GLOBUS MUNDI

COSUMNES RIVER COLLEGE

CONTENTS

FACULTY PAGE

MARTIN MORALES

Welcome to volume eight of Globus Mundi, the official publication of the Department of Political Science and Global Studies at Cosumnes River College.

This has been a great year! We've finally turned the corner on recruitment and I'm pleased to report that we have a sizeable new cohort made up of amazing intellects characterized by far-ranging and diverse interests. Their works are featured in this, our eighth issue, and portions of their stories appear in my comments and Olivia Askins' "Alumni News."

This year, our transfers are **Nicholas Friend, Gurmilan Kaur, Michael McGinnis, Andi Murphy, Soovya Nagin, Sarah Ortiz, Robert Richter, Nephtali Robles, Maria Roman, Susana Sanchez, Christian Scott, John Skinner, Sean Snell** and **Aliyah Villareal**. Their transfer institutions are listed on page 7, in "Valete." We thank them for their contributions, mentorship of new students and honor them for their accomplishments. They'll be missed.

NEW AND OLD FACES

This year, Beth and I were delighted to have hired Adjunct Faculty. **Adrian Carpenter**, the Governor's Legislative Liaison, taught California Politics, a welcome addition to our curriculum particularly in these times. Our students were happy to have had her and recommend that others take this important course next year. Adrian completed the Los Rios Faculty Diversity Internship Program and interned for Beth as part of her required curriculum. Fortunately for our fourth term governor, Adrian will be there until his successor takes the oath of office. Unfortunately for CRC, Adrian won't be here in fall semester—but not to worry! **Dan Aseltine**, a twenty seven year veteran of the California community college system, having taught at Chaffey College and Cal Poly (Pomona)—currently taking global studies courses in the evenings—has been begged out of retirement

and will be teaching California Politics for us. **Betty Chan**, Adjunct Faculty at American River College and also a Los Rios Faculty Diversity Internship Program graduate, joined us from ARC where she interned under our ARC departmental colleague, **Kathleen Collihan**. **Alexis Hanson**, a former US Senate legislative aide, starts her career with us. She received her BA with Honors from UC Davis and her MA from SFSU. **Trevor Krapf**, our newest hire, currently teaching regionally, will be joining us this fall.

It's always funny—maybe not so as time marches on—to see familiar names on rosters. "Do you have a brother/sister/cousin with the same last name?" Sometimes you don't have to ask: they tell you the relative's name and share that they were told to "take his class." It's OK when it's on a roster. But when you see a name you had as a student on the schedule…. That changes things. I'm honored to have my good friend, CRC alumnus **Ryan Neach** on staff. Ryan attended CRC 2010-2012, transferred to my alma mater, SF State and earned both his BA and MA in IR there ('14 and '15, respectively). He interred for the SF World Affairs Council, SF Dems, Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi's Washington, DC office and in President Obama's Executive Office (EOP) throughout his undergraduate and graduate education. Ryan also published in this journal: "Untouchable Prosperity" (Vol. I, 2011) and "Becoming an International Pastime: The Difficulties of Migration for International Players into American Culture" (Vol. V, 2015).

WELCOME, ALL!

A classmate of **Ryan Neach's**, **Jacob Velasquez**, has also been hired to teach at CRC. Jacob was in a few of my classes 2010-2012 and did exceptionally well in all of them. He was, at that time, contemplating teaching as a profession and I gave him the opportunity to lecture a US Government class on federalism—a

complicated subject. He did well and then…. he turned to the dark side. No, he was stolen from us! Better yet because of its honesty, Jacob found his true love, academically, and followed that road to its logical conclusion through UC Berkeley and, now at UC Davis. I use the word logic, loosely, as that's what Jacob is teaching at CRC in the Philosophy Department. My colleague, **Dr. Rick Schubert**, apparently saw Jacob's brilliance and inspired him to study philosophy and pursue his doctorate. Welcome to the faculty, Jacob; well done, Rick.

Another familiar face was with us—again. **Ginny McReynolds** has completed yet another tour as our interim Dean since her 2014 retirement. We thank her for all her hard work, support and—in my case—patience.

EVENTS & OUTINGS

This year, our department hosted twenty events! We started the year by inviting the campus to a showing of "Romero," as part of Latin American Politics class. The film is a dramatization of the 1980 assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero at the hands of School of the Americas graduates. A three part special lecture series on "War & Strategy" and "Peace, Conflict and International Law" followed in International Relations. Each of these three topics is an unique transfer major in the UC system and a valuable overview for our students. We were fortunate to host Dan Kovalik, attorney, union organizer, peace activist and author. He was visiting the region promoting his latest book, "The Plot to Scapegoat Russia." His extensive experience in Central America tied in nicely with the content of Latin American Politics. The highlight for September was "Forensic Banking," with Sonia Desai. Sonia is a dear friend of mine from college who trekked up from The City to discuss how financial institutions help track illicitly gained monies to prevent their use in funding terrorism and crime. Sonia is a Vice President at Schwab Bank and serves as the bank's BSA/AML officer. Sonia has worked in banking for over twenty years—after serving in diplomatic intelligence for the US Department of State. (The event was recorded and is available for viewing on the departmental webpage.) October's first event was a wonderful interdisciplinary program, "Political Psychology and Political Sociology" introducing our students these two UC/CSU majors. I was joined by professors James Frazee (Psychology) and Rachel Browne (Sociology) that evening as we discussed social, political and economic events from all three disciplines' perspectives. Students were delighted at the exposure and many conversations were had as to evolving major choices! "Benazir Bhutto," a documentary on the life and times of Pakistan's assassinated leader was screened in October as a means of discussing events in Pakistan and helping set the stage for Women's History Month as she continues to inspire women to pursue leadership roles.

"Great Power Relations" explored American hegemony post WWII and exposed our decline in economics, diplomacy and education. An emergent China has moved to the fore on the world stage. "Is China destined to be the next hegemon?" "What might the world order look like under Chinese hegemony?"—these were the questions my wonderful colleague and friend Beth Huffman concluded her program with. "City of Life and Death" (by Lu Chuan) is China's first big budget film dealing with Japan's horrific 1937 occupation of Nanking. I was joined by my friend, History Professor **Diana Reed**, for a post-screening discussion on this powerful film based on Iris Chang's novel "The Rape of Nanking." The film won several awards including Asian Film Award for Best Director and the Asian Film Award for Best Cinematography. We closed out the fall semester—on campus—with a screening of "Imagining Argentina," a film addressing the Argentine Dirty War and actions taken by both the military and Argentines to combat the terror unleashed on real and imagined enemies of the military juntas governing Argentina. This film, like "Romero," was shown as part of Latin American Politics. The semester and year truly ended at our annual Alumni Christmas Event. Everybody dressed up, secret Santa gifts were exchanged after a shared meal and we parted until spring semester. Special thanks to **Brittany Cox** for once again organizing the evening's festivities.

Spring commenced with Beth Huffman and I hosting a viewing and discussion of the 2018 State of the Union Speech. An interesting evening to say the least! In February, we screened "The Square," a documentary on the Arab Spring in Egypt and used it to measure progress in those Arab nations that went—and are undergoing—transformations as a consequence of regional democratic movements. We also showed "La Grand Illusion," a 1938 Jean Renoir film depicting social interactions during the Great War. This event, apart from offering students an additional opportunity to explore and discuss political psychology and sociology, was used as a launch for Fall 2018's global studies offering, "Modern Europe and the Unification Process." April was a busy month due to last minute preparations associated with our team's preparation for the 68th Model United Nations of the Far West Conference. Despite this, we were able to host "White King, Red Rubber, Black Death," a film depicting the imaginary trial of Leopold II King of Belgium for crimes against the Congolese during Belgium's reign of terror in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. May is always bittersweet as we host our annual Departmental Colloquium and bid our transfer students adieu. The last goodbye comes at the "End of the Year BBQ," an occasion for our department and alumni to celebrate the year that was. June this year, as every June since 2011, sees the distribution of Globus Mundi. At press time, our last event is scheduled and I, for one, can't wait! A new tradition in the form of an alumni camping trip—highlighted by kayaking and long hikes, is born.

While we were very busy on campus, many of our students found time to organize outings over the course of this year. In no particular order, some/a few/a couple of students, some alumni and I went to/attended the following events: World Refugee Day at the SF World Affairs Council, the Armenian Food Festival, the Folsom Street Fair, SF Fleet Week (Blue Angels Air Show), North Beach Italian Heritage Festival and Columbus Day Parade, SF Fashion Week, the MSF Interactive Exhibit (Oakland), Vallencourt Plaza Ice-Skating Rink and Holiday Lighting Show at the Embarcadero Center, "Friendsgiving" (Elk Grove), Union Square Christmas Tree Lighting, trips to the de Young Museum and the Legion of Honor, the Chinese New Year's Parade, the Berkeley Persian New Year Festival and the Cherry Blossom Festival. And, of course, the weekly tradition of Wednesday Night pre-class dinners at local venues continues as strong as ever!

