy, for their guidance throughout the project. I am also grateful for the financial support of the Elliott School of International Affairs and the GW University Honors Program. Finally, I would like to thank Annie Vinik, Courtney Heath, and my fellow scholars for their diligent feedback and support.
## Appendix I: Additional Regression Models

### Table 5 Regression Models for Democratic Legitimacy, State Level (Models 13–24)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>(13)</th>
<th>(14)</th>
<th>(15)</th>
<th>(16)</th>
<th>(17)</th>
<th>(18)</th>
<th>(19)</th>
<th>(20)</th>
<th>(21)</th>
<th>(22)</th>
<th>(23)</th>
<th>(24)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preference for input-oriented definitions</td>
<td>0.196</td>
<td>0.777***</td>
<td>0.816***</td>
<td>0.687***</td>
<td>0.818***</td>
<td>0.802***</td>
<td>0.835***</td>
<td>0.845***</td>
<td>0.818***</td>
<td>0.817***</td>
<td>0.799***</td>
<td>0.731***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>0.388*</td>
<td>(0.206)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective political competence</td>
<td>0.456</td>
<td>0.389</td>
<td>(0.436)</td>
<td>(0.315)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional trust</td>
<td>-0.038</td>
<td>0.144</td>
<td>(0.320)</td>
<td>(0.152)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent / quality of democracy</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
<td>(0.037)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.025**</td>
<td>(0.012)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-0.218</td>
<td>(0.247)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.046</td>
<td>(0.086)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media penetration</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>(0.290)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.231</td>
<td>(0.207)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wealth</td>
<td>-0.024</td>
<td>(0.049)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>(0.019)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youthfulness</td>
<td>-0.219</td>
<td>(0.737)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.112</td>
<td>(0.252)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanization</td>
<td>-0.118</td>
<td>(0.266)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>(0.116)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social trust</td>
<td>-0.673</td>
<td>(0.426)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>(0.172)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inequality</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>(0.312)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.110</td>
<td>(0.205)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrialization</td>
<td>-0.121</td>
<td>(0.189)</td>
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<td>-0.074</td>
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<td>Observations</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>31</td>
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**Coefficient (standard error)**

*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

### Table 6 Regression Models for Democratic Legitimacy, State Level (Models 25–37)

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<td>Preference for input-oriented definitions</td>
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<td>Satisfaction with democracy</td>
<td>0.363*** (0.112)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional trust</td>
<td>0.142 (0.186)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extent / quality of democracy</td>
<td>-0.038*** (0.013)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media penetration</td>
<td>0.283 (0.252)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wealth</td>
<td>-0.013 (0.025)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youthfulness</td>
<td>0.201 (0.290)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urbanization</td>
<td>0.044 (0.141)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social trust</td>
<td>-0.115 (0.205)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inequality</td>
<td>0.028 (0.248)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrialization</td>
<td>-0.008 (0.103)</td>
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Coefficients (standard error): **p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, * * p < 0.1

CIVIL SOCIETY IN JAPAN AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA:
Government Relations and its Effect on Reconciliation Efforts

Seo Kyung (Rosa) Kim

Japan and South Korea have had historically tumultuous relations despite their normalization of relations in 1965, which officially brought a former colony and its colonizer together to establish diplomatic ties. However, the strength of the relationship is still heavily defined by unresolved historical grievances that flare nationalistic sentiments against each other. While the executive branches of both countries drive their respective foreign policies, there is still much room for cooperation in the field of civil society. As both countries’ civil societies began to flourish in the 1990s under new regulatory frameworks, so did their abilities to influence domestic and foreign policy. This paper aims to use the activities of the Japanese Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA) and the Korean Bar Association (KBA) as a case study in examining how the cyclical strengthening and weakening of bilateral Japanese-Korean relations affect civil society efforts towards bilateral reconciliation. Through my findings of KBA and JFBA activities, I conclude that government-level Japanese-South Korean relations do not decrease the number of joint cooperative programs aimed at addressing postwar grievances.

Introduction

The year 2015 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic ties between Japan and the Republic of Korea,1 ratified under the 1965 Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and South Korea. While the anniversary celebrates the establishment and progress of diplomatic relations between a former colonial aggressor and its victim, current chilly re-

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1. Herein referred to as South Korea, ROK, or Korea.
lations between Japan and South Korea have stilled bilateral cooperation between the two countries. The tense relations mainly stem from the current Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s policies towards World War II historical grievances, such as visiting the Yasukuni Shrine and hinting at the possibility of revising the Kono Statement. Much of the Korean population remains sensitive to these political actions from the Japanese government. World War II grievances remain a core part of Japanese-Korean relations, while flares of nationalistic hostile sentiment against each other have become a repeating characteristic in the two countries’ relations. Some of the most heated issues between the two states are comfort women, history textbooks, forced laborers, and Yasukuni Shrine visits. Despite both the ups and downs in this relationship, there has yet to be a significant step in bridging the gap between the Japanese and Korean governments, and by extension, their populations. While the two countries share many strategic policy priorities, such as North Korean denuclearization, counterbalancing the rise of China, and military cooperation with the United States, cooperation has never reached its full potential. For example, a mutual bilateral military intelligence sharing pact was agreed upon in 2012, but the Korean government rejected it within a few hours of ratification due to intensifying domestic pressure against Japan.

While the executive branches of both countries define and dictate their respective foreign policies, civil society also plays a role in shaping the agenda. Both Japan and Korea experienced an exponential increase in the number of civil society groups in the late 1990s as domestic laws were passed to help streamline registration processes and provide tax incentives for civil society groups. As civil society expanded in number and capacity, it has begun to play larger roles in direct transnational cooperation.

I provide an answer to the question of how governmental relations at the state level affect civil society efforts towards bilateral Japanese-Korean reconciliation. While there are many civil society groups in both South Korea and Japan that promote bilateral dialogue and are aimed towards raising awareness in Japanese historical revisionism, I chose to use the Korean Bar Association (KBA) and the Japanese Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA) as a comparative case study. Both the KBA and JFBA represent prominent and influential civil society organizations that are not committed to advocat-
ing one of the opposing sides of historical revisionism, but instead promote an objective, legal opinion of historical interactions between the two countries. By using KBA and JFBA as case studies, this paper aims to (1) identify different methods through which KBA and JFBA promoted cooperative dialogue and raise awareness in issues that plague bilateral relations; and (2) analyze how patterns in KBA and JFBA activities changed according to the changes in government level relations. I examine KBA and JFBA history and activities as well as analyze their press statements and conducted programs. By comparing the activities to state-level bilateral relations, I examine how government relations affect cooperative programs in civil society that are aimed at reconciling the two countries’ historical grievances.

**Methodology**

There is relatively little literature regarding the joint activities of the Korean Bar Association and the Japanese Federation of Bar Associations, as their joint activities really did not begin until 2009. However, I mainly used their websites in Korean, Japanese, and English languages to access all documents and files related to KBA and JFBA’s joint activities. I also reached out to each of their International Human Rights divisions. From within these Human Rights divisions, I was able to contact Hee-Chang Yang of KBA Human Rights Department and a representative of the JFBA Office of International Affairs. By emailing interview questions, I was able to receive their opinions on certain issues in depth. However, the officers of KBA and JFBA seemed reluctant to answer certain questions. Due to the sensitivity of the topic, Mr. Yang stated that any rhetoric may be misinterpreted and possibly create bad press for the organizations. By interviewing Mr. Yang and the JFBA Office of International Affairs, I was able to present the interactions of the KBA and JFBA parallel to the government grievances that characterize Japanese-South Korean relations. Underlying the surface of icy political relations rests a strong, persistent civil society partnership that propels social progress and poses hope for political reconciliation.

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2. Hee-Chang Yang, “KBA-JFBA Activities,” e-mail message to author, April 6, 2015.
Reconciliation and Civil Society

While literature on Japanese-Korean relations and its background of historical grievances are extensive, there is not much to be found when it comes to discussing the roles and actions of civil society in Japanese-Korean reconciliation. In defining the term “reconciliation,” it is a laborious long-term process that implies relational transformation from enmity to amity.3 The importance of civil society in facilitating such reconciliation lies in the necessity of fundamental changes in mutual perceptions based on deeply rooted beliefs and stereotypical images as efforts need to come from both political elites and the mass public. While the term “civil society” is defined and characterized in many ways, two noteworthy expressions emphasize its impact to Japan and South Korea. These examples of civil society are the forming of voluntary associations by citizens and the ability of those associations to check the power of the state.4 Schmitter and Karl remark, “At its best, civil society provides an intermediate layer of governance between the individual and the state that is capable of resolving conflicts and controlling the behavior of members without public coercion.”5 This intermediate layer of governance bridges political elites and the mass public. The successful model of Franco-German reconciliation reveals the importance of this connection. The role of religious communities, educational initiatives, and joint university programs allowed French and German elites and public opinion to slowly change their perception towards each other. While recognizing that Japanese-Korean relations may differ from Franco-German relations, it is crucial to emphasize the important role civil society plays by bridging the gap between the government and the mass public in shaping identities and ideas.

As arguably the two most liberal democracies of East Asia,\(^6\) Japanese and South Korean governments developed new frameworks roughly around the same time to aid the growth of civil society groups. While Japan’s democratic rule is much older than that of Korea’s, the significance in comparing Japanese and South Korean civil society is that reforms and the opening up of civil society took place at about the same time for both countries. The two countries’ legislatures also passed bills to make government procedures more transparent and encourage citizen participation in government around the same time.

The 1990s were the defining moment for civil society in both countries due to the nature of their governments opening up to allow more civil society expansion, grant legal statuses, and make government more participatory. Japanese passing of the 1998 NPO Law opened up more chances for Japanese civil society organizations to become legally registered and gain benefits from the government. A year later, the South Korean National Assembly passed the Law to Promote Nonprofit Civil Organizations, a similar piece of legislation that provided foundational groundwork for civil society. This law introduced tax benefits for registered nonprofits; created the role of the Ministry of Internal Affairs as a governing body over nonprofits; and provided subsidies that permitted civil organizations the ability to use government facilities to carry out their related duties. Such laws led to a boom in civil society organizations in both countries, paving the way towards greater citizen participation in government.

**Case Study: Korean Bar Association & Japanese Federation of Bar Associations**

I chose to examine the Korean Bar Association and the Japanese Federation of Bar Associations as a case study for several reasons. One is that they are both well-established civil society organizations with extensive historical background. KBA was established in 1952 and JFBA was established in 1949. Another is that these organizations directly correspond with each other and thus make contrasts and comparisons of their activities much

\(^6\) He, “Social Movement,” 267.
more consistent. Lastly, I chose the Korean Bar Association and the Japanese Federation of Bar Associations as they have nonpartisan, objective goals in promoting the rule of law and champion social justice rather than advocating a specific side of the various controversial issues.

The Japanese Federation of Bar Associations, (nihon bengoshi rengokai 日本弁護士連合会) was established in 1949 with the passing of the Attorney Act, a law designed to codify the mission of an attorney at law as well as to establish requirements for the profession. JFBA’s mission and objective is defined by the Attorney Act as a source of protection of fundamental human rights and of realization of social justice.\(^7\) It is also a financially independent organization that produces its own funding without any external sponsorships and government subsidies. Its financial sources lie purely in its membership dues, training fees, publication revenue, among other things, which further emphasizes the importance in objectiveness and nonpartisanship of JFBA.

The Korean Bar Association, (daehan byunhosa hyuphoei 대한변호사협회) was created in 1952 by attorneys in remote towns and villages to empower, improve, and advance the profession of law. It is also a financially independent organization with over twelve thousand members, and it also maintains its budget by collecting membership dues, conference fees, and publication revenue. Its mission is “to bring together attorneys of all specialties across the map, to maintain the dignity of lawyers, to promote legal reforms, and to improve the rule of law.”\(^8\) A comparison of KBA and JFBA’s mission statements as well as their financial independence reveals how they are mirror organizations in their own respective countries.

Both organizations are well-established non-governmental organizations (NGO) that are active not just domestically, but also internationally with other NGOs and inter-governmental organizations. In 2015, the United Nations Economic and Social Council awarded KBA an NGO consultative status, an affirmation of its prominence as an internationally recognized

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NGO. KBA has also been active in the United Nations Human Rights Council by conducting conferences for the Universal Periodic Review report with other NGOs aimed at promoting human rights. As such, KBA has already established itself as an internationally recognized NGO that has the resources to conduct its activities. JFBA has also been accredited consultative status by the United Nations Economic and Social Council, and it also provides NGO report submissions for the Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review.

Cooperative Activities

KBA and JFBA have historically enjoyed cooperation and engagement with each other as bar associations of neighboring countries. Since 1987, the two organizations conducted annual exchange conferences for attorneys and bar association members of each country to meet and discuss issues that prevail in both countries. This annual exchange conference is heavily institutionalized in the KBA-JFBA relationship, as they have never missed a single year without conducting the conference. In fact, this annual exchange conference evolved into the “Bar Leaders Conference” beginning in 2011. Marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of close KBA-JFBA relations, the newly created Bar Leaders Conference was expanded to include not just the secretariat and the officers of the two bar associations, but also to include the leaders of local bar associations in Japan and South Korea. The new annual Bar Leaders Conference was created “in order to expand the horizons of and further strengthen the already good relations between attorneys in Japan and Korea, and to increase the presence of attorneys from northeast Asia around the world.”

11. “What is the JFBA?”
KBA and JFBA created the KBA-JFBA Working Group on Korean War Victims in March 2010 to further cooperation in litigation support for colonial human rights victims, raise awareness through human rights legal frameworks, and present recommendations to both governments in this bilateral relationship. KBA hosted an “Imperial Japan Victims’ Human Rights Report Conference” in October 2009, during which attending academics and attorneys recommended that a joint working group would be even more significant in furthering human rights causes of Imperial Japan’s human rights victims.13 The Working Group was thus created in 2010, which also marked the centenary of Japan’s official annexation of the Korean Peninsula in 1910.

Arguably, the hallmark in KBA-JFBA cooperation is the Joint Declaration of the Korean Bar Association and the Japanese Federation of Bar Associations of 2010, signed during the JFBA-KBA Symposium on Compensation for Korean War Victims. The joint declaration released by the Korean Bar Association states, “[Both organizations] recognize the need for the combined efforts of both associations to address the human rights violations committed under Japanese Colonial Rule and, particularly, the claims by victims of the Asia-Pacific War, which have been left unresolved and without adequately compensated [sic] by the Korean and Japanese Governments.”14 The joint declaration is aimed at providing recommendations to both Korean and Japanese governments in taking progressive steps towards acknowledging and assisting human rights violation victims from Imperial Japanese colonization, including the creation of specific working groups. The significance of this joint declaration is not only that these two NGOs approached the human rights violations of Imperial Japan together, but also that both organizations acknowledged fault in both governments.

The Symposium on Compensation for Korean War Victims was held multiple times as a dialogue series by KBA and JFBA. The first Symposium held in June 2010 was attended by more than two hundred people, includ-

The Symposium was aimed at discussing current issues in human rights violation lawsuits, as well as making efforts to help explain current efforts aimed at helping the victims of Imperial Japanese human rights violations. KBA explained the situation by presenting issues in dispute in lawsuits and discussing Korean constitutional lawsuits made by comfort women, while JFBA explained the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ)—then the ruling party of Japan—and its efforts towards legislation on issuing apologies and compensation for comfort women. The second Symposium in December 2010 had more active politicians participate, including Ms. Mieko Kamimoto, Member of the Japanese House of Councillors (Democratic Party of Japan), Mr. Yoon Seok Lee, Member of the Korean National Assembly (Democratic Party of Korea), and Mr. Byung Ju Oh, Chair of the Commission on Verification and Support for the Victims of Forced Mobilization under Japanese Colonialism in Korea.

The KBA-JFBA Working Group also created an online forum for the Working Group to concentrate its information sharing. The forum is aimed at translating key judicial and legislative documents from both countries and making them accessible to the public. The forum had also made the documents and notes of the KBA-JFBA Working Group accessible online. While this may seem like a small step in furthering cooperation, this forum page has allowed KBA and JFBA to share agreed-upon information that is accessible in many languages while also providing objective legal opinions on such matters.

Government Affairs and its Effects on KBA-JFBA Activities

To examine how government affairs affect civil society activities towards reconciliation, I examined whether or not government affairs halted or stalled joint KBA-JFBA activities since their pledge to cooperate on helping war and colonization victims in 2010. The years between 2010 and

16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
2014 have been rocky for Japan-South Korea relations, as changes in ruling party in Japan as well as changes in leadership made drastic differences in government-level bilateral relations. The year 2010 had markedly positive relations between the two countries, as Prime Minister Naoto Kan of DPJ made apologetic remarks, which South Korea accepted and appreciated.\(^{18}\) There were ongoing efforts to start the new Trilateral Cooperation Organization, a cooperation organization for South Korea, Japan, and China. The South Korean Foreign Ministry expressed its appreciation of the Japanese government’s efforts towards a “future-oriented relationship” as the Japanese government under DPJ rule worked towards avoiding controversial issues, such as the textbook issues.\(^{19}\)

However, beginning in 2012, relations began to slide downhill when the issue of Dokdo/Takeshima, a disputed island, came to the spotlight. There were issues regarding the Japanese Foreign Minister’s comments on disputed islands in early 2012,\(^ {20}\) and when President Lee Myung-bak became the first South Korean president to visit the islands, the Japanese government recalled its ambassador in Seoul.\(^ {21}\) Rebuffed with strong and provocative language, such as claiming that the Japanese government’s proposal to bring the issue to the International Court of Justice as “not even worthy,”\(^ {22}\) relations began to take a sharp downturn. This marked the beginning of souring relations between Japan and Korea, as well as the beginning of a new cold war as tensions simmered between the two countries. Channels of dialogue had been shut off: the annual meeting of the finance ministers scheduled for August 2012 was postponed; the bilateral meeting set for late August on the sidelines of the forty-fourth ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting was cancelled; ministerial-level bilateral meetings at the


\(^{22}\) “MOFAT Spokesperson’s Commentary on the Japanese Government’s Announcement on Dokdo,” August 1, 2012, accessed May 1, 2015.
Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders Meeting in Vladivostok in September had been scrapped; and ministerial-level negotiations on adopting liquefied natural gas (LNG) that were scheduled for September 2012 in Tokyo were abandoned.\(^23\)

The chilly relations between the two countries reached a peak in December 2013 when Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited the Yasukuni Shrine in his capacity as prime minister.\(^24\) This sparked diplomatic clashes as the South Korean foreign ministry called the act “anachronistic” and asked whether or not Prime Minister Abe “really thinks he could contribute to peace.”\(^25\) The downward spiral of Japanese-South Korean relations had hit rock bottom.

However, through all of this, my findings indicate that while the two governments may have been experiencing chilly relations with little cooperative dialogue, this did not prevent the Korean Bar Association and the Japanese Federation of Bar Associations in cooperating further on war victim programs. My interview with JFBA’s Office of International Affairs revealed that civil society relations were too closely-knit to be affected by such official government relations. When asked, “Do you think the recent worsening relations of Japan and Korea affected JFBA and KBA relations?” JFBA’s Office of International Affairs responded:

JFBA and KBA, since 1987, had regular annual secretariat exchanges that were held rotationally between the two countries. Since 2011, such exchanges were expanded into “Japan-Korea Bar Leaders Conference” (or as KBA calls it the Korea-Japan Bar Leaders Conference) to include more members of local bar associations. Through such programs, the two countries have exchanged views on various issues they each have faced. As for the postwar issues, JFBA and KBA have met regularly since 2010 (an average of four times annually) to deepen mutual understanding and to foster mutual trust. As described above,


JFBA and KBA have maintained good relations that will continue to be expanded and built upon.\textsuperscript{26}

To support the statement from JFBA, KBA’s annual Human Rights Report also describes continued cooperation with JFBA in their human rights programming. In the year 2012, the JFBA-KBA Working Group on Korean War Victims further expanded their programs and their number of cooperative conferences. On January 12, 2012, they held a university panel on the South Korean Constitutional Court’s decision on the issue of comfort women and its effects on bilateral cooperation. In March 2012, the Working Group proposed that the joint forum mentioned be placed on each bar association’s homepage. In June, the Working Group conducted a press conference urging Japanese conglomerate companies to respect South Korean district courts’ decisions on forced laborer compensation. In July 2012, a conference was held by the Working Group to bring together organizations and foundations dedicated to helping remaining victims of Japanese colonialism. In August 2012, JFBA and KBA decided to split the Working Group into two branches based on the comfort women issue and the forced laborer issue. That following December, the secretariat of JFBA and KBA met to celebrate the second anniversary of the Joint Declaration of 2010, and to discuss future plans and programs for similar initiatives. In 2012, there were recorded at least twelve joint KBA-JFBA events aimed at addressing postwar grievances. In 2011, there were only five. While the JFBA-KBA Working Group and the Joint Declaration of 2010 are relatively young, the cooperation and progress show its potential for exponential growth despite soured government relations in the background.

\textsuperscript{26} Original Japanese text: 当連合会と大韓弁護士協会は、1987年から、両会の執行部が毎年交互に相手国を訪問して定期交流会を行ってきました。2011年からは名称を日韓バーリーダーズ会議（韓国側の呼称は韓日バーリーダーズ会議）と変更し、地方弁護士会の代表者も参加して、毎年両国が抱える様々な問題について意見交換を行っています。また、戦後処理問題については、2010年以降、当連合会と大韓弁護士協会との間で定期的に協議を続けており（平均年4回程度）、相互理解・相互信頼を育んでいます。以上のように、日韓両弁護士会は良好な友好関係を維持し発展させています。JFBA Office of International Affairs, “KBA-JFBA Activities,” e-mail message to author, April 14, 2015.
Conclusions

My findings conclude that, despite the downward spiral of South Korean-Japanese relations since the Joint Declaration of the Korean Bar Association and the Japanese Federation of Bar Associations of 2010, the number of cooperative activities between KBA and JFBA continued and increased in number of events. This showed there was no direct effect of worsening governmental relations on KBA and JFBA efforts to reconcile and address postwar and postcolonial grievances that continue to create tension between both countries. Such resilience against this chilly political backdrop may be due to the two bar associations’ extensive history stretching back to 1987, as the two have continuously held their annual exchange conferences without missing a single year. KBA and JFBA acknowledge how each of their respective legal systems face similar obstacles and issues, and such cultural proximity may also provide strength in maintaining ties with each other.

While my study of the Korean Bar Association and the Japanese Federation of Bar Associations is merely a case study of the role of civil society in South Korean-Japanese relations, it seems that it can contribute to the discussion by highlighting the importance of civil society cooperation. While government-level dialogue and summits can break down due to political rhetoric and individual actions taken by politicians of high standing, civil society groups have the power and resilience to withstand such political tension and promote continued dialogue towards reconciliation.

An important step towards strengthening Japanese-Korean relations is focusing on the positive developments of bilateral relations rather than the negative developments. While academia and the media seem to focus on political developments on the issue of how the two respective governments react or handle controversies, it may be necessary to shift the focus onto positive developments in civil society organizations. As KBA and JFBA cooperative programs have shown, such programs are much more resilient and do not break down as much as government initiatives. Such positive actions and developments deserve more spotlights as they emphasize the steps taken towards progress, rather than steps taken backwards against it. This would provide encouragement that there is a future for Japan-South Korean relations that is future-oriented and not begrudging of its past.
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Professor Daqing Yang and Amanda Conklin for their endless support and guidance throughout the entire process in developing this thesis research paper. I would also like to thank Professor Celeste Arrington for providing me with resources and important questions to consider in order to guide me through developing feasible questions for this broad topic. Lastly, I would like to thank all of the Elliott Undergraduate Scholars and friends for their encouragement and support for me to persevere to the very end of this process.
BEYOND CAPABILITIES:
Investigating China’s Military Strategy and Objectives in Cyberspace

Samuel Klein

United States government officials and policymakers regularly warn that China will launch destructive cyberattacks against critical US civilian infrastructure, including electrical grids, water supply stations, and transportation networks. However, they base such predictions on analysis that emphasizes China’s cyberwarfare capabilities, while ignoring the country’s cyberwarfare strategy and objectives. While China may possess the capacity to carry out devastating cyberattacks, does the country want to? Accurately predicting Chinese cyberattacks requires a holistic analysis that considers not just China’s capabilities, but its strategy and objectives as well. This paper relies on journal articles produced by senior military officials at China’s Academy of Military Science to uncover, organize, and ultimately distill Chinese cyberwarfare strategies and objectives. In addition, secondary analysis conducted by Western military experts on China and intelligence gathered by the US government help identify key trends and anomalies found in the primary sources. These documents reveal a Chinese cyberwarfare strategy that calls for cyberattacks to be used during military conflicts in a preemptive manner to disrupt enemy logistics and communications networks. The strategy does not call for the destruction of civilian infrastructure during peacetime. Framing China’s cybersecurity threat within a broader context of strategy and objectives emphasizes that the country may not be the most likely perpetrator of future destructive cyberattacks. This discovery has significant implications for current US national security policy, which is heavily focused on confronting a major Chinese cyberattack.

Introduction

In 2012, then-Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta warned of a cyberattack against the US that “would cause physical destruction and the loss of life.”1 Referring to such an attack as a “cyber-Pearl Harbor,” Panetta ex-

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1. Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta, “Remarks by Secretary Panetta on Cybersecurity to the Business Executives for National Security, New York City,” (speech, New York,
plained how this scenario might look: the derailment of a passenger train or
one loaded with lethal chemicals, the contamination of a major city’s water
supply, and the shutdown of a power station effecting large parts of the
country. Overall, Panetta warns that these kinds of cyberattacks could ultimately “paralyze and shock the nation and create a new, profound sense of
vulnerability.”

Panetta is not wrong in warning of such devastating cyberattacks. However, his justification for predicting a cyber-Pearl Harbor is not comprehensive; he relies solely on the existence of cyber capabilities without considering military strategy or objectives. In particular, Panetta draws attention to China, arguing that the country is not only “rapidly growing its cyber capabilities” but already has some “advanced cyber capabilities” as well. He uses this proof of capabilities to predict the potential for a Chinese cyberattack that will “cause panic and destruction and even the loss of life.” However, his prediction of a cyber-Pearl Harbor fails to consider how adversaries, such as China, view cyberwarfare; how they incorporate information operations into their overall military strategy; and, what they consider to be the best avenues for leveraging their cyber capabilities.

Predicting the potential for a Chinese cyberattack along a one-dimensional perspective that only considers the country’s cyber capabilities is a poor way to predict attacks. When formulating policy, a failure to put China’s cyber capabilities within a broader context of the country’s strategy and objectives leads to a distracting game of ‘what-if’ and creates misplaced fear: What if they shut off electrical grids? What if they disrupt transportation networks? What if they interfere with public works systems? Policymakers are left considering a large number of potential attacks that technically fall within the scope of China’s capabilities but may not subscribe to the country’s overall military strategy or may not work to achieve the country’s objectives. Policymakers and those responsible for US national security


2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
must take a more holistic approach to attack prediction, one that invests time and money into developing a better understanding of not just China’s capabilities but also its strategy and objectives.

Focusing on an adversary’s strategy and objectives has significant implications for conceptualizing, implementing, and carrying out policy responses. If an adversary’s strategy is misunderstood or its objectives are misidentified, then monetary, personnel, and equipment assets might be misallocated when preparing for and responding to attacks. This paper seeks to bring balance to the current discussion on Chinese cybersecurity threats by focusing on China’s overall strategy in cyberspace and the objectives the country’s political and military leaders hope to accomplish through this strategy. Current threat assessments need not just answer the question: what can China do in cyberspace (capabilities-based approach), but also: what does China want in cyberspace (objectives-based approach) and how do they plan on getting it (strategy-based approach). Overall, China’s capabilities must be placed within a broader context of objectives and strategy. By following such an approach, policymakers can reinforce their current knowledge of China’s cyber capabilities, more accurately determine which cyberattacks will happen, and allocate resources accordingly.

**Methodology**

This paper relies on both primary Chinese sources and secondary scholarly articles analyzing these sources. The Chinese sources include military and academic journals in which high-level government and military officials, as well as academic scholars, publish articles detailing their thoughts, observations, and conclusions about cybersecurity strategy. These articles provide the foundation for doctrine formation in China as the Chinese government and military often adapt the contents of these articles into official policy positions. Scholarly articles written by Western experts on China help translate the primary sources, give them historical context, and provide details about the Chinese authors. Although secondary sources often focus directly on China’s strategies and objectives in cyberspace, each source highlights different components. By pulling from analytical secondary sources, this paper seeks to collect, combine, and ultimately distill Chinese cyberspace strategies and objectives.
In addition, this paper looks to China’s *Defense White Paper*, (published biennially beginning in 2004), to gain a better understanding of the Chinese government’s own characterization of its cyber strategy and objectives. To assess bias in such a publication, and to address the real possibility of purposefully missing information, I matched anything mentioned in China’s *Defense White Paper* against the US Department of Defense’s *Report on the People’s Republic of China to Congress*, an annual overview of China. However, this report also has its limitations, as it is a publicly available, declassified document. As such, there exists the possibility that information related to China’s cybersecurity strategy and objectives has been removed and only included in the classified version of the report.

Research conducted by the Congressional Research Service, Congressional testimonies recorded by the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, and policy papers written by several think tanks provide additional observations, analysis, and conclusions relating to China’s cybersecurity strategy and objectives. Overall, this paper looks to these sources to provide a big-picture view of the Chinese cybersecurity threat facing the US.

**Applying Information Technologies to the Battlefield**

**Lessons Learned**

Initial Chinese discussions about information warfare and computer network operations stem from the People’s Liberation Army’s (PLA) observations of Operation DESERT STORM in 1991. Broadly stated, this operation made China aware of the use of information technologies (IT) during war. The PLA not only observed the operational effectiveness of using IT to connect different fighting forces involved in warfare, but also learned about potential vulnerabilities within this new system that could be exploited. Operation DESERT STORM sparked new doctrinal thinking within the PLA leadership, including the drafting of new strategies for fighting high-tech warfare.

The US invasion of Iraq during the first Persian Gulf War highlighted the powerful role IT can play in warfare and showcased the effectiveness of ‘jointness’ (integration of different military branches). The US military leveraged IT to create sophisticated information systems that connected sol-
diers, sailors, marines, and airmen, enabling them to conduct joint operations. For China, this was a major wake-up call. The DoD’s 2004 Annual Report to Congress on the Military Power of the People’s Republic of China notes that Operation DESERT STORM was a “watershed event in terms of Chinese observations of future warfare.”\(^5\) The PLA was frightened, yet fascinated, with how IT could be deployed to plan, coordinate, and execute military operations. The DoD’s 2003 report notes that Chinese military strategists studying the first Persian Gulf War observed “how quickly the [US], equipped with high-tech weapons systems, defeated the Iraqi force, which ‘resembled the PLA in many ways.’”\(^6\) In particular, top-level Chinese military officials watched how the US military utilized IT to enable ground troops to communicate with fighter jets to coordinate precision airstrikes and rapidly secure operational victories.

As PLA military officials studied the US military’s implementation of technology on the battlefield during operation DESERT STORM, they began to reconsider their own military strategies and operations.\(^7\) At the time, PLA strategists approached military planning by thinking about fighting “local wars under modern or high-tech conditions.”\(^8\) This strategy had been adopted during a time of decreasing US-Soviet tension and rising US-Sino relations, when China’s perceived threat of becoming involved in a massive land war had diminished. This led to reductions in the army paralleled with increased investments in navy and air force programs. However, after Operation DESERT STORM, PLA military leaders realized the “potential for ... enhanced information warfare, networks of systems, and ‘digitized’ combat forces.”\(^9\) In particular, the PLA discussed the need to modernize the PLA’s armed forces and develop a strategy for fighting information warfare.

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They referred to this new strategy as “fighting local wars under conditions of informationalization.”

The Need for an Information Warfare Strategy

“Informationalization” (xinxihua) is an awkward English word resulting from an imperfect translation. The most literal interpretation of the original Chinese would be: “To make or become informational.” However a comparison helps better translate the word: Informationalization is the information age equivalent of industrialization. Industrialization refers to the process of inventing and adopting new industrial technologies. Similarly, informationalization refers to the process of inventing and adopting new information technologies. With regards to the Chinese usage of the term, it often refers to the military’s development and adoption of information technologies.

China’s 2004 Defense White Paper first introduced the term “informationalization.” Produced every two years, these publications provide the Chinese central government’s perspective on many national security topics, including current threats facing China, new strategies and operations, future plans for force development, and anticipated budget allocations. Most notably, in the 2004 publication China recognizes that “the forms of war are undergoing changes from mechanization to informationalization.” Given this change, the document repeatedly calls for modernizing China’s armed forces and recommends building “a strong military by means of science and technology.” The document further states a need for China to transform


11. The term derives from a combination of the Mandarin Chinese word for information (xinxi) with a suffix used to signify the occurrence of change or transformation (hua). Often times, the suffix -hua corresponds to the English suffix -ization. However, Mandarin Chinese adds the -hua suffix to a wider variety of nouns than English does with -ization, resulting in words that do not have a direct English counterpart—such as “informationalization.”

12. To make matters more confusing, English translations of China’s Defense White Papers after 2004 switch from using “informationalization” as the translation to “informationization.”


14. Ibid.
“the military from a manpower-intensive one to a technology-intensive one,” or in other words to “transition from mechanization and semi-mechanization to informationalization.” Ultimately, China aims to “win local wars under conditions of informationalization.”

