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## Letter from the Editors - Volume 39

Dear readers,

Since 1981, The Meridian has provided a space for all Lewis & Clark students, regardless of major, to publish original work related to international and cross-cultural perspectives. The Meridian aims to provide students with experience in navigating the scholarly journal process; all submissions are meticulously reviewed and edited by our editorial board to ensure the published works are of the utmost quality. This journal operates independently from faculty and is entirely student-run and produced, as it has been for the past 38 years.

The 2020-2021 edition of The Meridian, like its predecessors, is comprised of a wide variety of topics that cross borders of culture and time. This edition explores everything from the perils of Yemen’s healthcare system, to monarchic survival in the Middle East and North Africa, to authoritarianism during COVID-19. It also features student photos from their journeys abroad before the pandemic halted international travel. Our editorial board makes it a priority to work together in curating a journal of diverse topics, experiences and opinions.

Given the continuous changes due to the COVID-19 outbreak, we are especially thankful to our contributors and our editorial board. We have conducted all of our work remotely, from different parts of the country, to create this year’s edition. This journal would not have been possible without the unrelenting curiosity and drive of Lewis & Clark students. We would also like to thank our advisor, Bob Mandel, the Student Media Board and Morel Publishing for assisting and guiding us throughout the process. We are deeply thankful to everyone involved that helped us uphold the quality of The Meridian throughout this tumultuous academic year. Although we cannot hand out the journal in-person at the International Affairs Symposium as we have done in the past, we are dedicated to distributing the journal in ways that are most accessible to readers: on campus, through the mail, or online.

We hope you find this edition as engaging, informative, and inspiring as we do. We now present to you the 39th edition of The Meridian Journal of International and Cross-Cultural Perspectives.

Cassidy Harris ‘22 and Nathan Oakley ‘22
Editors-in-Chief

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# End in Sight: How to Illeviate Policies of Isolation and Deligitimization in Gaza

*Josh Phillips*

The situation in the Gaza Strip has justifiably been termed a humanitarian crisis since the founding of Israel in 1948, when 250,000 Palestinians were forcibly pushed out of their homes and onto the sliver of land perched between the sea, the desert, and Egypt (Finkelstein 2018, 3). Today, Gaza is filled with the descendants of those original refugees, and its 1.8 million inhabitants live in one of the most densely populated areas on Earth. Tracing the plight of those living in Gaza is a study of isolation, delegitimization, and suffering. In 2016, the UN Council of Europe reported that "due to severe damage to the coastal aquifer and the overall environmental degradation, Gaza is in danger of becoming unlivable by 2020" (Jansson 2016, 3). The Israeli blockade of Gaza, which restricts to a draconian degree the passage of people, imports and exports, and raw materials, is responsible for the increasingly dire humanitarian conflict in Gaza. The question of improving the situation for those in Gaza centers on how aid agencies, the international community, and the Palestinian political body can convince Israel to roll-back their restrictions. This paper addresses the viability of maintaining the situation as it is. Currently, aid agencies are at the mercy of Israel's political whims, the entirety of the Gaza strip is being blockaded, and the Palestinian political entity in Gaza is isolated from humanitarian aid. The paper will also analyze the flow of Gaza's aidand a path of transparency and accountability is suggested in order to transition away from humanitarian dependency while increasing the efficiency of aid and legitimacy of Gaza as a political entity. Finally, this paper will explore a policy to bring the economic weight of the international community against Israel. This paper posits that the Quartet (the US, the UN, the EU, and Russia) should level sanctions against Israel, which will serve as leverage to force a drawdown of Israel's wide-ranging siege on Gaza. This essay will outline how this policy path, while seemingly requiring actors to hurt close allies, actually forecasts on a longer time scale, and will force Israel to reckon with a stain to their credibility and improve their security situation in the long run.

**Background**

The background precipitating the present emergency in Gaza spans from the inception of Israel up to the modern day. In 1947, a UN mandate split what had previously been Britain's Palestinian territory into two parts. Forgoing the agreed upon division of 56% Jewish and 44% Arab, the Zionist movement succeded in expanding their territory to 80% through a bloody war fought against a loose Arab alliance (Finkelstein 2018, 3). Thousands of Palestinians fled this war, and approximately 250,000 ended up in Gaza, "the panhandle of the Sinai Peninsula" (Finkelstein 2018, 3). This flood of refugees overwhelmed the limited space and infrastructure of the region. Today, almost three fourths of Gaza's population consists of these refugees or their descendants, with the total population of the strip exceeding 1.8 million (Finkelstein 2018, 3). While the Zionists celebrated the successful formation of their long sought-after state, those whose land the state was built on mourned. For Palestinians, "the immeasurable loss of 1948 [is remembered] as the nakba, the 'Catastrophe'" (Filiu 2014, 71).

Following the 1948 war, Gaza came under the control of Egypt. Strict censures and control were enforced, and Egypt attempted to maintain a tight rein over Palestinian guerillas as well as internal Islamic political movements (Finkelstein 2018, 4). During this time period, brutal violence dominated the region with numerous civilian casualties on both sides. In 1956, Israel invaded Gaza and Egypt's territory of the Sinai Peninsula. Israeli historian Benny Morris catalogues the unremitted brutality of the Israeli operation in the strip, showcasing a disproportionate use of force that would come to dominate Israel's relationship with Gaza: "the United Nations estimated that, all told, Israeli troops killed between 447 and 500 Arab civilians in their first three week of the occupation of the Strip" (Finkelstein 2018, 4). Israel's operations in the Gaza strip since the nakba have ranged from strategic commando insertions to full scale occupation, which persists to this day (Finkelstein 2018, 5). The type of occupation has differed in recent years, with



internalized control being replaced by external control in 2005.

The modern political structure within Gaza fundamentally affects how the humanitarian crisis in the Strip plays out. In 2006, Gazans democratically elected Hamas as the political leader of the territory. Fatah, the more moderate alternative, contested this result and a bloody civil war wracked Gaza following the election. By 2007, Hamas succeeded in consolidating power, much to the chagrin of outside observers. More extremist in nature than Fatah, Hamas posesses a more violent ideology of resistance than the negotiation-focused Palestinian Authority which governs the West Bank. Hamas is considered a terrorist organization by the US government (though it is certainly also a political organization). Israel, following these political results, maintained a blockade of the Gaza Strip that only tightened after Hamas's takeover of Gaza in June 2007" (Feldman 2009, 23). Israel has also initiated offensive operations in the Gaza Strip in 2008 and 2014 under the condition of self defense. In each instance, the citizens and combatants killed in Gaza drastically eclipsed Israeli losses, demonstrating the disproportionate force Israel invokes militarily in the Strip (Finklestein 2018, 15). These operations have destroyed infrastructure and displaced Gazans to a high degree. This characterization presents the fundamental problem Gaza faces with regards to alleviating the suffering of its inhabitants—how to improve conditions when restrictions and violence limit access to goods and services at the most basic level.

Israel's rationale for supporting the blockade, which "Gazans and international agencies refer to as 'Al Hissar'—the siege,"is twofold (Smith 2016, 750). First and most pragmatically, Israel wishes to undermine the power and legitimacy of Hamas by barring access to any good that it deems political, or which might have a 'dual-purpose' (Feldman 2009, 29). Presumably this is an effort at self defense, preventing Hamas from amassing weapons that could harm Israeli citizens. However, as Ilana Feldman writes, Israel's policy on what it permits to enter the strip produces a circular logic: anything it allows to enter is considered humanitarian, while whatever it bars is implied to be political by the decision to bar it (2009, 29). In this context Israel holds a monopoly over the flow of goods, as well as the narrative about the purpose of these goods. A de facto outcome of the siege is that it directly punishes the population of Gaza for their continued support of Hamas. The problem here is that history hasn't shown this strategy to be working. The siege in this sense has failed to weaken Hamas, which has consolidated power to a high degree (Byman 2012, 52).

Current humanitarian operations in the Strip center around combatting an epidemic of hunger, medical ailments, and economic impotency exacerbated by the Israeli blockade. Due to the blockade, the majority of Gazans and the goods they produce are unable to move either to the West Bank or the rest of the world, while most people (and all goods not deemed humanitarian) are barred from entering. This isolation bears responsibility for the structural and economic decay in the Strip (Finkelstein 2018, 360). The humanitarian plight of Gaza is reflective of the broader struggles in of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. An improvement of the situation in Gaza represents an improvement in the Israeli-Palestinian relationship, and benefits the stability of the region as a whole.

**Policy Suggestions**

*As It Is*

The first policy option I will lay out is maintaining the status quo. Certain aid agencies have deemed the siege flagrantly wrong and judicial branches of the UN have ruled it illegal, yet the situation remains the same. This is understandable because Israel is an incredibly powerful actor on a number of fronts. Aside from being strong militarily, Israel has a wide-reaching economy and has been broadening its diplomatic leverage internationally (Finkelstein 2018, 361). Therefore the humanitarian and human rights desires of external actors as they currently are have little impact on Israel's policy of occupation.

Because the citizens of Gaza are excluded from participating in outside economies, they possess little utility to outside powers, a status termed "de-development" (Smith 2015, 334). This notion of de-development is part of the underlying humanitarian issue in Gaza. In the present context, there are no options drastic enough to leverage away Israel's blockade and bring a sense of life and vitality into the current economic and aspirational desert. Certainly this option has appeal, since it prevents shifting things in a direction that might indirectly invoke further conflict.

An unavoidable weakness of a policy

following the status quo is the fact that the humanitarian imperative (minimizing human suffering) cannot be successfully pursued under the conditions of the siege. Feldman characterizes humanitarian interventions as ranging "from the delivery of food and medical care to the development of industry and education" (2009, 24). The siege inherently restricts these activities, as outlined above. Healthcare offers one example of how compromised the humanitarian arena is under the blockade conditions. Smith's interviews with health care providers in the Gaza Strip: " illustrated that the difficulty that health care providers across the Gaza Strip find in maintaining their equipment and providing access to modern medicine is a direct result of the artificial shortages caused by the siege" (2015, 4). Upholding the status quo would mean resigning oneself to the continued devolving of conditions in the strip, an outcome that is incompatible with humanitarianism.

*Inclusive Aid*

Hamas, as the governing entity in Gaza, should not be excluded from aid activities and development. This contention is the crux of the second policy explored: that Hamas should offer a concession and greenlight a rigorous transparency program so that it can be directly involved with aid and long term development within its territory. This policy would allow for a shift away from a socio-political isolation that de-legitimizes Gazans. This second policy, while requiring a big ask (pandering concession) on the part of Hamas, and a big risk on the part of Israel (trusting Hamas), allows aid to be delivered more effectively within Gaza. It should be recognized that the flow of aid since the 2006 elections is strictly designated to avoid Hamas, which effectively paralyzes Gaza's government since aid is a key aspect of Gaza's socioeconomic makeup (Qarmout and Béland 2012, 35). Including Hamas in the chain of aid would be a step towards more efficiently centralized development. Institutional inclusion and organization would benefit many different parts of the humanitarian process, preventingoverlap that can be detrimental to humanitarian operations (Smith 2015, 336). Further, it could legitimize Hamas in a positive way that could open the door to future negotiations.

This policy option would require substantial shifts and concessions on the part of Hamas. Hamas would need to express a motivation and willingness to work with international organizations like the UNRWA, which is "the main provider of relief, development, and protection services for Palestinians in need across the region" (Grisgraber 2018, par. A1). More importantly, Hamas would need to offer substantial concessions to Israel, such as a condemnation of Islamic Jihad, and a verifiable pledge to dismantle stocks of Qassam rockets. The politics within Gaza are messy, and securing Hamas's political body to this end would be a challenge. That said, given the proper foresight and unity within the organization, it makes sense for the democratically elected government to have a hand in the assistance and stability of Gaza.

*Aggressive Economic Statecraft*

The final policy option this paper analyzes calls for the Quartet (US, EU, UN, and Russia) to sanction Israel directly, forcing Israel to roll back specific elements of its blockade if sanctions against it are to be lifted. The United States and these allies would then appoint a mediator to spur Hamas into offering concessions so that Israel can diminish their blockade while avoiding embarrassment. This element of "saving-face" is essential, since Israel needs to appear to have gained some tactical or political concession if it is to roll back its far-reaching blockade. Certainly, this possibility seems like a tall order. Why would the United State's sanction their closest ally in the region? However, the United States and the other members of the Quartet have an advantage of a birds-eye view, so to speak. they are not bound quite so strictly with regards to concessions and long term plays as are Israeli politicians, whose constituency has been inculcated with cynicism through deeply traumatizing violence, thus potentially becoming averse to structural shifts. In this context, the United States and its allies have the fortuitous perspective and capacity to attempt to make the choice for Israel, using a surplus of non-military hard power to effect this end.

This policy of economic statecraft has a number of critical strengths. First, historical precedent shows that the threat of US sanctions can influence Israel's activity in Gaza. In 1956, Israel invaded and occupied the Gaza Strip, . brutalizing its inhabitants. Because of this violence, Israel faced international condemnation. In 1957 after "US president Dwight Eisenhower exerted heavy military pressure and threatened economic sanctions," writes Finkelstein, "Israel was forced to withdraw from Gaza" (2018, 5). This threat of economic hard power worked in the past, and could work again if actors are willing to take the first step.

In addition to its strengths, this policy also has weaknesses and potential dangers. For one, Israel might enter a game of "economic-moralistic chicken" with the United States and allies, tanking the sanctions, ignoring the requests to lift the siege, or imposing retaliatory sanctions/tariffs. This is a very real possibility, since Israel is an unquestionably defiant power in the region and its nationalitic pride could overrule a calculated, game-theory approach, thus spurring it to respond out of defiance. A second challenge of this policy is the economic burden the United States and its allies would have to bear to implement this policy in the first place. Israel has many valuable exports, and its secular capital, Tel Aviv, boasts the highest number of start-ups per capita in the world (Sheppard 2018). In this context the U.S. and allies would have to be extremely intentional in how they target, frame and implement their tariffs so as to walk the knife's edge between self-inflicted short term economic damage and effective long term coercion.

**Proposal**

This paper suggests the policy of targeted sanctions. Although this policy sounds extreme, the long-term benefits vastly outway the short-term injuries, when implemented effectively. The situation in Gaza is untenable, both from a human rights perspective and from a geopolitical security one. Current conventional approaches to address this issue have shown themselves to be ineffective. As outlined above, there is rampant structural breakdown in the Strip due to the blockade. In 2018 roughly 50% of Gazans were unemployed while 70% were dependent on food aid in some form (Finkelstein 2018, 359). These are circumstances that breed not only visible human suffering, but also feed into the expression of violence against Israel. To alleviate these conditions and provide Gazan's with economic prospects is extremely prudent for any retext of Israeli security.

The issue of credibility is central in supporting this policy proposal. In all metrics, Israel loses vast amounts of credibility on the human rights front for its treatment of Gaza militarily and through the siege. Courts have ruled against the legality of the blockade, which "is considered a form of collective punishment of the civilian population of Gaza" (Shaban 2017, 71). Forcing Israel to stop harming its own self image and by extension the image of its allies (the US for example) offers genuine diplomatic and economic incentives. These incentives exist on a longer time frame than the direct economic slowdown the sanctions might cause, but even a realist approach excluding morals can recognize the value of salvaged credibility.

On the implementation front, this policy would require officializing strategic sanctions against Israel with a diplomatically stated purpose of lessening the siege against Gaza. An implication of this policy is that the United States and its Quartet allies would need to act or appoint a party in the role of mediator, helping to organize concessions from Hamas in response to Israel lifting certain restrictions. Like any sovereign nation, Israel would likely bristle at the notion of being bullied to do something with nothing in it for them. Therefore having Hamas at the bargaining table ready to cooperate is essential in order to successfully implement this policy.

To minimize economic loss, the US and the Quartet should consider unleashing the sanctions gradually, with the intention of pushing Israel right to the point of conceding. On Hamas's end, a condemnation of Islamic Jihad and other extremist groups would be required to give Israel a plausible concession to jumpstart the blockade rollback after the sanctions. A viable country to serve as arbiter is required as well. This country should not be politically linked to the conflict, nor should it be one of the countries involved with the sanctions. A non participating European power could be a favorable candidate, as could an Asian country like South Korea.

**Conclusio**n

The crisis in Gaza only grows more pressing with time. Violence as well as a lack of resources, due substantially to Israeli policies, make life for those living in the Strip dangerous and marked by material and developmental shortages. The background of the situation in Gaza is nuanced, but it is situated within the context of Arab-Israeli tensions in the region. Addressing the humanitarian

crisis will benefit the peace process between Palestinians and Israelis, increasing stability and minimizing violence. This paper has outlined three policies aimed at reducing the detrimental effects of Israel's siege on Gaza. First, the option to maintain the status quo was discussed, which is a non-risky short-term play that is unviable in the long run. Second, a policy outlining Hama's inclusion in the aid process was suggested. While this option possesses a number of challenges, its successful implementation would benefit the political agency of Gaza's citizens and enable more efficient efforts of development. The future of Gaza is dire, and no perfect solution exists to change the status quo completely. However, this paper argues that sanctions leveled against Israel are an advisable and necessary course of action to pressure the lifting of the blockade. The United States and the international community must exhibit a "tough love" approach to their relationship with Israel. Even omitting the humanitarian and moral reasons to lift the siege, states must recognize the injury that Israel's adjudicated human rights abuses have on all parties' credibility. The path forward for Gaza is uncertain. What is certain is that brave, moral, and analytical approaches are needed to prevent the continued physical, mental, and political suffering of a large number of human beings.

*Malaga, Spain*
*Milica Stanisic*



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# Monarchic Stability and Survival in the Middle East and North Africa

*Lila Khammash*

Today more than ever before, democracy seems to be the ideal which many countries strive to reach (Foa and Mounk 16). With such norms as self-government, political representation, egalitarianism, and freedom of expression, democracy has often been regarded as a driver of stability and economic development around the world, with prominent democracies occasionally going to lengths as extreme as waging war for the establishment of democratic institutions (Acemoglu). Despite this trend towards democracy, it is interesting to note that dictatorships still exist, surviving in spite of what some theorists otherwise predict (Przeworski and Limongi 156). In particular, monarchic dictatorships in the Middle East have endured multitudinous threats to their stability, including most recently the Arab Spring of 2010, which was a series of anti-government uprisings in the Middle East and North African (MENA) region that overthrew several republican regimes but left the Arab monarchies untouched. How have these monarchies managed to survive? This essay will attempt to answer this question, particularly emphasizing cultural, historical, and institutional factors that may have contributed to the regimes' stability.

Although not much scholarly work has been done surrounding Arab monarchies, political scientists have produced some plausible theories explaining the apparent stability of these regimes. In A Theory of Political Integration, Claude Ake describes the most stable type of political system – that is, the system that is most capable of neutralizing "the dysfunctional processes that social mobilization unleashes" – as "authoritarian", "consensual", and "identific" (Ake 98). Different scholars have studied how each of these characteristics apply to Arab monarchic dictatorships.

By definition, a monarchy is authoritarian:the regime is characterized by strong central power and very limited political freedoms. This leads us to the second characteristic, "consensual", which Leon Hurwitz defines as "when the political class is not threatened by a counter elite" (Hurwitz 457). According to Victor Menaldo, Arab monarchies achieve this characteristic by adopting a political culture wherein the monarch maintains the loyalty of his support coalition by distributing rents to members of the royal family, allowing them to colonize government posts that they can use for their own material benefit (Menaldo 711). This "monarchic culture" rests on clear rules that indicate who the insiders are and exactly how regime rents are to be shared among them, creating a stable, impenetrable political system wherein members of the royal family all have a stake in maintaining the regime. The combination of an authoritarian monarch and a close-knit political class creates the relative stability enjoyed by Arab monarchies.

Claude Ake describes a political system as "identific" when a mutual identity exists between the political class and the governed (Hurwitz 457). In Arab monarchies, it is this mutual identity that legitimizes the absolutism with which the monarchs rule. Unlike their republican counterparts, Galip Dalay, of the Middle East Eye, argues that Arab monarchs have built their legitimacy on customs and traditions which have deep Islamic, religious roots rather than on Islamism as an ideological framework, hence securing their rule by establishing a parallelism between piety and loyalty to the regime (Dalay).

While the cultural and institutional factors outlined above seem to paint an optimistic image of the Arab monarchies, a historical explanation by Lisa Anderson illustrates how the regimes' stability might only be temporary. The monarchies, Anderson argues, took root during the post-war era due to the apparent affinity between nation building – necessary for British imperial policy at the time – and monarchy and authoritarianism as regime types (Anderson 4). This correlation, supported by Perry Anderson, implies that the relative solidity of Arab monarchies is simply due to how recent they are. Mostly creations of the nineteenth century, the regimes today are particularly apt for the early stages of state formation, but will eventually grow "too restrictive to accommodate the political demands of new social groups" (Anderson 4). Anderson's functional explanation can be compared to the Modernization Theory posed by Seymour Lipset, which suggests a positive relation between economic growth and development and the emergence of democracy in a country (Przeworski and Limongi 156). Therefore, the general argument is that as the Arab monarchies develop economically, the stability of their regime type will gradually wane in favour of democratization.

Although further research exists around this topic, what has been outlined above should suffice as a general summary of the currently available information.



**Theoretical framework**

Before proposing a theory attempting to explain the stability of Arab monarchies, it is important to address how the competing traditions in comparative politics – culturalism, structuralism, and rationalism – would approach the question.

A culturalist would address this issue in terms of the cultural factors influencing the monarchies, and so would focus on the patriarchal nature of Arab society and the customs and norms that heavily prioritize kinship and the nuclear family (Anderson 5). As such, an explanation for the stability of Arab monarchies would be the tendency of their subjects to perceive their monarchs as idolized "fathers" whose paternalistic leadership brought, and continues to bring, about the formation and development of their nations (Dalay). Indeed, this loyalty is furthered by the religious legitimacy with which most of the monarchs associate themselves (Dalay). In Jordan, for example, the Hashemite King traces his lineage back to the Muslim Prophet Muhammed (PBUH), whereas the Saudi King refers to himself as the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, tying his role as the Kingdom's absolute ruler to the protection of two of Islam's holiest sites (Dalay).

A structuralist, on the other hand, would place more emphasis on the political structures and governmental institutions within the monarchies, and might explain their stability in terms of the electoral systems that some of them have adopted in parliament (Hurwitz 458). By loosening restraints on administrative participation and political representation, the monarchies can divide and weaken opposition groups and pacify subjects who are not content with power centralization, thereby guaranteeing relative stability. Some oil-rich countries furthermore provide their subjects with aid packages and institute nationwide development projects, accordingly benefitting from the positive correlation between economic dependence and political passivity (Cleveland).

Finally, a rationalist would focus primarily on individual actors, explaining the stability of monarchies in terms of the decisions self-interested subjects make in order to maximize their utility. A rationalist would suggest that military crackdowns, coercive measures, and repressive controls disincentivize civilian mobilization or protests against their monarchic leaders. Fearing repression, civilians refuse to attack the monarchy itself, stabilizing the position of the monarch in the process.

Although these approaches provide theoretically sound explanations, the causal story outlined below illustrates that some of the factors discussed tend to be more influential than others when it comes to explaining the stability of Arab monarchies. While it is evident that cultural, institutional, and rational factors are at play in this phenomenon, it seems more logical to see them as contributors to the success of two much more influential factors: relative newness and foreign support.

As stable as the Arab monarchs appear currently, evidence suggests that their ability to pacify their subjects is limited. As Anderson suggests, the survival of Arab monarchies seem to be a function of their recency: as long as the projects of nation building and state formation are occurring, citizens will remain occupied. The strategic alliances that many of the Arab monarchies have with the United States and its allies boost this apparent stability. The USA strategically backs some of these regimes with intelligence and military bases, not just to feed off of their oil wealth, but also to closely monitor Iraq and guarantee relative security around Israel by hampering the potential hegemony of Iran. Of course, the oil wealth of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) monarchies not only attracts foreign support, but also allows them to support their own subjects and fellow Arab monarchies. In summary, the ultimate driving forces behind monarchic stability in the Middle East are external assistance and oil wealth.

**Necessary and Sufficient Conditions**

Before testable hypotheses can be drawn, it is important to address the necessary and sufficient conditions that this theory entails. According to the research outlined above, external assistance can be considered a sufficient condition for monarchic stability. The presence of American bases and military personnel on Arab soil ensures that any opposition threatening the region's loyal monarchs is immediately silenced. The placation of subjects through economic provision or constitutional reform, on the other hand, can be regarded as a necessary condition for the outcome in question. While the monarchies that enjoy extensive oil revenues can achieve this condition through the provision of welfare agendas and development programs, monarchies with more modest incomes can mobilize minor structural reforms to pacify their subjects. Due to the loyalty and religious legitimacy that familial affiliation endows upon Arab monarchs, another necessary condition to

consider would be the hereditariness of Arab monarchies. This also perpetuates the aforementioned "monarchic culture" that ensures the loyalty of royal family members, and hence the stability of the crown.

**Testable Hypotheses**

With a clear theory now outlined, two hypotheses can be proposed:

*Hypothesis 1*: Arab monarchies will survive and maintain their relative stability so long as they are backed by external military and / or monetary assistance.

*Hypothesis 2:* Arab monarchies will survive and maintain their relative stability so long as they are capable of placating their subjects with economic or institutional reform.