MODEL UN

This year's team, CRC's fifth, represented Ghana at the 68th MUNFW Conference held in Burlingame. The team was led by co-Presidents **Brenna Murray** and **Maria Roman** and they came home with their second consecutive win (third overall): The Slanckza Award for Diplomacy. Well done! The agenda was wonderful and allowed for our team, made up by **Carlie Stanfill, Corey Hurley, Amrit Rai, Andi Murphy, Nearyrath Chay, Chez Demoulin, Peter Weller, Brandon Plath, Isaac Coleman, Nethaniel Harris** and **Kayla Lougosis**, to shine as they represented Ghana in the General Assembly, UNHCR, various committees and in Committee 34. **Carlie Stanfill** was awarded an additional award for her work in Committee 34 and was selected Rapporteur, one of the highest honors at Model UN. As always, we owe tremendous thanks to our former VPI, **Whitney Yamamura** (now Folsom Lake College's President) and **Ginny McReynolds** for establishing Model UN as an academic institutional activity. Claudia Leal also deserves our gratitude for all the logistical support she provides. Gracias, loca!

COLLOQUIUM

This year, we hosted our fifth annual Colloquium and had three exceptional presentations. The first, by **Alejandra Sepulveda**, "Prevalence and Policies of Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Cross-Cultural Examination" focused on ASD and compared diagnosis of ASD and policies in the US, China, Russia, Africa, India and the Middle East. Alejandra consulted with **James Frazee, Ph.D**. as she researched the article that led to her presentation. **Brenna Murray** presented "Defeat & Deviance: The Sociological Foundations of Terrorism." Brenna showcased the consequences of "othering" and using the label "terrorist" in the context of the Palestinian Question. Brenna worked with Professor **Donnisha Lugo** on her research and was additionally supported by Professor **Casey Miller** (English).

Colloquium's last presentation was "At What Cost?" by **Nikoletta Karapanos**. Nikki focused on multiple facets of corporatism and capitalism and showed the detrimental effects to the environment and Kayapo people (Amazon) that result from deregulation. Nikki worked with **Anastasia Panagakos, Ph.D.** on her research and colloquium presentation. Colloquium looked back on the year that was and, as well, previewed events already scheduled for next year. Currently, we'll be hosting six films and six events. The evening concluded by listing our transfers and where they'll be next year. We're proud of our 73% UC transfer rate! (Colloquium is available for viewing on the departmental webpage.)

THE VIDEO

"All Things Connect," was a long term departmental promotions project intended for use in high schools and also for the general public's viewing. It's a video that discusses what the fields of international relations (aka "global studies") and political science are, what opportunities flow from these majors and feature student commentary on the journeys they've been able to embark upon with what they learned at CRC. This informative and inspirational video was produced, edited and directed by **Michael Bittner**, CRC's Educational Media Design Specialist and debuted at Colloquium and is hosted on the departmental webpage.

VOLUME VIII

We've been very fortunate as a publication to be able to draw on student artistic talent. This year's cover was drawn by **Corey Hurley**. "The World is on Fire," a reflection of current events, is supported by "… And We Are Engulfed," as our back cover.

John Skinner served as this year's Editor. We all thank him for his relentless pursuit of excellence in editing and will miss him next year as he leaves CRC for UC Davis. John will become President of the Global Studies Alumni Chapter taking over from **Olivia Askins** who is graduating from UC Davis this month. Brenna Murray will be Editor next year in addition to serving as Beth's Teaching Assistant.

This issue of Globus Mundi will not have an alumni written article as we needed the space for the many articles and additional feature "Conversations…"

Alejandra Sepulveda, presenter at this year's Colloquium, publishes "Prevalence and Policies of Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Cross-Cultural Examination of Policy." Alejandra's research focused on ASD and compared diagnosis of ASD and policies in the US, China, Russia, Africa, India and the Middle East. Alejandra returns to complete her studies next year.

Brenna Murray presenter at this year's Colloquium, publishes "Defeat & Deviance: The Sociological Foundations of Terrorism." Brenna showcased the consequences of "othering" and using the label

"terrorist" in the context of the Palestinian Question. Brenna returns to complete her studies next year and will serve as Editor for Globus Mundi and Teaching Assistant for Beth Huffman.

Nikoletta Karapanos, presenter at this year's Colloquium, publishes "At What Cost?" Nikki focused on multiple facets of corporatism and capitalism and showed the detrimental effects to the environment and Kayapo people that result from deregulation. Nikki transfers to UC Davis to pursue her studies in Anthropology.

Sarah Ortiz, leaving CRC for University of the Pacific, publishes her second article in this publication, "The Effects of Globalization on Religion." Sarah discusses the impacts of globalization on religion globally.

Soovya Nagin, winner of the "29 Units with a 4.0 Semester Award", writes about the tragedies associated with modern day slavery by focusing on human trafficking in India. Soovya leaves CRC for UCLA to pursue her BA in political science. She plans on going to law school after she graduates

Isaac Coleman analyzes the extent to which the People's Republic of China is investing in Africa and, as well, the extensive extraction of mineral and other natural resources from the continent in " The World the West Forgot: The Rise of Chinese Influence on the African Continent." Isaac is interning in the "Dave Jones for Attorney General" campaign and has successfully recruited other students join the campaign. Additionally, Isaac assembled a large contingent of students to staff the California Democratic Convention held in San Diego. He returns next year to complete his studies and will serve as TA to Alex Peshkoff, Professor of History.

Carlie Stanfill has, since the day we met, expressed great interest in fighting child abuse and trafficking. Her article "The Abuse and Exploitation of the Most Important Citizens of the World: Children" explores factors that lead to child abuse, decisions to criminally compromise children and what can be done to prevent both. Carlie returns next year to complete her studies and will be my Teaching Assistant and President of Model UN.

Ella Lockhart-Ralston writes about indigenous land rights in the face of rampant deforestation and bad environmental policies in her article "Examining Deforestation and Indigenous Land Rights in Brazil's Amazon Rainforest" Ella returns to complete her studies next year.

Brandon Plath publishes "The Future of Cuba: The Transfer of Power Away from the Castro Family." For the first time since the revolution, Cuba will be led somebody whose last name is not Castro. What will be the administration of Miguel Diaz-Canal be like? What role, if any, will Raul Castro exercise? These themes dominate Brandon's article. He returns next year to complete his studies.

Corey Hurley, our artist and next year's Vice President of Model UN, explores factors leading to decisions to illegally immigrate to the US, including criminality in Mexico, paternal hierarchy and socio-economic changes as a pre-consequence to illegal immigration in her article "Last Resort: Poverty in Mexico and Decisions to Illegal Immigration.

"Iraq After 2003," anonymously published, is a first-hand account of what transpired in the wake of the US invasion of that country. The article focuses on what the author saw taking place and his role in it.

NEXT YEAR

Our plans for next year are coming together nicely. We plan to show six internationally focused films addressing a variety of social justice issues. At press time, we've planned four events: "1968," "An Evening with Tonya Williams," "A Feminist Analysis of US-Russian Relations and Counter-Terrorism," and "2018 Midterm Elections." "1968" will be an interdisciplinary review of events fifty years ago: Vietnam, the assassinations of RFK and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., student protests in Paris and Mexico City and uprisings in Europe. "An Evening with Tonya Williams" will afford our students the opportunity to hear from our Dean about her life and academic journeys—and they will be inspired! My former TA, Taylor Martin, will present her graduate research project and thesis "A Feminist Analysis of US-Russian Relations and Counter-Terrorism" in October. Taylor is in her final semester of study at USF anticipating her MA in International Relations. Next year …. law school! "The 2018 Midterm Election" event will showcase discipline faculty analyzing November's election. As always, we plan to host Colloquium, field another Model UN team, host a new cohort dinner and continue our tradition of Wednesday night pre-class dinners, SF based events and, as well, alumni based functions.

CONCLUSION

Future editions of Globus Mundi will follow yearly. Students, alumni and faculty will be asked to submit papers for consideration on topics from international relations, economics, history and theoretical issues as they pertain to global affairs.

Inquiries regarding Globus Mundi should be directed to Professor Martin Morales, Chair of the Department of Political Science & Global Studies at (916) 691-7114 or, via email, at moralem@crc. losrios.edu

We look forward to your continued readership.