In particular, the 2004 Defense White Paper calls for “building military information systems and information infrastructure,” as well as “emphasizing training for informationalization.” However, China does not seek to completely do away with its current resources. Rather, it hopes to gradually introduce “computers and other information technology equipment … into routine operations” as well as “integrate military and civilian efforts to promote the informationalization process.” Ultimately, China plans to overlay advanced information systems on much of its current force structure to create a fully networked command and control infrastructure. This infrastructure would then be capable of coordinating military operations on land, at sea, in air, in space and across the electromagnetic spectrum.

China’s informationalization doctrine also demands a wholesale transformation of strategic military thinking to account for information technologies and the increasingly important role they play in warfare. In addition to making its current personnel, infrastructure, and equipment more technologically advanced and interconnected, China also recognizes a need to “develop new military theories and operational theories.” For China to adapt its current fighting capabilities to the high-tech battlefield of the twenty-first century requires the conceptualization and creation of an information warfare (IW) strategy. The next section of this paper dives deeper into the development of China’s IW strategy and investigates how the country plans to leverage information technology in warfare.

15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
Integrated Network Electronic Warfare: The PLA’s Information Warfare Strategy

The PLA’s IW strategy calls for preemptive operations that disrupt enemy information systems and create opportunities to launch conventional strikes. China refers to this strategy as Integrated Network Electronic Warfare (INEW). The PLA military leaders adopted the word ‘integrated’ because the IW strategy calls for “a combined application of computer network operations and electronic warfare used in a coordinated or simultaneous attack on enemy C4ISR networks and other key information systems.” In contrast to other militaries, which often treat computer network operations (CNO) and electronic warfare (EW) as separate concepts, the Chinese combined the two into an overarching IW strategy. Ultimately, the PLA’s INEW strategy intends to “weaken and disrupt the entire process by which battlefield information systems acquire, forward, process, and use information.”

The author of the INEW strategy, Major General Dai Qingmin, was a prolific and outspoken supporter of modernizing the PLA’s IW capabilities. He first described the combined use of computer network operations and electronic warfare in articles as early as 1999 and in a book entitled An Introduction to Information Warfare, which he wrote while on faculty at the

22. It is important to realize the distinction between IW and Information Operations (IO) when discussing such topics. IO refers to the operations implemented under the direction of an IW strategy. Also known as Computer Network Operations (CNO), IO incorporates Computer Network Attack (CNA), Computer Network Defense (CND), and Computer Network Exploitation (CNE). These are all concepts at the operational level, whereas information warfare is a concept at the strategic level, referring not just to IO/CNO but also other military operations.


24. Computer Network Operations (CNO) are the types of operations most often referred to when the media mentions anything ‘cyber’ related. This includes Computer Network Attacks (CNA), Computer Network Defense (CND), and Computer Network Exploitation (CNE). Electronic Warfare (EW) refers to military operations that have been deployed for several decades now, including the jamming of radar and communications. When combined, they make up China’s doctrine of INEW.


PLA’s Electronic Engineering Academy. There are three main components to the INEW strategy: (1) disrupting information systems and deceiving military personnel, (2) conducting preemptive information warfare operations and combining them with conventional strikes, and (3) securing information dominance. By better understanding this strategy, policymakers can more clearly predict how China will use its cyber capabilities.

Disruption and Deception

The PLA’s INEW strategy concentrates on disrupting information systems and deceiving military personnel. In particular, Chinese IW literature “focuses on disrupting logistics and communications.” The INEW strategy aims only to attack the “key nodes” that enemy information and logistics pass through; attacks on an adversary’s information systems are “not meant to suppress all networks, transmissions, and sensors or to affect their physical destruction.” Major General Dai and others suggest that the INEW strategy intends to target enemy nodes that will most deeply affect enemy decision-making, operations, and morale. China’s IW strategy explicitly calls for targeting logistics and communications networks—there is no mention of targeting civilian telecommunication systems, civilian energy grids, or domestic transportation networks.

While the INEW strategy combines CNO and EW, understanding their distinct roles within the strategy is also important. China plans to leverage “electronic warfare to disrupt the opponent’s acquisition and forwarding of information,” while relying on “computer network warfare to disrupt the opponent’s processing and use of information.” Mulvenon, an expert on the birth, development, and evolution of Chinese IW strategy, makes an important observation. He argues that the Chinese INEW strategy “focuses

27. Ibid.


30. Ibid.

on disruption and paralysis, not destruction.”32 This analysis is fundamental for better predictions of future Chinese cyber attacks. Understanding what INEW’s objectives are (and more importantly are not) can help policymakers better focus their attention on patching the vulnerabilities of key military logistics and communications nodes, rather than generally warning of potential attacks targeting critical civilian infrastructure.

In addition to disrupting information systems, China’s IW strategy calls for deception as well. Two senior PLA colonels mention military deception and psychological warfare as major components of IW.33 Similar to how the disruption of logistics and communication networks can slow down an adversary’s military mobilization, deception tactics can also have a similar impact. Deception from an IW standpoint involves compromising the integrity of an adversary’s information and information systems, forcing that adversary to reevaluate what is fact and what is fiction—a process that can take considerable time.

Preemptive Usage to Enable Conventional Strikes

While INEW’s strategic objective intends to disrupt enemy information systems and deceive military personnel, this is not the goal in and of itself. The PLA believes INEW can create an “opportunity for other forces to operate without detection or with a lowered risk of counterattack.”34 The Chinese want to wage information warfare to technologically paralyze an enemy and then exploit this paralysis with missile attacks or other conventional firepower. PLA writings show that CNO would be conducted first in a military campaign, often as a surprise attack against enemy information systems. This would delay the enemy’s ability to mobilize first or launch counterattacks. Compared to China, the US is both stronger and better equipped to wage all forms of warfare, but in particular the more conventional ones. Given this reality, the PLA developed an IW strategy that could leverage a unique feature of IW: its asymmetry. According to one PRC author, IW was “one of the most effective means for a weak military to fight a

32. Ibid., 258.
Policymakers must understand that China’s IW strategy calls for the use of computer network operations in tandem with conventional military. This integration of IW into larger military campaigns stands in contrast to the approach taken by other militaries, which tend to treat the components of IW as isolated covert campaigns. However, such integration implies a limited threat toward the US. While China may be able to knock out US logistics and communications networks to create a temporary paralysis, the country would not be able to later launch conventional strikes that could hit US targets.

Secure Information Dominance

INEW seeks to secure information dominance, which can be likened to the classic military concept of ‘gaining the high ground.’ Mulvenon, an expert on PLA information warfare strategy, defines information dominance as “the ability to defend one’s own information while exploiting and assaulting an opponent’s information infrastructure.” According to PLA military writings, information dominance involves “attacking an adversary’s C4ISR infrastructure to prevent or disrupt the acquisition, processing, or transmission of information in support of decision-making or combat operations.” Seizing control of an enemy’s ability to send and receive information is seen as one of the highest priorities in a conflict, more important than gaining air or naval superiority even.

INEW is a comprehensive military strategy that can be leveraged early on in a conflict to blind an enemy so that China—the technologically and militarily inferior force—can mobilize and attack. In a sense, the PLA’s INEW strategy is nothing new for the Chinese. Much of the strategy’s dis-

36. Ibid., 261.
39. Ibid., 11.
cussions about launching a preemptive strike, exploiting a superior adversary’s weakness, and gaining a strategic advantage are all military concepts that can be traced back to the military writings of Sun Tzu in his classic book *The Art of War*. While INEW might require sophisticated information technology and highly trained cyber warriors to carry it out, its fundamental concepts are typical of how Chinese military strategists think about and approach warfare.

**Conclusion**

Since the early 1990s, China has taken a more aggressive approach to modernizing its military forces and incorporating information technologies into its military strategies. The country’s overarching military doctrine seeks to establish a highly interconnected fighting force that can launch joint operations. Within this general doctrine of creating a technologically advanced military are more specific strategies for fighting information warfare. China has taken a unique approach to this new form of warfare by integrating both computer network operations and electronic warfare into a single, unified strategy. In particular, this strategy is based on three key pillars: disrupting logistics and communication networks while deceiving enemy personnel, preemptively conducting computer network operations to prepare for conventional strikes, and gaining information dominance.

China does not view computer network operations “as a standalone capability to be employed in isolation from other war-fighting disciples.”

Given this perspective, isolated attacks on civilian energy grids, telecommunication networks, and transportation systems become counterintuitive to Chinese objectives. This is not to say that civilian IT infrastructure will never be targeted; in fact, the US military often relies on civilian IT infrastructure for logistics and communications reasons, making them a direct target. However, according to China’s IW strategy, the PLA will only target such civilian infrastructure within the context of a broader military campaign.

When taking into account China’s cybersecurity objectives and strategy it becomes clear that policymakers should not be as fearful of an attack that

would be a cyber-Pearl Harbor. Rather than solely focusing on China’s capability to attack US civilian infrastructure, policymakers should also consider the stated goals and intentions articulated in Chinese documents, which single out military communication and logistics systems as targets.

Further research on China’s strategy and objectives in cyberspace can expand to include areas other than the military sector. While this paper focuses on cyberspace from a military perspective, further research can investigate China’s strategy for dealing with the political, economic, and social ramifications of cyberspace. For instances, China has recently announced new requirements for companies seeking to do business in China, one of which being that they provide the government with backdoor access into their software. In addition, China is known for requiring Internet users to provide proof of identity prior to creating social media accounts. The Chinese government recently extended this regulation to the popular social media website, WeChat, in August 2014. Future research focused on China’s economic strategies or social objectives in cyberspace can shine a light on China’s overall behavior in cyberspace, which goes well beyond the military domain. Such research could even work to strengthen the research in this paper; a better understanding of how China seeks to control economic exchange and political dissent in cyberspace could have consequences for their military strategy in cyberspace as well.


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PAY-TO-PLAY?
The Impact of Russian Policymaking on Central Asian Labor Migration

Pamela R. Levy

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), there are an estimated 230 million migrant laborers worldwide, constituting a group larger than the population of Brazil and making up over 3% of the world population. Of those, ten to twelve million are estimated to live in Russia, migrating predominantly from Central Asian countries such as Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. While there is a large body of scholarly work examining how labor migration impacts wages in host countries, little research has been done on the factors impacting the decision of individuals to migrate or the impacts of policy of the receiving state on migration. Research examining immigration economics outside the US context is especially sparse. This paper uses a theoretical framework based on neoclassical labor economics to examine how policy changes impact migration decisions to answer the question: Do Russia’s policy changes impact the decision of low-skill migrant workers to stay in the host country? Looking at the case of Uzbek service workers in Russia between 2014 and 2015, this paper argues that while the cost of necessities has a strong impact on the decision of migrant workers to stay in the host country, government-imposed costs of economic assimilation are generally of secondary importance and do not factor into the decision to stay.

Introduction

Russia, the second-largest foreign-born migrant recipient country in the world after the United States, has received nearly eleven million migrants annually since 1990, who now constitute nearly 10 percent of the contemporary Russian working population. There has been a significant change in types of migrants arriving in the country; the number of ethnic

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Russians migrating back to Russia has decreased, while more Central Asian migrant workers have sought work in large Russian cities. As the country’s labor force is expected to contract by 15% over the next decade, immigration will become increasingly vital for supporting the aging population.¹

The year 2014 saw several notable trends impact the economic viability of labor migration to Russia. First, Russia declared a new immigration policy that entered into effect January 2015, which both changed the work visa registration system and initiated a new linguistic and cultural proficiency requirement for all foreign residents. Second, as the ruble’s value dropped nearly in half over the course of 2014, its international exchange rate has also been impacted, decreasing the value of remittances. Thus, the legislative changes mentioned above were introduced during a period of economic and political uncertainty, suggesting that migrant workers may face increased threats. If the policy is effective and migration is subject to increased oversight, it could potentially lead to further economic and political instability in the region.

There are two ways of analyzing migration: the process of migration and the result of migration. Available studies of the result of immigration tend to focus on the impact of immigration on national economics and employment. This paper, however, focuses on the process of migration—focusing on the rationale and actions of migrant workers. Specifically, this paper aims to address the following question: Do Russia’s federal policy changes impact the decision of low-skill migrant workers to stay in the host country?

For the purposes of this paper, “federal policy changes” are defined as legislative changes made by either the executive or legislative branch of the national government that impact the subject populations of the policy equally nationwide. “Low-skill migrant workers” are defined as individuals who leave a source (sending) country to work in a host (receiving) country for economic reasons, whose skill set is not highly valued in the host country economy.

Uzbek Migrant Labor Dynamics That Impact Budgeting

The majority of migrants that were granted work in Russia in 2011 were from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Over 35 percent of migrant workers live in Moscow alone. The majority of these migrants fit a specific profile: male, medium-skilled, and youthful. A comprehensive study of Tajik migrant workers found that the over 50 percent are male and 77 percent were under the age of forty. The majority of these workers come to Russia seasonally, with over 74 percent concentrated in the construction sector. Less than 2 percent of those surveyed found work through traditional recruitment channels; 52 percent had undocumented status, and 70 percent were prone to trafficking. Similar statistics can be found on labor migrants from other countries in the region. While an increasing percentage of women and children are migrating to Russia, these trends are relatively minor.

A significant number of migrants send a portion of income earned abroad back as remittances; thus, migration becomes a communal investment. Seed money from their birth community may help migrants pay the initial costs of transportation to Russia, as well as expensive necessary documents needed for employment. As a result of communication difficulties and these strong community ties, it is often the case that ethnic communities find particular niches within specific industries. For example, Tajiks

2. MPC Migration Profile: Russia (Florence: Migration Policy Centre, 2013).
tend to work in construction, while Uzbeks have found a niche in the services sector. As a result of these trends, migrants tend to form close-knit ethnic enclaves in Russia, which both provide ethnic and cultural support in Russia and promote the continuation of strong ties to home communities.

**The Conceptual Model**

The migration decision is the deliberate choice of migrant workers to leave the country of their birth to work for an extended period of time. It occurs in two different locations: the source country, where the workers were born, and the host country, where the workers move to work. This research assumes that, once the migration decision occurs, it is reversible and the migrant worker is able to return to his home country at will. As a result, the migration decision becomes infinite—the choice to stay in the host country is a reaffirmation of the initial migration decision, and the decision to leave the country is a signal that the initial migration decision is no longer economically viable. This paper will examine how the labor economics models can be used to explain the immigration decision and costs of economic assimilation, defined by Borjas as “the rate of convergence in economic outcomes between immigrants and natives in the post-migration period” for migrant workers in Russia.7

The main theory used to explain the indefinite migration decision is The Roy Model, which suggests workers will migrate to a host country where they receive a greater economic return for their skills than the total costs of the move.8 This includes both the cost of migrating to the country and opportunity costs of leaving the source country, as well as costs that are more difficult to calculate, such as leaving friends and relatives behind as well as cultural differences. The return to skills—how much money workers receive for their particular skill set—plays a key role in determining migration favorability.9 If the migrant worker is likely to receive a greater income

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in the host country for his labor than in the source country, he is likely to migrate, even if his income would still be lower than that earned by the median population in that country.\textsuperscript{10}

The model used for this particular research is derived from overlaying The Roy Model with Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Based on research by psychologist Abraham Maslow, the hierarchy of needs is a psychological theory that models five consequential stages of personal development.\textsuperscript{11} According to Maslow, the first needs that must be met are physiological needs, such as breathing, food, water, and housing. Only after these needs are met can individuals begin fulfilling each succeeding stage. These succeeding stages include belongingness, which involves maintaining intimate relationships, and self-actualization, which is the ultimate stage that includes achieving full economic potential.

![Figure 1 Theoretical Framework Diagram](image)

This paper will specifically look at whether the increased costs of economic assimilation created through policy—here defined as the cost of acquiring capital or technology conducive to raising income—significantly factor into migrant worker’s decisions to stay in Russia. Given the complexity of the migration movement question, this paper focuses only on migrant


workers already in the host country. I argue that migrant consumption habits can be divided into three types of costs: basic needs, remittances, and economic assimilation. Migrants decide to stay in Russia as long as they are able to fulfill their basic needs. After fulfilling basic needs, I hypothesize that migrant workers will prioritize spending surplus money on remittances over economic assimilation, because of the prohibitive cost of documentation and the high levels of source country community savings invested in migrant workers.

While there are a number of source countries in Central Asia that provide labor to the Russian Federation, this paper will focus on the Uzbek migrant population, which has a strong presence in the services sector, because of the community’s large size and economic importance. Uzbeks comprised the greatest proportion of recipients of visas under the quota system, and remittances constitute over 12 percent of Uzbek GDP. As there is a lack of available information on immigration in this region, it is difficult to determine the costs of the initial immigration decision for this group. However, the literature suggests that the decision is not cost-prohibitive, as Russia does not have a visa system in place for Uzbekistan.

The 2015 immigration policy change has been implemented during a period of economic crisis in the Russian Federation, during which there has been a significant change in value of the ruble. While a recent study determined that economic status is not correlated with anti-immigrant sentiment in Russia post-recession, this economic crisis has still had a significant impact on the budgets of all residents of Russia, documented and undocumented. This paper will try to account for the impact of changing exchange rates and other macroeconomic factors.

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Methodology

I focused on the impact of changes to federal law 115-Z in January 2015. Two major policies were affected by this legislation. First, the system of migrant workers shifted from a quota system to a patent system. Previously, employers were allowed to employ a specific quota of people from a given country to do labor; under the new system, an unlimited number of workers would be allowed into the country. Employers would have to pay both a one-time fee to obtain a work permit for the employee as well as a monthly fee to maintain the permit. The second important change introduced a mandatory literacy, culture, and history proficiency exam for all migrant workers, which had a small associated fee. The only exemptions to this legislation were certain high-skill professionals.\(^\text{15}\) In addition to these new costs, migrant workers were also expected to pay for mandatory health insurance as well as a permit for legal residency.

The research below is based on the budget of an Uzbek worker in the services sector in Moscow, who earned a monthly income equivalent to $215 and assumes that the initial cost of the work permit for the migrant worker was already provided.\(^\text{16}\) The numbers chosen broadly represent the costs associated with each of the three categories above: economic assimilation (documentation), remittances, and basic needs. Information is standardized to one year.

\(^{15}\) HR & Tax Alert: Changes in Russian Immigration Legislation (Ernst & Young, 2015).

The information used for pricing “basic needs” comes from data on Moscow available from Numbeo, a website which collects user-reported data on prices in various cities. I chose food prices by determining the cheapest goods listed which would fulfill basic calorie needs for one week, reflecting cultural preferences for certain ingredients. As food prices have

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increased significantly between 2014 and 2015, I have reflected this in the chart by estimating the cost of food in 2014 as about 10 percent lower than in 2015.\textsuperscript{18} Information for “remittances” comes from estimates available on the cost of transfers between various countries.\textsuperscript{19} Surplus income not used for basic needs is then put into the “remittance” row, minus the cost of transfer. Finally, I chose to model economic assimilation as the procurement of documents that cement legal work status. The 2014 and 2015 policies are both modeled in the “documentation” section, based off available information on documentation required to obtain legal work status.\textsuperscript{20} In this scenario, the migrant worker is responsible for paying the monthly work patent fee. Health insurance was not part of the pre-2015 policy.

\textbf{Table 2} Exchange Rates for Uzbek Som, Russian Ruble, and U.S. Dollar, 2014–2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year (Jan. Est.)</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RUB : SOM</td>
<td>1 : 66</td>
<td>1 : 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USD : RUB</td>
<td>34 : 1</td>
<td>64 : 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USD : SOM</td>
<td>1 : 2202</td>
<td>1 : 2436</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Four models will be looked at in the research section, reflecting how changing international exchange rates and documentation costs could impact the rational budgeting decisions of migrant workers.

\textbf{Research and Analysis}

The first model (Table 3) represents the initial economic and political state of affairs in 2014, before the economic crisis and introduction of new legislation. This first model is the most likely to ensure long-term migrant commitment and could be once again achieved if there is a return to eco-

\textsuperscript{18} “Russia Faces over 10% Hike in Retail Food Prices in 2015,” \textit{Sputnik International}, December 25, 2014.


nomic stability in the country as well as a rollback of the 2015-era immigration policies.

**Table 3** 2014-era Policies with a 2014 Dollar-Ruble Exchange Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPTUAL MODEL 1: WORK IN RUSSIA, 2014 (2014 EXCHANGE RATES)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic Needs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESTIMATED INCOME</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL COST</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOME LEFT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Choice A: Remittances</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remittance Surplus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transaction Fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESTIMATED REMAINING INCOME</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL COST</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOME LEFT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Choice B: Documentation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Patent (Monthly Fee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and Cultural Proficiency Examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESTIMATED REMAINING INCOME</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL COST</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOME LEFT</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The low cost of basic needs, in comparison to the current economic situation, allows for a strong income surplus that would allow the migrant worker to either work towards achieving legal status or to send enough remittances back home to provide significant community and familial support. Though the migrant worker is still unable to achieve documented sta-
tus solely on the basis of earned legal income, it is likely that he would be able to find supplemental income that would allow him to become documented over time. Yet, even in this model, the migrant worker is forced in the short-term and medium-term to make an immediate choice between paying documentation fees and sending remittances back home. This may help explain why, even during times of relative prosperity for the migrant laborer population, the majority of migrant workers do not decide to pursue economic assimilation through documentation.

The next model (Table 4) looks at how the 2014-era policies would fare under the current exchange rate, a scenario similar to what occurred in the Russian Federation in the fall of 2014. If Russia were to rescind their current immigration policies, this model would reflect their costs and income.
### CONCEPTUAL MODEL 2: WORK IN RUSSIA, 2014 (2015 EXCHANGE RATES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Needs</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>$1,957.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>$180.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>$372.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESTIMATED INCOME</strong></td>
<td>$2,580.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL COST</strong></td>
<td>$2,509.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOME LEFT</strong></td>
<td>$71.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Choice A: Remittances

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remittance Surplus</td>
<td>$67.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transaction Fee</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESTIMATED REMAINING INCOME</strong></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL COST</strong></td>
<td>$71.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOME LEFT</strong></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Choice B: Documentation

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Patent (Monthly Fee)</td>
<td>$180.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Insurance</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and Cultural Proficiency Examination</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESTIMATED REMAINING INCOME</strong></td>
<td>$71.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL COST</strong></td>
<td>$180.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOME LEFT</strong></td>
<td>($109.00)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this second model, the migrant worker is once again left with a small income surplus; however, the barriers to obtaining legal employment are lower. In this scenario, the migrant worker may be able to afford legal documentation if he works a side job—either formal or informal—which could give him additional cash to supplement his income. However, once again, the worker must choose between working towards economic assimilation and providing remittances to his family members. Given that an additional income source is still necessary to obtain the necessary documents, it
is more likely that the migrant worker will rationally choose to spend his money on remittances back home.

**Table 5** 2015-era Policies with a 2015 Dollar-Ruble Exchange Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPTUAL MODEL 3: WORK IN RUSSIA, 2015 (2015 EXCHANGE RATES)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic Needs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESTIMATED INCOME</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL COST</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOME LEFT</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Choice A: Remittances**

| Remittance Surplus                                           | $64.00  |
| Transaction Fee                                              | $7.00   |
| **ESTIMATED REMAINING INCOME**                               | $0.00   |
| **TOTAL COST**                                               | $71.00  |
| **INCOME LEFT**                                              | $0.00   |

**Choice B: Documentation**

| Work Patent (Monthly Fee)                                     | $720.00 |
| Health Insurance                                             | $80.00  |
| Language and Cultural Proficiency Examination                | $78.00  |
| **ESTIMATED REMAINING INCOME**                               | $71.00  |
| **TOTAL COST**                                               | $878.00 |
| **INCOME LEFT**                                              | ($807.00)|

The third model (Table 5) above reflects the current crisis impacting migrant workers. Given the increasing cost of fulfilling basic needs in the face of economic sanctions and rampant inflation, a migrant worker is forced to spend most of his income on basic needs. He is left to decide between retaining the remainder or sending remittances; his remaining income
is not enough to purchase even the cheapest share of required documentation. Therefore, the worker will likely decline pursuit of economic assimilation. If he does not have a work permit, it would be financially unfeasible for him to stay in Russia. This may help explain the decline in migration that has occurred since the start of the financial crisis.

The last model (Table 6) will pair the 2015 immigration policy with a 2014 dollar-ruble exchange rate. It assumes that government-stated prices will remain the same, but market prices will change to return to pre-crisis values. It is representative of an immediate deflation scenario, which could occur if the Russian Central Bank took definitive action on monetary policy to ensure such a scenario occurred.
Table 6 2015-era Policies with a 2014 Dollar-Ruble Exchange Rate

| Basic Needs |          |
|-------------|--|----------|
| Housing     | $1,780.00 |
| Utilities   | $163.00   |
| Food        | $334.00   |

$ESTIMATED INCOME$ | $2,580.00 |

$TOTAL COST$ | $2,277.00 |

$INCOME LEFT$ | $303.00 |

**Choice A: Remittances**

| Remittance Surplus | $296.00 |
| Transaction Fee    | $7.00   |

$ESTIMATED REMAINING INCOME$ | $0.00 |

$TOTAL COST$ | $303.00 |

$INCOME LEFT$ | $0.00 |

**Choice B: Documentation**

| Work Patent (Monthly Fee) | $1,500.00 |
| Health Insurance          | $156.00   |
| Language and Cultural Proficiency Examination | $153.00 |

$ESTIMATED REMAINING INCOME$ | $303.00 |

$TOTAL COST$ | $1,809.00 |

$INCOME LEFT$ | ($1,506.00) |

Unlike the previous model, the migrant worker is able to earn a significant surplus that allows for partial obtainment of documentation. The worker has the choice between obtaining health insurance and completing the language and cultural proficiency examination or sending surplus remittances back home or investing them in other non-assimilatory ways. The cost of documentation in this scenario is high, as the government has not yet adjusted to economic fluctuations. Though the migrant worker would be able to take the proficiency exam and obtain insurance, he would be un-
able to maintain the monthly patent fee. This seems to suggest that the more costs that are required for documentation, the less cost-effective it becomes to pursue legalization.

**Understanding Complicating Factors**

The above suggests that the costs of economic assimilation are prohibitively expensive; even in times of surplus, migrants cannot afford all necessary documentation. However, there continues to be steady flows of migrant laborers to Moscow as well as a significant number of migrants who do obtain legal status. This implies other factors may complicate the picture.

First, and perhaps most importantly, this model does not account for the impact of the black market. Buying fraudulent documents on the black market could allow for access to forged documentation. While this may have a significant one-time cost, this investment may reduce costs in the long-term. Similarly, migrant workers may sell goods and services on the black market to obtain supplemental income, and this additional money would not show up in formal surveys of migrant worker salaries. Thus, migrant worker income may be higher on average than is portrayed in this research.

Second, migrant workers may utilize established networks to decrease costs. As noted in earlier-cited studies, migrants often rely on ethnic networks to find jobs, as well as housing and other necessities. These groups may have income-pooling resources and organizational knowledge of cost-saving methods for navigating life in Moscow.

Third, this research does not cover all costs associated with each level of the hierarchical framework. In order to work with available data, this research did not cover the cost of smaller and more variable needs, such as transportation, immediate healthcare, toiletries, Internet, and clothing. It also does not take into account the tools that migrant workers may need to purchase in order to work, nor costs of economic assimilation not associated directly with documentation, such as the cost of HIV testing or Russian language classes.

Fourth, this model looks specifically at one migrant laborer archetype: an already-established male migrant worker with a stable salary. While it is a
common migrant worker profile, this is not a fully representative picture of the studied population. In addition to not incorporating gender and age differentials, it does not take into account groups outside of the service sector, non-Moscow migrant populations, and individuals who attain skills relating to economic assimilation but do not take on a direct monetary cost.

Lastly, though this paper accounts for changes in the international economy and exchange rates, there are ways that the current economic crisis has impacted migration that are likely missed in this study. This includes the impact of rising unemployment on the availability of jobs for migrant workers; the targeted impact of the financial crisis on certain sectors, such as construction, which tend to be especially susceptible during recessions; and the rising costs of imported goods due to the implementation of economic sanctions.

Conclusions

The original question this research set out to answer was: do Russia’s federal policy changes impact the decision of low-skill migrant workers to stay in the host country? Given the inordinately expensive cost of documentation, the answer appears to be that policy changes are superficial and do not have a strong impact on the decision of migrants to remain in Russia.

The findings of the above research suggest that many migrant workers remain undocumented for two reasons: the high costs of documents required to achieve legal status after entering the country and the endurance of strong ties between source communities and migrant workers. As long as Russia has a visa-free regime with major source countries of migrant labor, regulations that increase the costs of becoming legal—without impacting the ability of the migrant workers to arrive in the first place—are unlikely to deter migration. However, they are likely to further segregate the population and make migrant labor more vulnerable to coercion.

Why, then, does Russia continue to impose increasingly strict regulatory policies if it makes no real impact on the decisions of migrant workers to remain in country? It has been argued that President Vladimir Putin has used regulatory policy to influence public opinion, gain additional income for the state, and turn public attention away from key international issues. It
is possible that Putin is using immigration policy changes to retain control over the immigrant population and businesses reliant on international labor. In addition, he may be using the increased income to offset state deficits. In any of these cases, the recent immigration policy changes have likely been implemented for reasons unrelated to general Russian public opinion on the subject, and are likely not part of a grander anti-immigration government policy.

Acknowledgements

This paper could not have been written without the great help of my faculty advisor, Marlene Laruelle, director of the Central Asia Program at the George Washington University, as well as the recommendations of others in the field. Thank you to the various people who have helped me throughout this process with this research, including but not limited to: Laura Adams, Julian Waller, Peter Rollberg, Muriel Atkin, Nathan Cox, Isaac Scarborough, Kelsey King, and others.
PERCEPTIONS OF GENDER ROLES AND LAND OWNERSHIP: 
Analyzing Policy as a Mechanism for Safeguarding Women’s Land Rights in Liberia

Samah Mcgona

In May 2013, the Liberian government reformed its land management system by introducing the country’s first Land Rights Policy. The reform sought to define various land categories and identify individual property rights. The policy also attempted to outline land rights as they apply to women. However, since gender roles are strongly connected to historical and cultural norms, policy alone was not sufficient in securing equal ownership rights for men and women. In Liberian society, land ownership and personal livelihood are heavily contingent on gender identity. Historical prominence and cultural acceptance of men as laborers reinforce control over land by men at the expense of women’s autonomy. This thesis analyzes the 2013 Liberian Land Rights Policy from a gender perspective to evaluate whether policy is an effective mechanism for safeguarding women’s land rights in the country. This topic is important to the socioeconomic advancement of women in Liberia because effective land rights policies increase women’s access to sustainable livelihoods, food security, and economic independence. This research finds that the Liberian government can safeguard women’s land rights by combining a national policy that codifies gender equality principles with local initiatives that encourage changes in social perceptions of gender roles and land ownership.

Introduction

“She could not claim the land if she did not have children by the man … Even if you and the man had farmed on it before his death, the relatives of the man will not allow you to have it.”

— Female Town Chief in Liberia

Samah Mcgona is a Liberian-born, American-raised, Black feminist who strives to create dialogue about the splendor and complexity of Black womanhood. Samah majored in International Affairs with concentrations in International Development and Africa. Since graduating from the Elliott School, she is completing a J.D. program in hopes of combating gender-based oppression globally.

Women in Liberia and across the African continent have a tenuous hold on land. In various sub-Saharan African countries, undefined property rights and gender bias limit women’s access to, and control over, land and other resources. These practices are detrimental to women because property rights, specifically land rights, are vital to the attainment of basic human rights such as the right to food, health, housing, water, work, and education.

While legal accountability is needed to secure women’s land rights, issues of social norms and gender roles are often overlooked in policy recommendations. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to resolve issues of legal bias and social inequality. However, a clear understanding of historical shifts in gender roles and land ownership laws can better contextualize and humanize the issue. This paper analyzes the 2013 Liberian Land Rights Policy and argues that the Liberian government can effectively safeguard women’s land rights by combining a national policy that codifies gender equality principles with local initiatives that encourage changes in social perceptions of gender roles and land ownership.

What is the 2013 Land Rights Policy?

The introduction of the 2013 Land Rights Policy highlights the Liberian government’s efforts to solve increasing land disputes throughout the country. The Liberia Land Commission is considered an autonomous government organization, which is composed of seven commissioners from different counties in Liberia. Since its founding in 2009, the commission has undertaken projects reviewing and analyzing Liberia’s land laws, Liberian legal history, customary tenure, public land sale deeds, aboriginal land grant deeds, public land grant deeds, tribal certificates, and land use rights, including commercial use rights.

2. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
Regardless of the scale, the commission included specific policies related to women’s land rights in the released 2013 Liberian Land Rights Policy. These policies represent the first steps taken by post-conflict Liberia to safeguard women’s land access and ownership rights. However, the question remains whether the initiatives introduced in the 2013 Land Rights Policy can sustainably safeguard women’s land rights throughout the country.

**Methodology**

This paper argues that safeguarding women’s land rights in Liberia can be measured using three criteria: (1) improving women’s economic prospects, (2) protecting women from illicit land acquisitions, and (3) changing social perceptions of normative gender roles. The 2013 Liberian Land Rights Policy will be analyzed through these gendered criteria to determine whether the document can sustainably safeguard land rights for Liberian women. Through this policy review, various recommendations will be made to strengthen the Liberian government’s land policy and social reconstruction methods.