**Qualitative and quantitative methods**

In testing the hypotheses proposed above, foreign backing and subject placation are the independent variables, and government stability the dependent variable. The independent variables could be examined using scholarly work produced about the countries in question, whereas measuring the dependent variable could involve two approaches: qualitative or quantitative. While qualitative research places more emphasis on descriptive analysis and in-depth examination of words, quantitative research focuses more on measurable variables and numerical data.

A qualitative approach would be an in-depth analysis of patterns of change in public opinion over time. Focus groups and individual interviews can be utilized to reveal the overall level of civilian satisfaction with monarchs in terms of their leadership, service provision, and ability to drive development, among other things. One shortcoming of this approach, however, would be the preference falsification phenomenon, wherein individuals – fearing repression – fail to reveal their true preferences regarding the dictatorship, making it difficult to predict its long-term stability. An alternative approach would involve a detailed historiographic tracing of how foreign backing and economic/institutional reform had influenced the stability of monarchic dictatorships around the world. In using this approach, however, factors within the individual countries – other than the independent variables – may influence the accuracy of final results.

Alternatively, a quantitative approach would involve using the Index of Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism, defined by the *Global Economy* as a measure of the "likelihood that a government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means, including politically-motivated violence and terrorism" ("Political Stability"). With values ranging from -2.5 (least stable) to 2.5 (most stable), this index is constructed using variables from such sources as the Economist Intelligence Unit and the Political Risk Services, including "armed conflict", "social unrest", "orderly transfers", and "government stability", among others ("WGI Data Source Summary"). Using this index would entail certain shortcomings involved in all statistical examinations, including human error and insufficient sample sizes. Nonetheless, such inaccuracies are usually minute and will be overlooked for the purpose of this study.

**Testing Hypotheses**

Both approaches outlined above can be used in this research. However, the quantitative method is better suited for tracking changes and making comparisons over time. This is because it is numerical, and so can be used to generate visual representations of trends. In order to test my proposed hypotheses, I will be employing a method of induction known as Mill's Method of Agreement, wherein an explanation for a raised phenomenon can be derived by comparing several cases in which said phenomenon has taken place. Within the context of my research, this will be achieved by comparing Bahrain and Jordan, both of which are constitutional monarchies. These two countries have relative stability in common and, more importantly, their survival amid a period of political unrest within the MENA region. Thus, they both agree on the phenomenon in question. In order to support this assertion, I have compared the Index of Political Stability values for these monarchies over the period extending from 2009 to 2018. I have chosen this range as it is large enough to allow for comparisons over time, and because it is inclusive of the Great Recession and the Arab Spring – both of which are likely to have significantly strained the political climate of the Middle East – and so provided a challenging test to the stability of its monarchies.

As can be seen in Figure 1, both monarchies have experienced a gradual decline in political stability over the studied period. These trends suggest that Bahrain has felt the sharpest regression, starting in 2009 with a severe decline from -0.14 to -0.49, and ending in 2013, when political stability began gradually rising again, albeit very irregularly and with occasional corresponding declines. The most notable shock to political stability



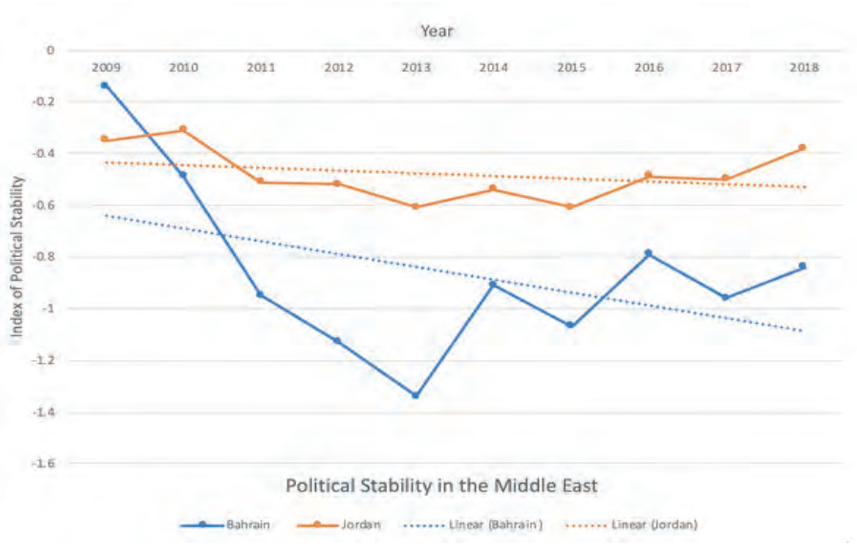


*Figure 1: 2009-2018 Index of Political Stability Values for Bahrain and Jordan. Source: The Global Economy*

in Bahrain occurred in early 2011, when the combination of growing popular discontent (shown above over the past two years) and the 2010 Arab Spring lowered the revolutionary threshold of Bahrain's majority Shiite population. This led to an anti-regime march of an estimated 100,000 citizens, nearly 20 percent of the country's population (Yom). Proportionally, this was far greater than the relatively modest few who mobilized and toppled the Tunisian and Egyptian regimes. What kept the Sunni Khalifa monarchy in power are the exact necessary and sufficient conditions outlined above: foreign assistance and civilian placation.

Bahrain, an oil-exporting monarchy, used its modest hydrocarbon revenues to strengthen its base of Sunni support through social welfare programs, all the while securing domestic control through the presence of a fleet of the US Navy in addition to an emergency contingent of Gulf troops (Dalay). This incident provides great support for my hypotheses. While the uprising in Bahrain was proportionally much larger than in Egypt or Tunisia, the monarchy survived – as Hypothesis 2 predicts – by using generous monetary concessions to lure its Sunni subjects away from bandwagoning with the majority Shiites. Simultaneously, Bahrain – as Hypothesis 1 predicts – exploited external military assistance aimed at ensuring Saudi Arabia's neighbour remained under rule by an allied Sunni family (Yom). As shown in Figure 1, these conditions clearly reaped benefits, and continue to do so, with political stability gradually reemerging and specifically rising against the trendline from 2017 to 2018.

Alternatively, in examining this graph, it is clear that Jordan did not experience as sharp a decline in political stability as did Bahrain. In fact, the monarchy experienced a minor rise in stability from -0.35 to -0.31 throughout 2009, before witnessing the severest decline in 2010 with the eruption of the Arab Spring. Jordan experienced a series of protests in January 2011 demanding economic development, electoral reform, greater democracy, and reduced monarchic power ("Arab Uprising"). Although initially peaceful, the demonstrations culminated in deadly clashes with security forces, until eventually declining towards the end of 2013. Despite the unrest, the Hashemite monarchy – led by King Abdullah II – maintained its hold in power, and once again the reemergence of relative stability was driven by foreign aid and government reform.

One of the main factors that contributed to the containment of political unrest in Jordan – and, indeed in all the monarchies of the region – was the mechanism of "monarchic solidarity" that Saudi Arabia preemptively put in place while the Arab Spring gained momentum (Dalay). Saudi Arabia extended not only military, but also financial assistance to both Bahrain and Jordan. In December 2011, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) – of which Saudi Arabia is a member – pledged $5 billion in development funds to Jordan (Dalay). This substantial sum, paired with the

monarchy's regular foreign aid haul from the USA, allowed Jordan to reduce a multi-billion-dollar budget deficit driven by price subsidies, job promises, and security spending (Yom). By that, Jordan used external financial assistance to cater to the demonstrators' demands, which satisfies both Hypothesis 1 and 2. Even before that, King Abdullah dismissed his government and appointed a new prime minister, whose newly-formed cabinet, according to the King, ought to "take genuine steps towards strengthening democracy" ("Jordan's King"). Consequently, the monarchy consolidated its stability by undergoing constitutional reform in response to popular pleas for democratization, hence further supporting Hypothesis 2. Once again, the combination of institutional reform, external financial aid, and foreign military assistance (through the presence of U.S. troops on Jordanian soil) has led to the survival of a MENA monarchy (Yom).

**Conclusion**

This paper has put forth two hypotheses: 1) that Arab monarchies will survive and maintain their relative stability so long as they are backed by external military and/or monetary assistance and 2) that Arab monarchies will survive and maintain stability so long as they are capable of placating their subjects with economic or institutional reform. The findings gathered throughout this paper have essentially corroborated my theory and provided clear evidence of these hypotheses. As expected, each of the cond itions outlined – external assistance and economic/institutional reform – has in both the cases of Bahrain and Jordan been the driving force behind the survival of the monarchies. It is important to note that these conditions have not necessarily *driven* political stability within the monarchies. Instability existed and manifested in the demonstrations and protests throughout the MENA region during the Arab Spring and the monarchies were no exception. What the conditions did was *reestablish* stability for an indefinite period of time, and prevent the unrest from culminating in complete overthrow of the monarchies. This explains the downward sloping trend of political stability in Bahrain and Jordan despite the satisfaction of both outlined necessary and sufficient conditions for political stability.

Although my findings do support my hypotheses, there are several factors that might have influenced the accuracy of my results. First, as previously mentioned, there are bound to be several shortcomings associated with quantitative, statistical data, including human error and inconsistencies in numerical figures over time. This is especially applicable to the Index of Political Stability, which encompasses indicators gathered from different organizations with divergent manners of data collection. There are multitudinous determinants of stability that the index does not account for, including public opinion and relations within the royal families themselves, which could have been revealed through qualitative data. Finally, although very useful, the comparative (Mill's) method employed might have been slightly erroneous as it is built upon assumptions that are almost impossible to achieve. For example, it assumes that the causal process examined is deterministic, when in practice, it was more likely probabilistic.

Despite these drawbacks, this research has noteworthy normative implications. Although there are more factors contributing to monarchic stability than my hypotheses suggest, overreliance on the examined two shows the extent to which this stability is quite unpredictable. Overdependence on foreign backing makes these monarchies disposable: deny them oil wealth and external assistance and they will collapse, which alarms me as one of their citizens. However, I still believe that this vulnerability is not necessarily the fault of monarchy as a regime-type as much as it is the fault of imperialism and its remnants in the Middle East, which my research has shown. Furthermore, although Modernization Theory, which was discussed earlier, is often endorsed, I believe that monarchy can persist even as nations undergo socioeconomic development. The special circumstances of Middle Eastern monarchies – with their loyalty to and dependence on Western superpowers – does not mean that all monarchies are subject to similar vulnerability. Even more, while Middle Eastern monarchies are largely dependent on American backing, the relationship joining both entities is largely symbiotic in nature.; The USA has major material, strategic, and geopolitical stakes in the Middle East, which provides the monarchies with implicit power and stability. If something were to genuinely weaken the Arab monarchies, it would be their sectarianism and lack of unity rather than their dependence on foreign superpowers. Otherwise, the regimes themselves seem to enjoy many benefits that have been discussed in this paper, and that points towards long-term stability and prosperity.



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# White Australia Policy and Human Rights Violations

*Can Altunkaynak*

In discussions of international human rights, we often do not tend to associate strong democracies with human rights violations. However, human rights violations have and will continue to occur in democracies, such as the Australian government's policies towards indigenous communities and migrants seeking asylum that stem from colonial legacies. Considering Australia's positive international image, one might be surprised to learn that Australia continues to commit human rights violations today.

Australia is still a British colony on paper. Thus, some of the structures and notions that were put in place by the British are still in effect. Due to its colonial heritage, Australia maintains many colonial laws and practices that violate the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. To better understand how colonial legacies might impact human rights violations, one must gain a better understanding Australian history and the mentality that comes with it.

**White Australia Policy**

Convicts from Great Britain established a settlement in New South Wales in 1788 after Captain James Cook landed in Botany Bay. The convicts became the landowners of the new colony. and called the rightful owners of the land, the Aboriginal and the Torres Strait Islander people, "uncivilized savages" (Foster 2020). As the British discovered their new colony and came across others on the continent – like the Chinese during the Gold rushes and the native communities who had inhabited the land long before –they gradually became more paranoid of the 'yellow peril' and of the natives' intentions.After the British seized the continent and claimed it as their own, a fear of keeping the continent 'White' emerged: they were thousands of miles away from Europe and surrounded by non-White communities. Due to this fear, the Australian colonies established a federation, and the first legislation that was passed was the Immigration Restriction Act of 1911, also known as the White Australia Policy.

The White Australia Policy restricted non-British immigration to Australia. However, the need for more workers in the agriculture sector in the following years made it necessary to relax the policy and accept people of other European nations. Europeans could become citizens, but Australia did not grant citizenship to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people until 1967, six years before the White Australia Policy was repealed.

Since its formation, the Australian government has systematically violated the rights of Aboriginal people. Smallpox, which arrived on the First Fleet, killed approximately 90% of the Aboriginal people and their cultural system with it. Many seeking medical help traveled to Sydney on foot and began working in the newly formed city.This is where they were introduced to tobacco and alcohol, which only aggravated their dispossession. As the continent became more urbanized, growing numbers of natives became sick and those who survived were forced into the system the British had created (Foster 2020). The dispossession of the Aboriginal people began with colonization and continues today as the Australian government makes its way deeper into the Australian outback.

**The Stolen Generation**

Between the years of 1901 to1973, many Aboriginal children were kidnapped 'to be educated' and assimilated into the white Australian society. This generation is called 'The Stolen Generation.' Government officials believed that if the children were placed in white families and institutions at an early age and were educated to become a part of society, they would have children with other whites and assimilate in a few generations, thus erasing Aboriginal culture. Many of these children "were victims of sexual, physical and psychological abuse whilst in the care of these institutions and families" , and lost their culture and language (O'Sullivan 2005, 247).

These children were mostly kidnapped from the reserves that the Australian government had created for Aboriginal people. Government reserves were "originally established to protect from colonial violence, which ended up being a tool for government to control the Aboriginal people. In these government reserves the Aboriginal people were denied their basic human rights, such as freedom of movement, right to work, custody of their children, and control over their personal property" (Aboagye 2020). Many Aboriginal women were raped and had mixed-race children. As a result, the government officials specifically targeted those children because they considered them more likely to adapt to white society.



**From the White Australia Policy to Today**

After the White Australia policy was repealed, people from all over the world began to immigrate to Australia, creating a multicultural country. However, violations of the rights of Aboriginal people did not end with the termination of the White Australian Policy. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults make up just 2% of the Australian population, but constitute 27% of the individuals in prison (Australian Law Reform Commission 2018). It is not difficult to trace back the incarceration rates to the dispossession of culture and land: 90% of the Indigenous people who are incarcerated link their offending to substance abuse, which is a consequence of their dispossession. (PcW's Indigenous Consulting 2017, 23). Since the 1990s, many of those incarcerated faced torture in detention, and access to detention facilities is still limited (Anthony 2020).

The White Australia Policy does not only harm the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, but also those who are seeking asylum. Australia welcomes immigrants as a result of its small population of 25 million people. To be specific, 29.7% of the Australian population was born overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2020). However, even though Australia claims it has a "race-blind" approach to immigration, recent events show that there are remnants of White Australia Policy within the current Visa system. This system is biased as the visa processing time, required documents, and time granted depends on the nationality of the passport holder. Australia is especially malevolent towards immigrants seeking asylum who attempt to enter Australia by boat. When mandatory detention was introduced in 1992, "asylum seeker policy has encompassed the detention of adults and children alike for prolonged periods of time, a remote offshore processing regime, the indefinite detention of individuals subject to adverse security assessments, the denial of procedural fairness in refugee status determination, a mandatory minimum sentencing regime for 'people-smuggling' offences, and — more recently — the turning back of boats containing asylum seekers" (Henderson 2014).

**Conclusion**

As a British colony, Australia has implemented policies to keep Australia a predominantly white country since its foundation.Australian settlers viewed the Chinese workers in the north and the Aboriginal people native to the land as threats to 'whiteness'. Non-whites were kept out of the country through restrictive immigration policies and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were denied citizenship until 1967. From the day it was founded to the day The White Australia Policy was repealed in 1973, many Aboriginal children were kidnapped to be educated and assimilated into white society. Although the White Australia Policy is no longer legally in effect, Australia continues to violate human rights through racially biased policies and institutions, such as high incarceration rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island People and their attitudes towards immigrants from 'non-White' nations.

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*Guayaquil, Ecuador*
*Alex Webb*

# Taiwan Can Help: Unmasking Taiwan's Soft Power in the COVID-19 Pandemic

*Sarah Lind-Macmillan*

Late in 2019, the outbreak of the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-COV-2)[1] in Wuhan, China began and quickly spread to countries around the world. Upon receiving communications from China in January of 2020, the World Health Organization was able to identify the novel coronavirus as the source and in February the name COVID-19 was given to the disease. Due to a lack of testing, late implementation of social distancing measures, and the uneven response from governments, the virus has spread to 177 countries and infected millions.[2] However, Taiwan (ROC) has been one of the anomalies during the COVID-19 pandemic. As of July 25, 2020, Taiwan has 458 confirmed cases with only 7 deaths, whereas the United States has 4,145,379 confirmed cases (146,050 deaths) and China (PRC) has 86,202 confirmed cases (4,651 deaths).[3] As a result of its success in handling the outbreak, Taiwan now has a unique opportunity to use its soft power to demonstrate to the world that it is a worthy diplomatic player committed to helping others, and in doing so, Taiwan can more effectively push back against China who claims Taiwan as a part of their territory.

**2003 SARS Outbreak**

Taiwan's ability to manage the COVID-19 pandemic partially stems from its experience with the past severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak in 2003. As Taiwan endured one of the highest mortality rates in the world during the first SARS outbreak, they have fought hard to keep COVID-19 mortality low. While national quarantine measures were new to many countries, Taiwan has a previous history with them. In the spring of 2003, Taiwan implemented a Level A and B quarantine to address people who were directly exposed to individuals with SARS and those who were travelling from infected areas.[4] Additionally, Taiwan recognized that the SARS epidemic would not be the last disease outbreak, therefore the National Health Command Center was established with the purpose of not only responding to the SARS epidemic, but also to address future pandemics.[5] Using and improving upon the methods they developed to control SARS, Taiwan has been able to domestically combat COVID-19 and extend assistance to other countries.

**Mask Diplomacy**

Without a vaccine for COVID-19, personal protective equipment (PPE) has been more vital than ever to stop the rapid spread of the virus. A global shortage of PPE has created a niche for Taiwan to both respond to the need for PPE and make geopolitical gains. As the second-largest producer of face masks following China, Taiwan is able to produce 15 million masks everyday.[6] This is a significant increase from January when Taiwan was producing less than 1.9 million masks per day.[7] The rapid increase in mask production is due to Taiwan's strong technology and manufacturing industries. In order to meet demand, the government has helped local companies deliver masks to Taiwanese citizens, and has offered "a package to international buyers by bringing together Taiwanese suppliers of raw materials, machinery, and technology."[8] The country's manufacturing prowess has allowed it to quickly address the domestic mask shortage and donate millions of masks abroad.

After producing enough masks to meet local needs, Taiwan relaxed the original export ban on masks that was set in January 2020. Taiwan announced it would begin donating 100,000 surgical masks to the United States each week beginning in March.[9] In addition to the United States, Taiwan is donating face masks to its diplomatic allies as well as many other countries hit hardest by COVID-19. Mask donations from Taiwan have been pledged to the European Union, Australia, Canada, Latin American countries, and some of the countries (Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam, India, Myanmar, Malaysia, and Singapore) in President Tsai Ing-Wen's New Southbound Policy.[10] It is also offering to share the new technology for apps that can help governments fight COVID-19. Since Taiwan lacks official diplomatic relations with many countries, it is in Taiwan's best interest to harness its soft power to show that it has the capability to be a good and reliable ally in a time of need.

**Taiwan Can Help**

Taiwan claims to be donating masks with solely a humanitarian intent under the new "Taiwan can help, Health for all" campaign with 7.07 million medical masks sent abroad to medical workers.[11] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs "reiterated that Taiwan's mask donations were intended as humanitarian aid and not for the purpose of gaining favor from recipient countries."[12] Realistically speaking, even if Taiwan claims to be giving masks out for purely the common good, it still stands to reap the possible benefits of its actions. A nation that comes to the aid of another in need is looked upon favorably, which is important for the preservation of Taiwan's *de facto* sovereignty.[13] For example, even though Canada and Taiwan do not have official relations with one another, Taiwan donated 500,000 masks to Canada. Taiwan is also Canada's fifth largest trading partner in Asia.[14] There is a possibility that future relations will grow between the Indigenous communities of Taiwan and Canada as they are "an arena of potentially lower political sensitivity."[15] Taiwan can use this to its advantage to foster greater connections with Canada in the future. It is important for Taiwan to use the COVID-19 pandemic to its advantage to show the world that it can be a more valuable global contributor than China.

**Taiwan vis-à-vis China**

The simple message that Taiwan can help fellow countries comes with an underlying "multifaceted effort to challenge Beijing in the realm of coronavirus aid diplomacy."[16] In the competition of mask diplomacy, China has been exporting PPE and medicine to European allies and countries across the globe, but the quality of the PPE has since been called into question. The cracks in China's mask diplomacy have given more validity to Taiwan's higher quality PPE donations and its commitment to actually helping other countries. In the Latin America-Caribbean (LAC) region, Taiwan has the opportunity to bolster its alliances and deny China's foothold.[17] Belize has received both monetary and mask donations from Taipei's Regional Emergency Fund Against COVID-19. China's show of authoritarian methods to handle the pandemic has been challenged by Taiwan's COVID-19 success as a democratic state. Taiwan's leaders "avoided politicizing the issue, candidly shared information and experiences, balanced a recognition of the virus' global and local effects, and showed respect for democratic process and values."[18] Under Tsai's leadership, Taiwan has proven to be "the antithesis of Beijing: a democratic and reliable international partner that can assist governments as far afield, and as powerful as America's–despite Taipei's exclusion from much of the international community's for-

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mal workings."[19]

**Taiwan in the Post-COVID Era**

Taiwan remains an issue for China as it pushes for more recognition from others and inclusion into international organizations. Going forward, the best thing for Taiwan to do is continue to "expand its unofficial relationships with capitals around the world…in order to solidify its gains."[20] However, Taiwan must also balance its approach to China because it still needs to maintain the economic relations with the Asian powerhouse. In recent months, cross-strait tensions have risen due to increased military pressure from China, threatening the stability of not only Taiwan but also the Asia-Pacific region at large.

Trade and economic partnerships with a diverse range of countries will be useful for Taiwan in the post-COVID-19 era.[21] In May, President Tsai discussed the need for Taiwan to insert itself into the global supply chain. Taiwan can take on a central role in the supply chain by using its strong semiconductor and information communications technology industries. Participation in the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership is a top priority for Taipei as well. By bolstering economic relations with other Asian nations, Taiwan can play a larger role in the Asia-Pacific region. The Philippines, India, and Thailand have all upgraded their bilateral investment protection agreements with Taiwan. Furthermore, Singapore and New Zealand have also signed new free trade agreements with Taiwan.[22]

The coronavirus has devastated many less-prepared countries as it has quickly spread around the world, and few countries have been able to control and combat it as successfully as Taiwan. Researchers from the Nanyang Technological University posit that "Taipei may have found its soft power niche by simply appearing constructive and non-political in combating the pandemic."[23] President Tsai's leadership has proven to be effective as COVID-19 cases remain significantly low. Taiwan used its resources to its advantage to ensure that the domestic needs for PPE were met first and then expanded to meet the needs of the international community. The "Taiwan Can Help" campaign, while launched as a humanitarian effort, ensures that countries in need will remember Taiwan as a helpful and reliable global player. It also pushes back against China's efforts to isolate the island from the world. The COVID-19 pandemic has opened up opportunities for Taiwan to prove itself and pursue valuable relationships, whether official or unofficial, with other nations to ensure its own future stability.