ALUMNI NEWS

O L I V I A   A S K I N S

Hello and welcome to "Volume Eight!" I'd like to start by congratulating this year's transfers: **Nicholas Friend, Gurmilan Kaur, Michael McGinnis, Keagan Miller, Andi Murphy, Soovya Nagin, Sarah Ortiz, Robert Richter, Nephtali Robles, Maria Roman, Susana Sanchez, Christian Scott, John Skinner, Sean Snell and Aliyah Villareal.** Those of you coming to UC Davis will be faced with the same academic challenges my classmates and I faced: a lot more reading, complex research and writing on a higher level, finding your way and making new friends. The good news is that you're well prepared and you'll at least know each other.

I'm really happy to see that Martin and Beth have given up teaching seven classes per semester—each—and have hired Adjunct faculty. I was lucky to have met Ryan Neach and taken classes with **Dan Aseltine**. I'm even happier knowing that new Dean Williams is so loved by students in the department as well as by faculty. **Brenna Murray** is an excellent choice for TA and will do a great job supporting Beth. I don't know **Carlie Stanfill**, yet, but know she'll be rewardingly busy and grow a lot supporting Martin throughout next year. Good luck, Carlie!

It's great knowing that the department continues to host great events on and off campus as well as maintaining connections with alumni. I think I'm most excited to come see my friend **Taylor Martin's** presentation on feminism and counter-terrorism between the US and Russia next fall. This past year has been very busy for me as a graduating senior and I haven't been able to come to CRC as often as I thought I would be. I hope to visit next year and attend additional events with alumni; "1968" sounds amazing. My favorite events were the films hosted in the evenings as they yielded great discussions afterwards—maybe I'll make it to a few films.

It's funny to point out that all the courses that were proposed and killed off before they were even offered two years ago formed the basis of this year's events calendar. "Political Psychology," "Political Sociology" and "International Law and Human Rights" courses were showcased at Colloquium. The proposed courses on "War & Strategy" and "International Law" appeared as lectures in Martin's IR class while Beth's "Great Power Relations" was its own program. And the elective course on "Film in IR" became the basis of the film series this year. Way to go you two.

Congratulations to this year's Model UN team! Two in a row: impressive. Martin's idea to push to attend the regional competition in Seattle sounds like a great idea. Hopefully, next year's team can attend. Regardless of what conference CRC goes to, hopefully they get a great country assignment.

Having done colloquium myself in 2016, I know how difficult the process is. The presenters' articles and presentations were in-depth, educational and incredibly interesting. I'm happy to see this event continue and am very happy to note that **Brittany Cox, Paul Frederici, Kevin Woldhagen** and a few other alumni attended. It's fun to go back and see faculty while supporting our successors.

"Los Rios Matters" fall issue featured **Brittany Cox** on the cover and told part of her story. I was so excited when I opened my mailbox and saw her on the cover. Go Brittany! Brittany's decision to pursue a degree in IR in addition to completing her degree in

medical biology may have added another year for her at Stanford but given how the world is today, I know she's entertained.

My classmates from CRC are graduating this year. Congratulations to **Nicole Cameron, Kaveh Toofan** and **Lupe Vizcarra** (UC Berkeley) and **Giselle Garcia** and **Namveer Singh** (UC Davis). I'm graduating this year, too—from UC Davis. Kaveh spent last summer interning at the US Department of State. Prior CRC transfers are also doing well post college. **Ryan King**, Martin's first TA, graduated from Georgetown University last month with an MA in Global Communications Studies; Martin flew out to Washington, DC to attend graduation. Ryan works in US Senator Catherine Cortez Masto's office. **Taylor Martin** and **Candi Moreno** are finishing up their MA's in IR at USF. "All Things Connect," the video on the department's webpage, starring **Ryan Neach, Taylor Martin** and **Ryan King**, is amazing. It's a good feeling knowing that CRC has helped all of us get to where we are today. Outstanding work you guys. **Gabby Castillo** is a Capitol Fellow through (D) Assemblyman Miguel Santiago's office (53rd District—Los Angeles). In the law, **Monique Matar** passed the bar examination last fall. **Emily Bills** will attend UC Davis Law School where **Nimra Said** is preparing for her third and final year. **Yuli Lozano, Taylor Martin** and **Julian Ramos** are preparing to take the LSAT this year. Good luck! **Hiba Baloch**, UC Berkeley graduate, interned for the

California Department of Education and then spent fall semester in England at University College (London) doing graduate work in IR and travelling throughout the EU.

This year, like every other year, we see an incredible issue of *Globus Mundi* put out. The covers are beautiful and very timely given the fact that the world is on fire and we're stuck in the middle of it. **John Skinner**, whom I know, did a great job editing and the authors' work is outstanding. It's a joy to be associated with this journal.

My association, however, is coming to an end. I'm pleased to see John take over my role as alumni chapter president because I know he'll do the job well and keep us all connected and informed of what's going on on and off campus. It's been a rewarding journey for me starting in my US government class with Martin and leading me here to UC Davis from where I'm about to graduate. Along the way I've been privileged to do many extraordinary things. As I look back, I know it all started at CRC and I'm grateful to both Martin and Beth for their roles in my life and their friendship, too. I wish them nothing but good luck as they continue their work. To my classmates and my successors, I also wish nothing but the best and ask that they remember CRC for what it gave all of us.

Professor Beth Huffman, with Brenna Murray, Professor Morales, Alejandra Sepulveda, and Nikki Karapanos at Colloquium

2018 Model UN

Ryan King and Professor Morales. Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

VALETE

THIS SECTION OF ALUMNI NEWS IS DEDICATED TO IDENTIFYING THOSE WHO ARE TRANSFERRING

NICHOLAS FRIEND	UC DAVIS (POL SCI/IR)
NIKOLETTA KARAPANOS	UC DAVIS (ANTHROPOLOGY)
GURMILAN KAUR	UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC (IR)
MICHAEL MCKINNIS	CSUS (CALIFORNIA POLITICS)
ANDI MURPHY	UC DAVIS (IR)
SOOVYA NAGIN	UC LOS ANGELES (POL SCI/IR)
SARAH ORTIZ	UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC (IR)
ROBERT RICHTER	UC DAVIS (POL SCI)
NEPHTALI ROBLES, JR.	SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY (IR)
MARIA ROMAN	UC SANTA CRUZ (IR)
SUSANA SANCHEZ	UC DAVIS (IR)
CHRISTIAN SCOTT	UC DAVIS (POL SCI)
JOHNATHON SKINNER	UC DAVIS (POL SCI)
SEAN SNELL	UC DAVIS (POL SCI)
ALIYAH VILLAREAL	UC IRVINE (POL SCI/IR)

CONVERSATIONS…

MARTIN MORALES WITH RYAN T. NEACH AND JACOB VELASQUEZ

Often, faculty, see familiar names on rosters. These are usually made up from family members coming to CRC and taking classes that their brothers or sisters or, with the passing of time—their moms or dads took. We've never seen a name, let alone two, go from the roster to the schedule. **Ryan Neach** and **Jacob Velazquez** were classmates 2010-2012 and both left CRC to SF State and Cal, respectively. Today, both alumns teach here as Adjunct faculty (Ryan for us in political science and Jacob in philosophy) and we thought it would be an interesting addition to *Globus Mundi* to ask them some questions about their journeys from being students to returning and teaching.

My questions are identified with my initials (MM) and Ryan's answers by his (RN); likewise for Jacob's (JV).

———————————————

(MM) Gentlemen, thank you so much for sitting down for a conversation with me for this year's edition of GM. You were both present at its birth and now are being interviewed for this feature. I'm so happy to be able to call you colleagues!

Jacob, I let you guest lecture in one of my US Government sections on the topic of federalism. Both Rick Schubert and Beth Huffman were in the room. How was that for you? Did it lead you into teaching?

(JV) Although it was a bit daunting, it was a great experience! It felt good to know that I was helping others understand and become interested in ideas that interest me. Teaching the material also

helped me retain the information, which came in handy when I was doing research recently. It is a treat to interact with students, and my first experience with doing it was when I guest lectured for you. So, the experience did, I think, lead me toward teaching.

(MM) Ryan, with us it was a bit different. You transferred to my alma mater (SF State) and I knew you'd have to do IR 550—the course which sees you doing major research and then presenting your work to the department. I'm glad you allowed me to come watch you do your presentation because it confirmed to me that you were a natural teacher. And that's what led me to ask you to teach here at CRC after you got your Masters. How do you like teaching?

(RN) I love it. It has definitely been an interesting experience. I have done all my teaching online, so exploring this relatively untraveled style of teaching, while being new to teaching in general, has been much more challenging than I thought it would be. I think being able to have the autonomy to try new things with my classes has made this such a fun experience. I am excited to see where this can lead next for my career.