To conduct this extensive policy review, I compared the projected outcomes of notable political theory to Liberia’s recorded practice of issuing land rights. The historical analysis will focus on the period between the signing of the Liberian Declaration of Independence in 1847 to the end of the Second Liberian Civil War in 2003. An in-depth application of Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink’s theory of international norms and political change will illustrate why social norms are important to state policy and how these historical shifts in gender roles and land rights have occurred in Liberia. A breakdown of historical documents, including Liberia’s constitution and various laws, will demonstrate changes in the understanding and importance of land rights in the country. Published oral histories from Liberian women and survey questionnaires (2008 Participatory Poverty Assessment [PPA] and 2012 Round 5 Afrobarometer Survey) will represent perspectives on gender roles in Liberia.

**Historical Analysis: The Liberian Context**

After creating a settlement, Americans of African descent used persuasive tactics and fraudulent means to seize land from indigenous communi-
ties and establish what is today known as Liberia. These early settlers saw themselves as American and viewed the native Liberian population as uneducated and primitive. The settler population further alienated themselves by refusing to learn the language of the country to which they chose to return and instead imposed English on 90 percent of the population. When Liberia was declared a free republic in 1847, the country’s constitution created conflicts between European inspired laws and native Liberian customs and excluded approximately eighty thousand indigenous inhabitants. This rift between the settler minority and indigenous majority lasted for many years as both groups fought over power, living spaces, and resources. Violence ensued as the indigenous population began to resist the settlers who refused to accept their beliefs and practices.

Years of shaky policy implementation eventually led to political opposition that had been suppressed for over a century. In 1980, following public riots against increased rice prices, a Liberian of non-American descent named Samuel K. Doe led a military coup that overthrew the government that had controlled Liberia since 1847. The coup ended Liberia’s first republic. In 1986, a new constitution established the second republic of Liberia and Doe became the first native Liberian to retain power as head of state. Doe’s rise to power was marked by a bloody takeover, a ban on politics and political parties, extreme authoritarian methods, and discrimination againstAmerico-Liberians and other minority tribes in Liberia.

As internal conflict became rampant following the 1980 coup, marginalization of youth and women and the mismanagement of national resources were widespread, which further contributed to stark inequalities in the distribution of benefits. In December 1989, Charles Taylor, a corrupt former civil servant under Doe, who was born from an Americo-Liberian

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7. Somah, Historical Settlement of Liberia, 6.
8. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
father and a native mother, launched a rebellion against Doe’s regime that led to a prolonged civil war in which Doe was killed. A period of relative peace in 1997 allowed for elections that brought Taylor to power, but major fighting resumed in 2000. An August 2003 peace agreement ended the war and prompted the resignation of Taylor. Taylor was later convicted of eleven counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The Liberian Civil War was a period when the subordinate status of women in the country truly became apparent. Rampant land disputes, sexual violence, and civil organizing highlighted the disposition of Liberian women. Fourteen years of brutal civil conflict drastically impacted the country’s economic growth and prospect, further divided the country, and decreased access to a sustainable livelihood. The war killed an estimated 270,000 people, created hundreds of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), and shattered the lives of thousands of others. It destroyed basic institutions of governance as well as significant physical infrastructure and social capital. The economy collapsed, impoverishing much of the Liberian population. Due to the war, the country’s judicial system weakened, the number of women heads of household increased, and land became an even more integral part of life in Liberia.

A decade after the end of the Liberian Civil War, Liberia is focused on rebuilding its infrastructure and economy. Land laws and policy reforms are integral to this process. The country’s land-tenure system reflects a longstanding division between the urban elite, often considered descendants of Americo-Liberian settlers, and rural indigenous populations. Urban land rights are governed by a Western statutory system. Rural communities—which make up 85 percent of the country’s population and largely practice subsistence agriculture—use their own customary systems. However,

12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
most customary land is not titled, and by law the state owns all land not secured by a deed. Under this system, the government recognizes rural people’s rights to use customary land, but not to own it.

**Historical Shifts in Gender Norms and Land Ownership**

**Theory**

This section seeks to explain why and how perceptions of gender roles and land ownership have shifted in Liberia by thoroughly applying Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink’s theory of international norms and political change. Finnemore and Sikkink argue that international norms drastically affect political change in states. The authors define a norm as “a standard of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity.” According to Finnemore and Sikkink, norms are able to influence state policies through a cycle that includes:

1. **Norm emergence:** Various factors including human agency, indeterminacy, and chance lead to the emergence of a norm. Individuals invested in a certain norm, often organizations, develop a platform to persuade a ‘critical mass’ of decision makers to adopt new norms.

2. **The broad acceptance of the norm:** Through international ‘peer pressure’ states are convinced to accept a new norm to improve legitimacy.

3. **Internalization of the norm:** A norm becomes internalized when it becomes so widely accepted that acting upon it is unreflective.

Through an analysis of historical changes in gender norms and land ownership, this paper argues that the emergence of Liberia into the international development scene following its fourteen-year civil conflict made the country susceptible to international pressures to conform to human rights and equality norms. Organizations like the United Nations, World Bank, 18. Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,” International Organization, 52 (1998): 887–917.
and other development organizations created a platform and convinced a critical mass of Liberian government officials and citizens that gender equality, in a broad sense, was an important social progress.

Due to international pressure and domestic needs, the Liberian government developed an acceptance for equality norms within legislation. However, the Liberian government and public have not fully internalized gender equality as an unreflective norm.

Equal Access to Land

The meaning of land in Liberia has shifted from one of communal and familial lineage to a necessary resource for survival and economic stability.

The 1986 Liberian Constitution includes a number of provisions related to real property rights. Article 22 states, “Every person shall have the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.” It limits that right to Liberian citizens, but makes an exception for non-citizen missionary, educational, and other benevolent institutions. Yet, despite the constitution, the Liberian government consistently treated untitled lands as public government property.

In practice, Liberia has had a dualistic legal system since the early 1800s when all land acquired by the American Colonization Society from indigenous peoples became public land and was allotted to citizens as private deeded land. Those holding land under customary laws suffered serious tenure loss. The government has continuously struggled to provide landowners under customary laws a security of tenure comparable to that of owners under statutory tenure.

The bloody civil war that devastated Liberia between 1989 and 2003 drastically changed the importance of land within the country. For many rural communities especially, land was familial and passed on as a means of

21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
keeping people and customs together rather than acquiring profit. Yet, the civil war forced many Liberians to seek refuge in other countries.\textsuperscript{23} When the war eventually ended in 2003 and democratic rule was established in 2005, many of the refugees returned to Liberia, mostly facilitated by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).\textsuperscript{24} Unfortunately, immediately after the war, frequent disputes over ownership were exacerbated by the loss of legal documents and a total breakdown of the legal system.

Taking advantage of the high demand for land, some Liberians devised means of disposing of almost any available land that had no visible ownership or that was not under immediate supervision.\textsuperscript{25} Many returnees encountered problems reclaiming or accessing their land, buildings, and other assets that survived the war. In many cases, assets were taken over by people who were not willing to relinquish their claims. In these cases, illegal occupants usually demanded that the claimants provide valid documentation to support their claims of ownership; documentation that often no longer exists after the country’s civil war.

According to an Afrobarometer survey conducted in Liberia in December 2008, a clear majority of Liberians say land ownership and distribution is the leading cause of violent conflict in the country (Figure 1). More than six in ten respondents (62 percent) rank land ownership and distribution at the top of the list of causes of violent conflict.

\begin{itemize}
\item 23. Ibid.
\item 25. “Land Disputes In Liberia: Views From Below,” 1.
\end{itemize}
The increase in conflicts over land after the civil war encouraged the Liberian government to secure communal/untitled lands. This shift toward a formal land management system allowed landowners, who previously used land solely for subsistence, to make external profits and gain personal security.

While the idea of land ownership has shifted in the country, acceptance of gender equality and women’s rights in regards to land has not changed as drastically. Under various customary and regional laws, women can only own land through inheritance and are therefore heavily dependent on their husbands or fathers. In the capital city of Monrovia, women with...

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children spend hours on the streets selling peanuts and other commodities for a measly income. Many of these street or market women are city squatters who have no access to housing, or rural women who became destitute when their husbands died or their family lands were unjustly sold. Broad inequality in social positions, education levels, and economic opportunities are the origins of numerous disparities Liberian women face.

Gender-based divisions of labor also significantly impact women’s rights to exercise control over land and gain economic independence. Liberia’s Poverty Reduction Strategy notes that women are major players in the agricultural sector, making up the majority of smallholder producers and the agricultural labor force.\(^\text{27}\) However, a majority of female labor in Liberia is unpaid, concentrated in the informal sector, and characterized by insecurity. In Liberia, women produce around 60 percent of agricultural goods and carry out 80 percent of trading activities in rural areas, but they have less access to productive inputs—land, skills training, basic tools, and technology—than men.\(^\text{28}\) So, even though women are involved in agricultural labor, they do not receive the same wages, protections, or ownership rights as men.

The government has attempted to initiate various legislations to safeguard women’s land rights in the past. The Property Law in the Liberian Code of Laws of 1956 was a piece of legislation that focused mainly on widows’ rights but was supplemented by the Devolution of Estates and Establishment of Rights of Inheritance for Spouses of both Statutory and Customary Marriages in December 2003.\(^\text{29}\) The shift from the 1956 law, which simply stated that widows had rights to their partner’s land, to the 2003 law, which affirmed women’s human rights and ownership rights, is drastic to the acceptance of equality as a norm within Liberia. The 2003 law, as opposed to the 1956 law, includes women on communal and private lands and explicitly names women as beneficiaries of basic human rights. This large shift and other changes in regards to land equality only began to truly take effect after the civil war. This shift occurred slowly and was often

\(^\text{27}\) “Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy,” 27.
\(^\text{28}\) “Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy,” 27.
\(^\text{29}\) “Photo Essay: Protecting Women’s Land Rights in Liberia,” AllAfrica.
implemented from top down policy or national legislation. However, while this top down approach has legally changed national laws, there is little evidence to show that the realities of everyday women have altered.

Changing social perceptions of gender roles and land rights to include a broad norm of gender equality is imperative to policy implementation. Without a shift away from a culture of corruption and subordination toward a culture of equality, Liberian women will not substantially benefit from legislative measures. The 2013 Land Rights Policy cannot sustainably safeguard women’s land rights without this important component of social reconstruction.

**Policy Review and Recommendations**

The Land Commission introduced a twenty-six-paged Land Rights Policy to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in May 2013. President Sirleaf publically praised the policy’s clarity on categorizing public, government, customary, and private lands and the associated rights and responsibilities. She also stressed that the Land Policy addresses past inequalities and provides a vision for the land sector. The policy includes new provisions for customary land, which will require extensive education for rural communities across the country.

Prior to completing the policy, the Land Commission conducted nationwide consultations that began in late 2012 and conclude in April 2013. Liberia was divided into regions or sections (Table 1), with each consultation covering a region and inclusive of government officials, community representatives, and civil society members from each county in that region. Each consultation counted around fifty participants on average. Participants were grouped by county, women, and youths. Each consultation concluded with a plenary session where groups presented their views.

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33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
and comments on the Policy. Importantly, for the first time in Liberia’s history these consultations were electronically recorded and transcripts prepared, although the transcripts were not and have not been made public.

Table 1 Nationwide County Consultations on Liberia’s Land Rights Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consultation Location and Date</th>
<th>Counties Covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tubmanburg, Bomi</td>
<td>Grand Cape Mount, Bomi, and Gbarpolu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 5–7, 2012</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monrovia</td>
<td>Urban Montserrado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 22–24, 2013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buchanan, Grand Bassa</td>
<td>Margibi, Rivercess, Grand Bassa, and Rural Montserrado</td>
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<td>February 12–14, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harper, Maryland</td>
<td>Grand Kru, River Gee, and Maryland</td>
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<td>February 20–22, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zwedru, Grand Gedeh</td>
<td>Sinoe and Grand Gedeh</td>
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<td>February 25–27, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gbargna, Bong</td>
<td>Lofa, Bong, and Nimba</td>
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<td>March 5–7, 2013</td>
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For the sake of this thesis’s focus on Liberian women’s land rights, this section will identify sections of the policy that specifically speak to women’s land rights and analyze whether policies established contribute to (1) improving women’s economic prospects, (2) protecting women from illicit land acquisitions, and (3) changing social perceptions of normative gender roles. These three criteria are important because, as displayed from this research, inequality in land ownership is a multifaceted issue that stems from social norms that exclude and subordinate women.

While land reforms in general can contribute to a better land management system for all Liberians, sustainably safeguarding women’s land rights requires specific gender equality principles that recognize Liberia’s history of subordinating women’s rights and provide a solution for women to realistically seek relief if their rights are violated.
Analysis

In the introduction of the 2013 Land Rights Policy, the commission establishes nine principles, five of which specifically affect the advancement of Liberian women. Table 2 below lists these five principles. Principle 2.1 alludes to the need to protect women and all Liberian citizens from illicit land acquisitions; principle 2.3 touches on how land reform can improve the economic prospects of all Liberian citizens; and, principle 2.4 establishes general ownership rights.35

Table 2 Summary of Principles Established by 2013 Land Rights Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description of Principle</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Secure Land Rights</td>
<td>All communities, families, individuals, and legal entities enjoy secure land rights free of fear that their land will be taken from them, except in accordance with legal due process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.3 Equitable Benefits</td>
<td>Ensure that the benefits of economic growth are equitably distributed by creating wealth for all Liberians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Equal Access</td>
<td>The Constitution gives all Liberians “the right to own property alone as well as in association with others,” which means land ownership is permitted for all Liberians regardless of their identity, whether based on custom, ethnicity, tribe, language, gender, or otherwise.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.5 Equal Protection</td>
<td>Since the founding of Liberia the lands of customary communities have been less secure than private lands. This policy must end such that lands under customary practice and norms are given protection equal to that of private lands. Moreover, women’s land rights are often less protected than those of men. This policy aims to give equal protection to the land rights of men and women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 Clarity</td>
<td>Policies and laws can be successfully implemented only when they are clearly understood and publicly available.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Principle 2.5 is the most gender-responsive clause. It is essentially an equal protection clause that confirms women’s land rights in a straightforward manner. The clause reads, “Although the country’s constitution guar-

antee that ‘all persons, irrespective of ethnic background, race, sex, creed, place of origin or political opinion, are entitled to the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual,’ including land rights … women’s land rights are often less protected than those of men. This policy aims to give equal protection to the land rights of men and women.” This principle is the clearest advocate for gender-responsive reform because it actively recognizes Liberia’s history of subordinating women’s rights and proclaims that women and men have equal land rights under the law. Lastly, principle 2.7 affects the advancement of Liberian women because clarity and accessibility to the policy enable women to realistically seek relief if their rights are violated.

In section 7.4 of the policy, the commission makes recommendations in regards to acquisition or “how private land may be acquired, especially with respect to the privatization of customary land.” The policy broadly states that acquisition of private land must treat men and women equally, especially regarding to acquisition upon marriage, divorce, or the death of a spouse. Despite its breadth this section is a legal statement that contributes to securing women’s labor and land ownership rights and protecting women from illicit land acquisitions.

When differentiating and defining private and customary land rights, the commission attempts to address gender-specific components by inserting “including women” in multiple sections. For example in section 6.1.4, the policy states, “Customary practices and norms not in conflict with national land laws, the Constitution, and international legal obligations, including women’s land rights, will be integrated into the national formal legal framework.” This clause is broad, but again can be taken as another legal statement that secures women’s land ownership rights by only recognizing customary practices that take into account women’s rights. In an indirect way this clause may also target social perceptions of normative gender roles by rejecting customary practices and norms that do not see women as capable of owning and managing land. There are other principles and clauses within

37. Ibid., 22.
the policy that attempt to include the word “women” but are not directly gender-responsive reform recommendations.

**Findings**

In its essence, the 2013 Land Rights Policy excels at clarifying the difference between private and customary land. The commission successfully created one brief document that defines and attributes rights to specific types of land within Liberia. The most gender-responsive clause in the policy is principle 2.5, which sets a direct equal protection clause for Liberian women. This clause is reiterated throughout the policy when defining customary land, private land, acquisitions, and ownership.

Despite its clarity, the policy around customary land tenure may leave some women unprotected, as customary norms around land inheritance often subordinate women. Although it is a needed step, by attempting to integrate customary practices into national legislation, the Land Rights Policy will face many future disputes that need solutions. For example, under most customary systems, if a woman’s husband dies and they jointly planted a rubber farm, she would be denied rights to the farm unless she had children by the man.\(^{39}\) Similarly, if a woman and man divorce, the woman may not be entitled to the land or trees the couple owned while together.

Overall, the policy clearly includes clauses that legally protect women from illicit land acquisitions and attempt to address how land ownership improves economic opportunities. The document is weak in addressing changing social perceptions of normative gender roles, which I argue cannot be achieved through policy alone. Rejecting customary laws that do not respect women’s rights does not necessarily change women’s social roles within their communities. Initiatives that focus on empowering women heads of household, improving education prospects for Liberian women, and diversifying the type of formal work available to women can best target issues of social perceptions of normative gender roles.

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Conclusion and Further Research

The Liberian Land Commission has done a commendable job by creating Liberia’s first national policy that not only clarifies land categories, but also codifies gender equality in relation to land ownership. There are three main recommendations that arose from this analysis. (1) The commission needs to make the 2013 Land Rights Policy truly accessible to all Liberian citizens as stated in its principle 2.7; (2) the policy needs to provide a solution for women to realistically seek relief if their rights are violated; (3) the policy needs to address issues of local norms that exclude women from ownership rights, especially customary lands.

The land commission’s dedication to conducting consultations needs to continue to evaluate whether communities are embracing all of the provisions. Most importantly, there needs to be community engagement with women who may not clearly understand what mechanisms there are to protect them if their land rights are violated. Social programming, beyond the capital city, is needed to impact Liberian society and slowly shift community norms that exclude women from ownership. This includes programming that pushes the education of young girls and discourages early marriage. These are simple steps that can improve women’s economic prospects and protect women from illicit land acquisitions.

Changing social perceptions of normative gender roles in Liberia will take time. However, the Liberian government, along with various NGOs and international organizations in the country, can assist Liberian women in their effort to claim their rights. After some time has passed and the government makes consultation transcripts public, a more thorough evaluation of the document will be necessary. In person interviews with Liberian women who are drastically impacted by the policy and small landowners will also help evaluate what changes the policy can achieve.

Further research related to historical perceptions of gender roles in Liberia and access to land records would help better strengthen this argument. The lack of a central digitalized system made accessing land records and deeds difficult. There are also not many published oral histories or historical documents related to the everyday life of Liberia women. Traveling to Liberia, conducting in person interviews, and accessing physical records could address these two problems.
Acknowledgements

My completion of this paper could not have been accomplished without the support of my amazing faculty advisor, Dr. Nemata Blyden. I cannot express enough thanks for your continued support and encouragement. Many thanks to my graduate student mentor, Whitney Tallarico, for her valuable insight and advice. Finally, I offer my sincere appreciation to the entire Elliott School Undergraduate Scholars Class of 2015 group for the love and countless learning opportunities they provided me throughout this experience.
WHAT WE TALK ABOUT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT IRAQ: 
Identifying Dominant US Paradigms and their Impact on Sectarianism

Paul J. McKinney

The politicization of identity along communal and confessional lines in post-2003 Iraq led to tragic consequences. The United States did not import sectarianism to Iraq, but it made sectarianism salient by creating the conditions that incentivized actors to identify primarily along ethno-sectarian lines. This paper builds off important research that focused on how the US incorporated “culture as a weapon system” as part of its counterinsurgency campaign and extends the body of work by identifying three causal mechanisms that crystallized sectarianism into a dominant political and social force in post-2003 Iraq. If the US wishes to remain engaged in Iraq, policymakers would be well served to fundamentally reexamine how they understand sectarianism and Iraqi identity. This paper rejects the ancient hatreds myth and the idea that Iraq was so polarized along confessional and communal lines pre-2003 that its violence can be explained as inevitable. Accounting for the harrowing violence and trend towards confessional and communal-based identitification at the expense of the larger “imagined community” is largely attributable to: (1) formal codification into law (Mubasasa); (2) the elevated role of sectarian entrepreneurs mainstreaming myth-symbol complexes; and (3) functionality of occupation.

Introduction

The politicization of identity along communal and confessional lines in post-2003 Iraq led to tragic consequences. Despite the rich scholarship devoted to Iraq’s modern history, US foreign policy continues to ignore

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what Rogers Smith called the nation’s constitutive story.⁴ This paper builds off important research that focused on how the US incorporated “culture as a weapon system”⁵ as part of its counterinsurgency campaign and extends the body of work by identifying three causal mechanisms that crystallized sectarianism into a dominant political and social force in post-2003 Iraq. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that the failures in Iraq were not inevitable. Rather, they were historically contingent and largely attributable to the dominant US narratives that construe Iraq and its citizens as necessarily divided along ethno-sectarian lines.⁶

The United States did not import sectarianism to Iraq, but it made sectarianism salient by creating the conditions that incentivized actors to identify primarily along ethno-sectarian lines. Because ethno-religious identities in Iraq have never been fixed,⁷ the dimming hope to reverse the sectarian trend hinges in part on how Iraqis chose to identify with one another across confessional and communal lines as equal and valuable members of what Benedict Anderson calls the “imagined community.”⁸ If the US wishes to remain engaged in Iraq, policymakers would be well served to fundamentally reexamine how they understand sectarianism and Iraqi identity. It is increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to begin to understand the complex dynamics in Iraq today without first excavating the events, policies, and actors that shaped the type of sectarianism that emerged post-2003. This pa-

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⁴ Rogers M. Smith, Stories of Peoplehood the Politics and Morals of Political Membership (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003), 60–65. Smith describes constituent stories as those which “proclaim that members’ culture, religion, language, race, ethnicity, ancestry, history or other such factors are constitutive of their very identities as persons, in ways that both affirm their worth and delineate their obligations.”

⁵ Rochelle Davis, “Culture as a Weapon.”

⁶ See former US diplomat to Iraq Peter Galbraith, The End of Iraq: How American Incompetence Created a War without End (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), 7. “Iraq was cobbled together by the British at the end of World War I from three different Ottoman va’liyes, or provinces: predominately Kurdish Mosul in the north, mostly Sunni Baghdad in the south, and Shiite Basra in the south.”


per traces that history. In the wake of the US invasion, Iraq has become plagued by violence along communal and confessional lines resulting in a terribly bloody civil war from 2006 to 2007 and a nation that is worse off today than ever.

This paper rejects the ancient-hatreds myth and the idea that Iraq was so polarized along confessional and communal lines pre-2003 that its violence can be explained as inevitable. Accounting for the harrowing violence and trend towards confessional and communal-based identification at the expense of the larger “imagined community” is largely attributable to: (1) formal codification into law (Mubasasa); (2) the elevated role of sectarian entrepreneurs mainstreaming myth-symbol complexes; and (3) functionality of occupation.

**Methodology**

This paper draws on eight in-person interviews and two via Skype with Iraqi intellectuals, artists, communists, and Baghdadis from the former educated middle-class (Effendiya). It also draws on four interviews with former US service members who deployed to Iraq between early 2004 and 2010. Interviewees were identified through a network of associates in Washington, DC. The interviews with Iraqis were conducted in both English and Arabic. Most of the interviewees spent their formative years in or near Baghdad during the late 1960s through the early 1980s and emigrated from Iraq in post-2003, unless otherwise stated. Thus, there is perhaps an urban bias (al-badhaba), as this paper lacks any voice from more rural areas (al-badawa). The religious orientations of the interviewees are Sunni, Shi’ah and Christian (Assyrian and Chaldean).

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Formal Codification into Law (al-Muhasasa)

Former Ambassador Paul Bremer encouraged sectarian identification from the very beginning of the US occupation when he designed a quota-sharing system (al-Muhasasa) for the provisional Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) based on confessional and communal identity. A trusted group of Iraqi exiles informed Bremer of Iraq’s religious and ethnic demography—numbers that were unverifiable because the Ba’ath did not maintain records of religious denominations. He then allocated seats based on the exiles’ suppositions that the Shi’ah made up about 60 percent of the population, the Kurds 20 percent, with Sunni Arabs a little less, and ethnic or religious minorities comprising the rest.

The IGC was intended to represent “Iraqi society’s balance,” along those designations. The IGC consisted of twenty-five members, each selected primarily not on their merits but on the basis of their religious or ethnic orientation and their allegiance to the Coalition Provisional Authority. The twenty-five member council thus represented what Bremer’s trusted exile community informed him to be Iraq’s demographics: thirteen Shi’ah Arabs, five Sunni Arabs, five Sunni Kurds, one Christian, and one Turkmen, with three of its members also being female. Alarmingly, after discounting the Kurds, who enjoyed US protection in the increasingly autonomous region of Kurdistan during the 1990s, only five of the IGC members lived in Iraq in the years preceding the occupation.

When the IGC dissolved in June 2004, ministries for the successive Iraqi Interim Government were divvied up using a similar quota-sharing system. Bremer set a dangerous precedent and left an enduring legacy when he codified confessional and communal-based identity into the fabric of the new political order. Sectarianism became an entrenched part of the political process in the new Iraq.

Yusuf, a refugee currently residing in Montréal where he works as a short-order chef, was twenty-six years old when the United States invaded Iraq.

Iraq in March 2003. His family resided in Baghdad for many generations and many have been members of the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP), even when Saddam made such membership illegal. Most of his family has since emigrated. He prominently displayed a framed picture of Comrade Fahd, who shaped the ICP from a loosely organized intellectual club into a mass political party, on a bare wall of his Montréal apartment, easily visible via Skype:

At first we doubted that the United States Army would actually come all the way up to Baghdad—I didn’t even believe it until I saw the American soldiers with my own eyes. At first it was shock and uncertainty—and then when Saddam’s statue came down we were happy for a little while, but of course there was also a lot of chaos, a lot of looting, people even stealing Iraq’s oldest artifacts. It was unbelievable. But yes, one of the biggest shocks from that time was the Muhasasa. That’s when I lost all hope. I mean, why were we [ICP] left out? Our party has nothing to do with religion. We don’t care if you are Chaldean or Assyrian, or Sunni or Shi’ah, or Jewish or Kurdish or anything else. We’ve always been against dictatorship, not religion. We just don’t care about your religious orientation. Are you Iraqi? Are you for freedom and equal rights for everyone? Those are the questions we ask, and that’s what we care about. That’s why we could not figure out why the Americans made it about sectarianism and actually punished us for not being more like them [the Islamic Parties that the US supported].

The Muhasasa system, established in the early days of the occupation, set Iraq on a path-dependency towards formalizing sectarian identity. Numerous accounts have been written about the chaos in Baghdad in the wake of its fall, the de-Ba’athification program, and the disbandment of the Iraqi military in May 2003. This section will not recount those events in detail, but it cannot ignore them or overstate how momentous those events and policies were in the power vacuum proceeding Baghdad’s fall in conjunction with the value assigned to religious orientation in the social and political sphere. Indeed, the invasion and subsequent occupation engendered

disenfranchisement from the very beginning and set the stage for guerilla warfare.

Yusuf raised two important points germane to this section. The first point is that the ICP and other secular parties were left out of the political fold because they did not easily conform to the tripartite lens that informed the US State Department’s policies. Secular parties were largely denied a voice in the new Iraq from the beginning, as the tripartite lens increasingly became the dominant way of viewing Iraqi society. This was demonstrated, in its most egregious form, in the Presidency Council of Iraq. This tripartite leadership system called for a Sunni president with Sunni and Shi’ah vice presidents. Rather than definitively and positively reflecting Iraq’s diversity, as was intended, it is perhaps more accurate to say it aptly reflected American ontological perspectives that viewed Iraq as an epically divided nation that would best be governed along ethno-sectarian lines.14

The deeply problematic and hastily composed 2005 Iraqi Constitution, whose very authors were once again selected according to a quota system, is opposed from just about every major party since its ratification, but has yet to be amended.15 The tripartite Presidency Council of Iraq expired in 2010 after one full parliamentary cycle, however, and now is comprised of three vice presidents, thus no longer allocating seats on a Kurd-Sunni-Shi’ah basis de jure. Ultimately, Iraqis rejected US sectarian-centric “psychological partitions”16 and stated their desire to move away from the poisonous sectarian politics of the past seven years during the March 2010 elections when the secular Iraqiyyah Party won a plurality of Parliamentary seats.

The second and final point here—and where this paper parts with Yusuf about when the war was lost—is that while the Muhasasa quickly alienated large segments of the population, established a legacy of formalized sectarian-inflicted politics, and gave credence to the ancient-hatreds myth,


the US experiment in Iraq was not lost completely until 2011. Ayad ‘Al-lawi’s secular, nationalist, anti-sectarian party won ninety-one seats to Nuri al-Maliki’s eighty-nine seats and was entitled to the first bid in forming a government. The tripartite lens induced paralysis in Washington as officials had been operating under this mindset for at least the past seven years. Nine months later al-Maliki was selected for another term as Prime Minister—in no small part due to Iranian influence. One of al-Maliki’s first decisions after the final US troops left Iraq was issuing an arrest warrant for then Vice President and political adversary Tariq al-Hashemi. Al-Maliki’s cult of personality ostracized western and northern Iraq. This helped pave the way for the reemergence of the Islamic State. Sectarian entrepreneurs like al-Maliki were aided by al-Mubasasa, a system conceived and nurtured by the United States that insisted on seeing Iraq under a tripartite lens.

The Elevated Role of Sectarian Entrepreneurs
Mainstreaming Myth-Symbol Complexes

Stuart Kaufman summarizes myth-symbol complexes as:

The combination of myths, memories, values and symbols that defines not only who is a member of the group but what it means to be a member. The existence, status and security of the group thus come to be seen to depend on the status of the group symbols, which is why people are willing to fight and die for them—and why they are willing to follow leaders who manipulate those symbols for dubious or selfish purposes.

Myth-symbol complexes continue to play an outsized role shaping post-2003 Iraq. Because the salience of communal and confessional identity in Iraq has ebbed and flowed for hundreds of years, categorizing Shi’ah and Sunni into “groups” is problematic. Today, there are millions of Iraqis

19. Haddad, “Approaching a Theory of Sectarianism,” in Sectarianism in Iraq: Antagonistic Visions of Unity. Haddad and I focus on different symbols, as he is more concerned with “lower Iraqi culture,” especially in his empirical arguments in chapters seven and eight, while my research in this section revolves around the symbols that elites rally around.
who reject categorization into distinct and separate groups. But there are also millions who have clearly embraced this categorization. Thus, when this section refers to Sunni and Shi’ah “groups,” it is not making sweeping generalizations categorizing all Sunni and Shi’ah as separate peoples in Iraq, as this paper rejects such simple heuristics and the flawed reasoning they induce in complex and unforgiving environments. This label instead refers only to those who—through a process to “make their appearance explicitly”—have engaged in the type of divisive behavior or discourse that unequivocally states their desire to be labeled as such in the realm of political Islam.

At the heart of myth-symbol complexes are “chosen traumas,” as Vamik Volkan puts it. Chosen traumas are the collective memories of a tragedy that befell a group, which involve a narrative of victimhood and are able to effectively integrate symbols as points of reference. Sunni and Shi’ah chosen traumas have increasingly been framed in what Ian Buruma termed the “Olympics of Suffering,” whereby competition over who has suffered the most somehow merits who should be in power today. This powerful theme of victimization acts to legitimize violence or oppression of the “Other” in response to that victimization.

The chosen trauma that Shi’ah Islamist political parties and militias have capitalized upon, quite convincingly in both Iraq and the United States, centers on its marginalization and victimhood. Their trauma evokes the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, Prophet Muhammad’s grandson, and weaves it into a narrative of long-standing oppression at the hands of the Sunni population. It has become the most potent myth-symbol complex in post-2003 Iraq—and also the most dangerous. The Muhasasa system, which infused sectarianism into the very genetic makeup of the new political order, derives its intellectual legitimacy from this myth. In a conversation with a former Iraqi diplomat to the United States, he explained Shi’ah oppres-

22. Volkan, “Chosen Trauma, Chosen Trauma, The Political Ideology of Entitlement and Violence.”
sion by the Ba’athist Party in explicitly sectarian terms, emphasizing the Iran-Iraq War as evidence:

Saddam sent the Shi’ah [of Iraq] to fight the Shi’ah [of Iran]...it was a geopolitical—a proxy war supported by the rich Gulf States against the Shi’ah. Those states are what? They are Sunni. Saddam sent all the Shi’ah to fight while protecting the Sunni population. We were the ones who did most of the fighting and dying. So of course Saddam was very sectarian. He did not allow the Shi’ah to celebrate their religion in public, and the Shi’ah are the majority in Iraq. So he knew he had to keep them contained or he would not be able to keep his throne.  

This narrative reveals a great deal about the new Iraq. The diplomat who trumpeted the majority-oppressed-by-the-minority argument was too young to fight in the Iran-Iraq War; his narrative is thus not derived from empiricism, but an acquired belief perpetuated in post-2003 by sectarian entrepreneurs that positively associates Shi’ah social oppression and political marginalization with Sunni dominance and aggression. These narratives have powerfully resonated with many young people, a key demographic in a country where half the population is under the age of nineteen. If the 2003 suppositions about Iraq’s demography are correct, however, then it is probabilistic that Shi’ah comprised the rank-and-file of the military, and hence would have sustained the highest casualties during the war. But the diplomat’s pervasive and impassioned argument that Saddam intentionally filled his ranks with Shi’ah to fight and kill other Shi’ah in order to further Arab Sunni supremacy is not based on documentary evidence.