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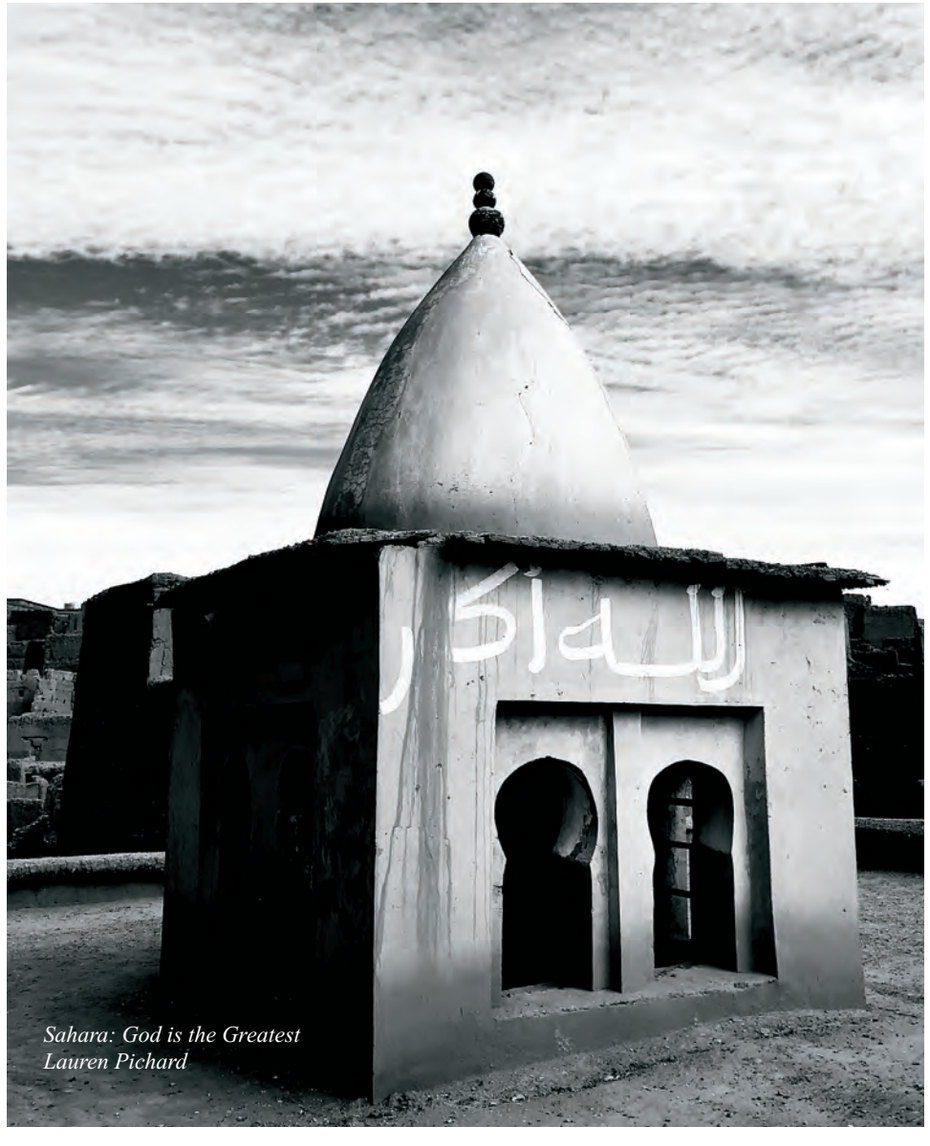


*Sahara: God is the Greatest*
*Lauren Pichard*

# War for Economic Gains: is Colonialism Really a Thing of the Past?

*Lila Khammash*

When thinking about war, perhaps one of the most fascinating aspects is the very reason it ever takes place. The driving forces behind it---the motives that push nations to instigate conflict and forgo peace for a period of violence, aggression, and hostility. Particularly, I find intriguing the reasons that prompt nations to take a break from stability and undertake campaigns of territorial expansion. What creates a positive correlation between *having* more and *wanting* more? What about claiming land makes killing civilians and sacrificing loyal soldiers worthwhile? I have developed the proceeding questions to explore in this paper because of my genuine curiosity surrounding their prospective answers, and because I simply find human attitudes toward warfare and its causes, to put it plainly, laughable. The more I learn about history and the art of war, the more baffled I become by the psychology and justification behind it. How much, I wonder, has the nature of war waged for territorial gains changed over time? Just how different has this kind of warfare been across different cultures and nations? I want to examine these questions because I come from a region that has suffered over and again from imperialism and continues to live through its aftermath till this very day.

**Summary of the Controversy**

Territorial expansion in the context of this paper is defined as the extension of territorial possession through the military aggression of empire-building states and colonialism. When considering the implications of territorial expansion, one must consider its distribution of benefits and damage. The consequences of expansion are usually heavily weighted in favor of the instigator, and against the colonized, such that the advantages are enjoyed almost solely by the former, and the disadvantages suffered by the latter.

The benefits experienced by expansionists, or colonizers, are mostly economic and material in nature and include unlimited access to, and exploitation of, natural and human resources. By consuming these resources at very minimal cost, the instigating forces largely benefit from a growing industry and expanding economy at home, making them all the more competitive in the political and economic arena. Another advantage to consider would be the expansionist's ability to ideologically, culturally, and linguistically influence the targeted nation, creating a market within the colony for goods and services produced by the colonizers at home. Moreover, with territorial expansion comes significant strategic geopolitical gains. By stationing colonies in geographically distant regions, expansionist nations benefit from newfangled alliances with political agents across the globe, and may be able to secure routes to future imperial endeavors.

The damage resulting from territorial expansion, alternatively, is mostly suffered by the targeted nation, and most significantly includes civilian death and displacement. Settlers in the process of colony formation expel thousands of inhabitants from their homes, often meeting any resistance with downright violence and murder. Surely, retrospect plays a vital role in revealing the extremity of this particular drawback. In the process of displacement, many parents hurriedly abandoned their homes, accidentally leaving behind children with whom they never again reunited. Even more, history reveals that the establishment of settlements has often been preceded by massacres and mass demolishment projects that have left behind destitute societies and shrunken, traumatized populations. Add to that the psychological effects of colonization, which run the gamut from feelings of humiliation and defeat owing to the loss of sovereignty. It compounds to a loss of identity resulting from the dilution of culture and religion as colonizers impose their "superior" beliefs onto the colonized. Additionally, one cannot overlook the discrimination, stereotyping, and slavery that often result from imperialism, and that have, time and again, led to the total extinction of ethnic groups.

As much as the consequences of territorial expansion are weighted in favour of one side against the other, colonized populations may at times enjoy some advantages. For example, "developing" nations can largely benefit from the technologies introduced by the imperial power, potentially using them to modernize their economies, improve their agricultural sectors, and build new infrastructures. Furthermore, imperialism often brings into colonized nations newfound access to modern healthcare and education, potentially improving their standard of living and quality of life. Additionally, colonizers living within indigenous societies often end up protecting natives from danger they might have otherwise been exposed to, by building secure and protected settlements for themselves.

With that being said, there are negative consequences that may be experienced by an imperial power. Most significantly, waging war for territorial gains is bound to be very costly, especially if the land was originally colonized for ideological or geographical reasons, and lacked exploitable resources. This issue is exacerbated by potential conflict that may arise from public discontent, in which case settlements may be the target of violence from local inhabitants. Even more, the very responsibility of governing a culturally and ideologically divergent population is surely bound to entail multitudinous problems, especially if a struggle for power arises within the colony between one imperial power and another.

**Analysis of Two Wars: How the Nature of Territorial Expansion has Changed Across Time and Space**

With the implications of territorial expansion being analyzed, this section addresses just how much the nature of this kind of war has changed over time. In a world where liberal democracy has become the new ideal and political correctness the golden standard of norms, the remnants of imperialism are increasingly being regretted and dwelled upon. Countries have recently begun to address native peoples and the transgressions to which colonialism had subjected them. Many people nowadays discuss colonial war as a backward phenomenon to which modern civilization will never return. However, has this kind of war actually gone extinct? Is it really a thing of the past? Or does it still occur today, albeit masked behind sugar-coated puffery and propaganda? In order to answer these questions, I have undertaken the analysis of two wars that have occurred during different time periods, within different regions of the world: the Ottoman-Mamluk War (1516-1517) and the Iraq (or Second Persian Gulf) War (2003-2011). A comparison of these two wars in terms of their causes, nature, and outcomes will reveal just the extent to which territorial expansion has changed over time, and whether or not it has actually been abandoned as a form of warfare.

**Causes: How Was Each of the Wars Justified?**

The Ottoman-Mamluk War was the second major conflict between the Mamluk Sultanate based in Egypt, and the Ottoman Empire based in Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul, Turkey). It led to the demise of the former, and the incorporation into the latter of the Levant, Egypt, and the Hejaz (Winter 490). In very simple terms, the essence of the conflict – which started long before the 16th century – was a struggle for power. The rivalry between the two Muslim Sunni empires was over the hegemony of the Sunni World, which was challenged by the new Shiite Safavid state in Iran, and the Portuguese expansionist aggression in the Indian Ocean and Red Sea (Winter 490). The Ottoman empire was a forceful and dynamic state, devoting all its resources to conquest and expansion. Under Sultan Selim – who was a ferocious and bloodthirsty ruler – Ottoman policy was belligerent and unscrupulous. When Safavid propaganda began attracting adherents in Ottoman Anatolia, Selim violently restored his control over the territory by massacring them. He did not hesitate to continue his campaign of expansion by announcing a conquest against the Mamluk Sultanate, whose sphere of influence encompassed Egypt, Syria, and the Hejaz (Agoston).

Selim, feeling obliged to justify the war against his Sunni Muslim neighbour, used propaganda to accuse the Mamluks of cooperating with the Safavids through an alleged treaty and consolidated his legitimacy by securing a *fatwa*, or religious license, to authorize the war (Agoston). Although it is difficult to historically prove the absence of said treaty, it is important to recognize that the Mamluk Sultan Qanush al-Ghawri was both wary of the Safavids' expansionist intentions and aware of his own weak position given the seditiousness of his army, and so was unlikely to have committed himself to a pro-Safavid, anti-Ottoman stance (Winter 496). Still, Selim proceeded with his conquest, ultimately securing the significant strategic benefits that the Middle East offered.

As consequential as the Ottoman-Mamluk War was for the Middle East, it was only one of many conflicts that broke out within the region. Five centuries following the Ottoman conquest, another Arab state, Iraq, was invaded by a foreign power. The Iraq War was initiated by the United States under President Bush with the intent of, according to the US State Department, removing "a regime that developed and used weapons of mass destruction, that harbored and supported terrorists, and committed outrageous human rights abuses"

(Winning the War). In light of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, president Bush believed the USA – and, indeed the whole world – was increasingly vulnerable to the tyranny of then-Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, and so insisted that a preemptive attack against him would bring peace to the world and act as a form of humanitarian intervention by "rescuing" the Iraqi people through the establishment of democratic institutions (Miller).

As much as the public rationale proposed by the US Department of State was emphasized by the media, there still were many loopholes that suggested a different driving force behind the invasion: Iraqi oil reserves. Having been nationalized and closed to Western oil companies before the war, Iraq's domestic oil industry became significantly privatized and utterly dominated by foreign (predominantly American) firms following the war (Juhasz). What makes this theory more plausible is the fact that the Bush Administration was ultimately found to have exaggerated Iraq's prewar ability, and there seems to have been no significant democratic movements or opposition groups in Iraq that undermined Saddam's legitimacy (Miller). These discrepancies, among others, gravely weakened Bush's public rationale.

Now that both the implicit and explicit causes behind both wars have been addressed, an exhaustive comparison between the two can be drawn. In terms of what has been stated as a public rationale for the war, multiple parallels can be identified between Sultan Selim and President Bush. Both rulers felt the need to justify their decision. Selim, the Sultan of what would soon become an extensive Islamic empire, had to justify himself as a Muslim ruler: according to Islam, war is only permitted in self-defense (Quran 22:39) or in the defense of Muslims who have been oppressed by their own ruler (Quran 22:40). Selim used the first condition to minimize resistance from the majority-Muslim populations he was to conquer. In the same way, Bush, being the president of a democratic superpower, had to defend himself before the global political arena so as not to strain strategic ties with other world leaders. However, despite the surveillance and "democratic world peace" that today's international organizations are ought to maintain, they still could not hinder the Iraq War. Although many of the world's leaders were critical of Bush's plans, the president still proceeded with the war, launching his attack in March 2003 (Iraq War).

It appears that over time, war waged for territorial expansion has not changed much in terms of the propaganda and public statements issued. Both wars involved leaders sugar-coating their economic and strategic aspirations with literature and enemy images that acted upon people's fears and paranoia. However, it is also interesting to note that in both cases, the public rationale centered around ideology; although the "clash of civilizations" theory outlined by Samuel Huntington in the 20th century was forward looking and predicted ideologically-driven warfare in the *future*, it appears that the phenomenon existed long before. Sunni Selim justified his conquest by referencing a potential Shiite takeover of the Mamluk Sultanate, whereas democratic Bush referenced delivering the Iraqi people from tyrannical dictatorship.

In terms of what analysts have reported as implicit drivers of both wars, it seems that not much has changed across time and space either. Territorial expansion is territorial expansion, human greed is human greed, and resources were and always will be scarce, no matter the time, place, or culture. Despite the democratic peace in which the world is believed to exist today, and despite the level of civilization to which humanity is believed to have reached, President Bush did not undertake conquest for any reason "*nobler"* (by modern societal standards) than did Selim. Both rulers acted upon the material economic gains they stood to make from their invasions.

**Methods and Nature: How Was Each of the Wars Fought?**

When it comes to the Ottoman-Mamluk War, it is safe to say that Sultan Selim's victory was predominantly owed to two factors: asymmetric warfare and deception. When the Ottoman and Mamluk armies met north of Aleppo in August 1516, the former not only largely outnumbered the latter, but also outdid them in terms of technique and equipment.While the Ottomans heavily depended on the use of firearms – which the Mamluks had refused to adopt due to psychological and social objections – the ethos of the Mamluk caste was completely based on horsemanship (*furusiyya)* (Winter 498-499). What further weakened Sultan al-Ghawri's force was the treason of several of his bureaucrats, predominant among which was Aleppo governor Khayrbak, who had concluded a secret deal with Selim to withdraw all his troops towards the climax of the battle (498). Bribery and treason



were not the only forms of deception involved in Selim's victory; according to chronicler Ibn Iyas, the Ottoman Sultan allegedly forged his ideological war with the Safavids and faked peace overtures to al-Ghawri just to disguise his plans to destroy the Mamluks and become the regional hegemon (497).

The battle of Marj Dabiq at Aleppo ended very quickly with the defeat of the Mamluks and the surrender of Aleppo and Damascus. The Ottomans followed the fleeing Mamluk army to Egypt, where they landed another crushing victory in 1517, successfully terminating the Mamluk Era and incorporating into Selim's empire the new Ottoman provinces of Aleppo, Damascus, and Egypt (Agosto). The aggressiveness with which Selim's army took control of the conquered lands left little room for resistance. Although some insurgencies erupted throughout the conquest, they were swiftly suppressed and the Ottoman invasion was mostly met with paranoid inhabitants who either surrendered or fled. This was not the case in Iraq.

Like Sultan Selim, President Bush warned Saddam Hussein of the invasion, giving him 48 hours to leave Iraq. Failing to meet the deadline, Saddam triggered the invasion, which began with a series of airstrikes directed against government and military installations, followed by raids into cities staged by the U.S. Army and Marine Corps (Iraq War). Unlike the Mamluks, the Iraqi Army exhibited resistance - albeit very disorganized - and soon enough, they surrendered, leaving all major Iraqi cities under U.S. control (Iraq War). Unlike the native inhabitants during the Ottoman invasion, however, Iraqi rebels carried out continued attacks against occupying troops, soon igniting a full-scale guerilla war within Iraq.

By comparing the nature of both the Ottoman-Mamluk war and the Iraq war, one can clearly identify a methodological change in territorial expansion over time. While both invasions involved conventional warfare i.e. battleground warfare employing weapons and troops, the modernity of the Iraq invasion relative to the Ottoman-Mamluk War made the use of aircrafts and aerial warfare possible. It spared American troops the complications of crossing the Arabian desert and provided them easy access to an otherwise unreachable territory. Had the Mamluk sultanate been as remote from Selim as Iraq was from Bush, the Ottoman conquest would not have been as successful as America's.

Another change that can be noted is the difference in the nature of territorial expansion. While the Ottoman-Mamluk War involved the literal addition of land into Ottoman territory, the Iraq War involved the mere stationing of troops on Iraqi soil. Still, the level of economic and political control was parallel in either case. Iraq did not become a province of an "American Empire", but just as Selim appointed pro-Ottoman governors to rule the Arab provinces, President Bush chose a pro-Western prime minister to succeed Hussein.ust as the Ottomans financially benefited from taxing and confiscating Arab property, so did the USA benefit from reintroducing foreign private firms into Iraq's oil industry (Winter 500; Beauchamp; Juhasz). Both wars were colonial, except one was explicit, the other implicit.

Although the effectiveness of today's international liberal order has been implicitly questioned throughout this paper, it may well have contributed to the observed difference in civilian response between the Ottoman and American invasions. The sovereignty enjoyed by most states around the world today compelled Iraqi citizens to resist foreign intervention in their national and political affairs. These sentiments of nationalism and civilian self-respect were not as strongly felt five centuries ago, when international courts of justice did not exist, imperialism was a common phenomenon, and the declaration of human rights had not yet come to be. It is also worth mentioning that when Selim conquered the Levant, power transferred from Turkic Mamluks to Turkic Ottomans, two foreign powers. However, when Bush invaded Iraq, power was transferred from an Arab, patriotic Saddam, to a foreign, Islamophobic Bush, and that is what triggered a more aggressive civilian response from the Iraqi people.

**Outcomes: Who Benefitted? Who Suffered? Were the Consequences Equitable?**

It has been previously mentioned that the distribution of benefits and damage is usually heavily weighted in favor of the instigator and against the colonized. In this final section, the extent to which this statement is true will be examined.

The Ottoman conquest of the Levant and Egypt had significant strategic consequences. It enlarged the Ottoman Empire's expanse by more than 200,000 square meters, and with that came substantial gains: ample revenues from Egypt and Syria, a strengthened navy through the protection of maritime communication lanes

between Istanbul and Cairo, access to African territories through Egypt, and religious legitimacy through a monopoly over the annual Muslim pilgrimage in Arabia (Agosto). The conquest of the Arab Lands made the Ottoman Empire the chief representative of Sunni Islam on Earth, and while it came with some disadvantages, including future power struggles over the territory, the short-term consequences were largely, if not completely, in favor of the Ottomans. This was largely attributable to the aggressiveness with which the conquest took place. Damage inflicted upon the Arabs included massacres of ethnic and racial minorities, invasion and confiscation of private houses, and, most importantly, long-term underdevelopment due to a ban by Selim on the printing press, which made the Ottoman period the least developed among all fields of Islamic history (Jafar; Hess 56).

While the consequences of conquest were heavily weighted in favour of the Ottomans, that was not necessarily the case for the Americans. President Bush declared an end to major combat on May 1, 2003, yet the repercussions of the war continued devastating Iraq long afterwards. Following the collapse of the Iraqi regime, law and order dissolved.Among other damages, sectarian civil war ignited, a refugee crisis arose, and the civilian population suffered both violent and indirect deaths (Iraq War). Even more, radical Islam – one of the war's alleged drivers – reemerged following the systematic marginalization of Iraq's Sunni community under Nouri Al-Maliki, the Shiite prime minister appointed by President Bush (Cleveland 528).

While the USA enjoyed ridding itself of Saddam Hussein – who had previously blocked the entry of American companies into the Iraqi oil industry - threatened the USA's strategic interests in the Middle East by opposing Israel and striving for regional hegemony, and allegedly developed Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs). There were far more ramifications than had been anticipated (Juhasz). President Bush invaded a country whose economy and infrastructure had been devastated by two previous wars, making his "restoration" efforts all the harder to achieve. The USA's public image was tarnished as it slowly became clear that the justifications Bush had stated for the war were largely exaggerated (Trotta). Add to that the casualties and trauma suffered among American troops due to anti-occupation guerilla warfare, and it can be concluded that although the damage was more severely felt by Iraq than the USA, Americans definitely suffered greater consequences than the Ottomans from territorial expansion.

Conclusion

When I ponder the benefits and drawbacks of territorial expansion, I cannot help but be conflicted myself. A huge divide exists within me between reason and emotion, realism and idealism. Looking at the phenomenon as a Palestinian, I cannot help but feel anger and resentment towards those nations that abused my ancestors' most basic human rights, and denied my generation access to the resources they ought to have thrived on today. Judging from my viewpoint as a hardcore realist and cynic, on the other hand, I find myself justifying the strategy as a product of human nature and greed, as a tool for the survival of the fittest. The Earth has been given to living things – including ourselves – undivided, with no territorial borders or indications of what belongs to who. I believe planet Earth can be likened to a cut of meat haphazardly thrown to a hungry herd of dogs, each fighting for the largest piece they can get. As such, I do not see how it can be considered unnatural for nations to undertake territorial expansion and forge wars to gain from global resources. Are humans not ultimately rational beings seeking to maximize their power and prosperity? As such, why not undertake territorial expansion?

In studying the Ottoman-Mamluk War and the Iraq War – both forms of territorial expansion in their own respect – it is striking to examine how this kind of warfare has changed across time and space. As much as we humans love to believe that we have grown developed and civilized enough to leave certain modes of behavior behind, it has become clear to me that greed is not one of them. We genuinely believe that we have reached a level of advancement that makes us no longer prompted to sacrifice the lives and rights of others for our own prosperity. What we do not realize, however, is that in modern times, battles like the "war on terror" in Iraq are not too different from expansionist Ottoman campaigns. The reason why we think they are is due to media, propaganda, and our own delusion and pride. Wars forged for economic gains have not changed much, and although I am aware that "benefits" and "drawbacks" are highly subjective terms, I still believe that the consequences of such wars are heavily in favor, and always will be in favor of the instigators.



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*Old Mosque, Morocco*
*Lauren Pichard*

# Employee of the Month: How AI Increases Inequality in the Workplace and the World

*Sarah Lind-MacMillan, Celia McDonald, Mary-Claire Spurgin, and Mikah Bertelmann*

**Mo Tech, Mo Problems**

*How the Rise of Artificial Intelligence Creates More Problems in the International Economy*

Take out your iPhone from your pocket. Then ask, "Hey Siri! What's AI?" What does Siri say? Siri might not tell you this, but to many around the world, "artificial intelligence" sounds like a concept from a sci-fi movie – or more darkly, perhaps, from an Orwellian novel. Yet artificial intelligence (AI)-based technologies – those devices which are designed to imitate human intelligence and perform tasks that usually require it – are very real. Indeed, these innovations are poised to transform how people live their lives, how businesses produce and sell their goods, and how countries conduct their affairs, from diplomacy to war. AI presents changes that will have great promise for the world, but also pose a great risk if left unregulated. Specifically, on its current path, AI will greatly exacerbate global inequality by primarily benefiting developed countries and wealthy firms at the expense of their emerging counterparts.

**Robots on the Rise**

While the use of artificial intelligence has been on the rise over the last few decades, it is still in its technological infancy. Companies that rely heavily on AI, like Amazon, are currently in the minority, but they will soon start to become the norm as AI-based technology becomes more developed, widespread, and inexpensive.

A Troubling Path

Artificial intelligence in and of itself is not bad – it has the potential to increase both economic efficiency and the general standard of living in many ways – but currently, it is on track to widen the global distribution of income. Technologies using AI increase inequality by putting the workers at the bottom of the distribution out of work and increasing the salaries of the few head executives.. Proactive policy solutions on an international level are needed to deal with AI now, not once it has already transformed the world, enriching the few while leaving the very, very many behind. Those who stand to benefit the most are the countries and firms that adopt AI-based technologies first – those who already have the resources necessary to implement them – as AI has a distinct first-mover advantage. This means that, without immediate and dramatic international policy coordination, the global adoption of AI will primarily entrench the wealth and power of those who already have much of it. With AI on a path to turn society as we know it on its head, in the (not so distant) future - in the background, Siri might say, "Hey, human! What happened to humanity?"

**Dreams of Digital Democratization Derailed**

In the coming decades, AI will revolutionize our way of life; but not everything will be self-driving cars and chess playing robots. In reality, AI's biggest contribution will be towards inequality, and it has the potential to completely restructure how our societies and economies are composed. If we don't take strides to implement regulations now, the results could be disastrous, from financial market crashes to social upheaval.

Technology was intended to be the great equalizer, raising standards of living and allowing for greater social mobility. For instance, the Second Industrial Revolution's shift towards mass production and electrification created new jobs, compressed wages, and made goods more widely available. The mechanization of the workplace meant the end of many dangerous and physically demanding jobs. This period also saw an increase in wages as capital became tied up with machines and the skills needed to operate them became increasingly valuable. Crucially, these skilled jobs did not require high levels of education or training, and were thus widely accessible.

The tech boom, on the other hand, has corresponded with an immense increase in inequality. The gains of tech have been concentrated within a small subsection of society, rather than being equally distributed throughout. Thus, both within countries and internationally, inequality has flourished. This stems partly from the fact that salaries for a small range of highly specialized jobs have increased exponentially, while overall economic productivity has slowed. If AI is allowed to develop in a similar fashion to the tech boom, wealth disparity will only worsen.



**The Code May Be Binary, Its Applications are Anything But**

In the past, automation involved programming a machine to follow a set of instructions. However, with the development of AI and deep learning machines, we can now program computers to learn from experience and data. Additionally, AI is a general purpose technology with a vast range of applications. These two components of AI make many jobs susceptible to computerization, and a shockingly large segment of our society will soon be vulnerable to job displacement.

So what jobs might AI eliminate in the near future? Analysts, bartenders, and cabbies, oh my! Any number of routinized, single-task jobs are at risk, while jobs based on creativity, interpersonal relationships, and complex tasks will most likely be safe. According to Carl Benedikt Frey in his book The Technology Trap, 47% of American jobs are susceptible to automation.[1] As a result, labor market prospects for unskilled and even some skilled workers will continue to deteriorate, resulting in strong downward pressure on the wages of both the middle and lower classes.