(MM) What about you, Jacob?

(JV) Teaching is great! It gives me the feeling that I'm making a difference in others' lives, and it gives me a chance to continue to

study and think about topics that really interest me. It doesn't get much better than that!

(MM) How do CRC students compare with you when you were here?

(JV) I guess it is hard to say because, when I was a student here, I was so busy that I didn't have a lot of time to interact with the other students. As a teacher, of course, things are different. Many of the students I've had in my classes are very interested, very bright, and very active participants in class. It has been a great pleasure to teach them!

(MM) Your observations, Ryan—on how they compare to you as a CRC student?

(RN) I'd like to think I haven't been gone that long, so they haven't changed much. I am sure that isn't true. I would say students now are more savvy about what to expect when they are planning out a career path. Many of them know the importance of getting some sort of internship or work experience. When we were at CRC, I think many of us didn't know what kind of job market we were coming into since it was the height of the recession. Now, students are much more connected to where their career paths could take them and I think that is great to see.

(MM) What are your goals re teaching? Has teaching taught both of you anything?

(JV) I teach philosophy, and the quality of a philosophy class depends on the quality of classroom discussion. So, one of my main goals is to teach in a way that engages the most interested and eager students while stimulating interest in those who are less interested or eager. Teaching has taught me a lot! Something that it continues to teach me is what engages students and what does not. And learning this has given me the opportunity to learn how to improve my teaching.

(RN) I hope to teach full-time eventually. Where and when that will happen? I have no idea. But, that is my ultimate goal. Teaching has definitely reminded me to be detailed oriented. No matter how many times I learn a subject, I will always need a refresher. More and more, I am realizing teaching is about the little things. It's everything from the little interactions with students, to the little details that you miss that become big issues later. It is so challenging, and that is what I love most about it.

Ryan Neach

(MM) Are either of you modeling after any faculty you've had here or at SFSU or Cal/UC Davis?

(JV) The main thing that I've taken from faculty here is a commitment to being welcoming and encouraging. Their commitment to these things was, for me, the most important contribution to my success. And it continues to inspire me to be the best teacher and mentor I can be.

(MM) Ryan?

(RN) I have many Professors who I model after and who I avoid modeling after. I won't name names. I take bits and pieces from everyone of my Professors. I try to take an approach of always being approachable to students who ask for help. My graduate and undergraduate adviser, Professor Burcu Ellis at SFSU, was a such a great Professor for me. She guided me by never blowing smoke, but always showing me steps I can take to remedy my mistake. Her blunt honesty was so refreshing because no matter how many times I thought I did something perfectly, there was always something I could improve on and change. When students come to me, I try to take the same approach. I will be upfront about your mistakes, but I will always try to show a path to remedy them.

Jacob Velasquez

(MM) How do you two like CRC now? See it through different eyes?

(JV) In many ways, it feels like home. After becoming acquainted with students and faculty at Cal and UC Davis, it is easy to notice that CRC has a "hometown" character, and the characters of Cal and UCD cannot compete with it. Because of this, CRC offers a very comfortable and pleasing environment that is easy to enjoy.

(MM) Ryan?

(RN) CRC has always been home to me. It is still the same place I came to almost ten years ago when I had no direction of what I wanted to do in life. I was in a similar situation when I was offered this teaching job. I still wasn't sure what I wanted to do, even with a full-time job. Now having taught for a year, I know this is what I want to do. I think part of the reason I applied at CRC was because I still see faculty and staff who are dedicated to their student's success. I knew the support system for students was beyond anything I have seen at other schools and I wanted to be a part of that same community. It is strange being on the other side, but I love seeing that the same commitment to students I had from the faculty and staff at CRC is still very prevalent today.

(MM) Any final comments or observations?

(RN) My first year of teaching could not have been more rewarding. I am forever grateful to the community at CRC for providing me with guidance when I was a student and now in my professional life as well.

(JV) When I began taking classes at CRC, I had no thought of moving on to a four-year university. I certainly had no thought of going to graduate school or teaching classes at CRC! For many reasons, these possibilities simply didn't seem to be genuine possibilities for me. The CRC community helped me see these as possibilities for me, and proactively paved a way for me to achieve my potential. As a faculty member, I now have the opportunity to do the same for someone else, and this is perhaps the difference between being a student at CRC and being a faculty member that is most important to me!

(MM) I agree with both of your sentiments, guys. As faculty for over twenty years now—man, I'm getting old!—that's probably what motivates me most of all: being able to show students that there's more to life than one class and that life is full of possibilities—things that you can't even begin to imagine while you're here.

Thanks, really, for sharing your thoughts and insights. It's great having you here.

PREVALENCE AND POLICIES OF AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD): A CROSS-CULTURAL EXAMINATION

ALEJANDRA SEPULVEDA

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that has recently experienced an increase in prevalence due to a rise in recognition of ASD as a global burden. ASD is characterized by impairments in social interactions, inability to effectively communicate with others, and restrictive, stereotypic patterns of behavior.[1] The diagnosis of autism began to evolve into its current form with Eugen Bleuler's use of the word 'autism' to describe a symptom of schizophrenia. The relation between autism and schizophrenia was consistent until Leo Kanner and Hans Asperger's research in the 1940s. In his 1943 paper, "Autistic Disturbances of Affective Contact", Kanner described eleven cases of individuals with deficits in the areas of social interaction, emotional connection, intellectual ability, and an excess of stereotypic behaviors.[2] Hans Asperger's diagnosis of Asperger's Syndrome, like in Kanner's definition, portrayed the same deficits in social and emotional interactions, but were found to have higher intellectual abilities.[3] Kanner and Asperger's studies resulted in different ways of viewing the diagnosis of autism.

Following the first epidemiological studies in the 1960s, and with new ways of diagnosing and viewing ASD, higher prevalence rates have been reported among countries; however, most of the studies conducted have been done by high-income countries. Few have been conducted in middle-income countries and even fewer in low-income countries.[4] The lack of studies found from middle and low-income countries are a result of a variety of factors, including cultural and religious perspectives regarding healthcare practices,

as well as the lack of recognition, information, and funding. Some of these regions with low reported prevalence rates include, but are not limited to China, India, Africa, and the Middle East. It is important to identify prevalence rates in all countries because it will allow for policies towards things such as treatments to be effectively implemented. Once these policies have been enacted they will ultimately aid in facilitating services, and if started early in an individual's life and is intensive, there are then higher possibilities of lessening the severity of the diagnosis. Although the benefits of implementing policies for those with ASD and their families are indicated, the global prevalence rate of ASD is currently unknown.[5]

While a global prevalence rate is unknown, some countries do conduct epidemiological studies, resulting in a known prevalence for the region. One of these countries is China which has the world's largest population and has a prevalence rate of ASD that stands at a median value of 11.6/10,000.[6] In comparison to Northern Europe and the United States, the studies in China report a much lower prevalence rate. At 1.4 billion people, China has the world's largest population; therefore, it is essential to know the population-based prevalence of ASD.[7] Due to a significantly larger population than these other regions, China's reported frequency of ASD should be higher, but still there is an underreporting, which is due to doctors and public health workers lacking the knowledge and resources required to conduct epidemiological studies concerning ASD and its prevalence. This then leads to a scarcity in research, and a low incidence rate, which results in less financial input from the Chinese

government, and in the end less probability of helping families facing an ASD diagnosis.[8]

Similar to China, India has a large population at approximately 1.3 billion, making it essential that prevalence rates of ASD be known considering it is a globally present neurodevelopmental disorder. In India, there is a lack of information about prevalence rates, due to the research conducted being restricted to controlled settings, such as hospitals, which then restricts the population samples in studies. With limited population samples, a 2014 study conducted among tribal, rural, and urban areas in India reported a prevalence of 0.9/1,000.[9] The conclusion of this study stated that socioeconomic status (SES) was one of the indicators for ASD in India, since the results concluded there was a higher prevalence rate in rural areas.[10] Similar to China's situation, the lack of accurate prevalence rates in India will consequently lead to less financial input for treatment from the regional government.

Africa has a dearth of research regarding ASD, resulting in no known published data on the prevalence rate; however, Victor Lotter's study (1978) assisted with reporting the presence of ASD in Africa.[11] An additional study done in Africa by Khan and Hombarume (1996), also simply documented the presence of ASD in Africa.[12] Although these studies established ASD's presence in African countries, the sample population was not representative of the population as a whole, which places limitation on examining the occurrence of ASD in Africa. The absence of research on prevalence rates in Africa result in a dire need for epidemiological studies to be conducted in this region to identify the prevalence rate and outline the extent of ASD.[13] The recognition of the pervasiveness of ASD may then possibly encourage the regional governments to create policies and much needed services.