This popular narrative associates the egregious crimes carried out by the Ba’ath as synonymous with epic Shi’ah oppression at the hands of a complicit Sunni population. The problem with this popular narrative is that it distorts reality. It discounts Shi’ah who were active members of the Ba’ath Party. The infamous deck of playing cards that the US military developed to help its soldiers and marines identify Iraq’s most wanted during the initial invasion contained thirty-five Shi’ah (out of fifty-two playing cards). Those

entrusted with the most power, however, were Saddam’s clan members from Tikrit. Thus, viewing Saddam’s Ba’ath Party as Tikriti would be a more revealing and accurate category of analysis than viewing the Ba’ath as a Sunni party.

The brilliance of evoking epic Shi’ah victimization weaved into modern tales of sectarian oppression, a narrative in which the diplomat was well versed, is that it works on two strategic levels. First, it offers personal security for Shi’ah who otherwise would not identify in sectarian terms—all the while fostering and committing violence along communal and confessional lines. Second, it appeals to broader American myths of liberation against tyranny. Shi’ah Islamist parties who ascribe to and propagate this narrative have received considerable US support. Framing Saddam in sectarian terms instead of as a ruthless dictator responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands across the ethnic and religious spectrum has informed US policy for over a decade. It has also empowered and legitimized sectarian entrepreneurs. This dominant narrative, pronounced in US foreign policy and among the Shi’ah Islamist parties the US supported in the new political order they established, has marginalized the millions of Iraqis who detested Saddam but also rejected sectarianism.

Sunni chosen trauma is unable to evoke the same type of historical suffering that makes Shi’ah chosen trauma so compelling, and can thus only be explained in the post-2003 events and policies that fundamentally reshaped Iraqi society. The US-led invasion of Iraq created a power vacuum


27. In light of the Islamic State’s post-2011 revival after it was severely crippled in 2009 and 2010, it is especially important not to conflate Sunni chosen trauma with those who ascribe to Salafi-Takfiri beliefs and are aligned with the Islamic State. While there are some temporary strategic marriages between the two groups, so to speak, they have far less in common than is generally portrayed. This distinction is critical today, as the Islamic State rejects the very concept of Iraq and seeks to destroy all borders to form a global caliphate. A disturbing media production entitled “The End of Sykes-Picot” released by the Islamic State in June 2014 explicit makes this point. Will Youman’s forthcoming publication, “Echoes of World War I in Today’s Arab Middle East: The Sykes-Picot Agreement as a Symbolic Referent in Contemporary Political Discourse,” dissects the ways in which both the US and IS refer to Sykes-Picot symbolizing the Middle East’s ills, and that its fascinating nature “as a meme today is that it is relayed by those espousing quite different views, from different continents and of very divergent ideological backgrounds, towards different polemic or analytical ends. The overlap in
when it disbanded the military that immediately left hundreds of thousands unemployed. The *Muhasasa* system coupled with the arbitrary and intense nature by which Ba’athist members were first purged in 2003 and again in 2010 and systematically barred from having a voice in the new Iraq reverberates today. Al-Maliki’s methodical, extrajudicial consolidation of power marginalizing western and northern Iraq helped pave the way for the Islamic State’s occupation of Mosul. Indeed, Sunni chosen trauma, while unable to match the same epic narrative as Shi’ah chosen trauma, has nonetheless made a compelling case in the Olympics of Suffering.

On April 9, 2003, US troops toppled Saddam’s statue in Firdus Square. This entirely symbolic event remains the most iconic and enduring image of the invasion, and the meaning it has been assigned by Iraqis and Americans alike, both during and after the fact, acts as a microcosm to explain Sunni trauma and American disbelief why Iraqis were not more grateful to be liberated from Saddam. Kathim al-Juburi, an Iraqi who gathered at the demonstration to pummel the base of Saddam’s statue, has since regretted his actions. “Saddam Hussein maybe held us one hundred years back, but now, we have been pushed back almost three hundred years,” he said. “If Saddam’s statue still existed, I would put it back up again.”

Indeed, there is nothing more antithetical to the new political order and no one more emblematic to that mental representation of a united Iraq than Saddam Hussein himself. It is here where the great tragedy of the American invasion and subsequent occupation becomes the most pronounced. Saddam butchered tens of thousands of Iraqis; sent hundreds of thousands to the slaughterhouse during the Iran-Iraq War; rolled back human rights, civil liberties, and women’s rights; used chemical weapons and indiscriminate violence in Halabja and Dujail; and asked the Iraqi people to endure the world’s most crippling sanctions while his thugs stole and profited off their misery. The list is too long to recount here, but the collective outrage and antipathy the Iraqi people felt towards him at the time was

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considerable. The great tragedy, then, is that for all of the pain and suffering Saddam brought to Iraq, April 9th has come to be remembered with sorrow and he has been elevated to a martyr. This potent symbol has only grown stronger as the years have passed and Iraq has descended into psychological and physical partitions that pervade into nearly every sector of society.

**Functionality of Occupation**

This paper has thus far explicated the inadvertent but nevertheless devastating and far-reaching effects of reducing Iraqi society to three exclusory states along communal and confessional lines. This section will explore the ways in which seemingly innocuous questions about religious orientation and ethnic or tribal identification as an expedient but deeply flawed heuristic for US military service members and provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) in an attempt to better understand the country they occupied crystallized sectarianism on the ground. Because today’s violence in Iraq is often portrayed as inevitable rather than historically contingent, many observers are unaware or forget that the insurgency and violence that followed in post-2003 has not always been explained in explicitly sectarian terms.

The dominant US narratives in the military today that view Iraq as a nation with deeply divided fault lines have in fact evolved since the March 2003 invasion. The Pentagon caught up to Foggy Bottom, which has long viewed sectarianism as an explanatory variable. But do they both have this relationship in reverse? In other words, was the escalation of violence catalyzed and reified on the ground because the US increasingly insisted on its sectarian nature along the ancient-hatreds myth as support for the war effort waned at home?

Mark, who deployed with the US Army to Tikrit from early 2004 through early 2005 and then again to Baghdad from late 2009 through late 2010, compares the stark difference in the language used to describe enemy forces during his deployments:

> During my first deployment, every time there was an attack or some type of nefarious activity, or we were going after a certain target package, we always referred to them as ACF [Anti-Coalition Forces]. I can’t recall a single instance where they said we were hitting a Sunni insurgent stronghold. That’s not to say
that other units may not have done it; and maybe the Marines were already calling it that in Fallujah. All I can say is that in 2004 we weren’t using that language in my unit. But in 2009 it was very clear: you had Shi’ah target sets and Sunni target sets. Before we deployed, MTTs [Mobile Training Teams] would come during an FTX [Field Training Exercise] and give us a briefing on Iraq—its culture, the tribes, and the differences between Sunni and Shi’ah. So when we deployed they had drilled down the whole winning the hearts-and-minds philosophy into us by knowing the culture, the main differences between the two main sects, and the powerful tribes. 29

This section wishes to raise the possibility that the sweeping reductions of Iraqi society that members of the military and PRTs received as part of their pre-deployment training encouraged them to operate under a sectarian mindset. This social pathology in turn reinforced the Mubasasa system and the rhetoric espoused by sectarian entrepreneurs on the ground. Primary source research suggests Mark’s comments are more than anecdotal; instead of framing the escalation of violence in Iraq as a reaction to failed governance and as a modern struggle for power and economic gain, the military evolved in its analysis and attributed it to an epic tale of sectarian and ethnic divides as root causes and as explanatory variables.

In 1990, the US Army published an abridged but comprehensive overview of Iraqi history, society, politics, and national security as part of the now defunct Country Studies Program. Its analysis on inter-confessional relationships in Iraq proved insightful:

The theory of sectarian strife was undercut by the behavior of Iraq’s Shia community during Iran’s 1982 invasion and the fighting thereafter … prior to the war the Baath had taken steps toward integrating the Shias. The war placed inordinate demands on the regime for manpower, demands that could only be met by levying the Shia community—and this strengthened the regime’s resolve to further the integration process. In early 1988, it

29. Skype Interview, January 2015, Arlington, Virginia. Mark, an active-duty warrant officer, is a pseudonym.
seemed likely that when the war ends, the Shias would emerge as full citizens— assuming that the Baath survives the conflict.  

How and why did the US change its narrative regarding Iraqi identity and society in just a decade and a half? Although this analysis was written prior to Iraq’s failed occupation of Kuwait and the subsequent sanctions, it establishes that there was a general consensus inside US military circles that, although perhaps still wary of Iran’s Islamic Revolution creeping eastward, nevertheless recognized that viewing Iraq through a tripartite lens skewed reality. This view remained more or less constant for the military through the early months of the occupation. In December 2003 the Department of Defense published the Iraq Transitional Handbook, which contained over 200 pages of Iraqi culture, politics, and history. It issued the books to troops preparing to deploy. Overall, the handbook does well accounting for nuances in Iraqi identity:

The geographic shorthand used to describe Iraq—Shi’a south, Sunni center—masks more complex patterns of social and cultural identity. An Iraqi could simultaneously profess a strong Sunni or Shi’a loyalty, identify with a particular tribe, and have a strong sense of being an Arab. The existence of such overlapping loyalties has allowed past Iraqi elites to define and redefine the country’s identity in accordance with their interests and dictates of current policy.  

These analyses recognized the dynamic relationships and complex identities that are indispensable towards a better understanding of Iraq. As the US military mission in Iraq became increasingly murky, and as violence and US casualties continued to rise amidst dwindling domestic support for the war, the military gradually shifted towards adopting a more primordial mindset where it viewed sectarianism as organic and constant in Iraq dating back centuries. This narrative is much simpler than the previous military analyses and offers an explanation for the violence that is easier to compre-


hend. These bifurcations come with a steep price, however, as reality is better reflected in the nuance than in sweeping generalities.

Abu Ibrahim, who grew up in Kirkuk during the late 1960s and 1970s before leaving in 1994, returned to Iraq as an interpreter in 2003 and stayed through the end of 2010. This made him one of the longest-serving interpreters for the military and uniquely positioned him to witness the multiple phases of the occupation:

We only started really asking questions about someone’s sect to figure out who placed the IEDs in the road. If a Shi’ah guy said it about a Sunni we decided it was probably a lie to claim some revenge for something else. It soon became one of the first questions we asked someone. ‘What’s your name, what’s your sect? What’s your neighbor’s sect?’

You know, after seven years as an interpreter I never felt comfortable asking people that question [ascertaining confessional identification]. It’s not a natural thing to ask in Iraq because no one ever asked it before the Americans came. In a sense you could say that—not that it introduced racism to Iraq—but that after constantly asking people, ‘Are you Sunni? Are you Shi’ah,’ and then supporting some people because they were from this sect and arresting other people because they were from another ... the Iraqis learned how to play the same game too. And then as the time passed it became about what? It was all about Sunni and Shi’ah and sectarianism. It was like an obsession. But look: the Iraqis knew this is how the Americans think, and they became ... wise to it, and many of the Americans thought they understood Iraq or could understand the person and his motives better when they knew his sect.32

In spring 2004 the military issued troops the Iraq Cultural Smart Card: Guide to Cultural Awareness, a sixteen-panel laminated and foldable cheat sheet of sorts that condensed history, culture, religion, and language into bullet points that, unlike the previous Smart Cards of 2003, were devoid of any sense of national unity. The revisions it made in the subsequent editions maintain the 2004 narratives, which see Iraq as epically divided along ethno-sectarian fault lines and are devoid of nuance. Under the “Cultural Groups” section, one could ascertain from the bullet points that:

Arabs view Kurds as separatists, look down on Turkmen and view Iranian Persians negatively. Tension exists between Shi’i and Sunni Arabs. Kurds are openly hostile to Iraqi Arabs and distrustful of Turkmen. They do not interact much with Christians. Assyrians experience persecution by Kurds and Arabs, Chaldeans distrust Kurds and Arab intentions, and Turkmen fear Kurds. The only positive relation is that Chaldeans have peaceful relations with Turkmen and Assyrians have much in common with Chaldeans.33

The Cultural Smart Cards also contain the two maps of Iraq with striking contrasts delineating Sunni, Shi’ah and Kurdish “territories.” The images on paper quickly became reified on the ground. The tripartite lens is an expedient heuristic; it fails to put confessional and communal identifications in their proper context, however, and gives an observer a false sense of understanding that distorts reality.

Occupation is, by its very nature, not conducive to nuance, facilitating reductions that leave lasting legacies long after the last troops have departed. The military promoted the tripartite lens that viewed Iraq as epically divided along communal and confessional lines—but only after it became apparent that the mission in Iraq would be much different from the one that Donald Rumsfeld initially conceived. The military may contend that it reacted to violence on the ground that had already undertaken a sectarian nature. But by perpetuating the view that Iraq was three disparate nations of people deeply divided along the ancient-hatreds myth, they enhanced the cycle of violence rather than acting to break it. Instructing soldiers and PRTs to identify religious, ethnic, or tribal identity as the primary means to inform their interactions with the local population without also arming them with the tools to place that information into a proper context reified sectarianism on the ground.

**Conclusions and Implications**

United States foreign policy fundamentally misunderstands Iraq. It fails to properly diagnose why Iraq is a failed state and thus its prognosis remains off-key. Iraq is not a failed state today because of its artificiality un-

33. Davis, “Culture as a Weapons System.”
der the Sykes-Picot Agreement or because of its heterogeneous population. Nor can we attribute the failed US experiment in Iraq to ancient-hatreds that have endured for over fourteen hundred years. Iraq is failing today because of the type of sectarianism that was built into the new political order, foreign support of sectarian entrepreneurs, and nearly a decade of occupation that viewed everything about Iraq as exceptional under a tripartite lens.

If the United States is to continue playing a role in Iraq it must reexamine how the country arrived at its calamitous place. Explaining Iraq’s violence and instability today as part of an epic and inevitable battle along communal and confessional lines takes onus away from those actors and policies that have recently divided the nation. Indeed, this narrative leads to flawed reasoning but has nonetheless informed and guided US policy for over a decade. Foreign policy makers ought to make a better effort to place the events into Iraq’s political economy, where failed governance and naive intervention have fostered and sustained over a decade of war.

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My deepest gratitude to my faculty advisor Dr. Dina Khoury, whose knowledge and passion for Iraq motivated me to undertake this project, and to Dr. Will Youmans, whose fresh perspective helped shape my main arguments. And of course to Mina Hamodah and her family for their support in helping me locate Iraqi refugees from their beloved Baghdad—and to all those Iraqis I spoke with that inspired better scholarship.
AGGRAVATED ACTION:
Understanding the Vigilante Outbreak and Federal Efforts to Quell Cartel Violence in Michoacán, Mexico

Ryan Melcher

In February 2013, farmers and ranchers formed self-defense groups in Michoacán, Mexico. Known as rural vigilantes, these bands of frustrated community members expelled one of western Mexico’s most notorious drug cartels, the Knights Templar. Though vigilantes fronted the offensive against the Knights Templar, the federal administration of President Enrique Peña Nieto sent troops to militarize Michoacán. This work reveals how vigilante violence intensified after government intervention. Sourcing through newspapers and blogs, this study establishes an open-source geodatabase that records reports of violence, cases of corruption, and accounts of arrest from 2012 to 2014. Findings from this archive define unsolved security questions regarding the relationship between federal enforcement and the drug war in Michoacán. The insight provided by this case study outlines specifically how violence changed over time. Representing the vigilante outbreak of 2013 furthers scholars’ understanding of the relationship between federal law enforcement and violence in Mexico.

Introduction

Experts from the Wilson Center’s Mexico Institute understand why vigilante groups appeared in Michoacán, Mexico: fulfilling the failed duties of federal law enforcement, vigilante groups provided the people of Michoacán with both protection and security from drug cartel crimes, namely those committed by the cartel called the Knights Templar.1 Though the reason for the appearance of vigilante forces is answered, little research reveals how vigilante activity in Michoacán changed over time. The findings from

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this research reveal a direct relationship between homicide rates and government intervention in Michoacán. Transitioning from informal community defense organizations into formal branches of the Mexican military, vigilante groups sacrificed institutional efficiency for federal credibility. This period of transition is the focus of my study. Tracking outbreaks of violence and news reports in Michoacán from 2012 to 2014, I piece together a comprehensive narrative that outlines how government intervention changed the nature of vigilante activity over time.

Figure 1 The State of Michoacán, Mexico

All maps published in this study are products of the author.
marked the most successful challenge to cartel authority. Simply put, this means that the vigilantes were more successful than federal forces at dispelling the Knights Templar from Michoacán. Despite vigilante success, statistics indicate that overall violence grew worse with time. Extortion, kidnapping, and other activities classified as organized crime expanded across Michoacán in 2014, one year after the beginning of the vigilante outbreak. Multiple sources confirm that the Mexican National Public Security System (SNSP), the most reputable government agency of security information, reported a 30 percent increase in homicides and extortion in Michoacán from 2013 to 2014. This increase is significant because it parallels the beginnings of government intervention in the state. At a time when violence should have decreased due to government interference, homicides and extortion increased at a significant rate.

Understanding this ironic relationship is the subject of this paper. Vigilantism in Michoacán showcases how increased federal enforcement aggravates outbreaks of violence. Homicide rates increased from 2013 to 2014, but increases resulted due to fighting between government forces and vigilante members. In her acclaimed dissertation, Viridiana Rios poses a theory that partly explains this trend with regard to the larger Mexican context. She argues that government decentralization plagues policy implementation in Mexico. Rios defines decentralization as the unchallenged ability of local authorities, meaning the officials of independent Mexican jurisdictions, to circumvent regulation from the federal government. Through correlation and regression analysis, Rios proves that decentralization between federal and local authorities renders government intervention as a catalyst for violence. My research extends Rios’ theory to the 2013 vigilante outbreak.

6. Ibid., 30.
Government intervention not only sparked additional violence in Michoacán; it eliminated the effectiveness of the vigilante movement.

**What Made the Vigilantes More Successful Than Federal Law Enforcement?**

Unprecedented levels of public trust between the vigilantes and Michoacán communities enabled the early successes of the 2013 uprising. Two important themes identify how and why vigilante actors won support from surrounding communities: political corruption and *ranchero* culture. Both of these themes share how vigilantism defined itself from government affiliation and illicit cartel activity. Standing against political corruption and providing safety from cartel crimes, vigilantes embraced an autonomous identity that empowered the efforts of the movement.

**Political Corruption**

Political corruption reveals how public officials tarnished the trust between Michoacán communities and the government. Coordinated relationships between Mexican politicians and criminal groups caused community members to question the intentions of federal authority. Historians attribute the start of this practice to the foundation of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Calling corruption “the oil and glue” of the Mexican political system, renowned reporter Alan Riding describes how PRI and other federal officials supported drug trafficking organizations in return for government gains. Government gains, which included secured votes and sources of income, provided public officials with political stability. Such stability was challenged only by the drug cartels, which eventually upended their government partners. This transition occurred in the early 1990’s, when the drug cartels gained financial leverage over federal authorities. Embedded in

both the political and social fabric of Mexico, corruption profited the drug cartels at the expense of government authority.

Though political corruption plagues policy implementation across Mexico, its presence is especially prevalent in Michoacán. For example, in 2009 Mexican president Felipe Calderón ordered the arrest of thirty-five Michoacán political officials. Even though the provisions proved an attempt to clean Michoacán of its corrupt mayors, the effort failed when all thirty-five of the arrested officials were released from jail due to cartel-allied judges and juries.\(^\text{10}\) The ability of these corrupt officials to evade federal incarceration illustrates the power and influence of the drug cartels, which employed political corruption to create illicit networks in Michoacán communities. Tracy Wilkinson, a reporter from the *Los Angeles Times*, relays the extent of these networks and their damaging consequences on the community:

> Probably nowhere else in Mexico has a cartel managed to so thoroughly permeate society and dominate law enforcement and economic and political life, including city halls, transportation and even journalism. Spouting pseudo-religious rhetoric and casting themselves initially as protectors, the Knights Templar morphed from an earlier cartel, La Familia, cornered the production and export of methamphetamine and then expanded to a far wider bribery racket.\(^\text{11}\)

Tensions between the community and the Knights Templar reached a highpoint in December 2012. The inability of federal officials to suppress the Knights Templar only perpetuated frustrations between the community and the government.\(^\text{12}\) To prevent the cartel from further robbing farmers

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and workers of their profits and safety, communities in Michoacán turned to vigilante actors.

Ranchero Culture

To eliminate the Knights Templar from rural communities, the vigilantes attacked and dismantled the drug cartel’s illicit networks. Unlike federal enforcement, the vigilantes began their efforts in rural towns—the most local level of community organization. Though the vigilante’s grassroots strategy is largely abstract, the idea of ranchero culture culminates its significance. Professor Salvador Maldonado Aranda, a respected intellectual at the College of Michoacán, defines ranchero culture as a sense of “gritty individualism” that unites rural families against federal and outside intervention.13 In an anthropologic case study, researcher Marcia Farr examines how this shared identity shapes communities in Michoacán. Farr notes that work, religion, and education bind rural families, which support each other through a “dense and multiplex interaction.”14 This extensive network expedites community responses in Michoacán. Ranchero culture is an identity that links communities across the state and facilitates coordinated action among its members.

The tight-knit networks identified through studies of ranchero culture are the same kind of networks that the Knights Templar dominated before the vigilante uprising. Cartel success stemmed from controlling the people and local leaders in individual towns. In February 2013, vigilantes targeted these community actors. Because vigilante fighters were first neighborhood farmers and workers, they knew who was affiliated with the Knights Templar. Vigilantes exploited these low profile individuals, who were often overlooked by federal law enforcement. By understanding how vigilantes gained public trust and why their coordinated action was so successful, this research can make sense of the ironic relationship between violence and government intervention in Michoacán.


Methodology

To organize and represent the vigilante outbreak, I created a geodatabase. A geodatabase joins location data to related textual and numeric information. This means that users can click on a map point and discover any information tied to that activity. Maps produced from a geodatabase reveal patterns and correlations that are otherwise difficult to detect. Such a platform of study lends itself to the questions posed by the vigilante outbreak in Michoacán. The geodatabase created for this study tracks activity in Michoacán from January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2014. Despite the fact that the vigilante outbreak did not occur until February 2013, I chose to include information from January 1, 2012. I included this information in order to establish a foundational understanding of cartel activity before the beginnings of vigilantism. The information contained in this geodatabase includes any discovered, reported incident that relates to drug cartel activity, vigilantism, or government interference in Michoacán. If a report dealt with any of these three mentioned themes, it was categorized as either violence or news.

The sources that compose this geodatabase include three major US newspapers, Mexican newspapers, and narcotrafficking blogs. Though narcotrafficking blogs are often considered unscholarly sources of information, their relevance to this study is unquestioned. Read by the Mexican public, US newspaper reporters, and think-tank specialists, narcotrafficking blogs indiscriminately share valuable information regarding otherwise unreported incidents of violence. Each of the following maps reveals how violence in Michoacán changed over time. My findings confirm that homicides increased from 2012 to 2014. In addition, the defined range of deaths grew from year to year, indicating that the severity of some individual occurrences worsened with time.

15. The three major US newspapers are the Los Angeles Times, New York Times, and Washington Post. The narcotrafficking blog most cited is the “Borderland Beat.” Mexican newspapers include La Voz de Michoacán, Reforma, and a collection of others.

16. All measures, unless otherwise noted, derive from geodatabase entries.
Displays of violence in 2012 motivated the assembly and organization of vigilante actors. Laying the foundation for the vigilante outbreak, these incidents preview the burst of violence that would ensue in 2013 and 2014. Figure 2 displays the number of deaths per reported incident of violence in 2012. The right-hand column of the image breaks down these numbers according to the news source and scale of activity. Accompanying the 2012 homicide map is a weighted hot spot analysis, which includes every reported activity contained in the geodatabase. The hot spot map differs from the map entitled “Death Totals Tied to Reports of Violence” in that it includes more than just homicide data. Arrests, kidnappings, and other qualitative incidents of activity are represented in the hot spot study. Whereas Figure 2 displays the location and intensity of distinct homicides, Figure 3 reveals the distribution of all related vigilante, cartel, and government activity.

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17. Two incidents with a total death count between 9 and 13 people occurred in Zitácuaro, Michoacán. Because both incidents occurred in the same city, the circles overlap.
Figure 3 Hot Spots in 2012

This Heat Map illustrates my broadest data set for 2012. Thirty-nine entries compose this map, and each entry is a report regarding cartel or vigilante activity in Michoacán. For each of the thirty-nine recorded reports, the geospatial tool places a kernel over the user-determined location. From that kernel, the tool calculates how many other incidents are reported within a 10,000 meter radius. The darkest hot spots indicate the locations where the most reported activity occurred in 2012. In this case, the maximum number of reports, which are represented by the darkest clusters, is three.

Figure 3 illustrates the Knights Templar’s initial hold on each corner of Michoacán. Throughout 2012, the drug cartel aimed to expand its sphere of influence. A large collection of violence occurred in the northwest corner of the state, which borders Jalisco and Guanajuato. Harassed by public displays of violence, communities across Michoacán showed early signs of unrest. In August 2012, indigenous members of the rural town of Cherán expelled cartel affiliates due to cases of extortion. The revolt in Cherán

Aggravated Action previews the motives behind the larger scale vigilante outbreak of February 2013. Frustrations with extortion, corruption, and displays of violence caused community members to band together and revolt against the Knights Templar.

Figure 4: Homicides in 2013

In 2013, the location of the majority of violence shifted southward. This southward shift is due to the beginnings of the vigilante outbreak, which originated in the western parts of rural Michoacán. The towns of Apatzingán, La Ruana, and Uruapan, which are contained in the second and third zones of Figure 5, produced the first outbreaks of vigilante retaliation in February 2013. Due to the leadership of Dr. Jose Manuel Mireles and Hipólito Mora, the vigilante movement evolved from isolated outbursts of unrest into powerful calls for change. Due to such sudden success, vigilantism attracted more than just farmers: Michoacán businessmen and other former citizens of the state rallied behind the movement. Many of these supporters, who had fled Michoacán due to the influences of the Knights...
Templar, returned for the pure purpose of dispelling the cartel. As vigilantes gained rapport and support, their efforts expanded out from the western epicenter represented by zones two and three of Figure 5.

**Figure 5 Hot Spots in 2013**

This Heat Map illustrates my broadest data set for 2013. 120 entries compose this map, and each entry is a report regarding cartel or vigilante activity in Michoacán. For each of the 120 recorded reports, the geospatial tool places a kernel over the user-determined location. From that kernel, the tool calculates how many other incidents are reported within a 10,000 meter radius. The darkest hot spots indicate the locations where the most reported activity occurred in 2013. In this case, the maximum number of reports, which are represented by the darkest clusters, is seven.

Strong familial ties, community connections, and other themes of rancho culture strengthened the enforcement of the vigilante movement in western Michoacán. The depth of the vigilante movement made it difficult for the Knights Templar to challenge its authority, and such success

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prompted the vigilantes to move to more populated parts of the state. This type of expansionary activity characterized the movement in 2013. Communities recognized the vigilantes as unsung heroes and this reputation accelerated their success. Violence, though explosive compared to 2012, was contained under the idea of vigilante expansion. In 2013, the vigilante movement introduced a more complete strategy to combat cartel crime in Michoacán. In 2014, the motivations for violence changed from the vigilante’s expansionary efforts to the government’s disputed claims of control. The timeliness of government intervention, which occurred in January 2014, provoked such a change.

The year 2014 marked the end of the vigilante’s ability to operate autonomously from the federal government. On January 15, 2014, Mexico’s Interior Minister appointed Alfredo Castillo as the federal commissioner of Michoacán. This appointment introduced a federal presence to the state. Over the coming year, Castillo relied on a technique of military enforcement to control the vigilante movement. On January 27, 2014, the federal government took its first legal steps toward disrupting the vigilante’s organizational infrastructure. On this day, government officials pressured vigilante leaders to sign a binding agreement known as the Eight Point Plan. Issued by the federal government, this contract mandated the eventual disbandment of vigilante activity. The agreement announced that vigilantes would either have to disarm or join a federal enforcement agency called the Rural Defense Corps. Castillo’s Rural Defense Corps integrated vigilantes into the Mexican military. This integration permitted the government the ability to control the vigilante movement.

23. Ibid.
Backlash from the vigilantes ensued throughout the year. Due to government interference and claims of political corruption, divisions erupted among the movement’s leaders and violence increased at its highest recorded rate. The number of reported deaths rose by about 16 percent from 2013 to 2014. During the two years of the outbreak, 2014 recorded the largest amount of homicides. Further, Figure 6 illustrates how the locations of violence expanded to their largest extent. The introduction of government intervention brought about noticeable changes to vigilante activity. Among the vigilantes, factions evolved and divided the movement between supporters of government integration and advocates of autonomous identity.

Figure 6 Homicides in 2014

24. Though collected homicide data from the geodatabase is included for 2012, the vigilante outbreak only occurred from 2013 to 2014.
Conclusion

The development of the Rural Defense Corps sacrificed vigilante efficiency for federal credibility. Prior to January 2014, vigilantes emphasized a grassroots movement that thrived upon community networks. Though smaller in scale compared to commissioned government forces, vigilantes worked efficiently within individual communities to dispel members of the Knights Templar. Lower homicide rates confirmed the vigilantes’ ability to dissolve the networks of the cartel without excessive loss of human life. Statistics released from the SNSP revealed that municipalities in Michoacán with vigilante forces boasted lower homicide rates than those municipalities.
without a vigilante presence.\textsuperscript{25} This data was collected at the end of 2013, months before government provisions intensified and violence increased in the state.

In 2014, the autonomous growth of the vigilante groups ended. In effect, Nieto’s administration forfeited the most effective component of vigilante activity. By attempting to control the movement, the federal government reintroduced elements of political corruption. Such political corruption warranted community resistance from the people of Michoacán, causing violence and unrest to return to the state. This research resolves how violence changed over time during the course of the vigilante outbreak. Though data reveals that homicides increased in Michoacán from 2012 to 2014, violence proves relative to the success of vigilante actors. Due in large part to an autonomous identity, community defense organizations dispelled the Knights Templar from Michoacán.\textsuperscript{26} Government intervention aggravated violence and changed the nature of vigilante activity. Strategies to combat cartel violence in Mexico, let alone Michoacán, should learn from the otherwise overlooked triumphs of the vigilante outbreak.


Figure 8 Municipalities in Michoacán Affected by Vigilantism


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INDISPENSABLE DIPLOMACY: Reestablishing Ambassadorial Relations Between the United States and Iran

Nicolás Pedreira

Official relations between the United States and Iran ended as the result of the takeover of the American embassy in Tehran by revolutionary students in 1979. Despite the strong alliance shared by both nations under the leadership of the Shah, the emergence of a new Islamic government redefined the interests of the American-Iranian relationship that led to a break in diplomatic relations. This paper explores the reestablishment of an American embassy in Iran. Through interviews conducted with seven former US Ambassadors, this paper examines the role of embassies in managing relations between the United States and foreign nations. In these interviews, four themes surfaced regarding the scope of diplomatic work carried out by US embassies: (1) Fostering open channels of communication, (2) Advising Washington, (3) Promoting positive American images and values, and (4) Aligning bilateral interests. In this paper, the advantages of these themes are then evaluated against three reservations against the reestablishment of an American embassy in Iran: its security, its effectiveness, and its feasibility. By understanding the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Iran as a tool to bolster and strengthen any American policy toward Iran, rather than be minimized to a single strategy, this paper concludes the reestablishment of the American embassy in Iran to be a positive development in achieving US interests.

Introduction: An American Embassy in Iran

On July 15, 2015, the P5+1 (China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Russia, and the United States) agreed upon an historic deal with the Islamic Republic of Iran to curtail the latter’s nuclear program. Some foresee this development as the beginning of a transformation for relations between the United States and Iran, which have been estranged since the 1979 Iranian...

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Revolution.¹ This paper explores the idea of reestablishing diplomatic relations between the United States and Iran through the exchange of ambassadors. Throughout this paper, the advantages of and reservations against reopening the American embassy in Iran are evaluated to the conclusion that official diplomatic relations between the United States and Iran would invaluably contribute to American foreign policy objectives. Though the nature of the relationship between the United States and Iran may not change, the establishment of an American embassy in Iran would serve to bolster any policy that the United States wished to undertake toward the Islamic Republic.

**Methodology**

The primary research for this paper consists of semi-structured interviews conducted in person and via telephone. In order to determine the value of embassies in bilateral relations between nations, I interviewed seven former American ambassadors, whose tenures extended primarily across the Middle East and North Africa between 1991 and 2014.

**The American Embassy in Iran within a Policy Context**

The reestablishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Iran should be understood as a tool to bolster and strengthen any American policy toward Iran, rather than be minimized to a single strategy. By having a diplomatic presence in Iran, the United States would have greater flexibility to operate a vast array of policies toward Iran and execute them with more effective results.