Let's take a look at how AI automation might play out. The largest occupation in 29 US states is truck driving; 94% of truckers are male, with an average age of 49, a high school education, and a median income of $41,340.[2] Autonomous driving has made huge progress in the last decade and in December 2019, the company Plus.ai completed an autonomous coast-to-coast drive across the US.[3] Now imagine a truck driver who spends three decades driving for Walmart, earning $87,500 annually.[4] This salary is 64% higher than the national average for truckers. Walmart–taking advantage of their own slogan: save money, live better–decides that a fleet of AI-powered trucks might save a decent chunk of change. But don't worry, AI is going to create plenty of new jobs for all the ones it replaces, right? Our 49-year-old truck driver with a high school education will simply get a job in Silicon Valley developing software. Or more realistically, he might become a janitor or groundskeeper (both jobs complex enough to avoid immediate automation) and earn a salary closer to $25,510, decreasing his pay by two-thirds.[5]

While many will suffer decreased wages and unemployment, at the other end of the spectrum,business is expected to boom. Individuals and companies in the tech industry have already seen huge gains in wages and profits, which will only increase as AI lowers the costs of production and begins to monopolize consumer markets. Thus, in our "winner-takes-all" economy, the implementation of AI technologies will undoubtedly result in a field of haves and have-nots. Tech giants like Amazon, Apple, and Google have already taken advantage of lax regulations to acquire startups and rivals, stifling competition and creating the real potential for uneven gains in the AI field.

Because of the first-mover advantage, AI will benefit those that readily adopt it and have the resources to support the massive consumption of data and electricity that deep learning machines require. As a result, wealth and power will accumulate with the big tech companies, their employees, and their investors. Huge concentrations of wealth will arise due to skyrocketing salaries and the displacement of labor by capital. This process has already begun as growth and productivity continue to increase without a similar increase in wages for the median laborer.

**Who Gets the Bigger Byte? How AI Contributes to Global Inequality**

It's clear that many divergent factors exist within states in regards to wealth inequality, but what about the international trend toward convergence? For decades, developing states have used their comparative advantage in low-cost manufacturing to spur growth and catch up to industrialized states. However, these countries rely on the exact industries that are most threatened by automation due to their reliance on repetitive manual work. The International Labor Organization

1 Frey, Carl Benedikt. The Technology Trap: Capital, Labor, and Power in the Age of Automation. Princeton University Press, 2019.

2 Ibid.

3 https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-50742080

4 https://www.truckdriverssalary.com/walmart-trucking-pay-scale/

5 Frey, Carl Benedikt. The Technology Trap: Capital, Labor, and Power in the Age of Automation. Princeton University Press, 2019.

estimates that 56% of employment in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam is at risk of being automated, with textile and footwear manufacturing jobs among the hardest hit.[6] As factories in the developing world are replaced by AI-powered facilities, they will lose their current paths to growth.

Many economists dismiss the issue of automation, arguing that technological breakthroughs will contribute to global economic growth, benefiting everyone. However, if current trends continue, regional gains from AI will be concentrated in China and North America, which will catch 70% of AI's global economic impact.[7] Developing countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia will experience less than 6% of the gains.[8] One reason for this is that developed countries with slowing growth and high wages are inclined to invest in AI and integrate it into their economies. Alternatively, many developing countries lack the infrastructure, investment capacity, and incentives to adopt AI. As a result, the profits from AI will be concentrated within a handful of developed countries, exacerbating the digital divide.

**Digital Revolution Meets Populist Revolution**

Inter- and intra-country inequalities are sure to sow instability that threatens the international political economy. Many Western states have seen a populist backlash as an increasing economic divide has resulted in people feeling left behind. In France, the far-right populist party The National Front and presidential candidate Marine le Pen gained considerable support in the 2017 election. While le Pen ultimately lost to Emmanuel Macron, she performed strongly in areas with high unemployment and low wages where she pledged to halt immigration, playing on fears of economic insecurity. Moreover, in a 2015 Eurobarometer survey, 75% of French citizens agreed with the statement "robots steal peoples' jobs."[9] This fear of automation and job loss has translated to societal unease, and as populist politicians play on peoples' fears, they will continue to divide the electorate. Thus, if AI-led growth cannot benefit everyone, the likelihood of social upheaval will intensify as the general population is pitted against technological elites.

Indeed, AI will increase productivity and has the potential to lead to economic growth with the PwC estimating an increase to global GDP of $15.7 trillion by 2030[10]. In theory, everyone could benefit due to the vast amount of data and knowledge that can be shared. In practice, however, new regulations and policies are needed to ensure that the gains from AI are enjoyed by the many, not just the few.

**With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility**

If we allow AI to expand without the tools to control it, we will see its disastrous impacts. The increased pressure put on the middle class by the next wave of artificial intelligence will force governments to be proactive in the policies and programs they implement. Both the United States and the European Union face a dwindling middle class and threats of rising domestic inequality between those at the forefront of AI and those left behind. To put an end to economic inequality, countries must work to strengthen the social safety net through education and financial policies.

Education has always played an important role in improving one's economic status. The McKinsey Global Institute estimates that less than 10,000 people have the skills necessary for the new AI jobs in construction of deep neural networks[11]. Now, more than ever, education can be used to help people remain competitive with AI automation in the workforce. Those without college degrees are at a higher risk of losing their jobs to automation. It is unrealistic to assume that someone who is mid-career in a low or mid-wage job has the time and resources to commit to pursuing a degree to make themselves qualified for a job in the AI field. With this in mind, governments should implement fast-track education and training programs that can teach people skills in a few months rather than years. The United States, along with other nations, can take advantage of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), which allow people to update their skills at their own speed through online courses. Governments should also provide training grants to help workers finance their education and lower their risk of unemployment. Education has the power to change lives and is crucial to the livelihoods of millions of people in the United States and around the world.

Financially, governments should consider wage insurance and tax credits to improve the social safety net and protect workers from automation. As people are displaced by automation, they will be forced to move to a lower salaried job or become unemployed. Wage insurance reduces the amount of people negatively impacted by automation as it compensates the workers that have to take on lower salaried jobs. The United States' federal Trade Adjustment Assistance program includes wage insurance for workers who are over fifty years of age and make less than $50,000 each year. In order to make wage insurance more helpful in America, the Trade Adjustment Assistance programs should be adjusted to encompass everyone displaced by automation. Other nations can look to the United States"s Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) as another method of protecting workers displaced by automation. Governments have a responsibility to serve their citizens and protect their well-being. Without programs like these, people will struggle to make ends meet as they are stripped of their jobs and forced to navigate the new, complicated technological workforce without any support. Financial programs have the ability to reduce economic inequality as they ensure that those displaced by AI do not fall further and further behind.

If governments do not act now to implement meaningful policy changes that protect workers, communities will feel the detrimental impact of automation as millions find themselves without an income and unable to support their families. Without a proactive response, a restaurant host in Denver or the secretary who greets you in the morning will suddenly be jobless. While this may sound like an episode of "Black Mirror," lack of action may cause it to quickly become your reality.

6 https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---act_emp/documents/publication/wcms_579554.pdf

7 Chainey, Ross. "The global economy will be $16 trillion bigger by 2030 thanks to AI." World Economic Forum, June 27, 2017.

8 Ibid.

9 https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/ebs/ebs_427_en.pdf

10 Sizing the Prize: What's the Real Value of AI for Your Business and How Can You Capitalise? PwC Report 2018.

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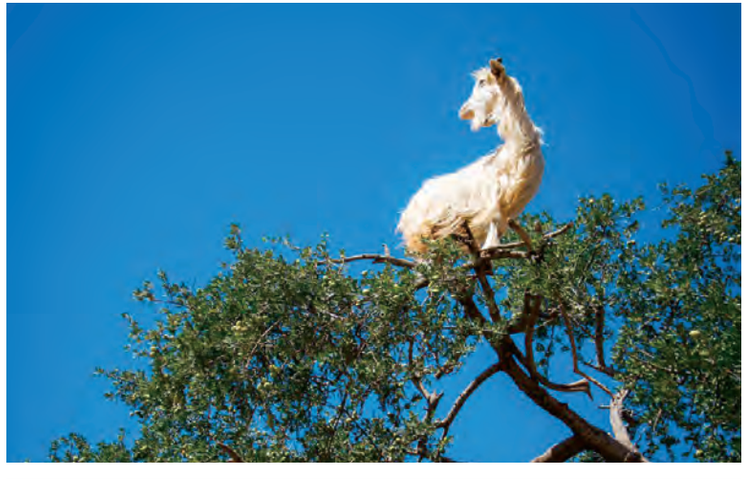

*Sahara*
*Max Krien*



# The Uighur Population in China: Policy Solutions to Combat the Ethnic Cleansing

*Maddie Thomas*

This paper will explore the most viable policy solutions for combating the ethnic cleansing of the Uighur and other Turkic minority populations taking place in China. This issue is incredibly important because in the name of "combating terrorism," over one million Muslims have been forcibly detained and placed into "re-education" centers in the Xiajiang region of China since 2017 (Bertelsmann Stiftung et al. 2020, 17). There have been media accounts of mass surveillance, forced labor, sterilization, political indoctrination, and compulsory religious conversion (Finnegan 2020). Mike Pompeo, US Secretary of State, passionately declared that Beijing's practices "demonstrate an utter disregard for the sanctity of human life and basic human dignity" (Tharoor 2020). Joanne Smith Finley, a specialist in Chinese studies at Newcastle University proclaimed, "It's genocide, full stop. It's not immediate, shocking, mass-killing on the spot type genocide, but it's slow, painful, creeping genocide" (Tharoor 2020). Four policy options will be discussed in this paper: Stick to the status quo, multilaterize targeted sanctions against the Chinese government, hold corporations accountable, and outward condemnation from countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on grounds of religious persecution. The paper will conclude that the best option to address the atrocities in China is to pursue a joint policy of government and nongovernment action targeting Chinese economic interests. This can be done by implementing multilateral targeted sanctions against the Chinese government, and by holding corporations accountable through import bans on goods from Xinjiang and NGO and ordinary citizen-led pressure campaigns against corporations soliciting forced labor in Xinjiang.

## Background

Reports began to surface in 2017 that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), led by President Xi Jinping, was carrying out vicious human rights abuses against Muslim ethnic minorities in the Northwest region of Xinjiang, which is home to some 13 million Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and other Turkic minorities (Maizland 2020). Beijing has been accused of utilizing mass surveillance technology in order to detain cultural, ethnic, and religious minorities, forcing them into state-run concentration camps. These minority populations, largely occupying the northwest region of Xinjiang, have been labeled by the Communist Party as potential terrorist threats. Under the guise of combating "religious extremism," Chinese authorities have been actively remoulding the Muslim population in the image of China's Han ethnic majority (Xiuzhong Xu et al. 2020, 4). Using the camps as their grounds for repression, the CCP has embarked on a massive program of "indoctrination and political-ideological re-education programs, aimed heavily at curtailing religious practice and bringing [the Uighurs] under the party-state's discipline," (Greitens et al. 2020, 17-18). In order to combat international scrutiny for the clear human rights abuses, the Chinese government has also mounted a propaganda campaign, calling their internment facilities Vocational Skills Education Training Centers (Zenz 2019) and resisting calls for transparency. It is clear not only that the Chinese government is guilty of cultural and ethnic cleansing of the Uighurs, but also that despite efforts to brand the internment facilities as re-eduaction opportunities that will contribute to a China free of terrorism, they are in practice being used as a way in which to create a mono-ethnic, mono-cultural, mono-lingual, and mono-religious China, which will pave the way for the Communist Party to maintain their grip on power without ideological opposition. This goal is clear in much of the curriculum in detention facilities. The facilities employ "patriotic education aimed at instilling ethnic unity and nationalist loyalty to the CCP, accomplished by replacing Uyghur language with Mandarin Chinese and substituting secular cultural habits for Muslim religious practice" (Greitens et al. 2020, 18). Along with forced re-education, China has also been employing systems of forced labor, sending groups of detainees to work in Chinese factories across the country (Xiuzhong Xu et al. 2020, 3). Most striking however, has been clear evidence that has surfaced of forced sterilization as a way to slow the birth rates

of minority populations and permanently alter regional demographics (Van Schaack 2020). If this issue is not addressed quickly and effectively, the Chinese government will be empowered to continue their programs of cultural and ethnic cleansing, targeting minority Muslims, leading to lasting suffering of a vulnerable population and the reality of a Chinese Communist Party further equipped to commit human rights abuses with impunity.

**Policy Options**

**Option #1: Stick to the Status Quo**

The first prospective solution for combatting the ethnic cleansing in China is for the international community to simply "stick to the status quo." As of today, there have been two notable actions taken to address the issue. The first policy was enacted unilaterally by the United States in July of 2020, in the form of targeted sanctions on top officials in the Chinese Communist Party (Verma, Wong 2020). The initial targets included Chen Quanguo, a Politburo party secretary of the Xinjiang region; Zhu Hailun, a former deputy party secretary for the region; Wang Mingshan, director of the Xinjiang Public Security Bureau; and Huo Liujun, a former party secretary of the bureau; along with the bureau itself (Verma, Wong 2020). The sanctions were first put in place after The UIGHUR Act of 2019 passed the US Senate with bipartisan support. The bill details that the President shall "report to Congress a list of senior Chinese government officials who are engaged in or responsible for serious human rights abuses, including mass incarceration and political indoctrination, against Turkic Muslims in China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and then shall proceed by imposing visa- and property-blocking sanctions on such individuals" (Rubio et al., 2019).

The bill also seeks to identify key technologies and goods that enable China to suppress human rights and subsequently subject such items to export controls. As defined by the bill, items classified as enabling China to commit atrocities against their minority population have the ability to: "conduct surveillance, monitor and restrict an individual's movement, monitor and restrict access to the internet, and identify individuals through facial or voice recognition" (Rubio et al., 2019). The second major action taken to combat the Uighur Genocide was a formal call on China to stop their human rights abuses, in the form of a letter to the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights, signed by 39 countries in October (Besheer 2020). The letter demanded that China "uphold its national and international obligations and commitments to respect human rights," as well as "provide access to Xinjiang for international monitors" (Delmi et al., 2019).

*Strengths*

The strength of the status quo approach lay largely in the strategy behind US targeted sanctions and export controls. As Kenneth Roth from Human Rights Watch (2020, 6) asserts, "Unaccountable governments [China] tend to put their own interests above their people's. They prioritize their power, their families, and their cronies". In this understanding, directly targeting the economic interests and potential prosperity of top Chinese officials is a good starting point for influencing policy change. Export controls on goods enabling China to suppress human rights also stand to make development and use of such technology more expensive. In regard to the UNstatement of condemnation signed by 39 countries, the action does signal a "ready pool of partners to organize a multilateral response" (Van Schaack 2020). In this case, the condemnation itself lacks 'teeth', but the threat of such international pressure morphing into a tangible multilateral response holds potential to make China reassess their actions.

*Weaknesses*

The most glaringly obvious weakness in sticking to the status quo is that Muslim Uighurs are still being persecuted, meaning that the status quo alone has not been sufficient in stopping the ethnic cleansing. This failure can be accredited to the fact that targeted sanctions and export controls have only been implemented unilaterally, by the United States, which has lowered their overall capacity for impact. In a global economy, unilateral sanctions tend to impose greater costs on [the sender] than on the target, which can usually find substitute sources of supply and financing (Haas, 1998). So long as the sanctions and export controls remain unilateral, China will be able to evade economic pressure by turning to countries other than the US to fill their needs. Additionally, the call on China to "uphold its national and international obligations and commitments to respect human rights" is largely incapable of influencing Chinese Policy if there is no clear intention to act past verbal condemnation if their behavior continues. Some evidence even suggests that not only do governmental human rights dialogues achieve little—as China uses them as "diplomatic deflection devices", but public "naming and shaming" tends to make Chinese authorities even more resistant to releasing prisoners and upholding the country's international UN human rights commitments (Bertelsmann Stiftung et al. 2020, 26).



**Option #2: Multilateral targeted sanctions against the Chinese government**

The second policy solution builds off of the standing US sanctions, but would consist of a significant number of western, and western allied, countries pursuing similar sanctions and export controls multilaterally. Such a policy would involve US allies all implementing their own version of a Global Magnitsky Act, which "allows the executive branch to impose visa bans and targeted sanctions on individuals anywhere in the world responsible for committing human rights violations or acts of significant corruption" (Human Rights Watch 2017).

*Strengths*

This policy approach has the same strengths as previously noted regarding US targeted sanctions and export controls already employed under the UIGHUR Act of 2019. This policy also provides a solution to the issue concerning diminished impact of unilateral sanctions. To reiterate, economic disincentives have the greatest potential to influence Chinese policy, especially when targeted at top officials. When pursued multilaterally, the impact of sanctions is greatly expanded. In a letter addressed to Minister Champagne, Secretary Mnuchin, Secretary Pompeo, and Foreign Secretary Raab, 71 Human Rights Organizations wrote, "We encourage your governments to prioritize multilateralization of targeted human rights and anti-corruption sanctions, which among other benefits will have the manifest impact of expanding the reach of travel restrictions and asset freezes. This, in turn, will increase the costs for each sanctioned individual and entity to continue committing human rights abuses or acts of corruption, in the Uyghur Region or elsewhere, and serve as a more effective deterrent." (Justice for All et al. 2020)

Two other key strengths of this policy relate to feasibility and existing infrastructure. First, The US has already provided a model for action through the UIGHUR Act of 2019 and more broadly the Global Magnitsky Act of 2012. Additionally, the UK recently implemented its own version of Magnitsky, called 'Global Human Rights' which may pave the way for other EU states to follow suit (Van Schaack 2020). Second, key targets for the coordination effort have already shown their willingness to act, through signing the letter condemning China's human rights abuses. This ready abailibility of a group of states all committed to stoping the Uighur genocide may speed up the process of pursuing coordination.

*Weaknesses*

This policy is not plagued by any overwhelmingly blatant weaknesses. However, one could argue that it could invoke intense backlash from the Chinese government. So far, this has only materialized in the form of counter-sanctions on 11 US citizens, including GOP Senators Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio, and Executive Director of Human Rights Watch, Kenneth Roth (Al-Arshani 2020). All three men had also been outspoken about government suppression of Hong-Kong protestors. There is absolutely potential for multilateral sanctions and export controls to spark political backlash, but in this instance those concerns do not outweigh the potential for positive impact that such a policy has.

**Option #3: Hold Corporations Accountable**

The next policy solution entails holding corporations accountable for the role they play in enabling the Chinese government to continue their human rights abuses, specifically by taking advantage of forced labor practices. This approach can take place on two levels: First, the US and its allies must pursue a multilateral commitment to place import bans on products produced in Xinjiang. Second, NGO's, Labor Groups, and consumers should mount a massive pressure campaign demanding that large corporations commit to cutting all ties with suppliers in Xinjiang. Jasmine O'Connor, CEO of Anti-Slavery International declared, "Now is the time for

real action from brands, governments and international bodies – not empty declarations. To end the slavery and horrific abuses of Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other Turkic Muslim peoples by the Chinese government, brands must ensure their supply chains are not linked to the atrocities against these people" (End Uyghur Forced Labour 2020).

*Strengths*

Like multilateral sanctions, efforts taken to hold corporations accountable stand to have a measurable impact on the economic benefits enjoyed by those upholding systems of forced labor. In this instance, these entities would be both corporations and CCP leaders benefitting from the massive profit margins accompanying the use of forced Uighur labor in state-owned factories. It is reported that Uighurs are working in factories whose supply chains are implicated with at least 82 well-known global brands in the technology, clothing and automotive sectors (Xiuzhong Xu 2020, 3). If NGO's, labor groups, and consumers can be successful in demanding that such companies cut all ties with suppliers in Xinjiang, those suppliers stand to lose an incredible amount of business if they refuse to stop using forced Uighur labor. The more companies that organizations and people are able to influence, and the more widespread the pressure campaigns are, the greater the reality that manufacturers in Xinjiang will have to choose between stopping forced labor practices or hemorrhaging profits. If worldwide pressure campaigns targeted at companies implicated in coercive labor networks are coupled with import bans on goods manufactured in Xinjiang, the possible positive impact is even greater. This is especially true if the cooperating countries are some of the world's largest importers. Given that the US, Germany, Japan, the UK, and France are five of the leading importers in the world (Statista 2019), and all 5 have condemned China for human rights abuses against Muslim minorities (Delmi et al., 2019), the potential for import bans to have a measurable effect on Chinese exports is high.

*Weaknesses*

The most concerning weakness surrounding this policy option is that for import bans and pressure campaigns to actually inflict the level of economic duress necessary to influence Chinese policy, they would both have to happen on quite a large scale (Xiuzhong Xu 2020). While this does not make the policy infeasible, it does mean that international cooperation will be vital to its success. This policy also holds the greatest potential for producing negative externalities for the countries implementing the measures. For example, the US Customs and

Border Protection recently proposed sweeping restrictions on imported products made with cotton and fabric from Xinjiang, but officials from the Agriculture Department, the Treasury Department and the US Trade Representative all objected on the grounds that such a measure could "threaten American cotton exports to China," if China was to retaliate (Swanson 2020). Additionally, successfully influencing companies to "make new public commitments, uphold current commitments, or both, to not use forced and coerced labour in their global supply chains," (Xiuzhong Xu 2020, 30) stand to make imported goods more expensive, which may have a negative impact on public opinion in affected countries.

**Option #4: Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) condemnation**

The final policy solution this paper will consider is urging powerful Muslim countries, and specifically the OIC, to condemn China's actions against the Uighur Muslim populations as a glaring act of religious persecution against followers of Islam.

*Strengths*

The greatest strength that the proposed solution offers is the potential power of Islamic solidarity. Such power was demonstrated in previous years when Myanmar embarked on a campaign of ethnic cleansing targeted at Rohingya Muslims and the OIC spoke out forcefully and mobilized to exert pressure on the government in Naypyidaw (Radio Free Asia 2018). An OIC declaration in 2018 urged member states to "stay engaged in U.N. efforts to address alleged rights violations" (Radio Free Asia 2018). OIC member states also set up an ad hoc ministerial committee to examine allegations of rights violations against the Rohingya population (Radio Free Asia 2018). While these actions alone did not stop the ethnic cleansing in Myanmar, they did give a greater voice to those



suffering on account of their religious beliefs, and the OIC dedication to protecting minority Muslims from genocide further legitimized an international response to the atrocities. Ideally, if the Organization of Islamic Cooperation was more outspoken in defense of the Uyghurs—and of the precious principle of religious freedom, not only would the condemnation of China's anti-Muslim policies be amplified and the coalition of states engaged on the issue grow (Van Schaack 2020), but China would effectively lose any ability they have to run successful propaganda campaigns. From a sheer numerical perspective, the OIC has 57 members, few of whom signed the initial UN letter condemning China's actions in Xinjiang (Delmi et al., 2019). If OIC governments band together with the governments who have already condemned China's flouting of human rights, the power balance shifts (Roth 2020, 16), and China stands to lose its ability to continue conducting attacks on the international human rights system from within international forums (Roth 2020, 7).

*Weaknesses*

This option shares one glaring and important weakness with the status quo approach. That is, authoritarian regimes are not primarily influenced by international opinion to the extent that democratic governments are. This means that formal condemnation from other countries, even if they have a Muslim majority, stands to have little impact on the behavior of the Chinese government without any kind of enforcement mechanism or loss of economic privileges. This weakness aside, this also is admittedly the least feasible solution in today's world, given the previous actions of powerful Muslim countries in regard to the Uighur situation. As mentioned in the discussion of the status quo policy, there has been a formal statement of condemnation released through the UN and sponsored by many western countries. However, in reaction to the Group of 39 action, 37 countries, recruited by Beijing, formally endorsed the Chinese government in a letter to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights writing, "Faced with the grave challenge of terrorism and extremism, China has undertaken a series of counter-terrorism and deradicalization measures in Xinjiang, including setting up vocational education and training centers. Now safety and security has returned to Xinjiang and the fundamental human rights of people of all ethnic groups there are safeguarded."

Signatories of this counter-resolution included a handful of Muslim-majority governments, most notably Egypt, Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia (Washington Post 2019). So, unless the signatories of the letter equating China's concentration camps to "vocational education and training centers" have a sudden change of heart, there is not a good chance that influential Muslim countries will take any meaningful steps through the OIC to protect the religious freedom of fellow Muslims within China. It is also important to consider that a vast majority of signatories to this letter are actively benefiting from China's Belt and Road Initiative (Green BRI, 2020). This means that outwardly condemning Chinese human rights abuses would run the risk of a loss of economic privileges for underdeveloped countries relying upon continued funding from China for infrastructure projects. This was not a consideration that had to be made in the case of condemning genocide in Myanmar. This massive disincentive for speaking out against China is almost solely applicable to weaker and poorer countries, who are incredibly vulnerable to any retaliatory action by China. As a 2020 Human Rights Watch report claims, "rather than really being "no strings," BRI loans effectively impose a separate set of political conditions requiring support for China's anti-rights agenda." Furthermore, despite concerns over feasibility, if Muslim solidarity is largely superficial, manifesting only as verbal condemnation of religious discrimination against the Uighurs, the problem circles back to policy lacking enforcement mechanisms, which is largely ineffective in influencing the behavior of authoritarian regimes.