Similar to the prevalence rates of other regions, rates found in countries in the Middle East reflect a variation in prevalence rates among each other.[14] Although studies regarding prevalence of ASD have been found in this region, the number is small compared to countries such as the United States. In 2014, a study was conducted that aimed to study prevalence rates among six Arab countries; these countries are Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Sultanate of Oman, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates (UAE).[15] This study identified rates of prevalence in three out of the six countries: Bahrain, Sultanate of Oman, and UAE. The rate found in Bahrain, with a target population of all children in Bahrain, was 4.3/10,000.[16] In Oman, studies found a prevalence of 1.4/10,000.[17] However, the UAE studies regarding prevalence of autism refer to DSM-IV's definition of autism as a discrete condition, and as being under the category of pervasive developmental disorders (PDD). As a result of using the DSM-IV, the prevalence rate found among the UAE population of PDD was 29/10,000.[18] In comparison to other countries, such as the United States, studies conducted in the Middle East concerning prevalence of ASD are few.

Resembling other high-income countries, such as Northern Europe, the United States' provisions for ASD are at a much higher availability than developing countries, resulting in higher prevalence of ASD reported in the United States. The current rate among studies varies between 11 to 50.5/10,000, with a median rate of 21.6/10,000.[19] In contrast to other geographical regions, the United States has a greater financial input from both the federal and local federal governments, ultimately leading to a greater number of epidemiological studies being completed, which contributes to higher prevalence rates.

Unlike the United States, many middle and low-income countries do not have sufficient studies regarding prevalence of ASD. In the case of China, the low reported prevalence rate is due to factors such as that some children with milder characteristics possibly not being considered in studies, the education level of the family, household income,[20] health professionals' lack of knowledge on ASD, and the place of residence of the family.[21] The most influential factors on whether a child in China is diagnosed with ASD and has access to appropriate services are the place of residence of the family, the mothers education, and the education level of the family.[22] Those families whose mothers had a higher education level, lived in urban areas, and had higher incomes were more likely to receive a diagnosis and have access to services.[23] These influencing factors then result in lower rates when conducting epidemiological studies, and in order to receive an accurate degree of prevalence for the whole region, there has to be a greater inclusion of children from different socioeconomic status families. However, although China's prevalence rates are not reflective of the population as a whole, they have performed more epidemiological studies than other countries.

India does not have a complete absence of epidemiological studies, but the ones that are available lack an accurate prevalence rate of ASD for the population as a whole. Studies on ASD in India, similar to China, have found correlations between SES, the diagnosis of ASD, and the services provided. Three studies set in tertiary care facilities found that the majority of families that participated in the studies were mainly middle-class families.[24] These tertiary care facilities were state-run facilities, and there were no people with a high SES found to attend them, while those in a low SES did not have access to them.[25] Hence there being a lack of variation in SES among the individuals participating in these studies, which has led to a limited prevalence rate being found. Without an accurate depiction of ASD across a multitude of SES, the occurrence of ASD found in the studies do not accurately reflect its occurrence for all of India. Also accounting for the low prevalence rate of ASD is the lack of access facilities have to translated and validated screening

and diagnostic tools (SDTs), which are essential to accurately diagnose ASD and to achieve consistency with other countries.[26] It is important to have similar SDTs among countries because of ASD's position as a global burden. Although the studies in India have been restricted and have resulted in a lower prevalence rate in comparison to other countries, the little research done has helped guide the way to more extensive research on the discovery to a known worldwide prevalence of ASD.

The currently available research on ASD in Africa confirms the presence of ASD in Africa, but no studies have concluded a prevalence rate. The few studies done have not been comprehensive enough to determine the commonness of ASD because of their limited sample size of participants, which did not represent the population as a whole.[27] As found in other countries' studies on prevalence of ASD, rates in Africa have also been influenced by SES.[28] The previous studies done in Africa found an overrepresentation of families with a high SES participating in the studies, which could have been a result of the studies being exclusive to major cities.[29] Therefore, the exclusion of rural areas and small cities in the studies have contributed to having no known prevalence rate for ASD in Africa. Furthermore, cross-cultural variation in demonstration of ASD contributes to the dearth in prevalence rate studies in Africa.[30] Lotter's 1978 study found an inconsistency in behaviors when comparing those with ASD in Africa to those in the West.[31] Individuals diagnosed with ASD in Africa did not commonly have stereotypic behaviors such as hand flapping, self-injurious behaviors, and gross motor stereotypy, which are commonly found in the West.[32] This suggests that there are sociocultural factors which contribute to the absence of prevalence rates of ASD in Africa. The lack of knowledge of the incidence of ASD in Africa is due in part to the absence of epidemiological research done to determine an accurate prevalence of ASD.

The prevalence rates found in the Middle East vary from country to country, and Bahrain, Sultanate of Oman, and UAE best embody this variation. The variability may be due to factors related to a difference in diagnostic criteria among the epidemiological studies.[33] However, similar to the geographical regions of China and India, the Middle East reports low prevalence rates of ASD. One of the reasons as to why the prevalence rate in these areas are low is due to an insufficiency of information families of those with an ASD diagnosis.[34] Furthermore, many individuals with milder characteristics of ASD could have not been diagnosed due to a lack of experience and information in health professionals. This is portrayed in a 2012 study of autism in Saudi Arabia that found no participants to be diagnosed with what DSM-IV would diagnose as Asperger's Disorder.[35] These symptoms portrayed by high-functioning individuals with ASD may be misdiagnosed with

other childhood conditions since the symptoms are much milder.[36] Therefore, with a lack of knowledge on diagnosing and the masking of symptoms in high-functioning individuals, health professionals often misdiagnose or do not diagnose individuals with ASD, thus resulting in a low prevalence rate in countries in the Middle East.

Epidemiological studies are important because they allow for an analysis of the prevalence and distribution of health conditions and provide information about the accessibility and quality of services relating to ASD.[37] Epidemiological studies are important when studying ASD because of its recognition as a global burden, and they contribute toward providing services through public health policies and government aid.[38] However, there is still a scarcity of epidemiological studies being conducted in countries despite ASD having responsibility for a significant amount of health loss across the lifespan.[39] Epidemiological studies are not only important to help assess the needs of communities, but also to assist in studying the causes of ASD.[40] With studying the possible causes, the diagnostic criteria being used will become more concise, and so allowing for a universal familiarity of diagnostic criteria for health professionals. Through having a universal familiarity of diagnostic criteria it will allow for a strengthening in the availability of services for those diagnosed with ASD and improvement on autism-specific policies worldwide.

Decisions for policy-making and funding are not only guided by epidemiological studies and prevalence of ASD but also by studies identifying the most effective and appropriate services that should be provided to those being diagnosed. One of the services that has shown an optimal outcome for 20-40% of children is known as early intensive behavioral interventions (EIBI).[41] EIBI programs must begin at an early age, be intensive, be behavioral, individualized for each child, comprehensive, and are mainly seen through applied behavior analysis (ABA). ABA-based programs have yielded results of improving adaptive functioning, improving cognitive skills, and achieving milder severity of autism.[42] These types of programs can later result in independent living skills and decrease social and economic barriers for individuals diagnosed with ASD.[43] Therefore, with a greater availability of effective and appropriate services, there can be positive economic consequences to both individuals with ASD and their families, as it will allow for more independence in adulthood.

In order to have effective and appropriate services, families of individuals diagnosed with ASD must be able to either pay for the services—with prices having an average annual cost that exceeds billions in the United States and the UK—or they can receive help from their local or national government.[44] The families of those diagnosed with ASD have been found to earn 28% less than those families not facing an ASD diagnosis while facing six times the

ABA and EIBI have been shown to be effective treatments for patience with Autism. Here Courtney Bierman of Bierman ABA Autism Center is working with a student using ABA.(Photo by Robert Herrington)

medical cost.[45] This results in many countries developing policies that aid in providing and improving services for individuals and families facing an ASD diagnosis.[46] The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) works to address rights of individuals with disabilities, and their research and policies have led countries to develop domestic policies addressing inequalities among individuals with disabilities, such as ASD.[47] However, not all countries are part of the CRPD, thus resulting in these countries possibly lacking policies that address ASD and other disabilities. Out of the countries discussed, only China has ratified the CRPD. Therefore, China has at least discussed policies concerning aid towards ASD, while no discussion on policies has been found for the countries of India, Africa, Bahrain, Oman, and the UAE.