Experts on US policy toward Iran consistently outline four paths of action in dealing with the Islamic Republic: engagement, regime change, containment, and military action.² Proponents of engagement believe diplomacy and cooperation between the United States and Iran would ulti-

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mately lead to a thaw in relations. The advantages of establishing an American embassy in Iran are most obvious in this scenario given the American ambassador in Iran would serve as a crucial interlocutor between the United States and the Islamic Republic to discuss and potentially resolve any outstanding issues.

Those who promote regime change believe the current Iranian regime is too anti-American for cooperation; to achieve cooperation, the regime ought to be overthrown and replaced with one more aligned to American interests. The use of an American embassy in this context has a historical precedent. In 1953, the US Central Intelligence Agency executed Operation AJAX to overthrow Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh. Prior to the operation, agents set up a command post at the American embassy and relied on diplomatic staff to effectively carry out the coup. If regime change consisted of encouraging domestic revolt, the American embassy would also possess the proper infrastructure to organize domestic forces and support them as needed.

Alternatively, supporters of containment conclude the United States is capable of counterbalancing Iranian actions to curb its influence and obstruct its regional objectives. In practice, maintaining an embassy in Iran while employing a policy of containment would largely resemble American policy towards the Soviet Union throughout the Cold War. In this scenario, the American embassy would serve as one of Washington’s most distinguished sources regarding Iran’s internal developments.

Advocates of military action against the Islamic Republic argue physical aggression is the most viable policy to achieve US interests, namely curtailting Iran’s nuclear ambitions and counteracting Iran’s actions to achieve regional hegemony. This policy option is arguably the most difficult to reconcile with the establishment of an American embassy in Iran. While there

would be tremendous risks for Americans in Iran at the time of a military strike, the American embassy would be able to provide Washington invaluable information in preparation for a strike.

**Research: The Work of American Embassies**

To support the theoretical framework of reestablishing ambassadorial relations between the United States and Iran, this paper explores the practical work of American embassies across the globe. In doing so, this paper asks the question: what would be the effects of reopening the American embassy in Iran? This section will convey the experiences of former US ambassadors to foreign countries to determine outstanding factors that seem to permeate throughout the United States’ diplomatic efforts. The research for this section was achieved through a series of interviews with retired US diplomats. Throughout these conversations, four discernible themes emerged regarding the scope of their diplomatic work. The four themes are: (1) Fostering open channels of communication, (2) Advising Washington, (3) Promoting positive American images and values, and (4) Aligning bilateral interests.8

**Fostering Open Channels of Communication**

Fostering open channels of communication refers to American ambassadors serving as interlocutors for the US government at their assigned posts. This work is twofold. For one, ambassadors present the American perspective on certain issues and explain US policies. Although this task is often geared towards the foreign government, it is also broadly applied to the foreign society.

For Amb. Richard Schmierer,9 who served as the US Ambassador to Oman between 2009 and 2012, presenting the American perspective included identifying issues within Oman, such as human trafficking, that could improve with American cooperation. In the case of human traffick-

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8. It should be noted that while the research focuses specifically on the work of US ambassadors, these themes also apply to the work carried out by other embassy personnel in their different capacities.

9. Quotations from in-person interview conducted on January 21, 2015 in Washington, DC.
ing, the United States tried “to help [the Omanis] identify areas where we felt they could improve.” The United States was “concerned that sometimes women are trafficked as prostitutes against their will.” The course of action then was “to encourage countries to try to have mechanisms in place to identify when that’s the case.” Such a task required persistence and patience because “we were trying to introduce concepts that weren’t already there” since, often, “if they find a woman engaged in prostitution, they’re just going to assume that she’s doing it willingly,” while the US position was “to try to find out if was coerced, if she’s really a trafficking victim.” Through his work, Amb. Schmierer granted the United States the opportunity to present its policy on Oman’s domestic issues while respecting Oman’s sovereignty, as “we would try to find ways to address them and also not undermine their internal kinds of systems.”

Amb. Margaret Scobey,10 who served as the US Ambassador to Syria between 2003 and 2005, did not share such a cooperative effort with the government while serving in Syria. Nevertheless, she still managed to present official messages from the United States to the host government though the use of demarches.11 She would often present the demarche “to raise a concern…mainly [about] regional issues” that involved Syria. In doing so, “We were expressing our views on what we would like to see happen.” Amb. Scobey valued that “we were able to talk” since “sometimes you want to be able to have those conversations for information to get through.” She remarks, “We gave them [the Syrian government] our view” but, “did not often [receive] a very explicit response.” Nevertheless, she notes there was value in presenting the US perspective because “the Syrians can be very transactional.”

Open channels of communication, however, are not one-sided. As the official representatives of the United States abroad, US ambassadors consult with their host governments on their views and perceptions of US policy and global or regional developments.

10. Quotations from phone interview conducted on February 24, 2015.
11. As defined by the US Department of State Foreign Affairs Manual Correspondence Handbook, a demarche “is a formal diplomatic representation of one government’s official position, views, or wishes on a given subject to an appropriate official in another government or international organization.”
In Oman, Amb. Schmierer remembers how he would seek audiences with Sultan Qaboos bin Said al Said “to get his advice … or to bring to his attention … specific kinds of issues.” This would be done to better understand how the Omani government perceived certain issues. Amb. Schmierer was often instructed to “make an appointment to see an official” so he could “elicit some kind of feedback” from the Omanis and better understand their points of view.

At times, the US embassy in Oman simply served as an intermediary for Washington to better understand Omani perceptions. In 2011, the embassy requested, facilitated, and organized two visits to Oman by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. In these visits, Secretary Clinton met with Sultan Qaboos to discuss issues of mutual interest to the United States and Oman. One of the points brought up by Secretary Clinton was the Sunni/Shi’ah divide in Iraq. Given that the majority of Omani Muslims are Ibadi, the government of Oman presents a unique voice in the Sunni/Shi’ah debate, making it a “helpful interlocutor” on the issue. For this reason, in her meetings with Sultan Qaboos, Secretary Clinton approached the issue “to ask the Sultan his own views” on the divide to better understand the regional context of it.

Advising Washington

Advising Washington concerns the recommendations of ambassadors in policy. Largely through the extensive work of embassies, ambassadors gauge internal developments within foreign countries and report them back to Washington. Thus, embassies allow the United States to have “eyes and ears on the ground” wherever its diplomats are stationed.

Amb. Ronald Neumann, who served as the US ambassador to Afghanistan between 2004 and 2007, provides a telling example of how US ambassadors gauge incidents in their foreign posts. After his arrival to Afghanistan, Amb. Neumann predicted a Taliban resurgence in the country based on his analysis of the domestic situation. Foreseeing such a development, he requested an extra $600 million of economic assistance expecting

12. Quotations from in-person interview conducted on January 28, 2015 in Washington, DC.
the war in Afghanistan “was going to get worse.” At the time, only $43 million were approved. According to Amb. Neumann, his prediction, which could not be seen from Washington, was “a question of a number of incidents that showed us the Taliban had the strengths to come back” and was determined through “a combination of talking to people, looking at the situation, looking at the incidents, putting pieces together analytically.” Initially, Washington approved $43 million of the requested $600 million, but approved greater economic support a year later when Amb. Neumann’s assessment “was proven right” and became reality.

During her assignment as the US Ambassador to Egypt between 2008 and 2011, Amb. Scobey frequently advised Washington on internal developments within the country. Her analysis served to “bring Washington up to date on where a range of issues stand … what the Egyptians are thinking” and identifying “the problem areas … the difficult areas, the areas that you expect a lot of conflict.” Her advice was crucial as she was stationed in Egypt when the Arab Spring erupted in 2011.

She concludes that without an embassy, Washington would “have snippets of information and [without] the context.” At length, she summarizes:

“It’s not always the ambassador, per se, who has the best street feeling, but it is the ambassador’s presence that allows the embassy to operate … It is that general ability to have people on the ground reporting, operating, talking to people, that gives you a sense—and traveling throughout the country—that gives you an ability to have a broader understanding of what’s going on in the country.”

Beyond gauging developments in a foreign country, US ambassadors are able to propose policy and actions to Washington based on their analysis. Following the end of the Gulf War in 1991, a debate emerged over the American military presence in Kuwait. While some officials wanted to remove all troops from the country, others advocated leaving a presence behind to deter Saddam Hussein from invading again. Amb. Edward

13. Quotations from phone interview conducted on February 24, 2015.
Gnehm, who served as the US Ambassador to Kuwait between 1991 and 1994, highlights that the United States assumed “Saddam would be overthrown” after the war, but since this was not the case, policy had to be adjusted. According to Amb. Gnehm, the United States would leave Saddam free to “roll back down with nothing to stop him” by withdrawing all forces from Kuwait. As a solution, he proposed a middle ground. He raised the idea of leaving a presence behind, “but not permanently.” Rather, he suggested a “rolling exercise program” in which different groups from the military would rotate in conducting military exercises in Kuwait for periods of about six weeks. Washington proceeded to follow Amb. Gnehm’s advice and effectively deterred Saddam Hussein from invading again.

Promoting Positive American Images and Values

Promoting positive American images and values deals with the perception of the United States in foreign countries. Often, American ambassadors work to humanize views of the United States through public engagement.

After 9/11, the United States was negatively viewed in the United Arab Emirates. Amb. Marcelle Wahba, who served as the US Ambassador to the UAE between 2001 and 2004, claims that America’s “image started to take some hits” because of Emiratis’ mistreatment while being in the United States due to their Arab appearance. Emiratis would then return to the UAE and share their grievances. In addition, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan portrayed the United States as “a military aggressor against Muslims,” which contradicted the earlier perception in the UAE, which saw the United States as “a country with clean hands.”

To counter these attitudes, Amb. Wahba planned “to humanize the American face ... at the embassy level.” She initiated a program to “send out junior officers [of the Foreign Service assigned to the embassy in the UAE] to local schools and talk about where they came from” so youth could meet and relate to young Americans. She resolves, “The kids loved it. This was a huge success.” Since “junior officers were the best way to hu-

14. Quotations from in-person interview conducted on January 28, 2015 in Washington, DC.
15. Quotations from in-person interview conducted on March 16, 2015 in Washington, DC.
manize the American face” because of their youth and approachability, “we got an amazing response because that kind of outreach really pays off.” The effect was that “kids would go home and tell their parents and then the whole family hears about it.”

Part of this humanization of the United States includes appearances in the media. For Amb. Gnehm, engaging with the media extended further than presenting American policy. He states that although “getting on programs and getting your profile is a means for getting your message across,” sometimes “the message might not be the topic you’re talking about.” Instead, he says when “I’m projecting me as a personality and a human being who represents America,” it would be deemed a success “if I come across like a nice or thoughtful person.” By virtue of that, the United States would be “improving its popularity and access” in the country.

Ambassadors also promote positive American images and values by affirming American intentions of good will. By their mere presence in their assigned countries or their attendance at significant events, US ambassadors can express solidarity with a nation’s people.

While serving as Ambassador to Algeria between 1994 and 1997, Amb. Neumann recollects an instance in which an Algerian newspaper was unlawfully closed by the government, but “I knew that if I just complained about it directly, they would say I was interfering in their judicial process.” In cooperation with editors from the newspaper, Amb. Neumann organized a visit to the offices of the closed newspaper, where he arranged to be photographed while “looking at the sign” that ordered the closing. He acknowledged “the symbolism from the picture would be clear that I was against this” without explicitly attacking the Algerian government. He followed up with the editors to “make sure you want me to do this.” They affirmed, “It’s important to our morale to know the world cares” and valued the ability “to have a visible sign of support.”

Aligning Bilateral Interests

For American ambassadors, aligning bilateral interests includes expanding areas of cooperation between both nations. Among other things, this work entails bringing government officials from both countries together and coordinating efforts of mutual concern.
In the UAE, Amb. Wahba hoped to further cooperation with the United States by institutionalizing the relationships that was, by her analysis, “personality driven.” To achieve results, she moved “to work more closely with the UAE’s ministries and made sure their different ministries were more plugged into our systems.” The goal was “to build lines of communication at the working level to complement and support at the senior levels.” In turn, she guided the establishment of the “US-UAE Strategic Dialogue.” The first initiative of the dialogue was to bring “a delegation of twenty-five people headed by the Emirati Foreign Minister.” Each member of the delegation then “had meetings with their counterpart administrations in Washington.” The reverse took place six months later when the State Department led a delegation to the UAE to “to go through all these issues that we were handling together as a bilateral relationship.” Through such efforts, the US-UAE relationship expanded, institutionalized, and strengthened.

In addition to finding areas of cooperation, aligning bilateral interests entails resolving issues of difference between two countries. American ambassadors serve as the first line of communication whenever disagreements take place and work immediately to resolve them.

While Amb. Stephen Seche was assigned as the US Ambassador to Yemen between 2007 and 2010, differences emerged on the role of the United States in the country. He claims “the biggest disagreement” between Yemen and the United States was “that Yemen felt we weren’t producing as much as our rhetoric suggested.” Amb. Seche explains the details of the disagreement were a balance that had to be made on “which comes first: security or development?” This involved demonstrating that the United States could not “put money wherever you can’t absorb it properly” and to move forward, the embassy worked to satisfy both Washington and Yemen by finding a delicate balance between Yemen’s demands and Washington’s capabilities.

While serving as the US Ambassador to Qatar between 2011 and 2014, Amb. Susan Ziadeh echoes the sentiment that there were, at times,

16. Quotations from in-person interview conducted on March 12, 2015 in Washington, DC.
17. Quotations from in-person interview conducted on February 25, 2015 in Washington, DC.
“differences of opinion and objectives.” Her course of action in these instances, however, was to “look where you can bridge the gap” between the United States and Qatar and claims that it was always possible to “find overlapping and mutual interests.” At times, she would even make appearances in the media to “clarify policy and promote people-to-people engagement.” Her approach to resolving issues of difference was to “address misconceptions and clear up misunderstanding.”

Reservations Against the American Embassy in Iran

As the benefits of an American embassy in Iran can be deducted from the established research, reservations against reestablishing the embassy must also be considered. Rather than comprehensively address all reservations, this paper seeks to raise questions for further research, namely, would the US embassy in Iran be secure? Would its work be meaningful? And would its reestablishment be feasible?

The first question concerns the security of the site and the safety of its personnel. Attempts to reopen the American embassy in Iran while the current regime stays in power will surely evoke memories of the 1979 embassy takeover and ensuing hostage crisis, which led to the official end of diplomatic relations between the United States and Iran. If the United States were to reopen its embassy in Iran, would it be equipped with the appropriate security in a country whose regime often relies on anti-Americanism?

The second question regards the value of the work in a potential US embassy in Iran. For the United States, the advantages of official diplomatic relations with other countries are evident in the research section of this paper. However, would these advantages replicate in a hostile Iran or would Iranian interference limit the scope of the US mission in a way that deems it ineffective?

The third question addresses the feasibility of reestablishing US-Iran diplomatic relations. In a country where the United States is often referred to as the “Great Satan,” the likelihood of the Iranian regime consenting to the reopening of the US embassy in Iran is likely to be low. Even if the United States intended to restore official diplomatic relations with Iran, would the Iranian regime be open to the idea?
Conclusions: Weighing Costs and Benefits

Although the aforementioned reservations require further investigation, an initial hypothesis can be formulated to address them. In terms of security, the United States ought to be capable of maintaining a secure embassy in Iran, much like it maintains safe diplomatic missions across the world. The question of security does not necessarily apply solely to Iran. Given recent, and sometimes fatal, attacks on American ambassadors ranging from Libya\textsuperscript{18} to South Korea\textsuperscript{19}, security should remain a serious concern for the United States in its diplomatic posts abroad, but the case in Iran should not be dramatically different than other diplomatic posts.

In terms of effectiveness, the reestablishment of the US embassy in Iran would have significant value for the United States, even if the diplomatic mission faced obstacles from the Iranian regime. Recall the example of Amb. Margaret Scobey: while she was stationed in Syria, the Syrian government was not always cooperative, and at times, downright hostile. Nevertheless, Amb. Scobey was able to enable transactions between the United States and Syria and her presence granted the United States the ability to gauge developments inside the country.

Lastly, the feasibility of reopening the American embassy would be dependent on Iran’s internal politics and thus, remains the hardest reservation to predict. While there are conservatives in Iran who seek to antagonize the United States, there are also moderates within the regime who seek greater engagement with the “Great Satan.”\textsuperscript{20} Given the recent nuclear agreement reached between Iran and the P5+1 on July 15, 2015, it is not farfetched to consider a future for the reestablishment of official diplomatic relations between the United States and Iran.


In terms of benefits, the US embassy in Iran could provide the United States with substantial assistance in achieving its regional interests. As was discerned in the research of this paper, the work of American ambassadors is broad and covers a multitude of crucial components vital to US interests. Having an embassy in Iran would serve to improve the United States’ success in achieving such interests.

Furthermore, the work of US ambassadors is irreplaceable. Although some aspects of their diplomatic work, such as being able to present US policy to a foreign nation, can be achieved through other mediums of diplomacy, US ambassadors undertake endeavors that could only be done at the embassy level, such as maintaining a diplomatic presence that is able to gauge the atmosphere in foreign countries and engage with the foreign public on a personal level at a frequent rate.

Perhaps most pertinently, the reestablishment of the American embassy in Iran would also bolster US interests in any policy context. As discussed at the beginning of this paper, reestablishing official diplomatic relations with the Islamic Republic should not be solely limited to a policy of engagement. Consider, for example, how the United States maintained an embassy in the Soviet Union while pursuing a policy of containment throughout the Cold War. Even in an Iranian context, recall that the United States had an embassy in Iran, which aided the CIA during the overthrow of Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh.21 In turn, the reopening of the American embassy in Iran should not be perceived alone through the lens of diplomatic engagement, but rather as a means of supporting the United States under any policy it seeks to pursue toward the Islamic Republic.

Lastly, a point on what the implications of reopening the American embassy in Iran would mean. Richard Haass, who served as an advisor in George H.W. Bush’s National Security Committee, explains the significance of establishing full diplomatic relations for the United States:

> As a rule of thumb, diplomatic ties and talking with other governments should not be judged as a favor or, more broadly, as a sign of approval or endorsement of another country’s nature or

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its policies. Rather, relations and talking should be premised on a judgment that communication is preferable to the alternative and that the other government has the capacity to modify its behavior if it so chooses. Not talking and not having a diplomatic presence denies the US government the opportunity to observe and influence developments inside another country—and should only be US posture in rare circumstances when the government’s behavior is so extreme as to render communication useless.\textsuperscript{22}

The reopening of the American embassy in Iran should not be interpreted as an affirmation of the Islamic Republic’s actions domestically or internationally. Any such interpretation would counter the historical precedent of the United States establishing diplomatic relations with nations as a channel of communication. Neither President Richard Nixon’s opening to China, which took place during China’s Cultural Revolution, nor the reestablishment of the American embassy in Iraq during the 1980s Iraq-Iran War, indicated approval from the United States for either of these nations’ internal or regional actions. Rather, these openings highlight the importance of maintaining diplomatic contact with important international actors.

As Iran continues to increase its clout across the Middle East, either by support of Shi’ah governments, like Syria, or through involvement with Shi’ah factions in countries like Lebanon or Yemen, it would be prudent for the United States to reopen its embassy in Iran. Steps toward this goal may even be gradual, perhaps first through the establishment of an interests section in Iran\textsuperscript{23}, or through the designation of a special coordinator to deal directly with issues pertaining to Iran.\textsuperscript{24}

By reopening its embassy in Iran, the United States would strengthen its own ability to pursue its interests in the Middle East. Even if the United States were to shift away from its current policy of engagement, which led to the nuclear agreement, the presence of an American embassy would still complement other policy alternatives the United States may wish to undertake and, indeed, bolster the United States’ work to achieve its interests.


\textsuperscript{24} Ray Takeyh and Suzanne Maloney, \textit{Restoring the Balance} (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2008), 81.
Since the 1979 Iranian Revolution, the cost of not maintaining an official diplomatic presence in Iran may never have been higher. In turn, the United States should work diligently to reopen its embassy in Iran.

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REBUILDING SOCIETY:
An Exploration of Ethno-Religious Peacebuilding in Post-Civil War Sri Lanka

Hailey Pulman

A thirty-year civil war between the Sri Lankan Armed Forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam increasingly polarized ethnic and religious identities while smaller Muslim and Christian communities fell into the crossfire. The post-war government’s refusal to acknowledge past atrocities has led to a lack of national reconciliation, an increase in violence against minority communities, and the continued neglect of minority rights grievances that started the civil war. While scholars have analyzed the role religion played in propagating the conflict, little has been written on the potential of religion to build a pluralistic Sri Lankan society. Through interviews with peacebuilding organizations, officials, and diaspora communities, this research analyzes what role ethno-religious programming plays in peacebuilding initiatives in Sri Lanka. By addressing the Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslim, and Christian communities, ethno-religious peacebuilding programs are able to build stronger relationships between disparate communities and move toward reconciliation. With the election of President Maithripala Sirisena in early 2015, Sri Lanka has the potential to address minority rights for the first time since the end of the civil war and move toward a stable Sri Lanka. Successful ethno-religious peacebuilding in Sri Lanka has the ability to serve as a valuable model for peacebuilding in the wake of ethno-religious conflicts across the globe.

Introduction

In 2009, the Sri Lankan government ended a thirty-year civil war against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) that led to increasing polarization toward ethnic and religious identities. Tens of thousands of Sri Lankans were caught in the conflict and became victims of gross human rights violations. There has been a lack of national reconciliation since the

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end of the war and the minority rights grievances that started the civil war have been left largely unaddressed. As a result of a rise in Islamophobia and anti-Christian sentiment, there has been a striking increase in violence against minorities. President Sirisena’s new government broke ground by establishing a cross party coalition, but fears of isolating the majority nationalist Singhalese contingency prior to the 2015 elections stifle any national reconciliation. While many scholars have analyzed the role religion played in propagating the conflict, little has been written on the potential for religion as a tool to bridge gaps and build a pluralistic Sri Lankan society.

Considering both secular and ethno-religious peacebuilding, this paper begins by reviewing Sri Lanka’s history since independence. With this foundation, I analyze the unique benefits, challenges, and potential for ethno-religious peacebuilding initiatives in Sri Lanka today. Ethno-religious peacebuilding is not meant to replace secular peacebuilding, but rather the two complement each other to allow for a more holistic approach to rebuilding post-conflict societies. Ethno-religious peacebuilding has a limited scope and addresses the socio-economic and reconciliatory aspects of peacebuilding from a specific point of view. The practice of ethno-religious peacebuilding is crucial to transition from negative to positive peace. This research will assess the validity of these claims in the context of polarized post-civil war Sri Lanka. This paper recommends that more resources be allocated to ethno-religious peacebuilding initiatives, urges religious communities to mobilize and advocate, and calls on the government to codify minority rights and establish a national reconciliation program.

**Methodology**

The research analyzes thirteen interviews focusing on the status of reconciliation in Sri Lanka today, the role politics plays, the current dangers minorities face, and the future of ethno-religious peacebuilding. A range of relevant actors were interviewed to understand international, domestic, and personal perspectives. My interviewees included: Ambassador Patria A. Butenis, who served as US ambassador to Sri Lanka from 2009 to 2012; former Sri Lankan Anglican Bishop Duleep de Chickera; five members of the Tamil Diaspora community currently living in Boston, MA; and organiza-
tion representatives from Sri Lanka Unites, Samasevaya, Survivors Associated, the United States Institute for Peace, the International Crisis Group, and a local Christian human rights organization that wished to remain anonymous. Organizations were chosen for interviews based on their experience with inter-religious or inter-ethnic peacebuilding, their current or previous work in Sri Lanka, and their accessibility. Interviewees’ insights are dispersed throughout the paper.

This study faced certain notable limitations. Due to time constraints, I was unable to travel to Sri Lanka. In addition, my inability to speak Tamil or Sinhala limited my interviewee pool to educated Sri Lankans who had computer access. Though these interviews proved invaluable, I was only able to contact members of the Tamil diaspora community and did not have the opportunity to speak with Sinhalese, Muslim, or Christian expatriates. The organizations I spoke with were focused on ethno-religious peacebuilding, which likely made them more positive about the field of peacebuilding and its impact. To counteract this, I spoke with personnel from two larger human rights organizations—the International Crisis Group and the US Institute of Peace. Both of these organizations provided a more objective point of view. As a young woman from the Western world, interview dynamics were created that could only be overcome through conscientious interview practices.

Finally, for the purposes of publishing, this paper summarizes an extensive study of the unique set of circumstances in Sri Lanka that make ethno-religious peacebuilding an especially useful tool. Significant amounts of analysis on the factors that led to the need for peacebuilding and the impact of that peacebuilding have been simplified or omitted and can be expanded upon request.

**What is Peacebuilding?**

Peacebuilding is the strengthening of a nation’s institutional and human capacity in order to avoid the resumption of violence in a post-conflict situation.¹ The ultimate goal of peacebuilding is to stabilize a country after

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¹ De Coning and de Carvalho, *ACCORD: Peacebuilding Handbook.*
war and avoid relapse by transitioning from negative peace, the absence of violence and war, into positive peace, a society where the cause(s) of the conflict have been removed. Peacebuilding initiatives are separated into three cones: security, governance, and social and economic development. Peacebuilding missions are largely dependent on each conflict’s unique characteristics and consistently require attention from organizations of various capacities that often have difficulty coordinating their respective peacebuilding programs.

Since the end of the Cold War, there has been a significant increase in intra-state conflicts where peacebuilding missions are used as a tool for international intervention, otherwise known as Liberal Western Peacebuilding. The growing post-9/11 belief that unstable post-war states are an ideal breeding ground for terrorist organizations has made peacebuilding distinctly liberal in orientation. Almost all missions promote democracy and market-oriented economic reforms that cater to Western norms and often come under attack as neo-imperialistic and self-serving for the nations that intervene. Without an enforcement mechanism, liberal peacebuilding missions are almost entirely dependent on the host country’s willingness to cooperate with the international community. While a large criticism of liberal peacebuilding is the imposition of outsiders and their norms on a post-conflict society, ethno-religious peacebuilding is inherently based in local pre-established communities and their beliefs.

With the increasing role of religion in conflicts today, ethno-religious peacebuilding plays a unique and critical role in establishing positive peace through religiously based NGO programming and clergy-led movements. As Susan Hayward explained, “Even if the initial issues are political and

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3. Development Assistance Committee, “Peacebuilding Overview.”
economic, if religion becomes part of the conflict, you’re going to have to deal with the religious dynamics in order to get to a sustainable peace.”

Ethno-religious peacebuilding largely focuses on bringing together isolated or antagonistic communities of different religious or ethnic backgrounds through inter-faith dialogues and mobilizing religious communities for social good. These programs are uniquely powerful because they build on altruistic religious principles such as non-violence, the value of selfless acts, and the sacredness of human life. Religious leaders are uniquely valuable because they are “long-term members of society with moral authority and nonsectarian objectives.”

Religious institutions have unique social capital that is highly valuable for national peacebuilding initiatives. “Temples create a network to mobilize communities in ways that can exert political pressure to really begin to make changes at the more structural institutional policy level as well.” The most well-known ethno-religious peacebuilding missions were successful because of this structure. For example, Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. used churches across the South to gather, educate, and mobilize communities for civil rights in the United States. The infrastructural support inherent to religious communities has immense potential for social change.

**Historical Background**

The Tamil and Singhalese kingdoms shared Sri Lanka for thousands of years until colonized by the Portuguese, Dutch, and British, who each brought minority groups to the island, namely Christians and Muslims. With a population of more than twenty million people, Singhalese are the vast majority and make up 74.88 percent of the society. Tamils account for 15.37 percent of the population; Moors are the third largest ethnic

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8. Hayward, telephone interview by the author.
11. Hayward, telephone interview by the author.
group accounting for 9.23 percent of the population\textsuperscript{13} and the Christian
community, which is ethnically Tamil and Singhalese, accounts for 7.45
percent of the population.\textsuperscript{14} While there are exceptions, the majority of Sin-
ghalese are Buddhist Sinhala speakers, Tamils are Hindu Tamil speakers,
and Moors are Muslim and largely speak Tamil.\textsuperscript{15} The four main `ethnic'
groups are based on crude ethnic and religious identities, yet none of the
communities are wholly unified. Administrative and legal practices estab-
lished by the British created modern identities based on ethnic groups and
made it easy to create stereotypes and simplify enemies during the civil
war.\textsuperscript{16}

Sri Lankan History Since Independence

Sri Lanka gained independence in 1948 and ethnic tensions between
the Buddhist Singhalese majority and Tamil minority surfaced in the fight
for power. Singhalese Buddhist nationalist sentiment, which believes Sri
Lanka is the ordained Buddhist homeland, treated all minorities as a threat
to Singhalese Buddhist identity and established support for a highly central-
ized government and the denial of rights to minorities in the country. The
1956 Sinhala Only Act and the 1972 Constitution declared Sri Lanka a
Buddhist republic, named Sinhala the official language, and discarded pro-
tective measures for minorities from the previous constitution.\textsuperscript{17} Tamils saw
these acts as undeniable proof of the majority attempting to exclude minor-
ities from government and students began establishing various Tamil rebel-
lion groups.\textsuperscript{18} The Tamil community, largely concentrated in the northern
part of the island, dealt with violent internal strife as different groups
fought for control until the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) es-
tablished itself as the clearly dominant representative of the Tamil people.

\textsuperscript{13} Bass, \textit{Everyday Ethnicity in Sri Lanka}.
\textsuperscript{15} Gordon Weiss, \textit{The Cage: The Fight for Sri Lanka and the Last Days of the Tamil Tigers} (New
\textsuperscript{16} Alan Keenan, videoconference interview by the author, London, England, February 16,
2015.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{18} Weiss, \textit{The Cage: The Fight}, 33.
In one of their first attacks, the LTTE killed eleven Singhalese soldiers, which led to an anti-Tamil pogrom referred to as the ‘Black July Riots.’ The riots left thousands of Tamils dead, 150,000 homeless, thousands of shops and homes destroyed, and triggered Eelam War I, one of four wars carried out between the Tamil Tigers and Sri Lankan Armed Forces throughout the thirty year civil war. The Tamil Tigers were one of the strongest insurgency forces the world has ever seen and commanded their own naval and air forces while maintaining territorial control of and social services for northern and eastern Sri Lanka for many years. The Eelam Wars ended with the establishment of peace talks, such as the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord of 1987 and Norwegian-led talks in 2002, but all attempts at peace ultimately failed when one side felt they could win militarily and another Eelam War began.

The Tamil Tigers faced significant setbacks in 2004, including a brutal tsunami that left 30,000 people dead, and in 2005 President Mahinda Rajapksa was elected on a military focused platform with little sympathy for the Tamil cause or peace talks. The Sri Lankan Armed Forces slowly pushed the Tamil Tigers north, and, in 2009, the civil war ended in a small jungle called the Vanni, which became known as “the Cage.” In the last stages of the war all international humanitarian organizations and media outlets were expelled from the region, making it nearly impossible to understand what happened to the 300,000 civilians interned in the Cage. When outside media sources were later allowed into the northern part of the country, it was under the strict guidance of the government officials who restricted movement to government approved areas. Many reporters believe that these approved areas were cleared of signals of obvious human rights abuses, such as mass graves. LTTE Supreme Leader Velupillai Prabakharan was killed on May 18, 2009, formally ending the civil war and Tamil Tiger insurgency.

19. Ibid.
Sri Lanka Post-Civil War

President Rajapaksa was seen as the ‘savior’ of Sri Lanka and was re-elected in 2010. With the help of a cabinet made almost entirely by his family and close friends, Rajapaksa established a further centralized government and created an oppressive state unwelcoming to peacebuilding or reconciliation. To reestablish control over the areas previously under LTTE control, Rajapaksa instituted a military and social occupation in minority-majority regions. Archbishop de Chickera defined these acts as a strategy that has left the northern and eastern parts of the country in a state of alienation and desperation.21

While Tamils in the north live under military rule, Muslim and Christian minorities across the country are often victims of acts of aggression by Sinhalese Buddhist nationalist extremists, such as the Bodu Basa Sena (BBS). These extremists do not focus on trying to convert Tamils, Muslims, or Christians to Buddhism, but rather use violence and intimidation tactics to try suppress all minorities, demonstrating that conflict is not solely religious in nature but includes an important ethnic dimension. It is widely speculated that Rajapaksa supported BBS and called on the organization to stir up trouble to distract the population from government failures.22 The BBS has been extremely active since the end of the civil war, with more than sixty-five attacks on places of worship reported between May of 2009 and January of 2013.23 A 2013 study found that the majority of Sri Lankans do not agree with BBS and violent intimidation tactics, but have no expectation of any vigilantes being arrested because of their connections to the


The BBS and its xenophobic rhetoric are one of the largest obstacles to peace and reconciliation between ethnic groups in Sri Lanka.

The government has exerted minimal reconciliation efforts between the Tamil and Singhalese populations. This is largely due to the military defeat of the Tamil Tigers, President Rajapaksa’s lack of sympathy for the Tamil population, and his refusal to acknowledge trauma caused by past events. The decades long cycle of violence and lack of accountability has become normalized in the country and created a deep-seated insecurity and mistrust between communities and the government. One of the few national initiatives for reconciliation was the establishment of the LLRC, or Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission, which was almost universally dismissed by human rights organizations due to corruption and misfeasance. Many Tamils and Muslims identify with India and Pakistan respectively, showing the lack of reconciliation post-civil war.