**Policy Recommendation**

Upon considering the merits and drawbacks of four potential policy options for addressing the ethnic and cultural cleansing of the Uighur population in the Xinjiang region of China, it can be concluded that the best policy option is a combination of policies 2 and 3: Multilateral targeted sanctions against the Chinese government and holding corporations accountable. As the two prospective solutions are not mutually exclusive and the responsibility for seeing said options come to fruition lies in part within two separate bodies, world governments and

civilian populations respectively, the two policies can be carried out simultaneously. They are also both feasible in today's world. If enough powerful countries agree to implement multilateral targeted sanctions against Chinese government officials coupled with export restrictions mirroring those already in place by the US, the mounting economic pressure placed on decision-making figures in the Communist Party may be enough to bring about policy change. While such sanctions are put in place by governments, non-governmental organizations and consumers can embark on missions to raise public awareness about the connection between large corporations sourcing labor from China and the human rights abuses against Uighurs. They can then demand through social pressure and threats of boycotts, that corporations make commitments to upholding standards that prevent forced labor and urge them to cut ties with any partners that are complicit in the forced labor of Uighur populations. If successful on a large scale, the Chinese government may be convinced to stop their forced labor practices or face huge threats of profit loss if large corporations seek new countries to source labor from. To hold corporations accountable to their fullest extent, pressure campaigns must also be coupled with multilateral government-backed import restrictions on goods exported from Xinjiang. The solutions presented stand to make a measurable economic impact, which is absolutely vital when trying to influence the behavior of China. In other words, successful policy solutions must "squeeze China where it is most susceptible to pressure: its economic bottom line" (Van Schaack 2020). While verbal condemnation from countries and organizations of the world is admirable, China is not beholden to global public opinion or international agreements. For instance, China has technically ratified the Convention Against Torture and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and yet their actions in Xinjiang are clear violations of these international treaties (Cohen 2018). With this understanding, any policy that lacks enforcement mechanisms is ineffective, especially when it comes to China. This discredits policy solution number 4 as well as the UN resolution portion of the status quo option. So while this paper does not discourage international condemnation of Chinese human rights abuses, it asserts that policy solutions that will have a measurable economic impact on Chinese officials and businesses (such as options 2 and 3), will be the most effective in forcing the Chinese government to stop the ethnic cleansing of Muslim minority populations.

**Conclusion**

The world stands at a crossroads. "The free world must wake up" as Rushan Abbas (2020, 16) writes. Muslim Uighurs continue to be forced from their homes, sent to concentration camps, re-educated, propagandized, physically abused, and forced into modern day slavery. The Chinese Communist Party has been able to commit these glaring human rights abuses with impunity for years. Empty words calling upon China to stop their ethnic cleansing, or scattered instances of unilateral action are simply not enough to stop the atrocities taking place in Xinjiang. The countries of the world committed to the sanctity of human life, the principle of religious freedom, and the goal of preventing ethnic violence against any population, absolutely must take action by pursuing multilateral sanctions on Chinese officials responsible for the current situation. Concurrently, consumers and NGOs committed to the same principles must put pressure on corporations to be more transparent about their supply chains, ensuring that preventative measures are in place to ensure that forced labour, especially of Uighur populations, is not solicited. The US and its partners must also facilitate and support these efforts by committing to placing import bans on goods coming from the Xinjiang region. If these policies are executed in unison, the economic pain that the most powerful members of China stand to endure may be enough to coerce them into halting their campaign of ethnic and cultural cleansing against the Uighur Muslims of Xinjiang. The time for inaction is over. We must not stand idly by and watch another genocide take place. Let us demonstrate our commitment to "Never Again" through effective action.



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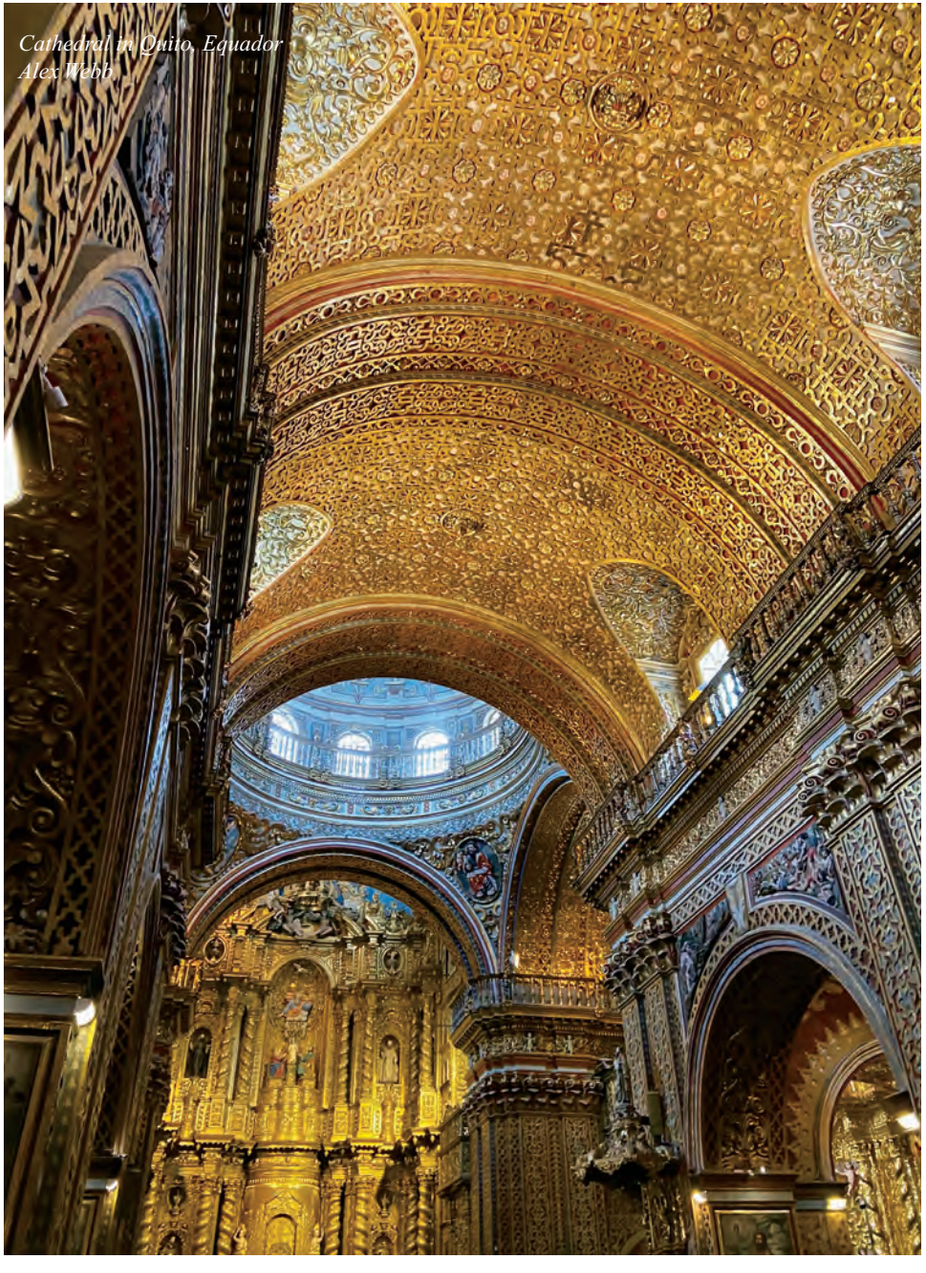


*Cathedral in Quito, Equador*
*Alex Webb*

# A Story on Borders, Pandemics, and Airport Dance Parties

*Barritt Reynolds*

*This story was written on March 19, 2020, in the first days of international lockdowns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.*

I find it strange to be in quarantine while the world is changing at an incredible rate. It is like living in an in-between world. A borderland: a time for reflection and isolation and simultaneously a time for connection and empathy. I never thought much about borders before all of this happened. As an American, I hold one of the most powerful passports in the world. A privilege that gives any American with the right amount of money and desire, the power to enter almost any country in the world. To cross any border. To almost forget for an instant that 'borders' even exist. As an exchange student, sometimes borders really did start to fall away through a new learned language or a mutual love that grows between oneself and the friends and family one discovers abroad. I never truly understood what a privilege it was to forget about borders, until borders started closing.

Being born into the 21st century meant being born into a hungry and globalizing world. There were pros of course, borders and travel became more accessible. It was easier than ever before to enter a new world outside your own town, city, state and even country. But the cons existed with equal validity. As enterprise expanded, so did humanity's entitlement and belief that the earth was theirs. The exploitation of the earth and the people on it for profit and greed began to globalize as well. Today we are beginning to see the aftermath of our destructive behavior. Whether that be through a pandemic, pollution, extreme weather, or closing borders. And the greatest injustice lies in the fact that those who feel the harshest effects, are the communities most marginalized and least to blame.

Please everyone: I hope my story helps convince you that now is the time to get inside and practice self-isolation (if you can). It does not matter your age. America is still in denial and these next few weeks are crucial. Young and healthy people—when you are carelessly spending your time out in public, you are inadvertently killing others who are older or have a weaker immune system than you. The aftermath of Covid-19 on our country is going to be significant, and our generation is going to feel its detrimental effects. I know it is hard to take it seriously now; a week ago I felt the same way. But if I have learned anything, it is that situations can change at rapid speed. Borders can close at the blink of an eye. We must heed advice from other countries and recognize the severity of this virus immediately.

It was Friday, March 15th. I was living in Ecuador on a study abroad program through my college with a group of eleven other people. We were all living with host families, taking absurd amounts of Spanish classes and generally living it up. Our plan was to be in Cuenca, Ecuador for one semester, or roughly three months. The first two months were amazing. I fell in love with the city's beauty, tasty bread, and cafecitos quickly. I had no idea at the time how quickly my life, and everyone else's lives could change. And change it did.

I remember that Friday night feeling unsettled. I couldn't sleep and my brain was nervously turning over thought after stressful thought. My group was planning to leave for a 9 day field trip to the Amazon rainforest that upcoming Monday with our biology class. We were going to a remote part of the rainforest where only licensed researchers were permitted to enter and only let one or two groups of students in per year. Our eccentric and charming professor— who loved nothing more than geeking out about microclimates, wildlife and mangroves—was planning to lead us. Needless to say it was a trip of a lifetime, and I was terrified.

But I had my reasons. At this particular moment while I was living in Ecuador, thousands of miles away my sister was living In Italy. She was located on an island off the Italian peninsula called Sardinia and was planning to live there for eleven months in total on a study abroad program similar to my own. But unfortunately, in the past few weeks, her exchange had rapidly converted into a period of quarantine due to the sudden outbreak of Covid-19 in her area. Airports in Italy were beginning to shut down and the prospect of exiting her island was looking grimmer by the day. My family in the United States had decided that they wanted her home before things got too bad for her to leave, and they were beginning to worry that the situation had already gotten out of hand. Flights were being canceled left and right, and new laws were being implemented. One required that you must have a signed permission from the Sardinian governor to even leave the island. Another stated that if you were driving anywhere other than to the pharmacy or to the grocery store you could be given a hefty fine (this meant driving to the airport was a risk). My parents were beginning to worry, or more accurately, freak out. I was beginning to worry too. We were all starting to realize just how quickly the world could turn on its head—and I was starting to think that my little world in Ecuador would be next.

The thought of spending nine days in the Amazon, and in turn nine days disconnected from the news and updates on the spread of Covid-19 was concerning. In nine days we could come back and Ecuador could have 100 new cases. I was afraid that Covid-19 would continue spreading outside of the Amazon, and I was also frightened that I could inadvertently introduce the virus to the Amazon and the people there. I kept running over these facts in my mind: I am twenty and I am healthy, I could have the virus and have no idea that I had it. Two weeks before, I had been traveling all around Ecuador for spring break and living my life as if Covid-19 did not exist. On the last day of my trip, my friends and I nervously read breaking news reports that announced that Covid-19 had officially entered Ecuador. The area it was first present in was a city that my friends and I had traveled through. And to make matters terribly worse for my anxiety, I had a slight cold. It was very mild, just a sore throat and congestion, but its presence kept my mind rheeling. The same thoughts circled over and over. Barritt, what if you DO have the virus? What if YOU spread the virus to isolated people in the Amazon?

That Saturday I rested and worried. I cried. After facetiming my dad and explaining my angst, I decided that unless I was 100% healthy on Sunday, I would not be leaving for the Amazon on Monday. It was a sad realization, but felt like the right decision. The risk was too great and the guilt I would have to carry if I did spread the virus would be too heavy. That afternoon I emerged from a sorrowful Netflix binge to the sound of my phone charming with text after resounding text. When I glanced at the screen I read, "Mayra is arranging a meeting at Amauta later today" (Mayra was the program director of our Spanish school and Amauta was the name of our school). I knew in my gut that from this moment on our study abroad program was not going to be the same. I dressed hurriedly and walked to the main road near my house where taxis commonly passed by. I was nervous that I would not be able to find a taxi but luckily hailed one down, and was the first student to arrive at our school.

Taxis were becoming scarcer by the day, one of the first signs that things were beginning to change. The night before I had tried in vain to hail a taxi for over an hour. It was pouring rain and although we could see taxis on the street, none wanted to stop. My friend and I spent half an hour glued to our phones struggling to get a driver to pick us up through a popular taxi app called AzuTaxi, to no avail. Eventually we entered a hotel nearby and inquired to see if the receptionist there could call us a taxi. She told us to wait twenty minutes. My friend and I draped ourselves on plush couches and chatted about our least favorite movies. We both agreed that the Oscar winning film, Shape of Water, was not very good nor worth the hype. Eventually the receptionist returned with a concerned look on her impeccably made-up face. She told us that she could not get a hold of a single taxi company.

Defeated, my friend and I slumped out into the rainy and flooded streets and began to walk to the house of one of a friend who lived in the city. Neither of us had the option to walk home because we both lived too far away and it was not safe to walk alone at night. We walked together in unison, sharing my single olive green rain jacket. I had my arm in the right sleeve, my friend's in the left. We must have looked like a drunk monster stumbling home from a night out on the town. Eventually we got lucky and were able to hail a taxi home. Our taxi driver, a sweet old man, claimed that no drivers were out because of the combined fear of the rain (flooded streets) and the virus. That night I got home wet and tired and wondered, without taxis how will I be able to get around after dark?

Once the whole group was gathered in our Spanish school, the meeting began. Mayra informed us that the Amazon had closed its borders—meaning our trip was canceled. I felt a rush of relief and disappointment. And from the looks on my peers faces, I wasn't the only one. We all began to share our thoughts,

feelings and fears about the current situation. Most of the students in my group had family members who wanted them home, and everyone was stressed out. I started sharing current updates on my sister in Italy and her ongoing struggle to make it back to the States, and broke down in tears. We all began bouncing worry after worry off each other. What if Donald Trump rashly decided to close borders with South America and we couldn't get home? What if the U.S. enacted a ban on interstate travel? What if the virus continues to spread and in a week we are all stuck in quarantine in Ecuador? There were so many unknowns and so many possible ways for things to go wrong. Steve, our program leader, decided to take a vote to see how many students were ready to go home. Everyone raised their hands. That night around 10:00 pm we got an email from our college that informed us that if we wanted to return home to the United States we could and if we wanted to stay that was fine as well. On Saturday the 14th we all sadly booked flights home, completely unaware that on Monday the 16th nearly every single South American country would be closing its borders to those exiting and entering the country at 12:00 am on the dot.

My last day in Ecuador was sweet, and sad. Now that I knew I was about to lose it all, my senses were latching on to each small sensation with a frantic vigor. The bluebird sky, the way the sun felt on the back of my neck, the playful scent of instant coffee coming from the kitchen, the muffled sounds of my host siblings interacting through my thin bedroom wall. I felt like I was living in slow motion — already nostalgic for the moment I was living in— steadily aware that this moment was the last time I would experience it. My host sister helped me pack and it felt strange unraveling the tiny world I had created in my bedroom. When we were all done I looked around, it was just a room. Painted a rosy pink color and about 120 square feet in size, it was unbothered by the fact that its furniture had changed and its roommate was leaving. Things would continue in a normal fashion, it did not matter if I was there or not. My host brother, sister and I went for a long walk to the park. It was a beautiful day. We ate ice cream on a park bench then laid down and watched the clouds snake through the sky. We watched ducks float by and tried unsuccessfully to catch frogs in the pond. I was happy so long as I did not linger too much on the thought that I was leaving. If I did, tears would begin to well-up and I would have to frantically fight to distract myself with a new sensation. When we got home we watched Dora the Explorer together, then had dinner as a family. Our dinner was fancier than normal and I stayed up late because I knew that once I fell asleep, the next family activity would be saying goodbye. Procrastination at its finest. As I drifted off to bed I worried that I had made the wrong decision. The day had felt so normal, not as if we were on the brink of a pandemic. Maybe it was just the quiet before the storm, or maybe my group and I were all overreacting . Were we losing the last month of our study abroad for nothing? It was hard to say...

Monday morning, the day of our departure, I woke up feeling numb. Almost defeated somehow, like the virus had 'won' and I was finally surrendering. It was the crack of dawn, like the ass-crack of dawn. We all had a flight to Quito that left at 7:00 am, meaning that we had to wake up around 5:30am to make our flight on time. Many people, including me, were a bit annoyed that we had to leave so early because our later flights weren't departing until the evening. This meant that we would all arrive in Quito at 8:00 am and have the whole day in the airport. Our first flight ended up being so early because Mayra had decided that it would be most economic if we all took the same flight as we would have to the Amazon (remember Monday was going to be the day we left for the Amazon), but once we arrived in Quito instead of continuing our journey to Coca, we would just stay in Quito. It made sense. And we all ended up being very happy and thankful that we had an excess of time later on.

Saying goodbye to my host family was hard, but the combined lack of sleep and realization that I had flights to get through in the upcoming thirty hours kept me from dwelling too much on the sadness of the moment. Our first flight went smoothly. We all arrived in the Quito airport on time and excitedly roamed around the food court in pairs deciding what we wanted to purchase with our remaining Lewis & Clark stipend. As we all gathered around some tables on an outdoor patio to begin our meal, our trip leader's phone began to ring. He answered quickly and we could all tell from the concerned look on his face that something was wrong. He told us that he had asked his partner to keep tabs on the US State Department website, just in case. Apparently, she had just



been checking the website for him when she saw a notification related to Peru. It stated that Peru would be shutting down their borders to those entering and leaving the country at 12:oo am that day. Needless to say, we did not get the chance to finish our breakfast..

It became an all-hands-on-deck project as everyone began frantically calling embassies, airlines, and parents to inform and get informed on our new developing situation. We learned that it was not just Peru that was shutting its borders, but also Colombia, Panama, and Ecuador. The US embassy informed us that all flights departing after midnight would be canceled throughout the afternoon. A group of us had a flight leaving at 12:15 am from Lima, and two other girls had flights that were not even scheduled to leave Quito until around 3:00 am. I called my mom to tell her that things had become complicated, and none of us knew if we were going to make it home. My parents wanted to buy me a ticket home, but the airline websites were not functioning well. Many sites were crashing, or showing flights that would disappear once you clicked pay. We checked the flight monitor frequently and saw that our flight from Lima to Houston had been moved up to leave at 11:55, but unfortunately the two flights of my other friends who had flights later that night were both cancelled.

Through random luck, the group of us flying from Lima to Houston received some insider information. The father of one of the girls in our group knew the pilot heading the flight from Lima to Houston. He had informed her that the flight would be leaving no matter what, because it was the last American flight available out of Peru and it was an American plane that had to get home. (There were even going to be other pilots relying on this flight to get back to the states.) This information was affirming, but also put one thought in all of our minds. We HAD to make it on this flight, which meant that we could not take the risk of continuing with our original flight pattern from Quito to Lima at 8:00pm (which would mean we would get into Lima at 10:00pm). Considering how crazy everything had become, a two hour lay-over was not going to be enough time and was not worth the risk.

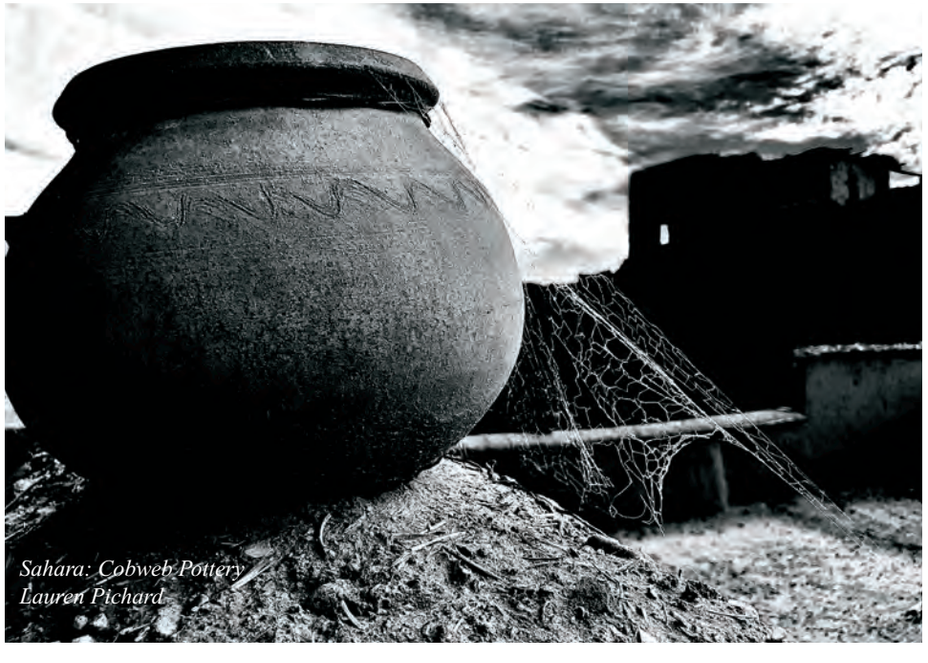
We all began searching for new flights from Quito to Lima that left earlier. We found one that left at 4:00p.m., getting us into Lima at 6:oop.m., therefore granting us a six hour layover. My friend and I both began the flight booking process, him selecting four seats and I selected four seats. I was just about to click pay when he got a phone call from his dad.

"Don't pay!", he told me urgently. He got off the phone and told me that he had just found out something important. Because we had bought all of our original flights together, buying new flights on the same day to replace previously bought flights could sabotage our other previously booked flights. Meaning, our flight from Lima to Houston could get cancelled if we buy different flights without consulting the airline first. After hearing this, another friend in my group immediately got out her phone and called United. Over an hour of talking and a $10,000 charge on the Lewis & Clark credit card later, we amazingly rearranged our flights to get us all on the 4:00p.m. flight to Lima without compromising our flight to Houston. The United airline assistant was incredible, and may or may not have developed a crush on our friend through their phone conversation. This became an ongoing joke throughout the rest of the trip. At one scary point the call dropped and we all sat in stressed silence praying that he would call back. A minute later he did, saying that he was "so glad I didn't lose you"

While we were getting lucky, my two other friends whose flights were cancelled, were not. They could not find any other flights out of South America that would get them out before the borders shut. Not a single one. We were all trying our best to call airlines and negotiate with long lines at the information desk to no avail. Eventually the group and I leaving for Lima had to go through customs and board our flight. Our group leader, Steve, was planning to go with us, he had a ticket paid for and secured, but he selflessly decided to stay behind and make sure our other two friends made it out of the country safely.

We made it through customs and boarded our flight easily, none of us mentally prepared for the mess we would encounter in the Lima airport. I began to feel like I was in some sort of twisted real life video game. I could imagine myself running through gates that represented country borders, and everytime I made it through I could hear the gate slam shut with a thump behind me. Ecuador CLOSED. Now I just hoped I could make it through the next level, Peru.

*Carpets in Marrakesh, Morocco*
*Lauren Pichard*



*Sahara: Cobweb Pottery*
*Lauren Pichard*



# Yemen's Collapsing Health System: Community-Based Solutions

*By Ariel McGee*

This paper will explore the state of Yemen's health system, how the five-year-long war has affected the people of Yemen's access to healthcare and what this means in the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Humanitarian space has been extremely limited in this country due to Saudi-led blockades and vast areas of the country that are controlled by rebel groups, who frequently obstruct the delivery of aid. The consistent warfare and direct attacks on health infrastructures have led to the collapse of parts of the health system, a country-wide famine and a devastating cholera epidemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has made the collapse complete (Médecins Sans Frontières, 2020). The policy options this paper will explore include holding warring parties accountable for their violations of international law, the establishment of a healthcare information network in Yemen, and the healthcare strategy of integrated community case management. The policy recommendation this paper will advocate for is a multi-faceted approach that includes the funding and implementation of health IT and the utilization and education of Yemeni healthcare workers.

**Background**

In order to understand the current state of the healthcare system in Yemen, it is important to be aware of the factors that led to its breakdown. Very early in the conflict and the involvement of the Saudi-led coalition, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that monitor human rights abuses and mass atrocities began writing reports. These reports exemplified Saudi Arabia's disregard for many international laws and treaties regarding the conduct of war. According to Amnesty International, Yemen is party to principal instruments of international humanitarian law such as: the four Geneva Conventions of 1948 and their Additional Protocol relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (2015).

Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions requires that the sick and wounded are protected and cared for. It also grants impartial humanitarian organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross the right to offer its services to all parties of the conflict (International Committee of the Red Cross, 2010). Saudi Arabia's coalition has imposed several naval blockades, the worst of which occurred in 2017. The naval blockades have been devastating to the population of Yemen and are in direct violation of Common Article 3. The Additional Protocol II of the Geneva Convention was created to extend the laws of war found in Common Article 3 to internal conflicts such as civil wars or complicated regional struggles such as the one happening in Yemen (UN Human Rights Council, 2018). The coalition has violated the Additional Protocol by repeatedly endangering and killing civilians. As stated by Amnesty International, "In the conduct of military operations, constant care must be taken to spare the civilian population, civilians and civilian objects; all feasible precautions must be taken to avoid and minimize incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians and damage to civilian objects" (2015). For the citizens of Yemen, the Saudi coalitions' unlawful air raids and the ongoing blockade instituted by the Saudi led coalition are destroying the lives of innocent people.