Although service provision for ASD in China is not commonly investigated, there are a few studies which discuss the amount of provisions. The services, although underdeveloped, aim to help those diagnosed with ASD and their families. The first set of policies and laws created to protect and aid individuals with disabilities in China were not enacted until the 1990s.[48] The laws issued at this time were the law on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities and the Regulations on Education for Persons with Disabilities.[49] The Protection of Persons with Disabilities' general provisions establish that individuals with disabilities exercise equality in political, economic, cultural, and social rights, in order to ensure their well-being among society.[50] The law also outlines the responsibilities of the government and states that the government should guarantee the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in budget arrangements when establishing economic and social developments.[51] The Regulations on Education for Persons with Disabilities (1994) aimed to ensure that individuals with disabilities exercised the same right to education and would not face any

discrimination based on their disabilities.[52] Another policy, known as the 'Suiban Jiudu' policy (1988), was also developed to address the issue of equality in education for individuals with disabilities, and it intended to implement a nine-year mandatory education in mainstream classrooms.[53] However, the 'Suiban Jiudu' policy did not successfully guarantee an appropriate education for individuals with disabilities, including ASD, because it was not mandatory.[54] Since the implementation of these three policies by China there have been improvements made to existing policies and creation of new policies.

China's current policies regarding ASD are focused and implemented at a local level, but there are no national policies.[55] Therefore, the type and amount of provisions for ASD vary from region to region, and the allowance given by the government to families of individuals with ASD varies among regions as well.[56] Beijing, the capital of China, is one of the local governments that provide individuals with ASD and other disabilities an allowance.[57] This allowance is provided through the Beijing China Disabled Persons' Federation, and is of £50.[58] However, this allowance is only given if the family can provide a residential identification and a disability certificate.[59] Although some regions, such as Beijing, have established provisions for ASD, the overall amount of policies and laws enacted to aid ASD are still underdeveloped despite the increased awareness of ASD in China. The minimal amount of provisions from the government creates a burden for families facing an ASD diagnosis because they are not provided with adequate support. Consequently, there is an urgent need for the creation of national policies to provide services to these families.

Most countries in the West, including the United States, have a wide range of policies towards ASD. In the United States, funding for the system of Various Research, Condition, and Diseases Categories (RCDC) is allocated through the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The NIH allocates funds by using research on the condition's burden—which includes mortality, morbidity, and financial costs—and the prevalence of the condition.[60] In the NIH's report, autism has a reported mortality rate of 216 and a prevalence rate of 2.4% (2015), and the amount of dollars in millions being allocated to research for 2018 is estimated to be $181.[61] The trends in the NIH's funding for ASD shows an increase between 2015 and 2017, but then the estimated 2018 budget drops. The decrease in funding may be due to an increase in recognition of research for ASD in the United States; however, it is still important to further research ASD since the causes and worldwide prevalence are not yet known. Although the United States' funding through the NIH for 2018 has decreased, the United States, in contrast to other geographical regions, still has a greater variety of provisions.

The increased awareness of ASD from past years has lead to officials supporting and encouraging certain services, such as ABA-

based therapy, and in creating legislation that is autism-specific.[62] The Combating Autism Act of 2006, renewed in 2011, was enacted to create regional centers that provide research and training in ASD, and to provide effective interventions and services for individuals.[63] This autism-specific legislation also establishes the creation of continuing education curriculum and establishes an Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee that focuses on planning research for ASD.[64] The Autism Insurance Act of 2008 was also created and implemented in the United States, and outlines an insurance provider's obligation to provide services for individuals up to the age of 21.[65] The services that the Autism Insurance Act of 2008 states must be provided include: diagnosis, medications, behavioral therapies, and treatments.[66] In terms of variation in legislation among states, 36 states and the District of Columbia have established legislation that mandate insurance providers to offer coverage for behavioral therapies, often specific to ABA-based therapy.[67] Resulting from the increased awareness of ASD and the legislation created, the United States government spends an average of $90 billion per year on ASD.[68] This results in the United States being one of the countries to provide the most adequate and effective policies toward ASD.

The increased recognition and new ways of approaching diagnosis and treatment of ASD have resulted in a rise in prevalence rates among countries. Although some countries—mostly in the West—have reported higher numbers in prevalence within recent years, some developing countries still report a low rate or do not have a known prevalence rate. Knowledge of the incidence of ASD is essential in policy-making for governments because it allows for an adequate amount of provisions to be distributed. However, due to the amount of underdeveloped epidemiological studies in these areas the regional governments do not provide sufficient services and support for individuals with ASD and their families. Providing adequate and efficient services, such as EIBI and ABA-based therapy, are essential in helping with improvement in adaptive functioning, cognitive skills, and achieving a milder severity of ASD. The United States, along with some Northern European countries, have begun to develop autism-specific legislation that has provided adequate and efficient services to those confronting an ASD diagnosis. China has also created policies that aim to help individuals with ASD and their families, but are not autism-specific and are still underdeveloped. Although China's provisions are underdeveloped, they have started to guide future efficient and adequate autism-specific policies. Therefore, while there are countries that are providing adequate services to individuals with ASD and their families, as prevalence rates for ASD worldwide increase, there is a strengthened necessity for some developing countries to create policies that aid in providing a multitude of services to individuals with ASD and their families.

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DEFEAT AND DEVIANCE: THE POTENTIAL SOCIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF TERRORISM

BRENNA MURRAY

In the West, terms like Arab, Islam, and Muslim have become synonymous with terrorism. The Middle East, more often than not, is thought of in terms of backwardness, as if its people are uncivilized and its customs *barbaric*. Though assumptions like this are born of ignorance and miseducation, the recent rise of terrorist organizations in the Middle East is undeniable, and reports of violence targeting the Western world are becoming common news fodder. Groups like Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), and Hezbollah, labeled terrorist organizations for their anti-Western beliefs and radical approaches to bringing about political and social change, have permeated world news, leading to widespread fear of an eventual clash between Western and Eastern values. The ideologies of these groups threaten long-held Western values and, as with many times throughout history, that results in them falling into the broad category of 'other', with an implication of being different and, therefore, perceived as 'less than'. Being regulated to this ambiguous and vast category of 'other', the 'them' in the social equation of 'us versus them', is one of the very reasons such groups are able to gain traction in modern society. The hefty blame that was placed on Germany at the conclusion of World War I, as outlined by the Treaty of Versailles, for example, was a significant factor in the quick rise of the Nationalist Socialist Party and Adolf Hitler in the 1930s. That is only one of the many examples in which social defeat played a role in an ideology gaining a foothold in the international arena. Suppression and othering can give rise to nationalist sentiment; strong degrees of nationalism, throughout history, have played a significant role in many conflicts.

When dealing with the factors—culture, nationality, religious belief, etc.—that make up and individual's or group's identity, *othering* takes on a different dynamic. To belittle one of these factors is to attack a core part of who that individual or group is. It causes an increase in the 'us versus them' belief, as well as a solid awareness by that individual or group that they are the 'them' within the equation. The 'us' is, in most instances, the dominant group. The dominant group is not necessarily the group with superior strength or numbers, but rather the group with the most access to social power. Continued suppression and relegation to the status of 'lesser' leads to feelings of social defeat. Western control and the role it has played in shaping the modern Middle East has kept the peoples of that region of the world largely without a say in their own fate, pawns in Western-led games of empire, oil, and ideological expansion. Attempts to gain control have been thwarted repeatedly, put down by superior forces. This constant failure to rise above only serves to solidify the fact that legitimate means of obtaining social control are futile, leaving the path to social deviance wide open as the only remaining means of obtaining that control.

The Middle East, as it exists today, is a region whose boundaries were drawn with the pen of the West, most notably Great Britain. It was once vastly different. Great Britain's interest in spreading its colonial holdings, trade opportunities, and control of the vast oil reserves in the region, had them dividing up the Middle East to better suit British needs. The Arabia originally promised to Sharif

Hussein with the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence (1915) was permanently fractured by the Sykes-Picot Treaty in 1916. This marked the original and perhaps most significant instance of the West not only influencing but directly controlling Arab affairs. It put British political interests above their word to the people of Arabia, establishing their lowly position in the British sphere of importance. With successive years, and the Balfour Declaration, the Treaty of Versailles, and the San Remo Conference, this mentality was only further codified. To be Arab, to be Muslim, to be Middle Eastern, was to be thought backward, something that needed to be controlled. As with other cultures labeled foreign or different throughout history, this backward label became the justification for all previous control as well as the impetus for all future intervention in the region. It was the classic "white man's burden" excuse, the belief that 'civilized' nations have a moral responsibility to direct the uncivilized until such a time as they can adequately govern themselves. The actions of Western cultures, especially Great Britain, in the decades that followed established a cycle of chronic social defeat, setting a precedence for the instability that exists in the region today.