To many people’s surprise, on January 9, 2015, Maithripala Sirisena narrowly won Sri Lanka’s presidential election against incumbent President Rajapaksa with 51.28 percent of the vote and created a historic multi-party coalition that offers a new hope for minorities, civil society, and reconciliation in Sri Lanka. President Sirisena appointed a Prime Minister from the opposing party and established a National Executive Council, an entirely new body that is made up of leaders from different parties. Political parties in Sri Lanka draw on specific ethnic communities for support and this coalition includes representatives from all four ethnic groups. The council is “focused on constitutional reforms, good governance reforms, and rebalancing the President’s power” and has fulfilled, to some extent, its promise to make constitutional reforms within Sirisena’s first one hundred days in office.

Sri Lankans and peacebuilders see a unique window of opportunity for change with President Sirisena, but upcoming elections in the summer of 2015 severely limit his opportunities to create meaningful change and leave

25. Ibid.
Sri Lanka in a historic and vulnerable place. The election of a coalition government similar to President Sirisena’s would offer significant promise for peacebuilding and reconciliation. Conversely, the election of a leader similar to Rajapaksa could cause Sri Lanka to stagnate in its current military state or even worsen the situation. Regardless of the outcome, if past traumas are not acknowledged and political power is not devolved to minority communities, Sri Lanka will remain at a high risk for a relapse into conflict and gross human rights violations.

**Ethno-Religious Peacebuilding in Sri Lanka, 2009 to Present**

Environment for Peacebuilding NGOs

The Rajapaksa regime made it difficult for civil society to make meaningful progress toward reconciliation. Shanti Arulampalam, a representative of Survivors Associated, noted, “Since around 2004 we have been very wary of conducting peace building programs especially in the north and east due to possible backlash from the Government.”\(^\text{26}\) Intimidation tactics such as arbitrary arrests and disappearances are continually used by the government to suppress civil society, including peacebuilding organizations. For organizations that found a way to run programming, “they must work with the government in order to get privileges to be allowed to go and help. So either directly or indirectly they have to account to the government as to how they are spending their money.”\(^\text{27}\) This oversight forces organizations to work within the limited confines of what the government approves of, which largely disadvantages minority communities.

Despite these challenges, about two dozen local organizations have been established with varying capacities for peacebuilding, and larger international peacebuilding organizations have established offices across the country. Interviews with Sri Lanka Unites, Samasevaya, International Crisis Group, a Catholic organization that preferred to remain anonymous, and Survivors Associated showed that each organization has unique strategies.

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27. Thiagalingam, interview by the author.
and programming to reach the ultimate goal of fostering conditions for an inclusive, just, and peaceful Sri Lanka. Four common programmatic themes found across these peacebuilding organizations were a focus on youth, cultural exchanges, language consciousness, and increased informal interaction between ethnic groups.

Patterns of Peacebuilding NGOs

Organizations such as Sri Lanka Unites, Samasevaya, and Peace and Community Action have programming that focuses on bringing youth of different ethnicities together. Sri Lanka Unites hosts an annual Future Leaders Conference that brings 125 students from across the country together for a five-day program. Nishath Najumudeen, a leader of the conference, explains, “We create a platform for them to understand each other. We try to create an environment which is very fun and at the same time teach the importance of unity and diversity and how they can use their skills for reconciliation as well.”28 Nishath says the students are “able to realize the negative stereotypes they’ve been fed by their umamas [grandmothers] aren’t necessarily true.”29

Another common practice among organizations is using cultural platforms, such as song or theatre, to bring together people of different ethnic groups. Samasevaya runs a program called Sama Sanskruthika Parshadaya, or Cultural Group for Peace, which gathers musicians of all ethnicities to create songs and perform across the country. These programs play a crucial role in exposing communities, largely rural, to cultures and traditions they have not had the opportunity to interact with in an attempt to overcome misguided negative attitudes.

The language barrier between the Sinhala and Tamil speaking communities is a large obstacle many organizations try to overcome. While many organizations try to publish their materials in English, Tamil, and Sinhala, Survivors Associated takes a proactive approach to the language barrier by offering language classes across the country to help bridge the language gap.

29. Ibid.
as well.\textsuperscript{30} Once again, multi-lingual resources are used to create a space for people of all ethnicities to be brought together.

Finally, many organizations understand the value of bringing different ethnic communities together in an informal manner to simply expose their inherent connection as human beings. Peace and Community Action brings people of different ethnic groups together for volunteer projects while Survivors Associated creates multi-ethnic sports teams that play together on a monthly basis. These activities are deeply rooted in the belief that bringing previously isolated and antagonistic communities together can dispel prejudices. Ambassador Butenis is a strong supporter of inter-ethnic dialogues and believes that “the largest problem is the lack of interaction between the communities” and ethno-religious peacebuilding organizations are beginning to bring these communities together.\textsuperscript{31}

Inter-Group Contact

Programmatically, every ethno-religious peacebuilding NGO interviewed focused on cultural exchanges that put a human face on each ethnic community through interaction. The underlying theory upon which these programs are based is Gordon Allport’s Contact Theory, which hypothesizes that “prejudice (unless deeply rooted in the character structure of the individual) may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of common goals.”\textsuperscript{32} Many Sri Lankans recognize the difference between rural and urban attitudes as proof of the importance of intergroup contact. One peacebuilder explained this reality saying:

If you take a rural village in Sri Lanka, which consists of only Singhalese, and ask them about people from the north it would be pretty negative. If you ask someone living in Colombo, which has a lot of diversity, you would get not so negative ideas be-

\textsuperscript{31} Butenis, interview by the author.
cause they have already met a Muslim or a Christian or a Tamil person.33

There are strong criticisms of the theory, including the belief that deep-seated prejudice is being underestimated and cannot be overcome by interactions once formed. An opposing theory, Social Identity Theory, explains that group membership, and the beliefs held within each community, are difficult to overcome through mere inter-group contact programs as it is only too easy to go home to your prejudice ridden communities and return to normal life.34 Susan Hayward had a more practical criticism of its use in Sri Lanka, explaining that even when programs are effective at changing attitudes:

It may change the way they interact with people in their communities but it doesn’t lead them to actually begin to advocate for the political rights of the Tamils and the Muslims. So it actually ends up creating a lot of resentment among Tamils and Muslims because they understand and empathize now but aren’t actually doing anything to help change the situation that persists.35

The lack of mobilization by the Singhalese majority who participate in inter-ethnic peacebuilding programs disheartens Muslims and Tamils who hope to make meaningful change. “For them it isn’t about a couple of Sinhala liking them, it’s about being treated fairly and justly by the police, by the authorities” and it can be argued that contact theory does not focus on political reforms and impedes progress for minority rights in Sri Lanka.36

Critiques of Current Programming

The environment of fear created by Rajapaksa and limitations of funding have kept the programs from reaching the vast majority of Sri Lankans. This is largely due to a lack of coordination between organizations that seem to have significant overlap. Susan Hayward believes, “The next step is

33. Najumudeen, videoconference interview by the author.
35. Hayward, telephone interview by the author.
36. Ibid.
going to require these different interfaith efforts to come and organize together. A bunch of little pieces don’t necessarily lead to a big change.” Coordination efforts have been limited by fears of government retaliation, which caused many groups to keep a minimal profile in an attempt to “stay under the government’s radar.” While President Sirisena offers new hope, his mere six month term does not allow for meaningful assessment of potential changes in the environment for NGOs, especially those trying to run programming in the North and East.

A larger criticism of current ethno-religious peacebuilding in Sri Lanka is its inability to transition from attitude changing programs to mobilization for political reforms. Fear of abuse, abduction, or retaliation by the Rajapaksa government created considerable barriers against identification as a human rights or civil rights advocate. Additionally, peacebuilding NGOs are largely run by Tamils and Muslims, while their target audience is the Sinhalese. While it makes sense that the people organizing for change are the people oppressed by the status quo, the majority must be responsible for some aspect of the peacebuilding process if change is expected to happen.

Until Sinhalese Buddhist participants in peacebuilding programs begin to advocate with minority communities, the root causes of this conflict will not be addressed. Hayward explained, the civil war was “about centralization of power and access to decision making” and inter-ethnic dialogues are politically weak. This was seen in 2002 when “there were a lot of inter-ethnic, inter-religious, peacebuilding exercises during the peace process and I saw that they were not very effective. All of those community level efforts were very fragile and weeks and months of efforts could be undone with one act of violence by people at the top.”

The relationship between the government and civil society in Sri Lanka has also sparked a debate on the order of steps necessary to reconcile Sri Lanka and create a unified Sri Lankan identity. Much like the question of the chicken and the egg, it is unclear if grassroots peacebuilding and the changing of attitudes must happen before meaningful national reconciliation.

37. Jayasinghe, e-mail interview by the author.
38. Hayward, telephone interview by the author.
tion can take place or if the government must set the example and show signals of good faith so that NGOs feel comfortable expanding grassroots programs. Alan Keenan, a peacebuilder at International Crisis Group, does not believe grassroots-level peacebuilding will:

Get anywhere until at the very least the government sets the framework to encourage and make it safe and seem worth the trouble for people to engage in dialogues and trust building activities. Those become viable only if the government is sending signals that they will be supported and that the direction of policy is favorable towards accommodating a variety of identities and political positions of the different communities.  

If this is the case, the work of current ethno-religious peacebuilding programs may be falling short. Yet this begs the question, how do you force the government to take such steps? Violence failed for the Tamil people and is not a viable option today. Past minority rights movements, like those in the United States and South Africa, show political mobilization to be the solution. However, political mobilization emphasizes the importance of the second main criticism of peacebuilding programs, which do not call for political advocacy.

**Conclusions**

A brutal civil war caused by Buddhist nationalist sentiment and extreme centralization of power ended in 2009 with a military defeat of one of the world’s most successful insurgency groups. With obscene disregard for accountability, human rights violations continued after the war with the support of a corrupt and militarized government. While the northern part of the country remains under military rule and minorities face systemic oppression and violent attacks, ethno-religious peacebuilding organizations have attempted to break down prejudices between ethnic communities.

Underlying prejudices must be dismantled for true reconciliation to happen and ethno-religious peacebuilding shows glimpses of hope in their ability to bridge the currently polarized Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslim, and

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40. Ibid.
Christian communities. Without any national reconciliation, ethno-religious peacebuilding NGOs have used inter-group contact as a means to create networks across isolated and antagonistic ethnic communities. While the vast majority of Sri Lankans do not support violence against minority communities, a lack of political mobilization and an environment of fear created by President Rajapaksa have allowed human rights violations to multiply. The inability to mobilize these networks to advocate for political reforms has left many root causes of the civil war unchanged.

Overcoming structural and social oppression with roots more than half a century old to create a unified Sri Lankan identity is a daunting task, but ethno-religious peacebuilding has the unique strengths that can help not only to transform society, but politics and policy as well. The lack of support for such programs and national reconciliation makes a unified Sri Lankan identity and positive peace nearly impossible, yet some people remain optimistic. President Sirisena and the upcoming elections offer qualified optimism for the future of ethno-religious peacebuilding in Sri Lanka. Based on my interviews and extensive research, I offer seven recommendations to the government of Sri Lanka.

**Recommendations to the Government of Sri Lanka**

1. **Acknowledge the suffering of all Sri Lankans.** President Sirisena may not take large steps before the June elections, but acknowledging the suffering of all Sri Lankans will be seen as a huge step toward reconciliation and force all other candidates to do the same.

2. **Expand ethno-religious peacebuilding in the North and East.** Inter-ethnic interactions are crucial to addressing the underlying resentments and prejudices that fuel violence in Sri Lanka today and pose one of the largest risks for the relapse of conflict.

3. **Mobilize inter-religious advocacy campaigns.** A human rights advocate explained, “The viability of inter-community activities depends on their ability to use the relationships built to transform the state and politics.”

41. Ibid.
(4) *Create a national reconciliation program.* The continued human rights abuses and lack of accountability make positive peace impossible. One Tamil fears that “hardship will soon become a grievance and we may well be sowing the seeds of another militant movement.”\(^{42}\) A national reconciliation program is necessary to address past injustices.

(5) *Codify minority and political rights in the constitution.* As one peacebuilder explained, “At root it’s not about attitudes, it’s at root about structural injustice. It’s about highly centralized states that haven’t devolved power to the provinces.”\(^ {43}\) There will always be a threat of conflict resurfacing until the original grievances that sparked the war are dealt with.

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**Acknowledgments**

I would like to thank all of my interviewees who took the time to explain complex and often personal issues to me. I am deeply indebted to my graduate student mentor, Sarah Lord, and my advisor, Professor Melani McAlister, for all of their unwavering support, feedback, and encouragement. I am grateful for the opportunity to do this research through the Elliott School Undergraduate Scholars Program with the guidance of the amazing Annie Vinik and the support of my fellow scholars. My research would not have been possible without the guidance of the Nadanasabesan family, who were kind enough to open their home to me and guide me immensely throughout my research. Finally, I would like to thank my parents for sending me to Sri Lanka two years ago, which sparked my interest in the conflict.

\(^{42}\) Sritharan, interview by the author.

\(^{43}\) Hayward, telephone interview by the author.
**Occupational Health Risk Factors for Schistosomiasis:**
Systematic Review and Analysis

Sarah Grace Sawyer

Schistosomiasis is a neglected tropical disease caused by a parasitic flatworm that affects over 240 million people in the poorest regions of Africa. Carried by snails living in fresh, stagnant water, the parasite penetrates human skin upon contact, causing the victim to suffer a range of symptoms including diarrhea, blood in the urine, and eventual death. Despite its prevalence, schistosomiasis is preventable, treatable, and curable once a control program is implemented. Substantial reduction of schistosomiasis would relieve suffering and produce many socio-economic benefits, including higher productivity and higher school attendance rates. Disease transmission is directly tied to the environment, and those in certain occupations are at particularly high risk, including agricultural workers and fishermen due to direct contact with unsafe water. The objective of this study is to examine which occupations yield risk factors for acquiring schistosomiasis in Africa. Conducting a systematic review and analysis based on inclusion criteria, thirty-five peer-reviewed studies were selected from Scopus, Web of Science, and Medline. All relevant evidence from the systematic review concluded that certain occupations result in an increased risk of schistosomiasis, and that a comprehensive approach to prevention is integral in community health in rural areas. Prevention programming for schistosomiasis should focus on at-risk occupations, including targeting water resource management, irrigation systems management, and agricultural management, in order to stop the occupation-specific transmission of the disease, which leads to higher schistosomiasis rates in endemic communities.

**Introduction**

Schistosomiasis, a parasitic infection that causes morbidity in Africa and other regions of the world, is a vast problem. Afflicting over 240 million people in the poorest regions of seventy-four countries, the disease is most often associated with patterns of high water contact in rural areas. In

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this paper, I explore the risk factors for schistosomiasis, focusing on occupational activities. Occupational activities refer to work-related duties that put people at risk for contracting the disease. These occupational activities include: fishing, mining, agricultural work, irrigation work, and domestic tasks such as dishwashing and laundry. Conducting a systematic review, I searched Medline, Scopus, and Web of Science to comprehensively review the occupational risk factors for schistosomiasis in Africa. While swimming and other activities also exist as risk factors, this paper focuses on the unavoidable contact with unsafe water that certain employees face daily, making schistosomiasis infection inevitable. Through the process of the review, I identified other notable factors in schistosomiasis transmission, including the gender differences in schistosomiasis research studies.

What is Schistosomiasis?

Schistosomiasis is one of seventeen neglected tropical diseases (NTDs). The World Health Organization (WHO) defines NTDs as a group of seventeen diseases with specific attributes that primarily affect the world’s poorest people. Though all seventeen NTDs are preventable, treatable, and curable, they continue to persist because of a number of factors. These factors include a lack of access to safe water, improved hygiene, proper sanitation (WASH), medical care, and information about preventing the diseases. Not only will control and eventual eradication of NTDs lead to greater well-being in poor regions of the world, but it will lead to socio-economic growth and the reduction of billions of dollars in associated costs. Schistosomiasis, one of the most common NTDs, is preventable with increased access to safe water and improved sanitation, combined with mass drug administration in endemic regions, and environmental control measures such as water resource management.

Over 240 million people worldwide are infected with schistosomiasis and an estimated 90 percent of the infected population lives on the African continent. Many endemic areas report over 50 percent infection rates, due

to the unavoidable nature of the parasite in water resources in rural regions.²

**Figure 1 Distribution of Schistosomiasis, Worldwide, 2009³**

Within Africa, schistosomiasis is most prevalent in Mozambique, Madagascar, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, and Ghana, with national infection rates in some countries exceeding 70 percent. Many of these countries have control programs that combine WASH initiatives with environmental and biological control, but increased effort and education is needed to eliminate and eventually eradicate the disease in Africa. While schistosomiasis has historically been endemic to parts of the Caribbean, Latin America, the Middle

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East, East Asia, and Southeast Asia, these regions have seen more sustained control efforts that have been successful at controlling the disease.

What Does Schistosomiasis Look Like in Africa?

Schistosomiasis remains an immense public health problem in Africa, affecting nearly every African country, with some infection rates over 70 percent. Two main types of schistosomiasis, S. haematobium and S. mansoni are present on the continent of Africa, while other schistosome types are found in Latin America and Asia. Often, one type of schistosome will be endemic to part of a country, while the other type of schistosome will be endemic to a separate region within the country. To understand how to prevent schistosomiasis across Africa, it is important to recognize the life cycle of the NTD.

The first stage of schistosomiasis development covers the schistosome eggs and release into the environment, the process of infection of the snail by the miracidia form of the parasite, and the process of growth within the snail before the cercariae are released into the environment to infect other animals and humans. In the egg stage, the oval schistosome eggs are excreted via the urine or feces in the infected person. Later, the eggs hatch in water under certain environmental conditions affected by temperature and amount of light. Eggs excreted from an infected person can stay alive for up to one week in the open, significantly contributing to the parasite’s success.4

After the eggs hatch, schistosomiasis enters the miracidium stage, which is the “free larval stage” in between the parasite infecting the snail host. Miracidia seek out specific species of snails, which they identify through certain attractants, including mucus that contains certain fatty and amino acids attractive to miracidia.5 After the miracidium identifies the snail in which it will infect, it typically penetrates the foot of the snail and begins to develop into a sporocyst, the next stage of larval development before infecting its second host. Sometimes infecting all snail tissues, the miracidium

5. Rollinson, 90.
begins its transformation into the mother sporocyst, which produces daughter sporocysts through asexual reproduction. Eventually, the daughter sporocysts produce cercarial embryos, which mature into cercaria. An infected snail usually releases between 1,500 and 2,000 cercariae per day, for S. mansoni and S. haematobium, respectively.

**Figure 2** The Life Cycle of Schistosomiasis

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The two types of schistosomiasis that are most prevalent in Africa include S. haematobium and S. mansoni. S. haematobium lives in the urinary system and can cause obstructive uropathy due to the volume of schistosome eggs present in the bladder and ureter, the tube that carries the urine from the kidneys to the bladder. Due to lowered blood supply, the bladder wall can decrease in thickness and is at risk of rupturing if subjected to stress or trauma. As the infection progresses, there is increased pressure on the kidneys, which can lead to ineffective kidney function. S. haematobium eggs are secondarily found in genital organs and can cause small lesions and surface ulceration, which present an easier entry point for other infections, including human immunodeficiency virus. S. haematobium eggs also accumulate in the liver and can cause liver enlargement and fibrosis, sometimes leading to cirrhosis and liver failure. Although some patients do not experience severe symptoms of S. haematobium, the most common symptoms remain haematuria, which is painful urination with the presence of blood. The more eggs that are excreted through the urine, the worse the haematuria can be.

Unlike S. haematobium, S. mansoni migrates to the large intestine where it matures into a worm, reproduces, and excretes eggs through the feces. Although sometime asymptomatic, people typically experience a fever, abdominal pain, muscle pain, a moderately enlarged spleen, and in severe cases, intestinal blood loss. Chronic S. mansoni infection can result in growth retardation, as well as increased inflammation in the intestines, liver, and other organs including the lungs. Bloody diarrhea remains the most common symptom in humans with S. mansoni infection.

How Do Doctors Diagnose and Treat Schistosomiasis?

Diagnosis of intestinal and urinary schistosomiasis infection can involve asking about symptoms; looking for symptoms in the urine or stool; clinical examination of urine, stool, or tissues; ultrasound of the abdomen area; or examining other organs such as the liver and lungs. Biopsies can

also be conducted on lesions present in the rectal area or genital organs and can identify the presence of schistosome eggs. In settings where there is little access to medical care for examining urine and stool to detect schistosomiasis, medical professionals may rely on haematuria and blood in stool as indicators of the parasite’s presence. Clinical treatment of schistosomiasis involves the use of antischistosomal drugs, including praziquantel, which is on the World Health Organization’s List of Essential Drugs. In some regions, control programs have conducted yearly mass drug administration (MDA) with high-risk populations, including elementary school children.

Effective prevention of schistosomiasis requires a multi-faceted approach. Because schistosomiasis is entirely preventable, control programs must emphasize prevention as a key component. They must also incorporate other control mechanisms to treat already existing infections in communities. An effective schistosomiasis control program incorporates preventive MDA, snail control, increased access to safe water, improved sanitation, and proper hygiene, and health education. Schistosomiasis control and prevention are less likely to be successful without each of these intervention strategies.

Methodology

The research objective of this study was to examine the occupational health risk factors for schistosomiasis in order to understand the factors at play leading to high rates of schistosomiasis in endemic communities in Africa. Because schistosomiasis is a parasite living in fresh, stagnant water, I explored the types of occupational activities involving high-risk contact with infected water. My hypothesis for this study was that employees in occupations that involve contact with unsafe water, including fishermen, farmers, irrigation workers, and people completing domestic tasks, were at higher risk for developing schistosomiasis. To address my objective, I conducted a systematic literature review and analysis. Conducting this systematic review allowed me to identify occupational buzzwords and develop a

comprehensive knowledge of the occupational activities that put employees in Africa at particular risk for schistosomiasis.

This study focused on occupational exposures that can lead to any type of schistosomiasis infection. Using Medical Subject Heading (MeSH) terms, such as Schistosomiasis and Agricultural Workers’ Diseases, I systematically searched for articles in English in all years using the databases Scopus, Medline, and Web of Science. A detailed search strategy was generated with a health sciences reference librarian. No regional limit criteria were set. The following were the criteria for inclusion:

1. The study was peer-reviewed and was published in English;
2. The article was not a randomized controlled trial of a vaccine or drug, or an intervention study related to schistosomiasis;
3. The study concerned schistosomiasis;
4. The study examined a specific occupational group in Africa;
5. The study identified the specific occupation as a factor to contracting schistosomiasis.

After eliminating internal and external duplicate studies, articles were excluded first based on the titles, then by reading the abstracts, and last by reviewing the entire study.

The systematic review identified 911 records in the Medline, Scopus, and Web of Science searches. A total of 221 internal and external duplicates were removed, and later, an additional 647 records were eliminated after screening titles and abstracts. The full text of the 46 remaining articles was screened, and 13 articles were excluded.
Number of records identified: n = 911

Number of duplicates removed: n = 221

Number of records screened: n = 690

Number of papers excluded: n = 647
Reasons for inclusions based on screening titles and abstracts:
(1) The study was conducted in Africa
(2) The study was an article or review
(3) The paper was published in English
(4) The study was not a randomized controlled trial of a vaccine or drug
(5) The study concerned a specific occupational cohort
(6) The study identified the specific occupational cohort as a risk factor for schistosomiasis

Number of full text records accessed for eligibility: n = 46

Number of papers excluded: n = 13
(1) Reviews
(2) Three studies eliminated because they were not in indexed journals

Number of papers added after hand-searching bibliographies: n = 2

Number of studies included in qualitative synthesis: n = 35

**Figure 3** Systematic Review Search Results
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author and Year</th>
<th>Location of Study</th>
<th>Years Data Collected</th>
<th>Study Population</th>
<th>Study Design</th>
<th>Occupation(s) at Risk</th>
<th>Other Activities Mentioned as Risk Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abdel-Wahab 1980</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>1977–1978</td>
<td>537 individuals</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Washing dishes, washing clothes, working in the fields</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdel-Wahab 2000</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>10,899 individuals from twenty-seven rural communities</td>
<td>Randomized cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Farming, washing clothing, washing utensils</td>
<td>Swimming, bathing, playing in canals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdel-Wahab 2000</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>7,710 individuals from five villages and sixteen ezbas (group of satellite dwellings)</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Washing clothes and utensils in canal water did not increase risk for infection</td>
<td>Swimming, bathing, playing in canals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anosike 2003</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>2000–2001</td>
<td>3,296 individuals from fifteen randomly selected villages</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Farming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awad el Karin 1980</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>203 individuals</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Irrigation canal cleaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukenya 1994</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>Inhabitants of six villages</td>
<td>Cross-sectional baseline survey</td>
<td>Working in rice paddies, fishing with baskets</td>
<td>Swimming, bathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandiwani 1987</td>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>1982–1984</td>
<td>2000 individuals observed, 760 individuals examined</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Prospecting for alluvial gold, washing clothes, washing utensils</td>
<td>Bathing, swimming, collecting water for gardening purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chikwem 1987</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>1976–1984</td>
<td>N/A (no individuals examined)</td>
<td>Retrospective study</td>
<td>Fishing, agricultural activities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chimbari 2003</td>
<td>Zimbabwe, Zambia</td>
<td>2001–2002</td>
<td>570 individuals</td>
<td>Longitudinal study</td>
<td>Subsistence fishing, commercial fishing</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chipeta 2013</td>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1,642 individuals from eighteen villages</td>
<td>Application study</td>
<td>Negative association between infection probability and fishing, negative association with infection probability and farming, working in the garden was observed not to be significant albeit it was positive</td>
<td>Bathing, washing, swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author and Year</td>
<td>Location of Study</td>
<td>Years Data Collected</td>
<td>Study Population</td>
<td>Study Design</td>
<td>Occupation(s) at Risk</td>
<td>Other Activities Mentioned as Risk Factors</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalton 1978</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>132 individuals</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Fishing not important risk factor</td>
<td>Recreational activities, entering canoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ejezie 1991</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>248 individuals</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Rice farming</td>
<td>Bathing, fetching drinking water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El-Gendy 1999</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>370 individuals</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Farming, fishing; domestic tasks did not show significant relation to transmission</td>
<td>Bathing, swimming, playing in water, fording in water, wading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el Katsha 1997</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>1991–1992</td>
<td>700 individuals from two villages</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary participatory study</td>
<td>Washing clothes, vegetables, utensils, mats, blankets, and grains in canal; agricultural activities</td>
<td>Swimming, playing in canal water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evans 1989</td>
<td>Namibia</td>
<td>1986–1987</td>
<td>4,174 individuals</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fenwick 1982</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>1979–1980</td>
<td>167 individuals</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Irrigation canal cleaning; irrigation activities, fishing, and washing stock; laundry did not lead to exposure</td>
<td>Washing, drinking, bathing, swimming, playing in the water, washing bicycles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gryseels 1988</td>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>1982–1983</td>
<td>6,203 individuals from forty-one localities</td>
<td>Regional survey study</td>
<td>Water contact for domestic and recreational purposes; irrigation work not a factor</td>
<td>Other domestic and recreational activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kloos 1980</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>1975–1976</td>
<td>N/A (no individuals examined); 30,925 water contacts observed</td>
<td>Observational survey</td>
<td>Laundering, farmers, professional water carrying</td>
<td>Fetching water, river fording, washing extremities, washing hands, drinking, playing, swimming, bathing, ablution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kvalsvig 1986</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>1982–1983</td>
<td>N/A (no individuals examined); 133 interviews conducted</td>
<td>Observational survey</td>
<td>Washing clothes and blankets; fishing was observed as little relative importance to the transmission</td>
<td>Washing body, swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lotoni-Lakwo 1994</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>636 individuals</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Fishing, cutting papyrus reeds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamo 2014</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>236 individuals</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Tobacco farm work</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marnell 1992</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>241 individuals</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study (parasitological survey)</td>
<td>Agricultural activities, domestic tasks, blue-collar work, security work, white collar work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathys 2007</td>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>2004–2005</td>
<td>716 individuals from 6 agricultural zones</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Farming</td>
<td>Other domestic and recreational activities (not specified)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndamba 1991</td>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>1,995 individuals</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Sugar cane cutting</td>
<td>Bathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nooman 2000</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>12,515 individuals from forty-two villages</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Washing clothes, washing utensils</td>
<td>Bathing in canal water, children swimming in canal water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ofoezie 1998</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>1991–1992</td>
<td>N/A - no individuals examined</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Washing utensils, washing clothes, fishing, agriculture activities</td>
<td>Fetching water, bathing, swimming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Activities:
- Fetching water, river fording, washing extremities, washing hands, drinking, playing, swimming, bathing, ablution. (from 1979–1980 study in Sudan)
- Other domestic and recreational activities. (from 1982–1983 study in Burundi)
- Fetching water, river fording, washing extremities, washing hands, drinking, playing, swimming, bathing, ablution. (from 1978–1979 study in South Africa)
- Fetching water, river fording, washing extremities, washing hands, drinking, playing, swimming, bathing, ablution. (from 1982–1983 study in Uganda)
- Fetching water, river fording, washing extremities, washing hands, drinking, playing, swimming, bathing, ablution. (from 1991 study in Zimbabwe)

Risk Factors:
- Washing clothes and blankets; fishing was observed as little relative importance to the transmission. (from 1982–1983 study in Burundi)
- Bathing, swimming, playing in water, fording in water, wading. (from 1982–1983 study in Egypt)
- Swimming, playing in canal water. (from 1982–1983 study in South Africa)
- Washing body, swimming. (from 1982–1983 study in South Africa)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author and Year</th>
<th>Location of Study</th>
<th>Years Data Collected</th>
<th>Study Population</th>
<th>Study Design</th>
<th>Occupation(s) at Risk</th>
<th>Other Activities Mentioned as Risk Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ogbonna 2012</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>2006–2007</td>
<td>1,337 individuals</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Farming</td>
<td>Swimming, washing, fetching water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pullanikkatil 2014</td>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>483 individuals</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Farming, fishing</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert 1989</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>1986–1987</td>
<td>1,145 individuals</td>
<td>Cross-sectional study</td>
<td>Farming, fishing</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>1989–1990</td>
<td>N/A (no individuals examined)</td>
<td>Observational survey</td>
<td>Agricultural activities, fishing with boat, fishing without boat, washing clothes and dishes, cleaning fish</td>
<td>Bathing, playing, washing, boating, fetching water, and wading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watts 1997</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>1,443 individuals from two villages</td>
<td>Participatory, community-based survey study</td>
<td>Farming, domestic tasks</td>
<td>Children taking the livestock to and from grazing, leading the donkeys carrying panniers of manure or harvested crops, weeding, washing vegetables in the canals, washing livestock in the canals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Figure 4** Study Locations and Changes in Prevalence Rates, 1990–2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter on Map</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Prevalence Rate</th>
<th>Number of Articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1990 (%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>2010 (%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Côte d'Ivoire</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>70.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>44.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Namibia</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis

Schistosomiasis concerns a variety of occupational cohorts, including those in agriculture, fishing, irrigation-related work, and domestic work. All of these groups have direct contact with unsafe water, whether they are working in the fields, cleaning canals, or washing utensils. The results of the systematic review, including the complete data extraction table, allowed the identification of the occupational activities that can lead to infection with schistosomiasis in Africa. This review covered numerous occupations, but any occupational activity that involves contact with unsafe water in an area endemic to schistosomiasis is a risk factor. In evaluating the studies in the review, it became evident that the relationship between gender and schistosomiasis, although difficult to discern from this review alone, was complex and perhaps understudied. Certain occupational cohorts appeared only in drug sensitivity studies. It is highly unlikely that Kenyan car-washers in the Lake Victoria region are the only car-washers subject to schistosomiasis in Africa. Rather, this demonstrates an understudied group. It is likely that this bias is true for other occupational cohorts as well.

Out of the total thirty-five studies, eleven cited males as having an increased risk of acquiring schistosomiasis in various occupational activities, such as agricultural activities, fishing, and irrigation canal cleaning. Meanwhile, only three studies cited females as having an increased risk of acquiring schistosomiasis, due to activities including domestic work, such as washing utensils and laundry. The remaining studies did not discuss the differences in schistosomiasis risk between females and males. Three studies sampled only male populations, and no studies sampled only female populations. All other studies sampled a mix of male and female subjects. While the review suggests that, due to risk factors in male-based occupations, males are at higher risk for schistosomiasis. However, this may or may not be true. Rather than showing that more men are at risk for schistosomiasis, this review highlighted the fact that schistosomiasis risk for women is understudied and they likely are more affected than they are reported to be. This is clear from the fact that three studies only sampled males and many studies did not differentiate at all between male and female subjects.

While the studies conducted in Egypt that were included in the review did differentiate between males and females in terms of schistosomiasis
prevalence rates, Egypt has a long-standing history of lack of reporting on schistosomiasis prevalence in females. Two of the studies conducted in Egypt reported male farmers as having the highest infection rate out of any occupational group. Although this was true in the study, there is situational bias. In Egypt, and perhaps elsewhere, farming is often seen as a male-dominated occupational activity and female involvement is overlooked. Women and girls often worked alongside men in the fields, but their risk for acquiring schistosomiasis has not been focused on. Many Egyptian studies on schistosomiasis have not focused on women and girls, including the noted ones in this review, because of cultural factors, including parents not allowing their daughters to go to the hospital for testing. These reasons may explain the emphasis on males and schistosomiasis in two of the Egyptian schistosomiasis studies included in the review.