All parties involved in the conflict are obstructing humanitarian aid by blocking entry ports and not allowing aid agencies into areas in great need. Donor funding to UN aid agencies has decreased significantly as a result of this obstruction. In addition to the loss of thousands of civilian lives through air raids, Yemen's already-weak health system has been severely damaged, along with its water and sanitation systems. The Saudi-led coalition — heavily supported by the United States through munitions sales, military training, and aerial refueling — has bombed both medical facilities and water-treatment centers in Houthi-held areas of the country. These bombings have triggered the spread of disease and put healthcare personnel and relief workers in danger since the start of the war (The New England Journal of Medicine 2019, 109-111). Attacks on medical infrastructure is a direct violation of the fourth Geneva Convention, and co-opts disease and humanitarian need as tools for war. The fourth Geneva Convention also

stipulates the need for free mobility of medical personnel within a conflict zone to carry out humanitarian assistance. Yet humanitarian organizations report that medical staff and supplies have been restricted from reaching the populations in greatest need. On the Houthi side, examples of obstruction include lengthy delays for approval of aid projects, blocking aid assessments to identify peoples' needs, attempts to control aid monitoring and recipient lists to divert aid to those loyal to the authorities, and violence against aid staff (The New England Journal of Medicine 2019, 109-111). Access to aid has only worsened since attacks on the port city of Hodeida in June 2018 obstructed the entry point for much of the country's food and medical imports (The New England Journal of Medicine 2019, 109-111).

What results from the above violations of international humanitarian law is an incredible health crisis: over half of the population has no access to immediate or near health services and is suffering from acute malnutrition. Delivery of humanitarian assistance in Yemen's conflict zones is both critical and challenging. Yemen is suffering from the largest man-made humanitarian disaster in modern history. They have also been suffering since 2017 from the largest cholera outbreak in recorded history (Kimball, 2020). In 2018, The Lancet estimated that nearly 8.8 million (30.6% of the total estimated Yemeni population of 28.7 million) people live more than 30 minutes away from the nearest fully- or partially-functional public primary health-care facility; more than 12.1 million (42.4%) Yemeni people live more than one hour from the nearest fully- or partially-functional public hospital; and nearly 40% of the population live more than two hours from comprehensive emergency obstetric and surgical care (2020, 1435-1436).

**Analysis of Policy Options**

**Option 1: Condemnation of International Law Violations**

The first policy option is what the international community has focused on the most: identifying the international humanitarian and human rights laws that the Houthi rebels and Saudi-led coalition have violated. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and other prestigious international NGOs have documented the violations of international law that have taken place on both sides of the war (focusing mainly on the Houthis and Saudis, rather than on the regions of the country held by terrorist organizations). With COVID on the rise, the focus of international name-and-shame campaigns against the warring parties, and the countries that fund the war, has shifted to the obstruction of medical and personal protection equipment and the shelling of medical infrastructures. In a September 2020 report, Human Rights Watch stated: "Some unlawful coalition and Houthi attacks are apparent war crimes. Yemeni forces, the Houthis, and the Saudi-led coalition have attacked over 100 medical facilities. The US, UK, France, Canada, and other countries have sold arms to the Saudi-led coalition, while also funding the humanitarian aid effort. Due to these arms sales, they have contributed to Yemen's humanitarian crisis and may be complicit in laws-of-war violations" (2020, 4).

In naming the war crimes and the countries explicitly and implicitly involved, INGOs have been attempting to pressure governments to change their ways and political affiliations. The UN has also released detailed reports on war crimes, urging Western governments to halt all funding and weapon-supplying of the Saudi coalition.

*Strengths*

Kathryn Sikkink, an international relations theorist, describes the power that NGOs have to influence the international community through principled issue networks (PINs) (1993, 412-413). PINs work best on issue-specific human rights violations and are composed of both international and national NGOs, IGOs such as the UN, and individual state actors. It has been difficult at certain points in the Yemen conflict for national NGOs to relay information to international NGOs, which is an important step in mobilizing the PIN, but internationally recognized NGOs like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have continually conducted reports detailing the violations of human rights committed by Saudi Arabia and the coalition since the conflict began, drawing off of information collected from Yemeni NGOs, such as Mwatana For Human Rights. Until recently, the UN has been quiet about international law violations in Yemen, especially when it concerns Saudi Arabia.

However, the PIN established by NGOs has become more effective in recent years. NGO reports coupled with media coverage have led to important international attention and action. In September 2018 the UN Human Rights Council passed a resolution that established a Group of Eminent Experts tasked with examining the alleged violations of international law committed by all sides of the Yemen conflict (UNHRC resolution 36/31). Most notably, the Group of Eminent Experts found reason to believe that "the Governments of Yemen, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia are responsible for… serious violations of freedom of expression and economic, social and cultural rights, in particular the right to an adequate standard of living and the right to health."[ii] This group has been urging Western governments to halt all funding and weapon-supplying of the Saudi coalition since its establishment. Though the requests of the UN have not been addressed by the U.S. (the coalition's top supplier of weapons), this report is one of the best attempts the UN has made to ensure that one day, justice will be dealt to those who have committed international crimes in Yemen.

*Weaknesses*

PINs derive their power through the dissemination of information and the power of rich, trend-setting countries. The UN has been unable to influence Western countries to halt their support of the coalition and is experiencing a major funding crisis as a result of the widespread obstruction of aid occuring in Yemen. PINs require time and cooperation in order to create lasting,meaningful change. Yemen is running out of time, and Europe and the U.S. have been unwilling to assert their power in a meaningful way. While the continued efforts of international NGOs to make the international law violations known would help to prevent future civilian deaths, the PIN will not change the degradation of Yemen's health system and will not result in direct resolution of the war. As stated by a group of medical doctors in an article in The New England Journal of Medicine:

We rely on humanitarian programs and on the principle of medical neutrality as a salve for the painful consequences of armed conflict. The moral responsibility for this catastrophe is collective. Those of us whose governments support the war's attack on civilians and civilian infrastructure through their direct actions or through their inaction at the United Nations Security Council can do more than stand by silently wondering what the warring parties hope to inherit at the end of the day. A generation of Yemeni people is being sacrificed (2020, 111).

The status quo of leaning on NGOs to enact every aspect of change will not be enough to protect the people of Yemen and their right to safety, and more immediately, access to healthcare.

**Option 2: Establishment of a Healthcare Information Network in Yemen**

Policy option 2 offers direct improvement to the existing healthcare facilities in Yemen: establishing a national technological healthcare information network and localized – at the level of individual hospitals – information technology. In order to further the research on healthcare access in Yemen and monitor the outbreaks of cholera, COVID-19 and other diseases within the country, technological advances are necessary. This policy option would require the funding and support of NGOs and donor states, but could yield direct and quantifiable results. Direct results might raise morale for individual and state donors, resulting in a greater influx of aid revenue.

*Strengths*

IT systems are one of the most important differences between developed healthcare systems and underdeveloped ones. Research suggests that hospitals in Yemen have extremely limited effectiveness, even for those who are able to make the trek necessary to be treated. With the help of a universal medical tech system, Yemen's hospital and medical aid workers would be able to assess which regions of the country have the highest level of need and the least amount of supplies and staff. As COVID continues to reach the citizens, warring parties and aid workers of Yemen, surveillance will be of utmost importance. According to a PLOS One research study, the surveillance system in the southern and eastern governorates captured mainly severe cases, making it difficult to interpret the mortality data (2020, 10-11) A healthcare information system would serve doubly as a surveillance system not just for COVID-19 cases and contact tracing, but for cholera and any other outbreak in Yemen. The ability to track, record and contact trace would make treating and preventing the epidemics plaguing the country, and mortality rates would enable a loose

hierarchy of treatment wherein the patients in the most dire need would be treated first.

In addition to improving the health sector, healthcare information systems have the potential to improve ethical research within conflict zones. When an NGO or government is deciding whether or not to engage in humanitarian intervention in a conflict zone, they must weigh the pros and cons. The decision to enter a country is generally made after extensive research is conducted, and the level of need is assessed. According to a Conflict and Health article by Eric D. Perakslis, healthcare IT systems "by automating chain of custody of data, by using smart metadata and by exploiting the other inherent capabilities of digital technologies, the quality and conduct of research in humanitarian settings can improve" (2018, 6) With more explicit information and records on the standards of health, number of people in medical need, and number of people helped, humanitarian research can be be more accurate.

*Weaknesses*

Though it is possible that increased data collection and evidence of effective healthcare aid could restore confidence in donors, a large initial sum of money is necessary in order to purchase and institute the technology. In addition to the financial barrier, an educational barrier must be overcome in order to create a health system that Yemen could one day operate without the help of medical humanitarians. Obstruction of aid and confiscation of technological devices would make this operation incredibly difficult to carry out in any part of the country, especially those most in need of medical attention.

Additionally, a universal database for the country would be incredibly difficult to institute via national policy due to the lack of a legitimized and effective national government. Currently, the health system is being supported and run by Health Cluster Yemen; a group of partners including international organizations and UN agencies, NGOs, affected communities, specialized health agencies, academic and training institutes and donor agencies. For these reasons, establishing a national healthcare system is not the most realistic policy option for Yemen as it stands today.

**Option 3: Integrated Community Case Management**

A third policy option is the integration of community case management into what still exists of the national health system. According to the World Health Organization, integrated community case management (ICCM) is "an equity-focused strategy that complements and extends the reach of public health services by providing timely and effective treatment of malaria, pneumonia and diarrhea to populations with limited access to facility-based health care providers." (2016) ICCM utilizes community and Yemeni health workers in conflict zones to create informal healthcare systems at the community level; these workers can be trained and funded by humanitarian health organizations such as MSF and Save the Children. This policy option offers a solution to the distance barrier to healthcare in Yemen by bringing the treatment closer to home, and actively rebuilds the health system that has degraded throughout the conflict. ICCM has been implemented in Yemen on a small scale by Save the Children launched an iCCM program, in the Lahj and Taiz Governorates, but further funding and healthcare training is necessary for this solution to reach the largest number of individuals in a health crisis.

*Strengths*

The cholera epidemic in Yemen was man made and can be easily treated, given access to healthcare materials. What Yemen needs the most Yemen is primary health care, vaccinations, and treatment for ailments like pneumonia and diarrhea. The iCCM strategy allows frontline humanitarian healthcare workers to train, supply and supervise Yemeni healthcare workers to treat patients with these ailments. Children and pregnant women are the most vulnerable to cholera and famine, and according to WHO, programmatic experience in other countries shows that an integrated strategy can be effective in achieving high treatment coverage and delivering high-quality care to sick children in the community (2016). With adequate training and supervision, community health workers can retain the skills and knowledge necessary to provide appropriate care for the diseases and ailments of particular communities within Yemen. Eventually, the iCCM could perform frontline tasks without direct aid. This strategy creates a system wherein Yemen's healthcare professionals can treat members of their communities, and be compensated by humanitarian organizations for their work.



*Weaknesses*

Due to the complexity of Yemen's conflict situation, implementation of iCCM's has been difficult. An attempt was made by Save the Children to launch an iCCM program in Lahj and Taiz Governorates. A qualitative study in The Journal of Public Health documented the challenges to iCCM service delivery and to aid in developing strategies for overcoming service delivery bottlenecks in conflict-affected rural areas (2020). Key findings included: policy, coordination, and funding were challenged by the fact that iCCM was not integrated into the national health system and was implemented as a short-term emergency program rather than a long term training program. Villages that received services from a community healthcare worker who was based in a different community experienced reduced access to services, especially during times of heightened conflict and insecurity. Supervision, supply chain, and monitoring were all challenges that were exacerbated by traveling difficulties l due to the conflict. Therefore, the iCCM long-term strategy has not been fully successful in some areas due to the nature of the conflict, the obstruction of aid and difficulties traveling. Though the iCCMs in Yemen have not been long-lasting projects, community healthcare workers have been able to aid community members in times of great turmoil and insecurity. I believe this strategy will be incredibly important to the rebuilding and reconstruction of the Yemeni health system, be that during or after the conflict.

**Recomendations**

The best immediate policy is a combination of options 2 and 3. Healthcare information technology would begin to construct a national network and healthcare database and aid humanitarians in their research. Research capabilities will allow aid organizations to assess the risk and need of individual regions of Yemen, and could result in success stories for their donor base. Integrated community case management is an effective short-term crisis tool, allowing community healthcare workers to expand their knowledge of medicine in order to help their communities, and has the potential to transform into a longer lasting educational system for the current and future healthcare professionals of Yemen. Both of these policies require initial funding, education and resources; but they have proven effective in other countries and could provide incentives for future funding and aid. Conflict resolution should continue to be the ultimate goal, and I believe that human rights abusers should be held accountable for their actions. However, an entire generation of Yemenis are at risk of death and healthcare should be equally important as governmental accountability.

**Conclusion**

The constantly-collapsing healthcare system in Yemen is largely dependent on the support of international organizations (Bull World Health 2015, 670-1) and as of December 2019, there are 39 health cluster partners (UN agencies, International NGOs, and national NGOs) that provide support to the primary and secondary healthcare services across the country. The approximate 3,000 healthcare facilities in the country have very poor working and sanitation conditions (Health Cluster, 2019). COVID-19 presents an entirely new and frightening set of concerns for the healthcare workers and citizens of Yemen. In the most recent study since the pandemic began, Frontiers in Public Health found that all healthcare facilities in Yemen lack even the most basic resources needed to fight an outbreak of COVID; there are not enough rooms, beds, isolation areas, essential medical equipment, testing capabilities or protective equipment for healthcare workers to follow any of the necessary protectionary rules for dealing with the virus (Frontiers in Public Health, 2020). Without the full funding requested by the UN, which they received 24% of this year, and access to adequate healthcare materials and staff, Yemen's healthcare system will continue to disintegrate. (Human Rights Watch 2020, 2)

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# Ruling with an Iron Fist: In This Period of COVID-19, The World Needs Strong Leaders

*Kaylee-Anna Jayaweera, Jack Kamysz, Brigid Morris-Knower, Mary Welch*

**Covid-19 Questions Freedom**

The world demands shifts to authoritarianism in times of crisis. As of May 3rd at 11:30pm GMT, there were 248,094 reported COVID-19 deaths worldwide, and the number continues to climb. Of these deaths, 68,566 were in the United States, 28,884 were in Italy, 28,446 were in the United Kingdom, However,only 1,280 were in Russia along with only 4,633 in China, the virus's place of origin.[1]

The problem presented by COVID-19 is how a country can effectively protect its citizens and stabilize their domestic economies. Authoritarian and democratic regimes are equipped with fundamentally different tools to handle both domestic and global crises. Authoritarian regimes prioritize social order and security, manifesting in conformity, traditionalism, and submission to authority. Authoritarian states have the ultimate authority to make top down decisions for the state in comparison to Democratic states which by definition, have to answer to the majority. The solution to COVID-19's challenge is the centralized power of an authoritarian regime. Despite the dangers that are inherent with authoritarian style leadership, COVID-19 has put the world in a situation that demands strong and fast decision-making in order to survive and recover from this pandemic.

**Our Current Global Existence**

Even though the entire world has been struck by this novel virus, not all countries are feeling its harsh realities. Countries across the globe are shutting down their borders and instilling stay-at-home orders for their citizens While these overbearing rules are mandatory for some countries, they are merely recommendations in others.

In China, mandatory quarantines have been implemented at a breathtaking scope and severity, and it's working so far. Reported cases have slowed, factories and jobs are returning, and the domestic economy is gradually getting back on track. Despite being the source of the outbreak, China has flattened the curve and is moving forward.

The U.S., on the other hand, is suffering both on economic and public health fronts. The country now sits at number one for confirmed cases and deaths, and the New York Stock Exchange has dropped 21% since the beginning of the outbreak.[2]

**Needs of a Panic Stricken World**

In a global health crisis, global citizens must recognize the survivability of the human race as of utmost importance and fight for authoritarian methods. It is true that many authoritarian regimes have led to terrible atrocities, but they are also able to effectively combat crises. Despite the fallout from The Great Leap Forward, China has seen a huge growth in their middle class over the last few decades. By 2018 they were able to bring 850 million citizens out of poverty — bringing their poverty percentage from 88% to an incredible 1.85%.[3] That same year, the U.S. had a poverty rate of 11.8%.[4] While the Nazi Party commited terrible atrocities in the 1940's, they also lifted Germany's economy out of the hyperinflation crisis in the 1930's. Putting global tragedy aside, authoritarian regimes maintain the tool of centralized power needed to ensure survival and support their citizens during times of crisis.

Governments are called upon to make the tough — but right — decisions. There will undoubtedly be, as modern COVID-society has seen, an uproar of misinformation and the possibility of a ravaging spread of the deadly disease. To prevent such spreading, many countries such as France, Australia, Norway and others have implemented fines on those who break quarantine.[5] However, those measures can only go so far under the limitations of a democratic state; where individual rights and freedoms are central, but power is divided.

Under authoritarian rule, this is a different story. In China, the government has taken massive effort to effectively and swiftly "shut the country down". Anyone with a hint of a fever is isolated and citizens are now required to carry digital QR codes establishing their risk to society based on symptoms or exposure. As of April 7th, Wuhan, China, otherwise known to hold Patient Zero, has re-opened.[6] In addition to being able to contain the virus, authoritarian states also have the economic tools to promote a faster recovery, such as quickly mobilizing resources and employing more labor. Even highly respected democracies like South Korea have started using extensive authoritative powers in order to track the virus in hopes of containing it and quickly reopening their economy. Democratic regimes don't have the direct authority needed to effectively manage crises. The fact remains that keeping up with the rapidly changing needs of a pandemic-ridden society means entrusting the lives of global citizens in the hands of authoritarian leaders during global health crises.

**Easy Peasy COVID Squeezy**

Authoritarian regimes are able to contain the spread of pandemics, such as COVID-19, better than democracies due to one main political advantage: the centralized nature of their power structures. This allows for authoritative regimes to have a faster, stronger response when it comes to pandemic controls. In essence, the sooner the spread of COVID-19 can be contained, the sooner we can go back to work and recover the economy.

The current responses to COVID-19 reflect the effectiveness of how governments across the globe are able to enact pandemic controls. Authoritarian regimes, such as China, are showing how their highly centralized government is able to respond more swiftly than more democratic nations. A clear example of this can be seen in a comparison of cases and deaths between the U.S. and China. It should even be noted that these controls are a copy and paste of China's response to the SARS pandemic back in the early 2000's.[7] To no surprise, they saw success in containing the spread, just as they are now.

South Korea pulled back on some of their individual freedoms in order to centralize power and contain the spread of this virus. Citizens who contracted the virus are methodically tracked through the use of expansive powers; including phone tapping and sifting through credit card records to trace the potential spread.[8] South Korea moved towards authoritarianism's most powerful tool, hence their ability to curb the spread of Covid-19 more successfully than democracies that have maintained the status quo of governmental control.

**History Repeats Itself**

Looking to the West, 101 years before COVID-19, the world was struck with an overwhelming wave of H1N1, the 1918 Spanish Flu. Best estimates show that of the 500 million infected (a third of the world's population), 50 million global citizens were killed by the virus, more than any other pandemic before it. According to some accounts, having a death toll greater than both world wars combined. Like COVID-19 in today's globalized world, it had unprecedented reach.[9]

In any case, it opened a precedent to increased centralized government controls. In the United States, the Committee of the American Public Health Association (APHA) issued measures in a report to limit large gatherings.[10] The committee held that any type of gathering of people was dangerous. Unlike today, nonessential meetings were prohibited *nationally* and actively enforced. Other restrictive methods of infection control included enforced quarantines and isolation of the ill. These measures required a sacrifice of individual liberty for the societal good and therefore required a strong public health authority. These sacrifices were made and citizens were kept safe because of a pause in democratic norms.

**Necessary Sacrifices**

John Podhoretz, a columnist for the New York Post, questions the true merit of democracy in challenging times, "What if liberal democracies have now evolved to a point where they can no longer wage war effectively because they have achieved a level of humanitarian concern for others that dwarfs any really cold-eyed pursuit of

1 "Covid-19 Coronavirus Pandemic." Worldometer. April 30, 2020.

2 MarketWatch. "NYSE Composite Index." Accessed April 26, 2020. https://www.marketwatch.com/investing/index/nya.

3 Weiping, Dr Tan. April 18, 2018 "China's Approach to Reduce Poverty: Taking Targeted Measures to Lift People out of Poverty," n.d., 15.

4 Bureau, US Census. September 10, 2019 "Income and Poverty in the United States: 2018." The United States Census Bureau. Accessed April 26, 2020. https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2019/demo/p60-266.html.

5 EDT, David Brennan On 3/18/20 at 8:10 AM. "Fines, Jail Time and Sackings: What Happens When People Break Coronavirus Quarantines around the World." Newsweek, March 18, 2020.

6 Zhong, Raymond, and Vivian Wang. "China Ends Wuhan Lockdown, but Normal Life Is a Distant Dream." The New York Times, April 7, 2020, sec. World.

7 Schwartz, Jonathan. 2012. "Compensating for the 'Authoritarian Advantage' in Crisis Response: A Comparative Case Study of SARS Pandemic Responses in China and Taiwan." Journal of Chinese Political Science 17 (3): 313–31.

8 The Economist. n.d. "South Korea Is Going through Deep Social, Economic Change." Accessed April 20, 2020. https://

9 Editors, History com. "Spanish Flu." HISTORY. Accessed April 28, 2020.

10 "The 1918 Influenza Pandemic: Response." Accessed April 28, 2020.

their own national interests?"[11] The heart of the matter lies in the issue of having the resources and centralized control needed to respond quickly to global and civil needs in times of crisis.

Another example of the U.S. turning further towards authoritarian power during civil crises is the response by the American people to 9/11, as seen through the Patriot Act. After the September attacks, it became all too clear that the citizens of the United States were ready and willing to sacrifice freedoms for the safety of the whole. The only certainty sits in the present, for in the long run we are all dead — the wider consensus seems to be to protect economic prosperity while it is at hand, and to protect it at all costs.

**It Makes Bloody Sense**

Even democracies look to strong leaders to step up and be effective in times of perceived crisis or struggle. In the Philippines today, President Rodrigo Duterte ran on the promise of brutality and murder to face the enemies within the country — drug dealers and addicts.[12] In a campaign video released for Christmas with a chilling message, "I want to wish Merry Christmas to you drug addicts, thieves, corrupt officials, criminals and those who make the lives of Philipinos miserable. But if you do not cease this brutality, then this would be your very last 'Merry Christmas.'"[13] He's unquestionably delivered on this promise. His bloody war on drugs has left thousands dead, with some estimates numbering the death toll as high as 29,000 suspected dealers and users killed by police since Duterte took office on June 30, 2016.[14] Many of the killings have been accused of being carried out extra-judiciary and having no concern for the innocent people caught in the crossfire.

Despite the awkward fact that "Duterte is the only elected president on the planet being investigated for crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court in The Hague," he has the continued support of his people, with an 87 percent approval last December.[15] Two times higher than approval ratings for the Trump administration, and only beat by G. H. W. Bush in 1991. Many Philipinos see him as a relatable figure and value his blunt nature approach as refreshing and needed — rather than obeying the norms of the political elite. Duterte has utilized the tools that come with authoritarian leadership to benefit the state in eradicating the drug crisis while cleaning up the streets, helping rebuild the country's infrastructure, and tackling poverty. With his absolute no-exception policies, poverty in the Philippines has fallen to 16.6 percent in 2018 from 23.3 percent in 2015.[16] Duterte uses social media as a successful propaganda tool; he has tarnished his political opponents, and deployed internet trolls to attack anyone who publicly criticizes him.

During this pandemic, Duterte's leadership style has not changed. The Philippines is on lockdown, shutting businesses while enforcing the 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew. Any protests or people who break curfew are treated with swift violence. "My orders to the police and military….if there is trouble or the situation arises where your life is on the line, shoot them dead….Don't test the government"[17] is his response to dissenters. His approval ratings, along with decreased crime and drug rates, only further prove his success in the eyes of the Philippino population. His ability to efficiently and effectively establish regulations that his population thinks are needed, proves that the productivity of authoritarian regimes is worth the trade-offs.

**Simply, Freedoms Inhibit Safety**

One outstanding difference between authoritarian and democratic governments are the rights that citizens have to the freedom of speech. Media, such as newspapers, social media, and TV news reports, have the power to influence and mobilize communities in a certain way. But freedom of speech comes with contention and conflict in and of itself. In times of crises there needs to be a centralized consensus on information to help contain the spread. The U.S. media, which has always been bipolar and reflects divides

11 "Civil Liberties - The Freedom Paradox | Special Report | The Economist." Accessed April 28, 2020..

12 Kenny, Paul D. "Populism and the War on Drugs in Southeast Asia." Brown Journal of World Affairs 25, no. 2 (Spring/Summer ///Spring/Summer2019 2019): 121–36.