Social stress is the most common form of stress that humans encounter in their lifetime. The most stress-inducing events in life- such as loss of a loved one, work problems, or marriage- are all social stress.[2] Social stress has been found to be a causal factor in severe anxiety disorders and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), amongst many other conditions.[3] Humans perceive social stress with more focused acuity than other forms of stress. Certain social stress can result in social defeat, the most common being resident-invader (also called resident-intruder or RI) stress. With resident-invader stress, a foreign agent (usually aggressive or hostile) is introduced into the home territory of an individual. To create a condition of social defeat, the foreign invader is then allowed to dominate the individual in their home territory, an environment where that individual has a reasonable expectation of ownership and, more importantly, safety.[4] Social defeat can, in turn, lead to chronic depression, cognitive impairment, increased instances of aggression, and antisocial behavior.[5] Depression, has an extremely high relapse rate, and those who experienced it in childhood are much more susceptible to experience it again, quickly and more intensely, in adulthood.[6] These effects happen in isolated incidents of social defeat; however, the people of the Middle East have been subjected to social defeat on a much grander scale.

In one recent study of social defeat, researchers studied the potency of social defeat experienced at different ages.[7] The research, conducted on Syrian hamsters for their similar social and cognitive reactions to humans, used a resident-invader scenario on three age groups: early adolescents (just before or during puberty), late adolescents (during the final stages or just after puberty), and adults.

The study was also conducted on equal amounts of females and males to account for differences between the sexes.[8] The findings were surprising. Not only was there virtually no difference between males and females in level or intensity of their negative reaction (males did exhibit higher hostility, but by too small of a margin to account for a significant difference), but there was a distinct and visible difference between those who experienced social defeat in the early adolescence stage and those who were already fully grown. The youngest hamsters, after experiencing only one single episode of social defeat in their early adolescence, became highly susceptible to relapse once aged into adulthood. They exhibited intense antisocial behavior, refusing to socialize with any newly introduced hamster, hostile or not. Those that had experienced their first episode of social defeat in late adolescence or especially in adulthood, did not experience an equivalent level of social isolation. They were overall significantly more willing to investigate any new encounters and then, after deeming the intruder to be amiable, would socialize in a reasonably normal range.[9] Though early experiences of social defeat are not a certain cause of increased hostility, those subjects that had received even one episode of social defeat before or during puberty showed significant maladaptive responses to stress as they moved into adulthood and exhibited increased social avoidance and unwillingness to participate in normal social settings.[10]

Social defeat is not limited merely to social consequences; it can do irreparable harm to the neurobiology of an individual. The two areas of the brain targeted are the hippocampus (the memory center of the brain) and the prefrontal cortex.[11] The prefrontal cortex is responsible for several functions in the brain, including

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impulse control, social interaction, and attention. It occupies almost a third of the brain and is larger than that of any other animal. Though scientists previously believed its sheer size was the cause of the human ability to think on a higher level than other animals, it has recently been found out that it is the complexity of the neural pathways in this section of the brain rather than size that is the defining factor.[12] Recent research conducted in Japan found that social defeat experienced first during childhood or early adolescence

had an irreversible cognitive impact on their subjects. Those mice (chosen because their neuro-reactions mimic humans on a smaller scale) that were subjected to resident-invader stress at a young developmental stage, when their neural pathways were not yet fully formed actually experienced changes in the way those connections were formed.[13] Neural connections in the adult brains, already fully formed, remained static. These compromised connections between the prefrontal cortex and the limbic system would then solidify in their new forms as the subject aged into adulthood.[14] As a result, cognitive flexibility is also compromised; subjects found it difficult to adapt to new social environments and behavioral strategies. Resident-invader stress experienced by the adult subjects was more easily reversible. Most adult subjects, after being exposed to an episode of social defeat, would return to the normal state within five to six weeks. This time was considerably longer for those who first experienced social defeat stress at a young age.[15]

Further psychological complications also arise. Subjects who were exposed at a younger age showed a diminished capacity in their level of anhedonia, the brain's incapability to experience pleasure. Younger subjects either found it harder to derive pleasure from activities and social interaction or showed a reduced ability to retain the feeling of pleasure for an extended period of time. Some replaced the feelings with those of depression.[16] This had a significant impact on future social interactions and led to an increased level of social avoidance in the youngest subjects. The early adolescent subjects experienced higher levels of anxiety when experiencing social situations with an unfamiliar individual and tended to isolate themselves more often than those with no pre-exposure to social defeat.[17] The prefrontal cortex is the location in the brain where all rational thought occurs and, as such, controls almost exclusively social interaction and processes. It not only gives an individual their personality but dictates their sense of self. Most importantly, it controls the human capacity to empathize with others and to feel guilt when inflicting harm.[18] The compromised neural connections between the prefrontal cortex and the limbic system, combined with the reduced capacity to derive pleasure from social experiences has the potential for dangerous effects on impulse control, especially in social situations.

Not all subjects exposed to social defeat stress experienced long-term implications for these impairments, either emotional or cognitive, however. Research in Beijing found that only three-fifths of subjects were fully susceptible to the long-term effects of social defeat. These subjects exhibited all the negative consequences, most notably the tendency to isolate themselves when put into an unfamiliar social environment.[19] The other 40% of subjects were either moderately less or completely unsusceptible to the negative ramifications. These mice exhibited a lesser or completely non-

impaired level of social interaction. These subjects did, however, find other ways for the negative emotions to manifest, typically through comfort eating.[20] Those that were found to be susceptible manifested all the symptoms, including an impaired memory. They not only avoided social interaction with their fellow subjects but exhibited an uncertainty and unwillingness to complete mazes that they were well-trained in prior to exposure to the conditions of social defeat; they began to second guess their movements and would take longer to make choices.[21] Research suggests that this propensity of contradictory levels of susceptibility to be a result of interaction experienced immediately following the episode of social defeat stress. Those subjects that had a non-hostile individual placed with them for comfort saw a certain level of amelioration of the effects of the episode.[22] The findings account for the differences between those who experience long-term trauma and an increased propensity for social deviance and those that lead more conforming lives.

The combined effects of social defeat show an increased capacity for social deviance. Social deviance is defined as a violation of society's established cultural norms. Though this differs from crime, which violates enacted law, the two can come together as criminal deviance.[23] Deviance is defined by society; people are perceived as deviant based on society labeling them that way. Sociologist and former UC Davis professor, Edwin Lemert, developed labeling theory, which posits that deviance is not an action, but rather a reactionary concept. It focuses on deviance being relative to those defining it.[24] In this vein, groups are often labeled as terrorist organizations by their opposition. Lemert also establishes two main types of deviance: primary and secondary. Primary deviance is small instances of diverting from the norm; they are generally isolated incidents and don't affect how society sees the offender or how that individual sees himself/herself. Secondary deviance focuses on a more consistent pattern of deviance and, over time, involves a shift in the individual's self-concept. That individual becomes that label. Society's continued labeling of that individual as a deviant eventually turns into a stigma; the label becomes part of that person's self-image to the point that they themselves begin to see it as a part of their identity.[25]

The choice to label individuals or groups as deviant has a function for society. Pioneering sociologist Emile Durkheim claimed that deviance serves four positive functions for a society. First, it solidifies cultural values. Most societies are socialized to focus on binary oppositions, a right and a wrong, a good and a bad. To promote the moral superiority of one is to denounce the morally reprehensible nature of the other. By labeling an action or belief as deviant, it affirms the opposition as the morally right belief or action.[26] The second function is that it clarifies this moral boundary for society. By delineating that divide between right and wrong,

people can establish which side to favor and strive to emulate.[27] Third, Durkheim claimed that opposing deviance has the ability to unite people under their shared opposition to the deviant act. Individuals who would normally have no common ground can find mutual bonds in the shared outrage of a deviant act.[28] Durkheim's fourth and final function is perhaps the most important. Deviance facilitates change in society. Society's moral boundaries have been malleable throughout time, changing as cultures themselves undergo social change. Deviants can therefore bring about social change under the right conditions.[29]

Working within the framework established by Durkheim and Lemert, Robert Merton proposed the Strain Theory of Deviance to then explain criminal deviance. According to this theory, only two factors are determinant in groups or individuals being criminally deviant: cultural goals and conventional means.[30] Cultural goals can be anything from self-sufficiency to financial success; they depend entirely on the culture. Western values center around freedom, self-sufficiency, economic prosperity, and social power. All individuals are expected to move toward these goals from a Western point of view. The conventional means are about access and pursuit of socially acceptable means. Focus is on whether or not an individual or group has access to the means to achieve these goals, through things like education and employment opportunities.[31] From this two-factor system, five types of individuals emerge, four of which are deviant. First, the conformist, or non-deviant, is an individual who accepts the cultural goals and pursues them through society's approved means. The first type of deviance results from people who share a society's goals, but reject or do not have access to conventional means. Having to find alternate, and sometimes unsavory, means to achieve those goals classifies them as innovators. The most common type of innovators in the United States are drug dealers.[32] The next type of deviance comes from rejecting society's goals but pursuing conventional means to achieve alternate goals. Termed ritualists, these people are not necessarily interested in things like money and prestige, but still go to school or work because they believe society tells them they must.[33] The third deviant group are retreatists. These are individuals who literally retreat from society. They reject both the goals put forth by society and the means by which society says they must achieve them.[34] The final and most problematic classification of deviance is rebellion. Existing outside of the form of society, rebels not only reject both the goals and means society proposes, but finds entirely new means to achieve goals they have outlined for themselves.[35] It is from this category, from rebellion, that terrorist organizations emerge.