A limitation of this study is that the literature review was restricted to studies in Africa published in English. While the majority of schistosomiasis infections occur on the African continent, there are infections in Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. Other occupational risk factors may have surfaced had the literature review included studies in these locations and in other languages. Furthermore, while the key terms were intended to be exhaustive, there may be published studies that were not included.

**Conclusion**

Only two studies mentioned the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), including rubber boots and heavy-duty gloves, for people working in rice fields. Because the review concerned occupational risk factors for schistosomiasis, and only two studies included PPE as a control strategy, it is likely that more research needs to be conducted. Other studies mentioned control strategies including improvements to water supply and sanitation, such as introducing piped or borehole water. Studies included in the review also mentioned snail control through environmental modifications, including the usage of molluscicide, particularly during the months from October.

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to February when snail populations are at its highest levels. Mass drug administration and provision of small troughs for washing of laundry and utensils were also mentioned as potential schistosomiasis control strategies in endemic communities. From these recommended strategies, the complexity of schistosomiasis control in Africa becomes apparent. Without a multi-faceted approach to target the different aspects of the disease, including infected stagnant water, snails, and chronic infections in communities, effective prevention of schistosomiasis will remain difficult to accomplish.

From this systematic review, it is evident that a number of research studies on occupational risk factors for schistosomiasis in Africa took place in Nigeria and Egypt. It is interesting that in Egypt’s case, the national prevalence of schistosomiasis dropped from 20 percent in 1990 to 0.3 percent in 2010. The same is not true for Nigeria; while its national prevalence was 25.5 percent in 1990, it was 23.2 percent in 2010. Egypt’s significant drop in schistosomiasis prevalence reflects its successful national control program. With the exception of Egypt, there is little change in each represented African country’s prevalence rates on the map shown in the results section, suggesting either non-existent or failed national control programming against schistosomiasis. In light of the identified occupational risk factors, control programming should focus on these occupational cohorts, including working to increase the use of PPE. Furthermore, many African countries with high prevalence rates did not appear in this review. More research on occupational health risk factors for schistosomiasis should be carried out in more African countries, in addition to the fifteen in this review.

Acknowledgements:
This paper would not have been possible without the guidance of my adviser, Dr. Amira Roess in the Department of Global Health at the Milken Institute School of Public Health. Special thanks to Gisela Butera, the Medical Sciences Librarian at Himmelfarb Library, for her constant support. Last, thank you to Annie Vinik, Courtney Heath, my fellow Elliott Undergraduate Scholars, and the journal editors, for their expert editing skills and words of encouragement throughout the year.
Learning to Share the Pie: Civil Military Negotiation over the Defense Budget

Michelle Shevin-Coetzee

After over a decade of war, the United States military faces difficult choices. Much as it has in the past, the Department of Defense (DoD) must determine the appropriate size and scope of a presumably smaller force. Yet as the military maintains a range of capabilities, appropriate levels of readiness, and technological edge, the Pentagon confronts a daunting fiscal environment characterized by shrinking budgets. As a result, the competition between the four services for their share of the defense budget intensifies. DoD’s internal budget dynamics outlined in the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) process require each service to submit proposals to the Office of the Secretary of Defense prior to their inclusion in the President’s Budget. Each service makes an independent assessment of what programs require funding in order to execute the defense strategy. Fearing deep cuts, the services justify extraneous programs to maintain their share of the pie. Given this incentive structure, there are deep discrepancies between the ‘theory’ codified in manuals for military programmers and the ‘practice’ by which senior officials develop the budget. Drawing upon a series of interviews with government officials, military personnel, and academics, I explain the process by which the military services reconcile the difference between the desirable force and the feasible force. Efforts to resolve this divergence are constrained by three issues: an unrealistic timeline (‘timeline’), a stove-piped analytic system to model scenarios prior to budget discussions (‘analytics’), and a reliance on external funding supplies, primarily Overseas Contingency Operations funding (‘dependence’).1 Until these constraints are addressed, DoD cannot budget properly for the future security environment and is forced, therefore, to endure additional and unnecessary risk.

Introduction

This paper explores civil-military negotiation over the defense budget as reflected in the efforts of the armed services—the Air Force, Army, and

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1. The terminology in quotation marks within the parenthesis is my own.
Navy—to work within the confines of the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) system.\(^2\) This process is of particular importance as the Department of Defense (DoD) confronts daunting challenges to American national security within a climate of budgetary austerity. Striving to do more with less, defense leaders should, in theory, be guided by the prescripts of PPBE as a means of addressing those challenges in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. This prospect, however, raises the question of whether current practice aligns with the theory codified in military programming manuals. Is civil-military negotiation over the defense budget conducted in the carefully reviewed and cost-effective manner prescribed in theory? This paper will argue the answer is no.

My research outlines both the theory and practice of PPBE and identifies three key discrepancies: an unrealistic timeline (‘timeline’), a stove-piped analytic system to model scenarios prior to budget discussions (‘analytics’), and a reliance on external funding supplies, primarily Overseas Contingency Operations funding (‘dependence’).\(^3\) This paper examines each discrepancy in detail, both illustrating the persistent disconnect between budgetary theory and practice and arguing that DoD requires significant reforms to make the process of planning, programming, budgeting, and execution more efficient and effective.

**Methodology**

In order to explore the overarching question of how the military services reconcile the difference between the desirable force and the feasible force, I examined one of the fundamental processes within DoD: the PPBE process. Focusing at the start of my project on this narrow annual exercise conducted by civilian and military personnel alike, I stated a hypothesis: DoD undergoes this process according to theory. Therefore, there should be no discrepancies between the “theory” codified in manuals for military programmers and the “practice” by which civilian officials develop the budget.

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\(^2\) This paper will discuss the Marine Corps’ budget under the guise of the Navy.

\(^3\) The terminology in quotation marks within the parenthesis is my own.
As a means of determining whether my hypothesis proved accurate, I solicited views on each stage of my research from various government and think tank officials, as well as academics and active, reserve, and retired military personnel familiar with the PPBE process. Based on those twenty interviews, I concluded that my hypothesis proved false and that there indeed exist discrepancies between PPBE’s “theory” and its “practice.”

As a result, I examined the differences between the PPBE process as outlined in books and the one actually used, discovering three areas of divergence: ‘timeline,’ ‘analytics,’ and ‘dependence.’ Doing so allowed me to explore fully the relationship of the Pentagon’s bureaucracy, personalities, and processes to the military services, and ultimately, the reconciliation between civilian and military leadership.

**Defense Budgeting: Theory and Practice**

According to the 2013 Department of Defense Directive 7045.14, PPBE “shall serve as the annual resource allocation process for DoD within a quadrennial planning cycle.”

In theory, the process occurs in four stages: planning, programing, budgeting, and execution, and is designed to align resources with ends, ways, and means. As the first component, planning, stipulates, “The military role and defense posture of the United States and the DoD in the world environment shall be examined, considering enduring national security objectives, and the need for efficient management of defense resources.” It is conducted under the auspices of the Quadrennial Defense Review, an assessment of strategies and priorities undertaken every four years, issued by the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy.

Within PPBE programming, “DoD components shall develop proposed programs consistent with the planning guidance, programming guidance, and fiscal guidance.” The primary document for this stage of PPBE is the Program Objective Memorandum (POM), which serves as the end

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5. Ibid., 10.
6. Ibid., 11.
product of the programming cycle. Each DoD component produces a POM that “displays the resource allocation decisions of the military departments in response to and in accordance with planning and programming guidance.”

The budgeting and execution sections of PPBE are a bit simpler. Within budgeting, “DoD components shall develop and submit detailed budget estimates for their programs in accordance with fiscal and joint programming guidelines and DoD 70000.14-R,” the Pentagon’s Financial Management Regulation. These budget reviews, overseen by the Under Secretary of Defense for the Comptroller, are undertaken in conjunction with program reviews, which include the participation of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Within execution, “DoD components shall conduct annual reviews to determine how well programs and financing have met joint warfighting needs.” This segment concerns the compliance of components with planning and programming guidance, as well as priorities of the Secretary of Defense.

In practice, however, fiscal realities hinder the budgeting process. The 2011 Budget Control Act (BCA), for example, placed defense spending under specific caps in order to achieve reductions, resulting in an enormous discrepancy between the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 budget request and the BCA budget caps. Likewise, planned spending by DoD totaling nearly $600 billion was reduced by three actions:

1. The FY 2013 President’s Budget decreased spending by $487 billion (from the original decade-long plan identified in the FY 2012 President’s Budget);
2. Sequestration in March 2013 reduced funding for FY 2013 by $32 billion;

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7. Ibid., 12.
8. Ibid., 11.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
The FY 2014 enacted appropriations decreased spending by $31 billion and the FY 2015 President’s Budget submitted a request for $45 billion under the sum outlined in the FY 2014 budget.\footnote{12}

Unlike external threats (for which Pentagon officials are used to budgeting), new internal threats are derailing the budgetary process. Sequestration’s implementation, as well as a congressional preference for continuing resolutions (CR) in place of normal legislation, is proving problematic. Initiating a CR—”short-term legislation passed by Congress to keep the government open,”—in particular, is detrimental because no new programs, no matter how critical, can be created.\footnote{13} Both sequestration and CR, however, are products of the current political gridlock that plagues the American legislative branch. Since 2010, for example, Congress has passed the Pentagon’s budget with an average delay of 128 days.\footnote{14} This ensures, “We never have appropriations on October 1” and, as a result, accept “CR as part of how we do business today.”\footnote{15} Congress seems unable to put party politics aside in order to eliminate much, if not all, of the fiscal constraints on the Pentagon.

The “breakdown in normal order of business in Congress,” therefore, has plagued the PPBE process.\footnote{16} Over the past few years, instead of developing one budget that works its way through the system, defense planners have built multiple budgets, each aligning with a unique scenario for how much money is available to spend.\footnote{17} In 2013, for example, the Pentagon “built four different budgets, each with a different set of tradeoffs to meet

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{12} Estimated Impacts of Sequestration-Level Funding (Washington: Department of Defense, 2014), 1.
\item \footnote{15} Personal interview conducted with interviewee #1.
\item \footnote{16} Interview, interviewee #3.
\item \footnote{17} Interview, interviewee #7.
\end{itemize}
potential budget caps.”18 Preparing multiple budgets, however, does not lead to better budgets; instead, it can lead to shortcuts and the potential for abuse.19 In order to compensate for building four budgets, for example, defense experts may overlook critical programs or not consult the full range of practitioners at their disposal. This particular issue could prove problematic for coordination purposes within the services. Fearing less time to devote to one budget because of the requirement to develop three others could lead individuals to minimize input. At the strategic level, the current fiscal environment, therefore, is facilitating a divergence between the theory and practice of the planning, programming, budgeting, and execution process.

**Discrepancies: Theory vs. Practice**

**Discrepancy One: Timeline**

The first discrepancy between the theory and practice of PPBE is the timeline for the process. According to the theory of PPBE, the timeline should be enacted in a sequential fashion so that each component of the process serves a defined purpose. Planning outlines the future security environment, programming proposes programs for investment, budgeting develops a detailed budget according to fiscal guidance, while execution ensures compliance throughout.20 Each stage, therefore, is linked to a specific period in the calendar year. For example, the programming component maintains a direct connection to the schedules of each of the services’ leadership. In April and May of any given year, the ‘Chief’ and the ‘Secretary’ are briefed on the POM, respectively. After input from these two senior leaders, the POM is then presented to the Office of the Secretary of Defense in July as part of the Program Budget Review (PBR), a process in which the policy division (Policy) reviews the services’ POM submissions.21

In practice, however, this timeline is not followed. Instead of each section of PPBE serving its defined purpose, all of the pieces overlap. Accord-

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19. Interview, interviewee #17.
21. Interview, interviewee #5.
ing to Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work, programming “has just kind of blended into the budget phase.” It is not simply the programming to budgeting linkage that has overlapped, but rather the planning to programming connection. Civilian guidance to the services is often issued late and, as a result, becomes largely irrelevant. For example, the document designed to provide this direction (planning guidance) was distributed in July 2014, one to two weeks before the services completed their POMs. The planning guidance should have been released at least six months earlier (January 2014), allowing the services months to align their POM submissions with its guidance. As a result, the delay hampered, if not precluded, the ability of the services to make substantive changes to their POMs. Without the proper civilian oversight, they were left to prioritize their own programs and advance their own interests.

Two factors, I believe, are responsible for this disconnect between the theory and practice of the timeline. First, the increasing workload for all parties disrupts timely completion of each step in the process. On the military side, defense programmers have built multiple budgets, each aligning with a unique scenario for available funding. As a result, individuals must work longer hours or neglect other duties to complete their work. It is no wonder DoD has concluded, “Early estimated (low) fiscal guidance is better than late ‘precise’ fiscal guidance” in helping programmers to build their POMs. Without budgetary certainty, these problems will persist.

Second, on the civilian side, it is possible that Pentagon leaders are uncertain what to include in their guidance. Swiftly changing events and rapidly emerging threats influence how the civilian leadership perceives the future security environment. Not surprisingly, they are divided over how to interpret these challenges and what capabilities, therefore, will be required to protect American national security. A protean threat environment, how-

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23. Interview, interviewee #12.
25. Ibid., 3.
ever, cannot offer the only explanation. Another concern is the variety of actors within the Pentagon itself, each with diverse and often competing interests. Although planning guidance is issued by one organization, Policy, it undergoes an extensive coordination process, receiving input from across the building, from Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) to the Joint Staff. Furthermore, because each stakeholder is involved in other tasks simultaneously, it may not provide input in a timely manner. This introduces further delays in a process that is difficult enough to coordinate.

Discrepancy Two: Analytics

The second discrepancy between the theory and practice of PPBE occurs within the analytic community. According to the theory of PPBE, comprehensive and coordinated analysis is crucial to strategic planning and appropriate programming. The effectiveness of scenarios and models depends on two elements: a common baseline and a robust analytic capability for the Joint Staff. First, a common baseline for all components to use in developing scenarios and modeling is essential. In order to understand why a common baseline is necessary, one can cite scenarios for antisubmarine warfare against the Soviet Union during the Cold War. In 1967, the Navy concluded that it could not trap Soviet submarines at their homeports by using mines or the Navy’s own submarines because all Soviet submarines would be pre-deployed at sea. As a result, the military would need to rely on sea-based patrol aircraft, confirming the necessity of the Navy’s new carrier-borne VSX antisubmarine aircraft. After the aircraft program was approved, merely a year later, the Navy changed its assumptions, suggesting that Soviet submarines would not be pre-deployed beyond their homeports. As a result, the Navy would be required to invest more heavily in submarines to patrol in areas near Soviet submarine bases. Changing the assumptions behind any given scenario, whether in the past, present, or future, influences what military capabilities are required. If the variety of actors within

27. Ibid.
the DoD analytic community do not share a common understanding of key assumptions, the product of any scenario is largely useless.

Second, a robust analytic capability for the Joint Staff is critical to the smooth functioning of PPBE. The primary actor involved, the J8, represents the analytic capability for the Joint Staff and “develops, maintains, and improves the models, techniques, and capabilities … to conduct studies and analyses for CJCS (the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff).” The J8 ensures that the military preserves a strong analytic capability that can utilize the expertise and resources of the services in developing scenarios and modeling potential conflict in a comprehensive way.

In practice, however, the analytic outlook is quite different. First, no planning assumptions or common baseline exist, a belief shared by multiple interviewees. As a result, instead of a shared grasp of the assumptions, constraints, and objectives, each component—CAPE, the combatant commands, the Joint Staff, Policy, and the services—must decide for itself what each of those elements entails. As a result, this complicates the analysis process and forces each of these organizations to act according to its own interests. Without the services and the Joint Staff coordinating their efforts on the basis of shared assumptions, the individual services could each proceed by defining a future environment that benefits their particular skillset. Today’s Navy, for example, could plot a set of assumptions that would enhance its importance in a future scenario relative to the Air Force. In developing a scenario related to a country with anti-access/area-denial capabilities (the ability to deny access to a particular area), the Navy may want to employ assumptions that downplay this adversarial advantage. Doing so would allow the Navy theoretically to deploy a carrier to the nearby area without worry of missiles raining down on it. The Air Force, on the other hand, may want to emphasize that a carrier would be inappropriate and propose the deployment of long-range aircraft from surrounding bases or the continental United States as a better fit for the mission. In sum, every organization is working with its own set of assumptions, leading to the

29. Interview, interviewee #6.
fragmentation of the analytic community and absence of a common baseline from which to build future scenarios and model them.

Second, the Joint Staff, which could provide a greater measure of coordination, is not equipped with the analytic capabilities that the services maintain. For example, the Army’s resources for independent analysis are much larger than that of the Joint Staff. Most notably, it maintains the Center for Army Analysis (CAA), an organization designed to “conduct analyses of Army forces and systems in the context of joint and combined warfighting.” No mention is made, however, of how its conclusions will feed into the joint community. Organizationally, as well, the CAA is extensive. Under its structural umbrella, there is a wide range of sub-organizations, including modeling and simulation, simulation proponent, force strategy, and logistics analysis. The CAA is not only well-equipped to manage a range of offices, but it also sponsors a number of special activities and programs, such as opportunities for continuing education, political-military gaming, and field trips and staff rides. The Joint Staff lacks the extensive programs and sheer capacity of the Army and of the other services as well.

What explains the discrepancy between the theory and practice of the analytics? Given the austere fiscal environment and shrinking budgets, there is little money for the Joint Staff to increase its capacity. Individuals working in the Joint Staff are loaned to the organization from their home services: the Air Force, Army, or Navy. On the one hand, it is difficult for the Joint Staff to make the case to the services for them to relinquish their personnel, even on a temporary basis. On the other hand, even if the services would agree to provide the Joint Staff with additional personnel, each new employee would have to be associated with a particular slot or ‘billet.’ As less money is available for each organization, it is unlikely that the Joint Staff would expand its personnel.

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30. Interview, interviewees #11 and #15.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
Discrepancy Three: Dependence

The third and final discrepancy between the theory and practice of PPBE can be referred to as ‘dependence’: the reliance of DoD on supplemental funding. In theory, supplemental funding such as OCO is designed to fund unforeseen crises or wars and has, therefore, played an enormous role in funding the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Prior to 2003, OCO supplemented DoD’s budget by modest amounts, averaging $19.9 billion in FY 2001 and FY 2002. Naturally then, in 2008, at the height of the war in Iraq and in preparation for the 2009 surge in Afghanistan, OCO peaked to $186.9 billion, bringing the topline of the defense budget to $665.9 billion.

These examples illustrate the utility of OCO, but given the breadth of its purpose and, therefore, the potential for its abuse, OMB established criteria for what this supplemental funding should and should not be used to support. OMB recognized that the 2011 BCA implemented caps on discretionary spending for the base budget, but did not place restrictions on OCO funding. As a result, OMB understood that “leaving OCO funding unconstrained could allow future Administrations and Congresses to use it as a convenient vehicle to evade the fiscal discipline that the BCA caps require elsewhere in the Budget,” [referring to the FY 2013 President’s Budget]. The FY 2013 President’s Budget, therefore, limited OCO funding to $450 billion over a defined period, from 2013 until 2021. In this same primer on the FY 2013 President’s Budget provided by OMB, the authors cite drawdowns in Afghanistan and Iraq as the reason for reducing OCO funding. Although DoD has indeed requested fewer dollars as part of OCO, the purpose of this supplemental funding has changed.

In practice, OCO is now used as an expedient to fund programs and operations well beyond its intended parameters. A senior DoD official, for

35. Ibid.  
36. Interview, interviewee #18.  
38. Ibid.
example, likens the military’s use of OCO to “drug addicts.”39 This same official suggests that 90 percent of the Pentagon’s Middle East posture is funded through OCO. For example, at a House Armed Services Committee hearing in March 2014, military officials underscored the importance of OCO funding to each of their services, even after the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are wound down. Air Force Lieutenant General Burton Field, Chief of Staff for Operations, Plans, and Requirements, acknowledged that bases across the Middle East and Central Asia in Ali Al Salem (Kuwait), Al Udeid (Qatar), Al Dhafra (United Arab Emirates), Thumrait (Oman), and Manas (Kyrgyzstan) are each funded by OCO.40 OCO is not designed to support bases that will remain in use after the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq come to a conclusion. Likewise, according to Todd Harrison, senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, “About $20 billion in Army and Air Force operations and maintenance funding, typically included in the base budget, was shifted to the OCO accounts in 2014.”41 Out of that same budget, he continued, “The Army and Marine Corps are funding pay and benefits for 38,000 troops.”42 OCO, therefore, is used as a cover to fund programs and operations that could not be included in the base budget given the austere fiscal environment.

Within this context lies the primary disconnect between the theory and practice of OCO. Supplemental funding provides the services a unique opportunity to label their programs and operations as ‘war-time funding’ without undergoing the closer scrutiny associated with normal budgetary channels. As more troops return home from Afghanistan, however, it will be increasingly difficult to justify an OCO fund that provides tens of billions of additional dollars to the military. This reliance on OCO, however, does allow the services to offset, albeit modestly, base budget cuts from se-

39. Interview, interviewee #16.
42. Ibid.
The trend to use OCO funds for activities beyond its intended purpose has expanded significantly, and now includes new programs such as the European Reassurance Initiative, designed to fortify American force posture in Europe.\(^{43}\) Although the services are softening the blow of shrinking budgets, the longer the Air Force, Army, and Navy rely on supplemental funding, the greater a problem dependence will become. Should Congress eliminate supplemental funding, without the services making the necessary tradeoffs to decide what should be included in the base budget without OCO, DoD would be in grave danger.

**Recommendations**

Although it would be beneficial for Congressional leaders to take steps to end the looming threat of sequestration and fund the Pentagon at the level requested in the President’s budget, these recommendations will assume that defense leaders are constrained by inaction on Capitol Hill. As a result, with the exception of one joint effort between the executive and legislative branches, these recommendations focus on internal changes for defense leaders to initiate. Each corresponds to a particular explanation provided for why discrepancies exist between the theory and practice of the PPBE timeline, analytic system, and supplementary funding mechanism.

**Timeline:**

1. Require DoD to build budgets that request two years of funding, not one, and allow for Congress to amend it after the first year
2. Prioritize elements of planning guidance
3. Hold briefings with subject matter experts.

**Analytics:**

1. Allocate funding from service analytic components to the J8
2. Shift billets from service analytic components to CAPE.

Dependence:

(1) Require OCO requests for each service to be no more than a certain percentage of its total budget.

**Conclusion**

This paper has set out to elevate the conversation related to civil-military negotiation over the defense budget. Although internal processes can appear less glamorous than external exercises and operations conducted with allies and partners, what occurs within the walls of the world’s most recognizable five-sided building is crucial. Civilian and military leaders alike must prioritize force development through the planning, programming, budgeting, and execution system. As this paper has outlined, significant discrepancies exist between the theory and practice of PPBE, particularly as related to its timeline, analytic system, and supplemental funding mechanism. In large and cumbersome organizations such as the Department of Defense, theory may be derided as too idealistic, incapable of accounting for the realities of global military operations. In this case, however, it is clear that the Pentagon has significant room for improvement. The costs of these discrepancies do not just affect the US’s finances, but rather the country’s national security. Without investing the careful time and attention to reform PPBE, the military’s greatest challenges will ultimately stem from inside the Pentagon.

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TWO LANGUAGES, TWO HAITIS:
The Impact of Haiti’s Language Dichotomy on Society and Post-Disaster Reconstruction Efforts

Avani Arora Singh

During France’s rule of Haiti from 1625 to 1789, language was used as a marker of social class. Although the masses spoke Creole during French rule, elites and upper class citizens promoted the use of French to distinguish themselves from lower class citizens. Thus, Creole became associated with second-class citizens. Today, language remains a symbol of class and oppression in Haiti. Creole is the only language spoken and understood by 90 to 95 percent of Haitians, while the remaining population is fluent in both French and Creole. Even though the Haitian constitution was amended in 1987 to include Creole as an official language, French continues to be used as Haiti’s primary language in official capacities and among upper class citizens. This dichotomy between French and Creole often results in the exclusion of monolingual Creole speakers from many government services that are accessible only to bilingual French and Creole speakers. Such services include programs in the areas of education, health care, and law. Since the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, international agencies and governments have pledged billions of dollars to assist in post-disaster and nation-building efforts, especially in these three areas. This research examines how the language dichotomy manifests itself in the three areas of education, health care, and law, and whether or not the status quo regarding the dichotomy shifted after the 2010 earthquake. These findings offer insight into how language remains a tool of social exclusion in the hopes that the international community will consider these results when designing post-disaster and national building initiatives to ensure that they are inclusive to all Haitians.

Introduction

On January 12, 2010, a catastrophic earthquake struck Haiti, killing an estimated three hundred thousand individuals and leaving an equal number of Haitians injured. The earthquake displaced more than 1.3 million Hai-

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The international community’s response to the earthquake was unprecedented. While estimates vary, most approximate that upwards of $15 billion in aid was pledged over ten years from various sources including countries, international organizations, and individuals. Prior to the earthquake, Haiti was often referred to as the “Republic of NGOs” due to the prominent role NGOs played in providing essential services such as health care and education. After the earthquake, this presence has increased due to growing efforts from other international relief organizations and NGOs. Although a discrepancy remains between the donations pledged and the donations Haiti received, significant monetary donations have been and continue to be made to the sectors of education, health care, and law. This research project examines the impact of the French and Creole language dichotomy on these three sectors of Haitian society in a post-disaster context.

**Background: A Dichotomy is Born**

The introduction of French and Creole on the island dates back to the colonization of Haiti. While French colonists spoke their native language, slaves sent to Haiti spoke a variety of West African languages. A few of these languages may have been mutually comprehensible, but since slaves were brought from a vast region, most of the languages were unrelated, making it hard for slaves to understand each other. Furthermore, language barriers existed between slaves and their masters, who spoke English and French. As a result, slaves needed a way to communicate with each other. This need led to the creation of the Creole language.

Creole became the language of the slaves and emerged from various dialects of French and African languages. As Laurent Dubois explains, “It was forged over several generations by many speakers: early French settlers and their slaves, free people of color, domestic and urban slaves, adult Africans brought to plantations during the height of the sugar boom, and espe-

cially children born into slavery in Saint-Domingue.”

Since slave masters spoke primarily French while slaves spoke only Creole, each language became a part of respective master and slave identities.

However, the emerging language dichotomy further separated slaves and masters. During the 1843 Haitian Revolution, the French used the dichotomy to their advantage by conducting debates and writing legislation in French, thus excluding monolingual Creole speakers. Given that slaves and peasants could not understand French, language became a tool of political exclusion during the revolution. Dubois explains, “Rural residents tried to overcome that barrier by gathering in public places and having someone who could read French explain the articles to them in Creole.” The lack of direct access to political documents meant that slaves and peasants were dependent on bilingual speakers for critical information.

In modern-day Haiti, all Haitians speak Creole as their native language and only a few of the most educated urbanites are native bilinguals. The bilingual educated urbanites represent less than 8 percent of the total population. Any Haitian can communicate with another Haitian using Creole. However, if a Haitian can also speak French, it shifts the balance of power between those communicating in favor of the French speaker. The unequal power dynamic is due to the prestige attached to the French language—a prestige that elevates one’s social standing within society. “It [the inequality] is part of the Haitian dichotomy: the ruling classes speak French and the masses speak our patois: the Creole.” Furthermore, language is also indicative of a certain level of education and wealth. Because French is no longer taught in the majority of Haitian public schools, bilingual Haitians must have money to study at a private institution where they can learn French. Furthermore, students of private schools typically pursue their higher education abroad, often in France. The ability to study at a private school, and

4. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
especially at a private institution abroad, is a significant marker of wealth and status in Haiti today.

Language, arguably to a more dramatic degree than other social markers, continues to be used as a tool of exclusion in Haitian society. Because bilingual speakers can use language to exclude monolingual speakers from numerous sectors of society, language is not only indicative of one’s class status, but it is also indicative of one’s economic, political, and economic status.

**Methodology**

This research examines Haiti’s French and Creole dichotomy within a post-disaster context, seeking to understand how the dichotomy affected Haitian society after the 2010 earthquake. With significant investments made in the areas of education, health care, and law, my goal was to identify areas of tension and inefficiency so that the international community might be better able to design, implement, and market post-disaster development initiatives.

Two primary research questions drove this research: (1) How does the language dichotomy between French and Creole affect the sectors of education, health care, and law in Haiti? (2) Did the pre-existing status quo regarding the dichotomy change after the 2010 earthquake? By answering these questions, this research will augment existing literature on the language dichotomy by examining it in a post-disaster context.

My methodology consisted of a qualitative analysis of sixteen in-person interviews conducted with various key respondents during my one-week visit to Haiti in January, 2015. I conducted the majority of my interviews in Port-au-Prince at the Hotel Oloffson, a historical landmark in Haiti’s capital. Selection criteria for my subjects included experience in at least one of the three categories (education, health care, and law). These sectors were picked based on preliminary research that suggested these sectors were among the most impacted by the language dichotomy. I interviewed government officials, anthropologists, historians, university students, and various Haitian professionals. These informants then referred me to other contacts in Haiti with whom I conducted interviews. For the purposes of this paper, I redacted the names of certain key informants who preferred to re-
main anonymous due to the sensitive nature of their professions. In such cases, I only provide non-descriptive information, as well as their profession to provide context. During my interviews, I asked a variety of questions and addressed numerous topics. Questions included the interviewees’ perceptions of both languages, their usage of both languages, and their understanding of Haiti’s social class structure. I also asked interviewees to discuss language as it pertains to education, health care, and law.

The Dichotomy in Post-Disaster Haitian Society

Education

Education in Haiti, particularly deciding what the language of instruction should be in Haitian schools, has been a point of contention in the country for the last fifty years. Due to inefficiencies and discord within the Haitian government, clear policies regarding the language of instruction in school have never been implemented or seriously enforced. To complicate the issue, the private sector operates the majority of schools in Haiti to compensate for the lack of education provided by the Haitian government. Because private institutions have the ability to teach in the language of their choice without approval from Haiti’s Ministry of Education, private schools have a significant amount of influence over the decision. To understand the complexity of the issue, I sat down with Guy Serge Pompilus, a senior official within the Ministry of Education. We met in a trailer at the Ministry of Education, which has been his makeshift office for five years after the 2010 earthquake destroyed the ministry’s building. Of education in Haiti Guy Serge says, “It’s a struggle in Haitian society, which is a very inequitable society, and it has been from the beginning. Schooling has been used as a selection tool and as an exclusion tool.”

The Haitian government attempted to rectify this inequality in the past, most notably with the Bernard Reform of 1978. The Bernard Reform sought to make the Haitian education system more accessible by introducing Creole in the classrooms. The reform called for Creole to be the language of instruction in schools for the first four grades of primary school. As part of the reform, a pilot program was conducted in which one thousand students were taught in Creole for the first four years of school. Despite the program’s immense success, it was canceled in 1982 due to politi-
cal discord regarding the switch to Creole in classrooms. The mission of the Bernard Reform, to conduct school in Creole rather than French to eliminate discrimination against lower socioeconomic classes, was never brought to fruition in Haiti. After 1982, the reform disappeared completely in talks within the ministry.

Guy Serge illuminated numerous challenges that the Haitian Ministry of Education continues to face today. One major challenge is that Haitians have differing opinions as to which language should be the language of instruction in schools. Many parents in Haiti do not want their children learning in Creole in fear that their children will not have the same opportunities as bilingual Haitians. This is due to the fact that universities, most high paying jobs, and government jobs are only available to bilingual French and Creole speakers. On the other hand, many parents do not want school to be taught in French out of fear that their child will be at a disadvantage given that French is not the child’s “mother tongue.”

Guy Serge said there is no “win-win” scenario for the Ministry of Education and he empathizes with both perspectives. While it is difficult for the Haitian government to implement a national policy regarding the language of instruction in schools due to varying perceptions associated with each language, the problem becomes even more complex when policies vary from school to school due to a lack of enforcement and capacity. For example, Guy Serge discussed how the language dichotomy affects schoolteachers. Some teachers in Haiti use French while others use Creole. Furthermore, some teachers may not feel comfortable teaching in French or in Creole so they may switch to the language of their comfort, even though doing so may be against school policy. Students suffer from unclear policies pertaining to the language of instruction, especially when it comes to standardized testing. Even though students are supposed to have the option of taking standardized tests in the language they are most comfortable using, many teachers fail to give students the option, and as a result, their scores suffer.

The debate regarding the language of instruction in Haitian schools has recently resurfaced, particularly due to the work of Dr. Michel DeGraff, a Haitian linguistics professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Dr. DeGraff has piloted numerous programs in Haitian schools with Creole
as the language of instruction and has had much success. He argues that education and literacy rates will grow if students are taught in their native language. Opponents to his theory argue that teaching in Creole is infeasible logistically due to the lack of Creole textbooks and literature. Haitian anthropologist Alain Gilles recounted an anecdote in which he tried to buy a monolingual Creole speaker a book as a gift only to discover that there was not a single Creole bookstore in Port-au-Prince. Of this issue, Gabriel Verret, a Senior Advisor to the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission (IHRC) says, “Unless you can get a translation of the Odyssey, if all you know is Creole, how are you ever going to read the Odyssey? Who’s going to translate it into Creole so you can read it?” He points out that if Creole were to become the language of instruction, students would be extremely limited in their options for Creole textbooks and literature. Proponents of this argument cite the lack of Creole textbooks and literature as the reason Creole should be used as a stepping-stone to French in schools. On the other hand, supporters of Dr. DeGraff’s philosophy argue that the lack of Creole textbooks and literature exists only because so few monolingual Creole speakers can read and write the language. They argue that once more monolingual speakers become literate in their native language, more Haitians will be able to write in Creole thus solving the issue. It is clear that there are distinct challenges to each approach, of which textbooks are just one.