13 Hegina, Aries Joseph. "WATCH: Duterte Warns 'Last Christmas' for Drug Addicts, Criminals." Accessed April 28, 2020..

14 Giles, Howard Johnson and Christopher. "How Many Have Died in Philippines Drugs War?" BBC News, November 12, 2019, sec. Asia.1.

15 Bernstein, Richard. "The Paradox of Rodrigo Duterte." The Atlantic, February 22, 2020.

16 "Poverty in the Philippines." Text. Asian Development Bank, December 13, 2019. Philippines. https://

17 Billing, Lynzy. "Duterte's Response to the Coronavirus: 'Shoot Them Dead.'" Foreign Policy (blog). Accessed April 28, 2020.



between political party affiliation, has done the exact opposite.

Beginning on April 13, FOX News devoted hours of air time to the coverage of nationwide protests against stay at home orders by states. "Of course, because it's Fox News, it's heavily inflected with comments in support of the protests, in praise of what they're doing and what they represent, in hopes that they spread further across the country."[18] This type of fanning, does not help in trying to recover from a pandemic of this scope. In fact, it hinders the ability of a country and its economy to reopen effectively. In addition, by having a free and divided media, different parts of the populus are shown conflicting reports on how the virus spreads and how serious a crisis it is. If the people watching FOX Newswere exposed to the accurate facts about the virus, the numbers in the U.S. could look very different.

In authoritarian countries, there is more control over what can and can't be said in the media. This in general causes some concern, but in time of a pandemic or crisis it can be quite effective. China again is another exemplary example in its success in using its state run media to mobilize the public. Their battle against COVID-19 has shown the superiority of its unique ability to foster a nationwide understanding of the disease; therefore eliminating any heavy push back against mandatory quarantines, testings, and suspension of businesses.[19] Obvious reductions in cases and number of deaths support this claim.

**Bottom line: The Economy Demands It.**

In authoritarian economies the state acts with a monopoly on power, and there are certain tendencies that authoritarian regimes lean towards in economic policies. Tendencies such as mercantilism, employment of more labor, better formation of physical capital, and higher mobilization of resources for investment leading to faster growth rates.[20] Authoritarianism can structure economic preferences indirectly through elite actors who signal strong positions on cultural or lifestyle issues. When an authoritarian leader chooses an issue for the state to deal with, there is quick implementation of policy and action.

Only authoritarian regimes have the ability to freely repress consumption and mobilize the massive investment necessary for economic growth in poor countries, giving way to rapid development. Six of the ten fastest growing countries during the 1950s were autocracies, nine of the ten in the 1960s and the 1970s, eight in the 1980s and 1990s, and nine in the 2000s.[21] And China has held the record for fastest sustained economic growth in history.

However, China was not the only country to sustain this growth. Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, also known as the East Asian Tiger economies, underwent rapid industrialization following WWII due to international protections and sustained growth. This was due to mercantilist and Infant Industry Protection policies allowing for these countries to have more extensive authority over their markets. While these countries were not all fully authoritarian, they were using more authoritarian style economic control to recover, as well as flourish. Yet, economic recovery is only possible after a crisis is contained.

**Mobilize, Protect, Flourish**

Having the ability to contain the virus is only the first part of being able to emerge from this crisis triumphant. Getting economies started again will be painful and slow, unless governments step up and manage the situation correctly. They must mobilize the essential workforce, provide protection for struggling businesses, and implement these necessary policies quickly. By leaning toward more authoritarian economic and political policies as countries emerge from the other side of this pandemic, domestic economies will recover more swiftly. Most countries will not have the luxury to wait for a long term solution, since they will be struggling to manage the extreme unemployment, deaths caused by the virus, and the unknown factor of economies being completely halted for extended periods of time. Speed and efficiency will be what is needed to recover.

**In The Long Run We Are All Dead.**

When looking at the long-run, democracies, in some cases, have the tendency to

18 Schulman, Jeremy. n.d. "How Fox News Is Supercharging the Coronavirus Protests." Mother Jones (blog). Accessed April 28, 2020.

19 The Economist. n.d. "China's Post-Covid Propaganda Push." Accessed April 28, 2020.

20 Luo, Zhaotian, and Adam Przeworski. "Why Are the Fastest Growing Countries Autocracies?" Journal of Politics 81, no. 2 (April 2019): 663–69. .

21 Acemoglu, Daron, Suresh Naidu, Pascual Restrepo, and James A. Robinson. 2014. "Democracy Does Cause Growth." Working paper no. 20004, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA.

economically out-perform authoritarian states. Take, for example, the USSR; in the years following WWII, the USSR's economic recovery out-paced democracies, such as Great Britain, which had been similarly devastated. Today The United Kingdom still stands as a stable economy while the USSR failed and disbanded in the 1990 demonstrating that democracies may out-perform autocracies in the long term.

Why does this matter? In a pandemic such as COVID-19, responding to the immediate crisis is far more important. Without effective short-term responses, there is no long term. Keynes famously said, "in the long-run we are all dead." In this situation, without proper regulation and government action, in the short-run we are all dead from COVID-19. We need the strong, fast actions of an authoritarian state to ensure that we will even be able to *think* about the long-run.

**Authoritarian Cohabitation?**

As the article "Is China Winning?" argues, with today's level of globalization and physical interconnectedness of the global population, COVID-19 is not something that one country can solve alone.[22] There needs to be cooperation and accountability across borders.

The question then becomes, can we trust authoritarian states to work well with others and move together towards economic recovery? In the middle of their own personal crisis of losing the founder and longtime leader of their country, the new Chinese government held a conference hosting famous economists from all over the world. However, in the end they barred people like Milton Friedman, who had ideas that were too liberal or capitalist.[23] The authoritarian leaders could not entertain ideas that they felt threatened their control. Even with the rejection of what most of the developed world at that point considered to be strong economic policy, they were able to grow and find strong economic footing to become the world's second largest economy. In times of crisis, authoritarian regimes are able to recover with or without Western ideals.

**We Are NOT The Same, You and I.**

One could argue that not all authoritarian regimes are created equal. As of May 3, 2020, Iran (the authoritarian state with the highest recorded death rate) had 73.29 deaths per million people, Russia had 8.37.[24] How can it be argued that authoritarian leadership is the solution when there is such a disparity in the effectiveness of authoritarian leadership across the globe? Not all authoritarian pandemic responses are equally effective, but they *have* the tools to fight COVID-19 with a strong stance; it is simply a matter of using them.

Democracies do not have the ability to enact dominating authoritarian responses, and therefore do not stand the same chance for success. While Iran's per capita death rate is much higher than Russia's, it is still far below the per capita death rates of the five countries with the highest death rates (all democracies), the lowest of which is The U.S. with 200.56.[25]

**Chaos Reveals the World's True Needs**

As countries struggle with their options in the global fight against COVID-19, there are some paths that are more inclined to succeed. Authoritarian methods are, unavoidably, the better option. They can make rapid, centralized decisions to implement new solutions as situations change, quell dissent before it endangers internal populuses, and promotes the best shot at faster recovery.

There is a logical desire to be attracted to strong leadership in times of stress and pressure. And right now we, global citizens, are all undergoing stress as we try and make it through this pandemic together. But if decisive measures are not implemented quickly enough, people will die and society will crumble.

Authoritarian methods can, and should, be adapted as necessary in this time of crisis. These include strong leadership to ensure the virus is contained, quick responses through testing and tracing, and controlled information to the public preventing hysteria and misinformation. aired with the ability to have fast economic growth, these policies would result in a total recovery after this pandemic. The only option we have as global citizens is to support and encourage a change to authoritarianism in this global crisis.

22 *The Economist.* 2020. "Is China Winning?." Accessed April 21, 2020.

23 "When Innovation Meets Authoritarianism." n.d. Institute for New Economic Thinking. Accessed April 21, 2020.

24 "Total Confirmed Covid-19 Deaths Per Million People." Our World in Data. April 30, 2020.

25 Ibid.

*Artisan Belt: Marrakesh, Morrocco*
*Lauren Pichard*

# Muhammed Mosaddiq and the Nationalization of the Iranian Oil Industry

*Lila Khammash*

When Mohammed Reza Shah succeeded his father Reza Pahlavi to the throne in 1941, the monarch inherited an insecure country weakened by communal fragmentation and a lack of constitutionalism. Iran, under Anglo-Soviet occupation at the time, was also troubled with an unparalleled emergence of resentment among its population, which increasingly grew with the rising influence of Western powers – including Britain, the U.S.S.R., and the USA – in Iran. Particularly, Iranians felt frustrated by the generous oil concessions made by Reza Shah to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC) in 1933, whose long-term effects included a heavy dependence of the Iranian economy on Britain. These sentiments, which united virtually all sectors of Iran's otherwise fractionalized society, found a spokesman in Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh. This paper explores the role Mossadegh played in exploiting the population's nationalist xenophobia to nationalize the Iranian oil industry, a historical event that contributed to the formation of modern-day Iran.

From its outset in 1933, the agreement with AIOC was muddled with problems. Iran was granted a modest 20 percent of the company's annual revenues (Cleveland 181), which perpetuated the British monopoly over the Iranian oil industry and economy. Since AIOC accounted for 12.9 percent of the government's annual revenues, and provided employment for some 175,000 Iranian labourers (Efimenco 393), it was seen as another manifestation of British influence in Iran. Furthermore, the AIOC was viewed as an entity that failed to compensate Abadan, the site of the world's largest oil refinery that lay in southwest Iran (Cleveland 276), to a degree comparable to the Saudi Arabian oil royalties, which at the time were also under foreign control. This prevailing issue prompted Mohammed Mossadegh to form the National Front coalition in 1949. The alliance was backed by Iran's two ideologically divergent factions: *Feddayan al-Islam* (Islamists), under Ayatollah Khashani, and *Tudeh* (pro-Soviet Communists), both of which strongly opposed foreign influence and royalism (Efimenco 396). Equating nationalization with a fight against "the enemies of Iran and Islam" (Abrahamian 265-266), Mossadegh and his allies were able to generate popular enthusiasm for the National Front's cause, pushing the *Majlis* (parliament) to pass legislation to cancel the 1933 oil concession and nationalize the oil industry in 1951. The Majlis also invited Mossadegh to become Prime Minister, a position he held between 1951 and 1953.

The Nationalization Law of 1951, eventually signed by the Shah under heavy domestic pressure, envisioned complete control of Iranian oil resources and vindication of the past record of subjugation to foreign exploitation (Efimenco 392). At the time the law was issued, Iran was geographically sandwiched between two antagonistic power blocs: Soviet to the north and Anglo-American to the south. Iranian patriots, striving for national liberation, wanted no involvement in the rivalry. They hoped that the law, among other things, would act as a requisite for neutrality in view of Iran's rejection of an oil agreement with the U.S.S.R. (Efimenco 395). Still, despite initially being considered a collective victory for Mossadegh and Iranians, the oil nationalization proved more significant in terms of the adverse consequences it eventually reaped.

Britain's first response was to lodge a formal complaint against Iran with the International Court of Justice (Efimenco 393), eliciting a series of events that would cost Iran the lives of hundreds, and sever some of its long-standing diplomatic ties. When U.S. diplomat W. Harriman arrived in Tehran in 1951 to negotiate an end to the crisis, nationalist protests resulted in the death of 20 Iranians (Kinzer 101). Due to this incident and their failure to secure armed assistance from Washington, Britain resorted to imposing economic penalties on Iran. The retribution started with a call by the AIOC for a worldwide boycott of Iranian oil, which was supported by Britain and later the U.S. (Cleveland 276). This prevented Iran from selling its oil on the international market, a consequence that was exacerbated after UK Royal Navy Warships intercepted an Italian tanker leaving Iran. The attack was carried out on the grounds that the ship's oil was "stolen property", and it successfully barred whatever was left of Iranian oil exports (Kinzer 138). Furthermore, the British cabinet prohibited the export of key British commodities to Iran and supported the AIOC in closing down its oil installations in Abadan (Cleveland 276).



Britain, with its monopoly of the world's oil tanker fleet and control of the market allocations for Middle East oil, was barely fazed by the closing of the Abadan refineries. However, the blow proved disastrous for the Iranian economy. With the departure of most foreign personnel, oil production significantly fell from 242 million barrels in 1950 to 10.6 million barrels in 1952 due to a lack of maintenance and expertise (McKern 300). This led to dwindling oil revenues, increasing unemployment, and rising consumer inflation (Cleveland 277). Ironically, the financial crisis compelled "nationalist" Mossadegh to seek financial assistance from the World Bank, an attempt that was ultimately met with failure (Abrahamian 268).

With foreign scapegoats now expelled, Mossadegh could no longer use propaganda to rationalize the shortcomings of his administration. As opposition to the National Front grew with the economic crisis, Mossadegh had no choice but to struggle for personal power. Disillusioned by the uncertainty of the Anglo-American bloc, Mossadegh confidently refused compromising on nationalization, severing diplomatic relations with Britain in 1952 (Cleveland 276). Mossadegh's delusion of grandeur was only inflated when the Majlis extended his emergency decree-making powers, allowing him to rule without the consideration of parliament. Khashani saw this as unconstitutional and defected from the coalition (Efimenco 399). Mossadegh then placed the armed forces under the control of the government and immediately began expelling pro-Shah commanders, a move that drew even more opposition in the form of military officers plotting a coup. Meanwhile, it appeared that the strength of such leftist organizations as *Tudeh* increased in direct proportion to the irresponsibility of the National Front. This observation heavily influenced U.S. policy in favour of the Shah, as the prospect of a *Tudeh*-dominated government inTehran would endanger American efforts to keep Soviet influence away from the Persian Gulf, where American oil interests lay (Efimenco 406).

In light of the aforementioned events, Washington, with assistance from London, dispatched CIA agents to Tehran to assist in a military-led coup against Mossadegh, which the Shah agreed to in advance. Despite initially failing, the coup – referred to as Operation Ajax – resulted in the imprisonment of Mossadegh, his replacement by Fazallah Zahedi, and the return of royal dictatorship under Mohammad Reza Shah in 1953 (Cleveland 277). Operation Ajax "brought down an iron curtain on Iranian politics" (Abrahamian 450). Following the coup, the Shah took all measures necessary to consolidate his power, including settling the oil dispute with an even more generous concession to AIOC, proclaiming Iran's commitment to the Western alliance. Reza Shah furthermore established SAVAK, an internal security organization with US and Israeli assistance to squelch the reemergence of organized opposition (Cleveland 278).

Initially considered a heroic act of patriotism, the nationalization of the Iranian Oil Company in 1951 proved fragile before the fundamental issues weakening the fabric of Iranian society. Government propaganda against the AIOC mistakenly created the impression that Britain had been the *sole* root of Iran's social ills. Mossadegh's diversionary national symbol averted policy away from the fragmented social order and inequitable distribution of economic and political power that contributed to Iran's instability. The country's unfavourable geographic location also made it impossible to escape external pressures. Surely, Mossadegh's failure to fortify the National Front's base in parliament, his underestimation of the monarchy's strength, and his arrogance at times only made the nationalization of the oil industry more detrimental. Ultimately, the aforementioned nationalization unfortunately caused more damage than reform, reinforcing Western influence on Iranian society, and reinvigorating monarchic oppression. Had Mossadegh used the oil revenues to drive domestic reform and build the parliamentary stability and societal unity necessary to weaken foreign influence within Iran, perhaps the Abadan oil situation would have been a victory, rather than a crisis.

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# UNRWA in Palestinian Territories: Options for Sustainable Development

*Matthew Schwabel*

This paper will examine the complex case of aid provision by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in the Palestinian Territories. This is an important issue because aid in Palestine is often diminished in its effectiveness, disrupted by political actors, or destructive to potential economic and social development, in part due to Palestine's unique situation as occupied territory. There are three policy options in addressing this issue: maintaining the current system of UNRWA operations, pushing for a more politically active role for UNRWA on behalf of Palestinians, ora reallocation of funds from temporary aid programs into long term development. This paper ultimately posits that a combination of more political advocacy and long-term infrastructure development is the best approach to address the humanitarian situation in Palestine, because Palestine requires sustainable development and political solutions to address the root causes of the humanitarian crises.

**Background & Importance**

A brief overview of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is needed in order to understand the broader context in which the UNRWA operates. In 1948, as a direct result of the Arab-Israeli war, between 520,000 to 1,000,000 Palestinians fled their homes in Palestine, many to Gaza and the West Bank (Kamrava 2013, 105). The occupied Palestinian territories examined in this essay consist of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which have been under Israeli control since the Six-Day War of 1967. It is worth noting that while the West Bank is still officially under Israeli occupation, the Gaza Strip is technically unoccupied since 2005. This was established when Israel initiated a unilateral withdrawal of Israeli troops and settlers from Gaza (Filiu 2014, 56). Despite being formally unoccupied, a combination of Egyptian-Israeli border restrictions and Israeli sea blockades contribute to severe deficiencies in electricity, sewage treatment, water supply, home construction, and medical services (Human Rights Watch 2019). In the West Bank, while not under outright closure, Palestinians have significantly less access to water, electricity, and government services than Israeli settlers, and are often at risk of having their homes and businesses demolished (World Report 2019).

There have been many aid and developmental programs focused on Palestinians over the years, but the largest and most prominent of these is the UNRWA (Ryseck and Johannsen 2009). The United Nations Relief and Works Agency was established in 1949 in an attempt to directly provide humanitarian and economic assistance to Palestinian refugees affected by the 1948 war (Schiff 1989, 60). Although intended to be a temporary relief for displaced Palestinians, the agency's mandate has been renewed consistently over the years, and it has developed into a semi-permanent fixture of Palestinian society (Al-Husseini 2020, 51). While the UNRWA has continued to provide valuable services to Palestinians in the form of employment, healthcare, education, and infrastructure building over the years, a lack of attention to consistent political, economic, and developmental backsliding has cast doubt on the efficacy of UNRWA's approach (Brown 2018). Working in occupied and highly politicized territory while under the UN charter certainly limits the options for UNRWA. However, if UNRWA is to continue evolving into a permanent fixture of Palestinian development, more scrutiny must be placed on its policies to ensure that it is actually creating lasting change in the Palestinian territories. The actions of UNRWA going forward will have lasting ramifications for not only the people of Palestine, but for populations around the world attempting to create lasting developmental change with foreign assistance, especially in stateless or occupied nations.

**Policy Options and Analysis**

**Policy Option 1: Maintaining UNRWA's Current Approach**

The most straightforward policy option for UNRWA is to continue the current system of providing various social and economic assistance to Palestinians. As of 2010, UNRWA employs over 30,000 Palestinian nationals, and currently holds a policy of hiring refugees "whenever possible to promote refugee employment" (Al-Husseini 2010, 12). UNRWA currently operates five main programs providing services to Palestinian refugees in the following sectors: healthcare, education, social services, microfinance and infrastructure, and camp improvement. In 2020, UNRWA reported that 58% of their 806 million US dollar budget would go towards education, with 15% allocated for health, 13% for support services, 6% for social services, and 4% for infrastructure and camp improvement ("What We Do," 2020). As it stands, the current UNRWA model mainly aims to reduce poverty, hunger, illness, and insecurity among Palestinian refugees while improving education services and economic development.



*Strengths*

The current approach employed by UNRWA has proven to be effective at providing immediate relief and services to Palestinians in need. UNRWA has continued to benefit greatly from its long history of work in Palestine, as well as its entrenchment in Palestinian society in almost every facet of public works and services. Al-Husseini (2010, 6) writes that the deeply involved nature of UNRWA has, "made for impressive operational achievements, including the spread of literacy… the absence of epidemics… quick responses to emergency situations, and vocation and other training for… refugees." UNRWA's primary focus on education and health seems to be providing tangible benefits in Palestinian society, as they reported that 80% of UNRWA vocational trainees secure jobs after graduation, UNRWA school enrollment increased from 526,000 to 533,342 students from 2018-2019, and over 270,000 refugees received medical care from UNRWA in 2019 ("UNRWA in Figures," 2019). UNRWA's impact in the Palestinian territories over seven decades of operation is hard to quantify, but the direct relief in food aid, emergency response, and medical care cannot be overlooked. In continuing to provide tangible assistance to Palestinians while investing in future growth with educational programs, UNRWA is exercising its unique position to make direct, immediate improvements in the lives of Palestinians.

*Weaknesses*

Despite some of UNRWA's achievements in the Palestinian territories, the temporary nature of its mandate, its efforts to stay apolitical in a distinctly politicized environment, and the seemingly stagnant situation for Palestinian social and economic growth casts significant doubt on the efficacy of its policies for long lasting development.

UNRWA aid programs, however well meaning, contribute to the depoliticization of Palestinians living in occupied territory. Tabar (2016, 20) summarizes this issue in the context of food aid, writing, "The international food aid program… which is now institutionalized, reduces structural problems faced by indigenous Palestinians to an economic issue, deflecting the political reality at their core." Although directly addressing food aid programs, this same logic can be applied more broadly across Palestine to issues of education, employment, and infrastructure. As is often the case in humanitarian situations where the population receiving aid are the victims of a politically centered conflict, efforts to remedy situations on the ground can contribute to a narrative that distracts from the structural factors causing the inequalities, in this case, occupation. UNRWA's temporary mandate and Palestine's economic situation are also cause for concern. In 2015, Palestinian per capita income was at the same level it had been in 1999, and unemployment rates were 37% and 17% in Gaza and the West Bank, respectively, despite receiving unprecedented levels of aid per person (Farsakh 2016, 48-49). Ryseck and Johannsen (2009) write that UNRWA is the largest employer of Palestinian refugees, an initially encouraging statistic that becomes worrying when considering that UNRWA's mandate is set to be renewed every three years, and UNRWA itself is still considered a temporary agency. UNRWA's overt focus on education seems short sighted when there is a good chance that even the best educated Palestinian citizens will be likely to graduate into a jobless market. In addition to this, in the event that UNRWA is dissolved, or is forced to dramatically cut programs and job opportunities, many Palestinians would be left without vital services and employment, lacking the infrastructure and internal development to function without UNRWA.

**Policy Option 2: Increased Politicization of UNRWA**

The second option available to UNRWA is to coordinate more with Palestinian institutions and advocate more heavily for Palestinian rights, essentially politicizing its role further. UNRWA would not necessarily be able to take a hard line stance on the right of return due to staunch resistance from the Israeli government and UNRWA's status as a UN institution tying its hands on overt political decisions, but it could mean a greater role in peace talks and Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. This would also not be a push for greater resettlement efforts, as large-scale Palestinian resistance to resettlement in the past, as well as failures on UNRWA's part to secure funding and establish self-supportive resettled communities has painted this option as untenable

(Al-Husseini 2010, 8). Rather, this policy would involve taking on a greater role in representing Palestinian interests, coordinating with Israeli and Palestinian leadership, and serving as a watch dog to uphold and protect human rights in Palestine.

*Strengths*

UNRWA's unique position as a semi-state institution in Palestine gives it a greater ability to coordinate development and institutional cooperation, leading to higher potential for peace talks, more sustainable development, and better protection of Palestinian human rights. There is already a precedent for this increased politicization of the organization, drawing from UNRWA's past political cooperation with the PLO in development, moving UNRWA's headquarters to Gaza, and documenting and intervening in IDF incursions into Palestinian territory (Al-Husseini 2000, 61; Krähenbühl 2019, 46). There is evidence that the UN could be persuaded to support a more politically involved stance in UNRWA. Schiff (1989, 70) writes that in 1988 the UN secretary general "made explicit in his report the desirability of using UNRWA international employees to help reduce the harshness of the occupation." Coupled with growing Palestinian support for UNRWA over the years, especially amongst Palestinian leadership, this policy could be a viable option (Al-Husseini 2000). With seven decades of existing networks and connections, UNRWA stands in the perfect spot to serve as an intermediary between Palestinian leaders, the Israeli government, and the world stage, all while providing greater protection for people living in Palestine.

*Weaknesses*

In spite of these strengths, the political realities of UNRWA funding, Israeli criticism, and past difficulties in coordinating UNRWA efforts with Palestinian leaders reduce the viability of this policy option, both in its initial implementation and its long-term success. UNRWA is almost entirely funded by voluntary contributions from UN member states, which puts special emphasis on UNRWA to maintain the interests of donor governments in order to retain funding in the face of growing demand for UNRWA services ("UNRWA Funding," 2020). A prime example of this pushback is the case of the United States cutting almost $300 million dollars of aid to UNRWA in 2018, criticizing UNRWA's fiscal management and Palestinian sentiments towards the United States (George, 2018). UNRWA risks losing even more funding if it strays too far into the political realm or oversteps its mandate. In this same vein, UNRWA relies heavily on Israeli cooperation to carry out its humanitarian mission. Schiff (1989, 64) writes that, "[UNRWA's] installations are connected to Israeli utilities; it transports material over Israeli roads and across Israel's borders; Israel formally controls the people and the land in the territories." The dangers of greater UNRWA collaboration with Palestinian groups has risen markedly in the past twenty years, with the Israeli government accusing UNRWA of aiding terrorists, employing anti-Israel rhetoric and policy, and providing legitimacy and shelter to Hamas (Ryseck and Johannsen 2009, 264). Even without considering donor and Israeli issues with greater UNRWA dialogue and coordination with Palestinian leaders, the constantly shifting political situation in Palestine has historically led to difficulty in collaborating with a consistent and unified Palestinian government (Ryseck and Johannsen 2009, 262-263). Increased politicization of UNRWA for the benefit of Palestinians in the long term could very well lead to a forced reduction in immediate aid services, which is a tradeoff that few humanitarian agencies would be willing to make.