Health Care

Health care in Haiti presents an interesting manifestation of the language dichotomy between French and Creole. In Haiti, there are no doctors that are monolingual Creole speakers; the vast majority are bilingual French and Creole speakers. Medical schools are taught exclusively in French, meaning that monolingual Creole speakers are excluded from any opportunity to attend. To understand how language dynamics impact health care, I sat down with Georges Michel, a Haitian doctor and historian. Mr. Michel was in Port-au-Prince during the 2010 earthquake and calls the days following the quake: “The worst days of his life.” He sought refuge at the Hotel Oloffson for almost three days before venturing out into Port-au-Prince. He now teaches radiology at a medical school in Port-au-Prince.
My interview with Mr. Michel revealed two problematic areas within the Haitian health care system that pertain to language: accessing medical records and filling prescriptions for medications. When asked what language Mr. Michel uses to speak with his colleagues and patients, he says, “When I talk to the patient, I say no word in French. I may use a certain vocabulary for them to understand, but when I talk to the patients I speak only in Creole … with other doctors, I speak French. I write in the medical records in French, but what I write in my records is totally irrelevant.” It appears as if the language dichotomy that exists between the upper class and the lower class in Haitian society also presents itself in the relationship between doctors and their patients. Such a relationship seems logical given that doctors represent the upper, educated class, while patients represent the poor, uneducated class. This example illustrates that the power dynamics between French and Creole can be found in a variety of settings in Haiti, with the relationship between doctors and patients serving as just one of them. When asked whether monolingual Creole speakers can access their medical records since they are in French, Mr. Michel says, “People here have access to their medical records, but they are in French. They just have to get a translator.” Mr. Michel did indicate that the inaccessibility of medical records could be problematic to monolingual Creole speakers. This could be due to a number of factors, including a lack of confidence in hospitals’ poor record keeping systems and confidence in his own abilities as a doctor to make health care accessible for monolingual Creole speakers.

Patrick Delatour, a Haitian architect, discussed a similar process that takes place in regard to filling medical prescriptions. He argues that Haitians have adopted a Eurocentric process regarding pharmaceutical structures whereas Haitians have traditionally and historically gone to indigenous healers and Voodoo priests who would give patients herbs and natural remedies. For him, the idea of a “written transmission,” or prescription, is problematic in Haiti primarily because it takes away from Haiti’s indigenous practices. Concerning the language dichotomy, Delatour says that because there are no Creole translations for medications, the distribution of medication could be confusing for monolingual Creole speakers. For Yves-François Pierre, a Haitian anthropologist, the language dichotomy goes beyond the physical prescription:
“The issue isn’t the prescription. The issue is how people perceive you when you are in the clinic and start talking in Creole versus someone else speaking in French? How are you going to be accepted? How will you be perceived? And how do you, you yourself, feel not being able to speak French in certain situations where you’re supposed to speak French and you can’t do it? You either stay silent or you become some kind of outcast and speak Creole by assuming your culture.”

Mr. Pierre sheds some light on the sense of humiliation monolingual Creole speakers may feel when unable to speak French. This humiliation appears to be analogous to the sense of shame felt by bilingual speakers who make grammatical errors when speaking French. With regard to medical records, Delatour says that access to medical information is easy for the monolingual Creole speaker because a bilingual speaker can “easily” make the translation. “It’s not as if it’s a blind world because the common thread is Creole. The monolingual Creole speaker has access to the same information, except he needs a translator. It’s a normal thing.”

The language dichotomy reinforces the social hierarchy structures that were present during the colonization of Haiti, as seen through the need for translations in the health care sector for monolingual Creole speakers. Similar to how monolingual Creole speakers would gather in public spaces and ask a bilingual speaker to translate French laws during the Haitian Revolution, Creole speakers still need bilingual speakers to gain access to crucial information they should have ready access to. The interviewees may not have perceived the need for translation as an impediment to accessing information for a variety of reasons, including the fact that both interviewees were trilingual speakers (thus the monolingual Creole perspective was not represented) and because the practice of translating documents for monolingual speakers is so common due to historical precedents and practices.

Law

Law in Haiti has historically been representative of the language dichotomy between French and Creole, with many examples dating back to the Haitian Revolution as previously mentioned. In Haiti today, the language dichotomy manifests itself in three distinct manners: land titles, birth certificates, and court related procedures.
In post-disaster Haiti, massive rebuilding initiatives are being implemented primarily in Port-au-Prince. Given that official documents—including state budgets, agendas, and laws—are exclusively in French, I wanted to examine any potential effects the dichotomy might have on law and rebuilding in Haiti. To understand how the dichotomy manifests itself in the areas of law and reconstruction, I met with Patrick Delatour, an architect who offered some insight. Mr. Delatour indicated that the dichotomy is most noticeably present in the process of acquiring land titles. “Land titles are done in French even though there is a movement to move some to Creole, but it is an effort. The natural tendency is to do all of that in French,” says Mr. Delatour. When asked how monolingual Creole speakers access land titles, Mr. Delatour says that monolingual Creole speakers need a bilingual Haitian to translate the French land titles. For him, land titles are not only indicative of the language barrier, but are also expressive of Haiti’s fervent desire to adopt Eurocentric conventions. According to Mr. Delatour, Haitians typically identify possession of land through an informal method, which identifies one’s property relative to other properties and geographical features. The Eurocentric method is more impersonal, according to Delatour, and formally identifies land parcels by plot numbers. Therefore, land titles in Haiti are not only indicative of the language dichotomy, but are also illustrative of a preference for Eurocentric processes.

Birth certificates are another example in which the language dynamics between French and Creole are present. Guy Serge Pompilus, an official in the Ministry of Education, explained that there has never been a Haitian birth certificate issued in Creole, despite numerous efforts. Until 1991, two types of birth certificates were issued, but neither was in Creole. One birth certificate was issued for Haitians of urban areas and the second was issued for Haitians of rural areas. The latter was referred to as a “peasant birth certificate.” Despite the fact that the majority of Haitian peasants were monolingual Creole speakers, peasant birth certificates were issued in French. While there were no legal differences between the two birth certificates, the division between urban Haitians and peasants was another way to exclude Haitians of lower socioeconomic status. In 1991, Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide ended the issuance of peasant birth certificates, but the issue of language in regards to birth certificates resurfaced in the late 1990s.
In 1997, Haiti’s Secretary of State for Literacy urged the Haitian Justice Department to issue Creole birth certificates in order to legitimize her Creole literacy campaign. According to Mr. Pompilus, who was present at the discussion, “She asked the Minister of Justice, ‘Can we have the birth certificate, that you manage as the Minister of Justice, in Creole?’ She fought with him for three years and never succeeded. Birth certificates are still in French.” While interviewing Mr. Pompilus in his makeshift office at the Ministry of Education, he pulled out a copy of his driver’s birth certificate to demonstrate the fact that his driver, who is a monolingual Creole speaker, cannot read his own birth certificate. Furthermore, Haitian driver’s licenses are also issued in French, meaning that monolingual Creole speakers also cannot read their own driver’s licenses. While the majority of official documents have not been translated into Creole, Mr. Pompilus says that the Haitian government started issuing Creole identity cards in 2005, which he feels is a major improvement.

Court proceedings are a final area in which the tension between French and Creole is evident. Haitian court proceedings are predominately conducted in French. Furthermore, because French is viewed as the language of official procedures, law school is taught exclusively in French and references to the law during trials are also in French. According to Lyonel Trouillot, who studied law before switching to literature early in his career, “There is no way people [monolingual Creole speakers] can understand the law because it is in the language they cannot master.” Mr. Trouillot says court proceedings are only in Creole when monolingual Creole witnesses are unable to give their testimony in French. Despite this inequality, Mr. Trouillot says that the situation used to be far worse for monolingual Creole speakers. According to Trouillot, witnesses were initially questioned in French even if they were monolingual Creole speakers. Now, he says, the situation has improved and monolingual Creole speakers can answer questions using their native language. While Mr. Trouillot indicates that such dynamics are present in higher-level court proceedings, it is unclear whether the same dynamics apply to lower-level court proceedings. Haitian doctor and historian Georges Michel contends that Creole is widely used in lower-level courts, but further research must be conducted on how language dynamics differ between the various levels of court proceedings.
In addition to court proceedings, court decisions are also issued in French. For monolingual Creole speakers to understand a verdict, they must hire a bilingual speaker to translate the document containing the verdict into Creole. “Giving a court decision in Creole sounds funny. It does not happen. I don’t know how it is in the United States, but only three lines matter in the court decision and that is what the monolingual Creole speaker must have translated,” says Mr. Michel. While it may be true that only a few key sentences in a lengthy legal document explain the verdict, the fact that monolingual Creole speakers cannot access information pertinent to them is a form of injustice in itself. Guy Serge offers some perspective regarding the veracity of law in Haiti versus in the United States, which helps to illustrate the complexity of the language dichotomy as it relates to law.

“The impact of the constitution within the Haitian society is very minimal. For someone in the United States, the constitution is a fundamental text. In Haiti, you use what suits you in the constitution and you forget everything else. So on the language front, this is this same. For example, the 1987 Constitution had a provision for a Creole academy. It was created this year, from 1987 to now, just this year.”

Conclusions

My research indicated that the status quo regarding the language dichotomy did not shift as a result of the 2010 earthquake. However, the fact that the status quo did not change reveals many important aspects of post-disaster development. For example, international organizations and NGOs have to hire translators to ensure that their work is effective. However, this is not the case for all organizations. As one Haiti-based USAID official explained, USAID employees are only required to speak English and French, not Creole. Therefore, international organizations and NGOs may be perpetuating inequalities that already exist if they are unable to reach both monolingual and bilingual speakers. The earthquake may also be viewed as a missed opportunity to change the status quo regarding the language dichotomy. The international organizations and workers that operated in Haiti following the earthquake had the opportunity to put Creole at the forefront of Haitian society, but instead the status quo prevailed.
A significant finding of my research is that billions of dollars of aid are being poured into broken social structures in the areas of education, health care, and law. Given that significant funding is being funneled into post-disaster development work in these three areas, Haiti and the international community must recognize that the language dichotomy may inhibit the success of such programs. To ensure that these programs are effective and inclusive of both monolingual and bilingual speakers, international organizations and NGOs must consider the language dichotomy when designing, marketing, and implementing development initiatives. If designed incorrectly, such programs could create further divides between monolingual Creole speakers and bilingual French and Creole speakers.

Inequalities in education, health care, and law in Haiti illustrate that French continues to be used as a tool of exclusion by bilingual speakers. Though further research must be conducted, it is possible that the language dichotomy manifests itself in other areas, aside from the ones explored in this paper and that the dichotomy has inhibited the success of various development initiatives if such programs are designed without considering the history of language in Haiti. Inequalities pertaining to language in Haiti are not only indicative of communication barriers, but are also illustrative of inequalities that exist between the various social classes in Haitian society today. As Haiti continues to rebuild, it is crucial that the state and nation bridge the gap regarding the language dichotomy in order to “build back better” both in terms of infrastructure and social structure.

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THE COOPERATIVE IS AN OPEN BOOK:
Diversifying Labor Opportunities and Innovating Urban Waste Management in Buenos Aires

Julia Wagner

The cosmopolitan city of Buenos Aires, Argentina, has long operated with an invisible underbelly of informal laborers who are largely responsible for various key operations of the city. Perhaps one of the most politicized of these laborers is the cartoneros (urban waste pickers) who collect recyclables from the city’s solid waste and resell them to middlemen or firms, which sell to industries to repurpose the materials. In 2007, the cartoneros took on an added layer of the “environmental-service provider” to their identity when they were officially designated as “urban recyclers” and folded into the city government’s Zero Waste plan as the prime recycling service throughout the city. This paper examines the drivers that led to the public’s change in opinion about the cartoneros and how that change impacted their participation in the growing recycling infrastructure of the city. Through the explication of ethnographic interviews and Argentine government data, I seek to illuminate how collaboration among the cartonero cooperatives, the municipal government, and NGOs created this impactful identity that altered the city’s overall sustainability agenda. I argue that the cooperatives’ social networks, derived from their productive occupation of public spaces, ultimately allowed them to change public perspective of their work. The cooperatives were best equipped to collaborate with government agencies and non-profits, ultimately leveraging resources to improve their collection service and generate a positive narrative around their identity as “dignified workers.” This paper explores how cooperatives can be utilized as a participatory element to achieve more sustainable urban planning, revealing the role of identity-making rhetoric and institutional networking in integrative urban sustainability planning.

Introduction

Of all of the elements that go into planning a city, waste management is hardly the most glamorous; yet this ‘dirty’ job remains at the top of every city’s agenda.¹ Waste and its production, disposal, and treatment reveal

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much about a city, its people and values, and its political and technical infrastructure. As nations continue to industrialize, waste will be a window to how cities manage massive consumption and tackle growing resource scarcity.

In many countries, formal waste collection and disposal only represents one side of a larger system of the waste material industry. As the raw materials for production become scarce, recyclable waste materials grow more valuable on the supply side of the production cycle, and the economic benefit of recycling increases. In cities where the government does not provide the infrastructure for recycling, individuals often seize this niche opportunity in the market. They begin collecting recyclable materials from the streets or dumps to sell back to industries either directly or through middlemen. This informal practice is most commonly referred to as “waste-picking” and informally employs millions of people around the world. In fact, approximately 0.5 to 2 percent of the global population makes a living through informal waste management. In its Integrated Solid Waste Management manual, the UN Environment Programme never fully recognizes the existence of informal modes of recycling. Yet, waste academics have suggested formalization of this informal labor class as a means of creating “Integrated Solid Waste Management” (ISWM) and inclusive work opportunities.

Understanding the importance of public buy-in to the functionality of solid waste management programs, I sought to discover the drivers behind the Buenos Aires public’s strong adoption of the cartoneros, the city’s newly formalized waste-picker actors who serve to collect recyclable materials from porteño residents. Without public support and collaboration, infrastructures go unused and rarely serve their initial purpose, begging the quest-

4. Linzner and Mansoor, 50.
5. Cartoneros is the popular name for waste-pickers in Buenos Aires. Waste-pickers are actors who collect recyclable waste materials for resale to the market.
6. Popularly used term referring to the people of the autonomous city of Buenos Aires.
tion: Which social circumstances allowed for the strong public adoption of the recycling infrastructure operated by the city’s traditionally informal actors?

In this paper, I investigate how the newly implemented ISWM system in Buenos Aires has garnered public support. I argue that the cartonero cooperatives were able to utilize their social networks to create the most profound shift in the public perception of recycling and spark public buy-in to the recycling program. This message was carried through a re-imagination of waste in the public eye, in which the cartoneros utilized public space to renegotiate the value of waste as a means of creating dignified work. I argue that the cooperative structure allowed the cartoneros to collaborate with the government and non-profits for resources and capacity-building while maintaining personal relationships with clients at the residential level and local organizational autonomy.

I begin by explaining the role of the government in supplying legitimacy and reliability to the cooperatives’ recycling service. Then, I explicate the projects created through collaboration of the cartoneros with non-profits to build cooperative capacity and create an environmental narrative. Finally, I discuss the deployment of these identities to residents through the cartonero cooperatives’ personal client relationships with their neighbors, explaining how partnerships with government and non-profits have strengthened these relationships and allowed for greater resident participation in the recycling program.

7. In its 2009 Integrated Solid Waste Management training manual, the United Nations Environment Programme creates an ISWM definition with social character that heavily emphasizes the importance of buy-in from multiple levels of the waste system and suggests the utilization of stakeholder participation in the planning process.

8. Many cartoneros have organized into cooperative enterprises—democratically run organizations in which each member has an equal stake in the profit. While cooperative business models around the world are variable and diverse, I will refer to the cooperatives as enterprises run by cartoneros in Buenos Aires, in which each member has an equal stake in the process and profit of the organization. In these organizations, the cartoneros are the individual workers who organize to make a cooperative.
Methodology

In this study, I conducted ten interviews with various informants who were connected to the task of garnering public participation in the city’s recycling service, which is operated by the cartoneros. The individuals whom I interviewed include government officials, non-profit employees and volunteers, and cartoneros holding various positions within cooperatives. I have changed the names of my participants and eliminated any identifying features of their employment in order to preserve their privacy. In addition to my interviews, I have drawn upon the nuances that I noticed during my participant observation. Finally, I utilized public government data supplied by the municipal government’s Open Source data platform to read the legislation regarding cartoneros and other government studies on their work.

Cooperative Collaboration: Garnering Public Participation

Presently, twelve formalized cartonero cooperatives serve as the foremost actors in solving Buenos Aires’ waste management crisis. They are the only actors who serve in handling the city’s residential recycling needs, and manage more than one thousand green bin recycling containers daily. A manager of the state-run landfill facility indicated that the cartoneros collectively prevent over 40 percent of the waste stream from ever entering the landfill and recycle an estimated 2,400 metric tons of material each day.9

Additionally, the cooperatives have had a marked impact on the attitude of the residents toward their work as well. The evidence for this change resides in the growing willingness of residents to separate their recyclable materials from their disposable waste and allow the cooperatives to pick up the materials at their door rather than rummage through curbside trashcans or the designated recycling dumpsters set up along the streets of the city. A study conducted by the municipal government in 2014 indicates that over one third of the city separates their waste “daily” while an additional third “sometimes” recycles (Figure 1).

A geographical analysis of the data reveals the true impact of cooperative collaboration with government and non-profits. The poll results indicate that while the responses for the central and southern zones of the city generally hold to the average results, nearly half of the respondents from the northern zone responded that they separated their waste daily (Figure 2). The fact that the northern zone reports a nearly 20 percent increase from the average amount of daily recyclers is no surprise given the cooperative context of the city. The northern zone of Buenos Aires is home to the highest levels of collaboration between the cartonero cooperatives and the government or non-profits. The northern zone contains highly organized and vocal cooperatives, many of which auto-initiated cooperativization be-
fore a government-imposed, mandatory cooperativization process—which I discuss later.

![Recycling Based on City Zone](image)

**Figure 2** Recycling Habits Based on Geographical Zone


I argue that the *cartoneros* achieved such marked recognition through a steady deployment of the resources: some they inherently possessed, and others they gained through increased government and non-profit interaction. Therefore, it is the cooperatives that collaborate best that have seen the greatest improvement in their residential recycling participation. The *cartoneros’* achieved transformation in the public eye can be attributed to three processes: (1) Legitimization and reliability through partnerships with the municipal government; (2) Creation of an environmentally ethical narrative due to collaboration with non-profits; (3) Consistent interaction with residents on a personal level. In the following sections, I elaborate on the historical and personal accounts of the stakeholders in these three processes, through explication of ethnographic interviews and observations.
The Role of the Government: Cartoneros and the Law

The role of the cartonero in the eyes of the state abruptly shifted after the rapid increase of “new cartoneros” during the 2001 financial crisis. Prior to the crisis, their work was clearly designated as illegal due to a law established during the dictatorships. During the rise of the cartoneros, the government also realized the need for a new recycling service. The sanitary landfill operated via a regional partnership, the State Corporation for Ecological Coordination of the Metropolitan Area (CEAMSE), was getting closer to capacity every year. The government felt the pressure to either reduce the waste headed to CEAMSE or to begin building another sanitary landfill. In such a highly populated area, the feasibility of a new landfill was both economically and politically costly, so the government moved toward devising alternative methods for waste reduction. The emergence of cartoneros in the city, particularly those who had cooperativized, provided a significant opportunity for the municipal government. As such, the municipal government moved to facilitate organization and formalization of the cartoneros into service cooperatives.

Law 992: Legalization of Cartoneros

The cartoneros gained a legal presence in December 2002, a mere year after the protests of 2001. Law 992, which went into effect in January 2003, effectively legalized the work of the cartoneros as long as they officially registered with the municipal government. The law also incorporated the labor of the recyclers as a “valid urban hygiene service.” While Law 992 was far from a complete endorsement, it marked a symbolic shift in municipal policy to be in support of the cartonero project.

11. Marianna, Interview with waste scholar from the University of Buenos Aires, March 2014.
12. Ibid.
14. Law 992, Article 2.
Passing with widespread citizen support, Law 992 was the first step in recognizing the social aspect of the cartoneros’ labor. One former government worker explains, “It would be impossible to get rid of them,” and when a former mayoral candidate ran on a platform to remove the cartoneros, “the political cost was enormous.” The government and residents began to recognize that the cartoneros’ actions were born out of their need to survive and that collecting “garbage” from the streets was their means. Their labor at this point was far from “formalized,” but it was legal. The government’s swift decision to legalize their work marked their recognition of a widely held imperative that their presence was the result of paralyzing economic conditions.

Law 1.854: Formalization through Cooperativization

Despite successes of Law 992, the work of the cartoneros remained informal and lacked resources. The majority continued to work independently, portraying an image of scattered organization and low productivity. With few resources, many cartoneros continued to retrieve their materials by opening garbage bags on the curb. While residents tolerated their work, they continued to consider the cartoneros as disruptive to the order and cleanliness of the city. The government was dissatisfied with the cartoneros’ lack of interest to organize as well as their inconsistencies in service.

After further study on this topic, the government realized that such inconsistencies were a result of market fluctuations. The price of raw materials relies on the global market and constantly shifts. Cartoneros working as individuals could not demand better prices at the market in the same way that their cooperativized peers could. In the absence of a stable income, cartoneros could neither collect from the same spaces everyday nor commit to organizing into a larger group. A government worker explained, “It’s necessary to pay an incentive stipend … because if you don’t, one day they make

15. Ibid.
two pesos, another day they make ten ... and they can’t plan further than a
day.” The government passed Law 1.854 in order to incentivize a more
robust recycling service program by allowing cartoneros to make the “leap”
toward cooperative organization. Law 1.854, which passed in November
2005, officiates the creation of an “integrative” urban waste system in Bue-
nos Aires and declares the city focus on actions toward achieving “Zero
Waste.”

Perhaps most importantly, Law 1.854 offered an incentives package to
cooperative cartoneros, which included priority inclusion for organized
groups into the dry waste collection system as well as the establishment of
lines of credit to fund capital acquisition. Interestingly, even Law 1.854
did not see the rapid cooperativization of individuals into cooperatives until
Decree 639 in May 2007, which gave the prospective cooperatives 180 days
to complete the requisites for cooperativization. With a hearty new coop-
erative base, the government could begin to divvy up capital supplies such
as collection trucks, uniforms, and later small salaries. The City began de-
veloping Green Centers, or warehouses within city limits where the coope-
ratives could aggregate and separate their findings before sale, allowing them
to wager for a better price at the market.

Law 1.854 contributed to the cooperatives’ strong public platform by
providing resources and making their collections service more predictable
and accountable to the public. The government-supplied “Green Center”
warehouses allowed the cooperatives to move their sorting processes out of
the streets, making the job safer and more discrete. The trucks facilitated
the movement of materials to the marketplace without clogging public
transportation. A collective presence allowed cartoneros to join a larger co-
munity for group recognition among residents, and the salary ensured that
cartoneros would return to the same locations every day regardless of market
fluctuations.

18. Ibid.
20. Law 1.854, Chapter 12.
The Role of Nonprofits: Adding Value with Art

Whereas the government’s role in changing the *cartonero* identity provided a highly practical approach toward improving their services, non-profit organizations focused their realm of influence on an ideological and innovative approach to what constitutes ‘waste’. There is much anthropological literature discussing the connections between a person’s conception of a worker and the kinds of products that the laborer deals with. Many scholars have investigated how waste-pickers often become personally associated with the waste that they work to eliminate from the streets. It is not uncommon for societies to place those who clean up waste within the bottom tier of their social strata, considering these people to be as dirty as the waste they clean up. Thus, many non-profits presume that the reconceptualization of waste will also shift public perception of the people who handle waste. Such was the logic of several non-profits who initiated projects to utilize ‘waste’ products to create art and other useful products.

Eloisa Cartonera is a non-profit bookstore that has developed projects to change the perception of the utility of ‘waste’. The publishing house, created by two Argentine poets several months after the December 2001 economic crash, publishes solely Latin American authors on books crafted from recycled cardboard. The workshop purchases cardboard from local *cartoneros* to create the covers of its novels. In an interview with a workshop employee, he explained that the goal of the organization was fourfold: to support local *cartoneros*, to reimagine the use of cardboard, to give Latin American authors an outlet for publishing, and to produce books to sell at an affordable cost. Eloisa Cartonera’s slogan, which translates to, “so much more than books,” expresses the organizations intent to relay these messages symbolically through their books. In addition to its location in the

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The Cooperative is an Open Book

The historic neighborhood of La Boca, the organization also supports a kiosk located on Corrientes Avenue, a major commercial thoroughfare famous for its many bookstores. The location is a strategic move to bring their message to a larger Buenos Aires audience. The kiosk essentially creates a public demonstration with which the public can interact and gain a new understanding for the waste material, cardboard.

*Taller* in Spanish means workshop, and a non-profit partnership between the University of Buenos Aires, El Arca (non-profit), the Carrefour Foundation of Argentina, and the El Ceibo Cooperative created Taller El Ceibo to “investigate the potential for waste materials to be used for different purposes.” El Ceibo is a highly organized cooperative in the northern zone of the city, which emphasizes the power of cooperative organization. The non-profit collaborative donated about seven thousand pesos and the University students and cooperative employees began working together to create projects that utilized the waste materials coming into El Ceibo to create products with “added value.” The workshop was set up with several artisanal tools, including a heat press and an industrial paper cutter. Most of the products consisted of artisanal craftwork including cloth-covered notebooks and clocks made of recycled tetrapak, a material that is difficult to recycle. The goal of the initiative is to “create a purpose for materials that cannot be recycled and sold back to industries.” At the time of my observation in March 2014, the workshop was still in its experimental phase, testing out different methods and designs for their products, but the intent was clear. The project was a symbolic act in order to “put emphasis on waste as a product again.”

The projects helped to focus the abstract idea that waste materials can be reused in the industrial production process by reimagining these same

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26. Ibid.
27. Macarena, Interview with student volunteer working in El Ceibo Taller, March 2014.
30. Ibid.
31. Macarena, Interview with student volunteer working in El Ceibo Taller, March 2014.
materials in the context of useful products. In the new context, people can recognize the value in these products while still recognizing what the base material had been, leading to a reconceptualization of the value of the material. In assessing a new product made from ‘used’ materials, a person confronts the implications of his consumption—and disposal—habit, at once sparking room to develop an environmental ethic and recapitulating the potential of ‘waste’.

A small difference in the two non-profits’ projects demonstrates the capacity for change that cooperativization can achieve. Both non-profits work to create crafts to inspire a positive narrative of the cartoneros’ utility in society, but Eloisa Cartonera works with individual cartoneros while Taller El Ceibo works with a cartonero cooperative. Eloisa Cartonera purchases cardboard from individual cartoneros at an above-market value while Taller El Ceibo works to build the capacity of a cooperative to enhance its productive capacity. Adding-value to the cartoneros work means engaging the workers and their collected materials in a creative process to design new goods that extend their output beyond raw materials. Eloisa Cartonera provides beneficial opportunities to individuals, but its current model alone cannot elevate the productive capacity of any individual. While both non-profits can achieve the creation of a narrative around the utility of garbage, adding value to cartoneros’ labor can only occur at the organizational level of a cooperative.

Cooperatives: Civil Society Networkers

Notably, with the exception of Greenpeace Argentina and their push to get the Zero Waste law through the municipality, all of the non-profits have reached beyond the government to work with the cartoneros themselves.32 Further, the cooperatives’ quasi-formality as government contractors has preserved their flexibility to pursue projects with whomever they wish. A cooperative’s operations director emphasized, “[The cooperative] is an open book,” and they were willing to work with anyone who could help

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This informant’s particular cooperative has collaborated with many non-profit and student organizations to organize workshops, site visits, and mapping projects.

It is the flexibility and independence of the cartonero cooperatives that best encapsulates the exceptional ability of the cooperative enterprise to provide an economic alternative. It is the unified yet localized organizational structure of the cooperatives that allows them to interface with large governmental and non-profit institutions while simultaneously maintaining personal relationships with their clients. The cartoneros’ organization into larger groups allowed them to receive resources and capacity-building experiences from larger, more endowed institutions. Without this organizational critical mass the cartoneros could not have received the resources they needed to make the jump in enhancing their service provision.

The cartonero cooperativization and formalization did not jeopardize the individuals’ partnerships with residents, but rather strengthened these relationships and allowed the cartoneros to improve their service provision so as to form new relationships with once reluctant residents. Each cooperative has had its own path to cooperativization and follows its own methods of organization. The fact that each cooperative functions via its own process allows these organizations to operate in a way that best serves the neighborhood in which they are located. For this reason alone, the cooperatives serve as the strongest representatives of their identity within much of the city and have facilitated the shifting public opinions and actions regarding recycling.

Despite the fact that many laborers maintain a steady distrust for the government and even the formal sector, many have found peace in the cooperative model, where they belong to a group that operates with respect for providing dignified and stable work. As members of an organization in which every member has an equal stake in the process and profits, cartoneros can feel shielded from the unstable formal market that has sputtered since

33. Anna, Interview with director of operations for highly organized cooperative, January 2015.
34. Francisco, Interview with former policy planner and coordinator for CABA’s Department of Environment and Public Space from 2003 to 2013, January 2015.
the economic crisis. While thousands of cartoneros remain outside the formalized system, those who choose to enter into a cooperative are privy to a number of benefits without sacrificing the underlying sense of independence.

The cartonero cooperative is at once inclusive and efficient. The cooperative model turns the traditional capitalist notion on its head by simultaneously saving the municipal government millions of dollars in disposal fees while providing stable and dignified employment with social protection. Buenos Aires’ Zero Waste plan is a large-scale experiment in the “alternative” or “diverse” economic sector.35

**Conclusions and Implications**

In the historical memory of the economic crash, the porteños were sympathetic to the disenfranchised laborers who were forced on to the streets for survival; their early toleration of the cartoneros applauded these actors’ ingenuity to subvert the system that had failed them. As individual cartoneros gained more traction through the expansion of the neighborhood networks, the government mandated cooperativization to facilitate distribution of resources and enhance their recyclables collection service to the city. Non-profits contributed to the narrative of all cartoneros by creating recycled crafts that showcased the utility of the materials that the cartoneros collect, thereby extending the idea of utility to the service of the cartoneros themselves. The non-profits that partnered with cooperativized cartoneros also had the ability to facilitate capacity-building projects to increase the productive capacity of the organizations.

Without question, the work of the government and non-profits contributed to the overall positive identity of the cartoneros today. Yet, it was the grassroots footwork of the cartonero cooperatives themselves that communicated this identity along with their self-made identities as dignified laborers to the people in a manner that was accessible to all neighborhoods within the city. The cooperative structures served as a conductor of available re-

sources and capacities to provide a fitting solution to Buenos Aires’ waste management and social capital issues.

It is the cooperatives’ unique ability to collectively interface with governmental offices and non-profits while maintaining personalized relationships at the residential level that ensures their continued success in altering public opinion and behavior in regards to recycling. In an act of solidarity with the cartoneros, the residents decide to separate their waste and coordinate its collection with cartonero cooperatives. They accept the cartonero narrative of dignified laborers who provide an environmental service to the city, and in doing so, change their habits.

The success of the cartonero cooperative in the context of Buenos Aires depends heavily upon the city’s unique historical and social setting. The economic crisis created an impetus to re-shuffle the means of economic structuring and opened up the opportunity for innovation driven by desperation. Yet, other municipalities should not pass up the promise of the cooperative as an economic alternative to building a more diverse economy. Nor should they ignore the successful attempts to integrate informal workers into the formal sphere without infringing on their values of independence and self-autonomy. Though each case will depend on the particularities of the locality in which it is based, cooperativization and other ‘alternative economies’ or ‘social enterprises’ may prove as viable pathways to formalization as traditional development initiatives.

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The sixth issue of the Undergraduate Scholars Journal strengthens a distinguished tradition at the Elliott School of International Affairs: publishing original research and substantive writing completed by a highly selective group of Elliott School juniors and seniors. The Elliott School Undergraduate Scholars Program supports this tradition by providing valuable resources, countless opportunities, and a cooperative learning environment for those juniors and seniors. The Undergraduate Scholars Program begins with each Scholar attempting to write their paper’s abstract in haiku form and ends when they present their findings and conclusions during a research symposium a year later. Though the 2014–2015 program comes to a close with this publication, we know the tradition will continue to thrive.

The editors would like to thank each of the Elliott School Undergraduate Scholars, whose prompt replies permitted this journal’s timely publication. Condensing a year’s worth of work into fifteen pages is no easy task, yet each of you produced incredible pieces of writing that showcase your scholarly contributions. Whether at brunch on the weekends, dinner during the weeknights, or in class on Thursday mornings, the camaraderie we built won’t soon be forgotten.

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