**Policy Option 3: Reallocate Funding for Economic and Infrastructural Development**

The third option available to UNRWA is a reallocation of funds towards economic and infrastructural development, in order to steer away from short term relief measures and focus on long term, lasting development. Without dramatic cuts to programs, aid would be slowly diverted away from short term programs such as food aid, education, health, and social services into infrastructure and development programs. Barring an increase in funding for UNRWA that would allow the funding of both long and short-term programs simultaneously, this slow reallocation would allow for the development of self-sustaining systems of education, healthcare, agriculture, and social services and significantly reduce the need for continued UNRWA administration of public services in Palestine.

**Strengths**

The greatest strength of this policy option is that it attempts to address one of the most pressing issues in the Palestinian territories today: aid dependency. Calis (2013, 11) writes that, "West Bank Palestinian society is, in fact, entirely dependent upon and influenced by various forms



of foreign assistance." Although UNRWA is far from the only aid provider in the West Bank or Gaza, it undoubtedly plays a large role in the creation of this dependency. By taking steps to build self-sustaining and independent systems, UNRWA will be able to not only lessen its direct involvement in Palestine, but also insulate Palestinians from shocks from future funding or policy changes to UNRWA. This will also reduce outside actors' influence on Palestine. Tabar (2016, 19) writes that, "96 percent of staple items and food commodities in the [Palestinian territories] are now imported, largely from the Israeli settler state's economy." Although there are certainly limitations on how independent Palestine can become without concessions from Israel, more investment and training from UNRWA in fields like agriculture and manufacturing would greatly reduce Palestine's dependence on international aid, and Israel in particular. This would reduce the political power that outside actors have over Palestinians and improve the overall well-being of Palestinians in both employment and resource availability.

*Weaknesses*

This policy is weakened by two factors, the unilateral power that the Israeli government holds over Palestine, and the UNRWA's lack of funding. Regardless of any hypothetical progress UNRWA makes in developing schools, agriculture, or manufacturing, there is the distinct possibility that the Israeli government will dismantle this infrastructure at any time through broad counter offensives against Hamas in Gaza or illegal demolitions and seizures in the West Bank. History of the Israeli government demolishing or seizing schools, solar panels, farms, and villages does not present a hopeful case for the future of UNRWA development lasting long enough to be worth drawing funding from short term programs ("Demolitions in the News", 2012). The lack of additional funding in UNRWA for this shift also compounds this issue. If money is diverted away from short term food provision or healthcare into sustainable development, and then that development is destroyed or fails, the funding has disappeared, and the Palestinians are then without even short-term aid.

**Recommendation**

The most realistic and sustainable policy solution for long term development and stability in Palestine is a combination of options 2 and 3. More specifically, a cautiously measured approach is needed, requiring UNRWA to increase its political representation of Palestinians only so much as it can do so without incurring significant push back from its donors or Israel. In this same way, UNRWA would begin to invest in long term infrastructure development to the extent that its budget allows without abandoning the immediate needs of Palestinians. By tackling the joint issues of Palestinian political representation and infrastructure development, UNRWA can mitigate the weakness of both policies. More political coordination facilitated between Israeli and Palestinian leaders can provide more space for UNRWA to implement sustainable development programs without Israeli interference. More self-sustained Palestinian infrastructure will reduce the need for direct UNRWA intervention, reducing Israeli anxieties about UNRWA interference and Palestinian concerns about aid dependence. Neither option necessarily requires more funding or a change in mandate and as such can be implemented without significant agency overhaul.

In some years, the political or budget situation may necessitate halting political or infrastructure work in the event that employing either policy would jeopardize UNRWA's immediate mission to provide direct aid in Palestine. This is a frustrating and very slow going option, but given the political and economic stagnation in Palestine under the current policy of aid provision, gradual and cautious change is better than none at all.

Conclusion

The incredibly complex and polarized situation in the occupied Palestinian territories can seem entirely static and resistant to change. This is a false assumption. Although the situation is indeed highly polarized and certainly slow moving, it is still a dynamic and ever-changing case that requires dynamic solutions. The policy combination suggested in this paper embraces this dynamic environment by proposing policies that address weaknesses in each other and can be scaled up or down in intensity according to changing political and economic constraints. In cases like Palestine, defeatism or submission to the seemingly impossible nature of the situation will do nothing other than perpetuate the same band-aid solutions in favor of real, lasting development and political change.

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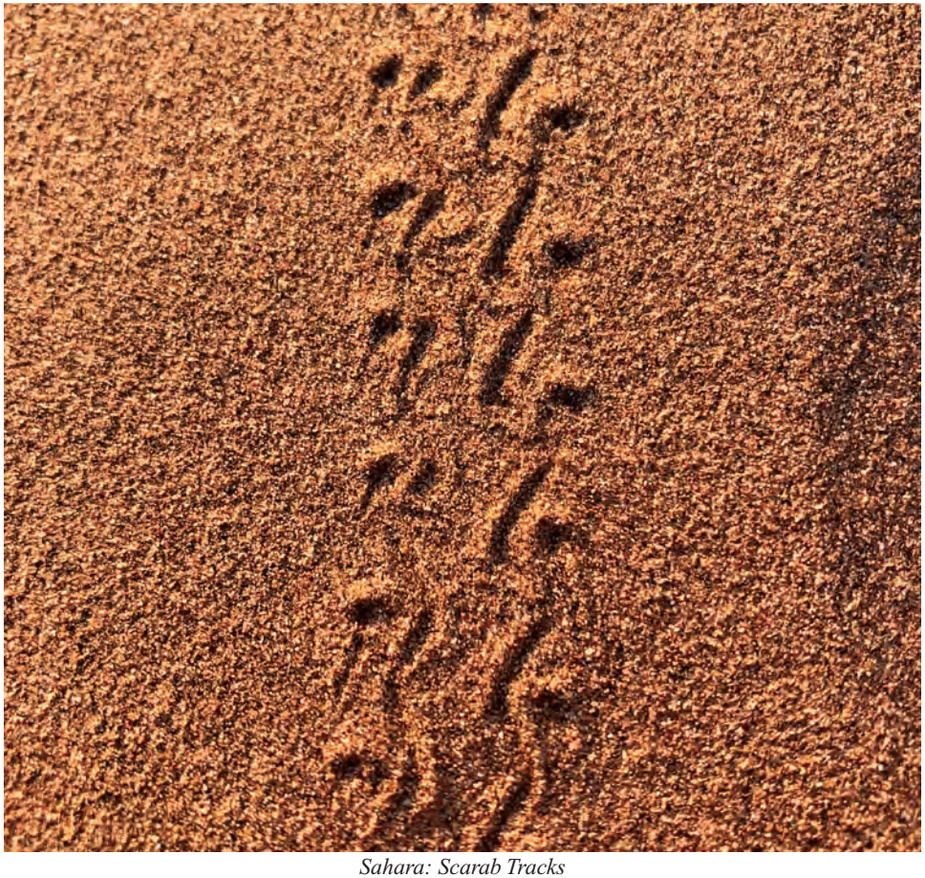

*Sahara: Scarab Tracks*
*Lauren Pichard*

# Safe Third-Country Agreements: US Policy Solutions for the Northern Triangle

*Jack Norman*

This paper focuses on the United States' Safe Third Country Agreements and their impacts on refugees from states in the Northern Triangle—Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. The issue is important because these Safe Third Country Agreements endanger refugees, are inconsistent with international law, and perpetuate a humanitarian crisis rather than solving it. Future policy options for the United States include maintaining current Safe Third Country Agreements and immigration policies, moving to a system of increased burden-sharing of asylum-seekers and adopting multilateral immigration policies that protect refugees, and discarding Safe Third Country Agreements in favor of revisionist immigration law and policies. This paper's policy recommendation for the United States is to discard the Safe Third Country Agreements in favor of new policies that follow international law and work with the regional and international communities to protect refugees and address the evolving humanitarian crisis in the Northern Triangle.

**Background**

To understand the basic dimensions of this issue, it is important to examine the origin countries of the refugees impacted by these agreements, what Safe Third Country Agreements are, and core tenets of international human rights law.

The Northern Triangle countries of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador have experienced political, economic, and societal turmoil for decades. Guatemala has had a series of corruption scandals involving the last five Guatemalan presidents, including the current one (Pineo, 2020). Honduras has long been in the control of the state's economic elites and military, and as recently as 2017 Trump recognized a fraudulent election's victor as president (Pineo, 2020). El Salvador has been recovering from a civil war in the 1980s in which the U.S.-backed authoritarian regime terrorized civilians in an effort to thwart the leftist FMLN rebel group, and over the past two decades it has dealt with political scandals (Pineo, 2020). The majority of the problems facing the Northern Triangle center around corrupt governments incapable of providing solutions to endemic poverty and violence. Perpetuating these problems are powerful and violent gangs such as MS-13 and M-18, which have emerged because of the Northern Triangle's geographic sandwich between the world's largest drug producers in South America and the world's largest consumer of illegal drugs – United States (De Jesus, 2019). In 2015 alone, there were a recorded 13,400 murders in the Northern Triangle, as well as at least 55,000 known cases of internally displaced persons; additionally, 30,000 students dropped out of school (Medrano, 2017). The primary sources and effects of violence in these countries are massacred bodies on the street, rival gang killings, police-gang killings, girls and women being recruited or disappeared, cultures of silence, mistrust, and fear, and territorial based killings (De Jesus, 2019). Swaths of the Northern Triangle are completely unsafe to live in, and the governmental inability to protect civilians has led to a refugee crisis in which people have been left with no choice but to flee the violence and make the long and dangerous trek north to find safety.

Safe Third Country Agreements are bi- or multilateral agreements signed between governments to provide regional structure to immigration and refugee flow. They resemble readmission agreements in that their structure consists of a requesting state and a requested state—destination and origin states, respectively—that require the requested state to readmit their own nationals if they are found to be in the requesting state illegally (Caron, 2017, 34). U.S. Safe Third Country agreements effectively take readmission agreements a step further by requiring hopeful refugees to apply for asylum in the first state with a signed agreement that they step foot in. If they fail to apply in the first state and continue to the next, they are forcibly removed to the first state to await adjudication of their first request (Von Sternberg, 2014).

Finally, international human rights and refugee law provides agreed-upon norms that states can look to when crafting their immigration and refugee policy. Their intentions are to set out a clear baseline for universal human rights and to set the bar for the way that states craft their immigration and refugee policies. Some of the most important tenets of international human rights law reside in the UN Refugee Convention of 1951. Article 33 states that "…a refugee may not be returned to the frontiers of a state wherein her life or freedom would be threatened by reason of race, religion, nationality, membership in a social group or political opinion", and Article 3 of the Convention Against Torture "…preclude[s] the return of any person to a state wherein there are good reasons to believe that that individual would be subject to torture" (Von Sternberg, 2014). These international laws construct the basic principles surrounding the illegality of refoulement, or the forcible return of a refugee to the origin country.



The refugee crisis in the Northern Triangle has led millions of asylum seekers to flee north towards the United States and Canada. In 2019, the United States threatened the Northern Triangle countries and Mexico with sanctions until they signed Safe Third Country Agreements that are intended to disrupt the flow of refugees and thereby put asylum seekers in dangerous positions of insecurity (Galbraith, 2019). These agreements violate international human rights and refugee laws and perpetuate the endangerment of millions of asylum seekers.

**Analysis of Policy Options**

**Policy Option I: Maintaining Current Safe Third Country Agreements and Immigration Policies**

The first policy option that the U.S. has is to maintain the status quo and utilize these Safe Third Country Agreements to stem the flow of refugees from Northern Triangle countries that has threatened to overwhelm the U.S. asylum system, placing a burden upon the U.S.. The rationale behind many of the current U.S. immigration policies stems from post-9/11 arguments of national security (Kerwin, 2005, 751). Following 9/11, terrorism became a hot-button topic, with a focus on tightening immigration to protect U.S. national security. When it comes to immigration policy, civil rights were sacrificed in the name of combatting terrorism. There are a number of U.S. immigration policies that are intended to keep refugees out, one of them being a post-9/11 "…Terrorist Grounds of Inadmissibility…" that has been used inappropriately by the United States in refugee cases applying to the Northern Triangle (Von Sternberg, 2014). The U.S. has used this precedent to turn back people who have been coerced by gangs and are seeking asylum on these grounds, and uses 1996 U.S. reform legislation that allows for the expedited removal of aliens without documents to be returned without a hearing (Von Sternberg 2014). In addition, the United States Board of Immigration Appeals made the decision to refuse cases of children fleeing involvement with gangs (Von Sternberg, 2014). The U.S.'s current Safe Third Country Agreements and immigration policy skirts around international laws such as the above mentioned Article 33 of the Refugee Convention of 1951 by claiming that asylum seekers fleeing from gangs does not fall under one of the social groups that are protected by international law (Von Sternberg, 2014).

*Strengths*

The current set of Safe Third Country Agreements and immigration policies are a well-thought out system of refugee and asylum seeker denial through the use of legal frameworks that prioritize national security and the United States over human rights and refugees. By using a legal framework that focuses on precedent, the filing of the correct documents and forms, and immigration as a whole rather than on an individual level, the U.S. has created an efficient system that skirts international law and removes refugee agency. However, it is clear that the focus is not so much on protecting these individuals, but more so on keeping refugees out of the U.S.

*Weaknesses*

This policy option ignores human and refugee rights completely. International law dictates that refugees must be protected from persecution, and the return of refugees to states in which they are fleeing violence and instability directly contradicts that. By signing these Safe Third Country Agreements with Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, the U.S. is asking refugees that are fleeing violence in their home countries to essentially apply for asylum in countries that are themselves dangerous. To expect countries that cannot protect their own populations to then take on the burden of protecting millions of asylum seekers from other countries not only violates international law, but creates additional problems for the struggling states of the Northern Triangle (Galbraith, 2019). This is a version of legal refoulement, one in which in order to actually work, the destination state would need to be able to ensure that the origin state that the refugees are being returned to is actually safe to return to (Caron, 2017, 42). Following this policy option would ensure the continued degradation of a humanitarian crisis that harms human lives and perpetuates a problem that the U.S. has the resources to address.

**Policy Option II: Burden-Sharing and the Adoption of Multilateral Immigration Policies to Protect Refugees**

This policy adoption would require the U.S. to work with the regional community to ensure the protection of refugee rights and equally distribute regional responsibilities. Specifically, this policy amendment would require

the U.S. to certify the 'safe' status of refugee host countries in order to sign a Safe Third Country Agreement with them. For example, if the U.S. wishes to sign an agreement with the Guatemalan government that would return refugees that first applied for asylum in Guatemala back to Guatemala, then Guatemala would have to meet a set of standards that ensured it could protect refugees from persecution. Additionally, current Safe Third Country Agreements with Canada and Mexico could be altered to set in place refugee quotas that would ease the burden on the U.S. as the principal refugee destination and shift the burden to other countries capable of providing refugees asylum. Currently, the U.S. has 3.2 million registered residents from Northern Triangle countries, whereas Mexico and Canada have under 200,000 and 100,000 respectively (Medrano, 2017). These numbers do not even come close to reflecting the number of people who actually need protection, and through burden-sharing potentially more refugees could be protected.

*Strengths*

From a human rights perspective, working to ensure the protection of refugees by certifying potential host countries would prevent persecution by the very violence that refugees fled from to begin with. It would also prevent perpetuating of the crisis by making sure governments are materially able to provide for asylum seekers. From a legal perspective, the alteration of current Safe Third Country Agreements with Canada and Mexico to set refugee quotas would prevent the overwhelming of the U.S. immigration and refugee system. This would also protect refugees by ensuring that instead of being returned to potentially unsafe origin countries, there would be a materially capable country such as Canada or Mexico able to provide refuge.

*Weaknesses*

This policy proposal is ultimately weakened by its inability to consider the agency of the refugee. Under international law asylum seekers are given the agency to choose where to file, and by assigning refugee quotas to countries that are deemed safe, refugee ability to choose where they would like to file and potentially be granted asylum is diminished (Von Sternberg, 2014). This potential shuffling of refugees around between countries can promote Refugee in Orbit Syndrome. This includes refugee claimants being returned to another state in which they are deemed to have prior presence and in turn declines the jurisdiction of the receiving state until their refugee case has been approved or denied, potentially lengthening the amount of time refugees spend waiting for asylum before being ultimately deported (Von Sternberg, 2014). Refugee in Orbit Syndrome is a common problem of Safe Third Country Agreements to begin with, but if country quotas were assigned could potentially exacerbate this problem even more. While this proposal promotes regional cooperation and would potentially help protect refugees, this policy solution also potentially violates international law in a way that removes all agency of refugees and does not guarantee their safety.

**Policy Option III: Discarding of Safe Third Country Agreements in Favor of Revisionist Laws and Policies**

This policy option focuses on coming into accordance with international law and making refugee safety the priority. This policy advocates for the dissolution of the legal framework that allows for the deportation of asylum seekers that have not followed the proper legal steps but have still arrived at a port of entry seeking asylum. This policy would be based on a number of international laws, such as the 1967 Refugee Convention and Protocol that ensures refugees will not be returned to their home country from which they were fleeing persecution (Cutler, 2004, 130),the abovementioned Article 33 of the Refugee Convention of 1951, and Article 3 of the Convention Against Torture. In order to protect refugees from the Northern Triangle legally, a redefinition of what kind of persecution warrants asylum status is necessary. This policy proposes that the 1984 Cartagena Declaration, which expands upon the 1967 Refugee Convention and Protocol, become the baseline for U.S. refugee protections. The Cartagena Declaration redefines those that qualify for refugee status as "… people who have fled their home countries because their life, security, or freedom has been threatened by widespread violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violations of human rights, or other circumstances that have seriously disrupted public order in a country", instead of just "…including only those who have been persecuted due to their membership in a protected group…" and essentially providing refugees fleeing the Northern Triangle countries asylum in the U.S.
(Medrano, 2017).



*Strengths*

This policy solution saves lives, follows international law, and returns the U.S. to a leadership role in the legitimization of international law and institutions. By opening U.S. borders to asylum seekers, the U.S. discontinues its immoral and unsafe policy of deporting vulnerable refugees to unsafe environments. This policy also falls in line with international law that is designed to provide physical, mental, and emotional protection and dignity to refugees. Finally, by employing a policy that puts human rights above all else, the U.S. sends a clear message to the rest of the world that even the most powerful country is not above international institutions, international law and institutions matter, and that human rights abuses will not be tolerated.

*Weaknesses*

The idealistic nature of this policy solution is its downside. Implementing this kind of policy would require a major overhaul of the current refugee and immigration system. Problems caused by a massive influx of refugees in response to this kind of policy could include massively increasing refugee admission decision wait times, overcrowding at both ports of entry and processing centers, domestic public opinion push back, and potential national security risks related to terrorism.

**Recommendation**

Having explored various policy solutions to address the refugee crisis emerging from the Northern Triangle, the best policy solution for the United States to implement is Policy Option III. With this policy in place, the U.S. would look at this humanitarian crisis through a human rights lens rather than a legal one, and start prioritizing the protection of people over monetary cost. By enacting this policy, the U.S. moves away from putting refugee lives at risk through deportation and prevention. Instead of putting refugees in a process of material instability and emotional duress, refugees will be treated as humans and given the opportunity to succeed.

The implementation of this policy would include restructuring the immigration and asylum systems to deal with larger numbers of people. Resettlement programs, translators, funding, and other essential aspects of efficiently and safely accommodating refugees will all need to be expanded. Ways in which this can be done effectively are through the inclusion of NGOs and IGOs that are focused on helping Northern Triangle refugees such as the Central American Council of Lawyers for Human Rights and special divisions of the UN such as the UNHCR (Medrano, 2017). By including the UNHCR and NGOs, the U.S. will have individuals and groups with experience working with refugees and will help provide direction to the new policy. In terms of domestic public opinion pushback, the implementation of this policy is likely to be unpopular—the perception that immigrants take jobs away from U.S. citizens is popular in certain xenophobic communities of the U.S.. However, implementation of this policy would involve expanding resettlement programs, and resettling refugees across the U.S. rather than just in border states. Lastly, the promotion of national security as the reason to tighten immigration is invalid. Immigration facilities are perfectly capable of apprehending potential threats to national security at the border when given the right information, and the real issue lies with interagency communication concerning the dissemination of accurate intelligence information to the appropriate agencies (Kerwin, 2005, 754). By improving interagency communication in relation to refugee and asylum seekers agencies, national security issues can be avoided.

While the other policy options explored accomplish some of the goals of immigration and refugee policies, they fail when it comes to the refugee. Where the focus of the recommended policy solution is on the refugee through a humanitarian lens, the other policy solutions view it as a legal and monetary problem and therefore break international law.

**Conclusion**

The United States faces a unique challenge in the refugee crisis of the Northern Triangle. The current solution perpetuates the mistreatment of refugees and exacerbates the problems of the origin countries of asylum seekers. It violates international law and is essentially a form of refoulement. This paper poses a number of policy routes that the United States could take in order to better address the issue. Ultimately, the best policy solution is a humanitarian one that suggests reconfiguring our current immigration and refugee infrastructure to accommodate more refugees. This policy solution will follow international law, set an example for the rest of the world, and save the lives of thousands of refugees fleeing violence in the Northern Triangle.

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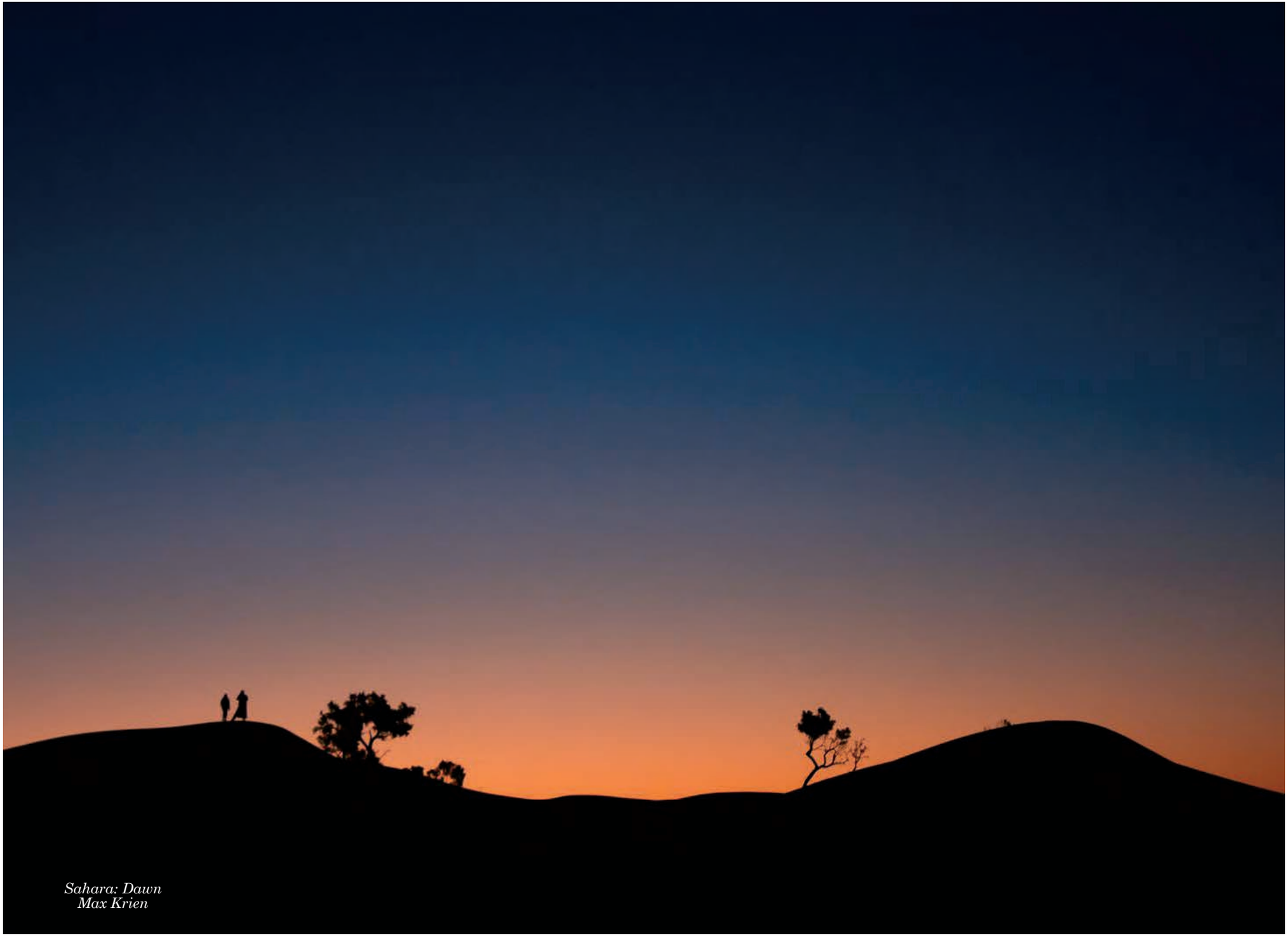

*Sahara: Dawn*
*Max Krien*