There is no universal definition of terrorism, despite the fact it has been around for several centuries. Accepted definitions are changeable, vary over time, and are most often shaped by politics.[36]

The commonly accepted idea of terrorism, from a Western perspective, is a group that seeks to change the political or social order, using violence to promote their message, and operating outside a state's authority. This is a loose definition; not all groups classified as terrorist organizations fit this exact mold.[37] In recent years, and the escalation of terrorist attacks by groups that fit a certain ethnic and religious classification, terrorism has come to be most commonly associated with Islam and the Middle East. Despite the fact that Islamic fundamentalist terrorism occupies the majority of Western media coverage on terrorism, of the 44 terrorist organizations tracked by British intelligence, only 5 are motivated by Islam alone. The majority are motivated by social revolutionary or ethno-nationalist ideologies.[38] Terrorist attacks are very rarely violence for the sake of violence; rather, attacks operate as a means of communication for a group that feels voiceless, suggesting that social defeat could play a role in the existence of some of these organizations.[39] Due to its history with Western powers exerting control, resident-invader stress on a macro scale, the Middle East has been the victim of chronic social defeat. Countries were drawn up with little regard for the people who originally inhabited the area, leading to displacement on their own land and political instability throughout the region. This social defeat, which had remained fairly constant throughout the majority of the twentieth century, not only served to lay the foundation for anti-Western sentiment, but also for the festering of the emotional and psychological toll that social defeat exerts on individuals within a population.

The economic and political realities of the world in the twentieth century gave the international community a Western trajectory. Most international organizations require an adherence to Western values like democracy and human rights before a state can effectively participate in or gain support from the international community. This reality allowed for Western dominance in the international arena. However, moving into the end of the twentieth century and into the beginning of the twenty-first, the world has seen a shift in this dynamic. The West retains dominance, but not to the degree it once did. This has allowed terrorist organizations to flourish as a result. Suppression of Middle Eastern values and the West's unwanted involvement in many of the region's affairs have renewed the sense of social defeat felt so keenly in the early twentieth century, when Arabia first was broken apart into the countries that exist there today. Any opposition to Western intervention or the establishment of governments based on Western models was quick to be labeled as deviant. Considering Lemert's labeling theory, for any group calling for radical social change, especially if religion is an attendant factor in that change, the label of 'Islamic fundamentalist' or even 'terrorist' became a stigma, a part of how the world viewed people pushing for that change and then how they, in turn, viewed themselves. The

Israeli West Bank wall

suppression, yet again, of their views regarding their own fate in social and political matters was just a new episode of social defeat. This is a possible explanation for the quick rise and proliferation of so many anti-Western terrorist organizations in a relatively short period of time. In a 2010 released recording, Osama bin Laden stated, "If it was possible to carry our messages to you by words, we wouldn't have carried them to you by planes."[40]

No group in the region has experienced a greater level of social defeat than the Palestinians. The roots of Palestinian social defeat can be traced back to the Balfour Declaration in 1917. The letter, sent from British Foreign Secretary Balfour to Lord Rothschild, called for a Jewish state to be carved out of Palestine and was the foundation for the awarding of the Mandate of Palestine by the League of Nations. This 1922 decision helped Britain retain control until the state of Israel was officially established in 1948.[41] This 26-year period was a time of uncertain fate for the residents of Mandated Palestine. It had been outlined in the Declaration that part of their land was to be given over to the establishment of a Zionist state. The effects were not immediate and became further complicated by World War II. At the conclusion of the war, exacerbated by the horrible atrocities committed during the conflict and the changing sympathies toward the plight of Jewish people, Palestine was carved up as promised.[42] Palestinians were forced to accept the intrusion of a new social group, both ethnically and religiously different from their own. After

years of internationally sanctioned control by a Western power, the Palestinians were now being forced to give up their own land to a foreign intruder, elevating the social stress experienced by the native Palestinians. In reality, the Balfour Declaration had largely been a political effort by Britain to maintain a strategic position relative to Egypt and the Suez Canal and protect British interests in the area.[43]

This social stress moved into social defeat in the years following the establishment of Israel in 1948. The incoming population produced a Western-approved narrative that they were finally overcoming unbelievable odds and achieving the culmination of their struggles and efforts; the native Palestinians were a mere fragment in this narrative, inconsequential to the message being promoted. With fewer resources and a lack of institutional support, Palestinians were left with no way to immediately counter this narrative with their own.[44] Any reports of the systematic violence, brutality, destruction, and forced expulsions experienced by native Palestinians were swept aside or directly denied. Declassified reports of the 1948 war chronicle how the Israeli settlement movement, Yishuv, used "its prewar intelligence and overwhelming military superiority to drive most Palestinians out of their villages and towns."[45] Evidence gathered paints a picture, not of a people finding their place in the world, but rather another branch of Western-led colonial imperialism, sold with a more palatable and socially accepted narrative than the empire and burden of civilization

excuses that permeated the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Israel found its foundation in the support of imperial powers, both direct and indirect, and has maintained that support through the years.[46] The 1948 war marked the beginning of Palestinian social stress moving into chronic social defeat; in a relatively short amount of time, their land became someone else's. They were introduced to an extreme version of resident-invader stress, committed by an intruder who did not plan to ever go away.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was meant to serve as a blanket organization that incorporated the various voices of the Palestinian people, from student associations and labor unions to refugee groups and fedayeen forces.[47] It was the product of the 1964 Arab summit, hosted by Egypt's leader Gamal Nasser. Meant to be the representative voice of the Palestinian people in their quest to get back the land taken from them, it was divided into three parts: the Palestine National Council (an assembly of the people), the Central Committee (a group of advisors), and the Executive Committee (the decision-making group). The Executive Committee, led by the diplomat who had nominated its members, Ahmad al-Shuqayri, was dominated by the fedayeen from the beginning and became the focal point of the organization.[48]

The next scar of social defeat inflicted on the Palestinian people came in 1967 with the crushing outcome of the Six-Day War, in which Israel gained significantly more of what little territory had been left to the Palestinians. This new wound led the PLO to fall under control of guerilla groups, the largest being Fatah, led by Yasir Arafat, who maintained leadership until his death in 2004.[49] Violence began to escalate, with the PLO committing various attacks against Israeli targets; Israel responded in kind and tensions mounted as the years passed. It is from this point that the PLO began to cultivate a reputation as a terrorist organization. The violent attacks, though not the Israeli responses, were often deemed terrorist acts. The label, as Lemert's theory suggests, became part of the Palestinian identity. The Palestinian people were considered interlopers on their own land, subject to the whims of the Israeli government, the IDF, and settlers, and policed in a territory that was once theirs.[50]

The struggle, and the social deviance that accompanied it, began to define Palestinian identity, especially as younger generations who were exposed to Israeli settlement or had lived their entire life in this new reality came of age. As a result of this subjugation, the PLO was forced to find new means to achieve a new goal, one that conflicted with Western societal goals, forcing them into the 'rebel' deviance category. This shaped public perception of their message, terming it radical ideology despite the diplomatic intentions from whence the organization originally emerged. The stain of social defeat colors the PLO's activities, but the West, so often the writers of history, ignore the brutal and systematic dispossession that created the

modern Jewish state and the potential hazards, both emotional and psychological, that this suppression has created in the Palestinian people.[51]

While the presence of social defeat in Palestinian history does not guarantee causation, it does remain a potential factor in the PLO's more aggressive tactics. The Palestinian people, like many others in the Middle East, have experienced high levels of social defeat brought on by resident-invader stress. This has the possibility of not only severe emotional implications, but even the potential to alter natural neural development. Both these negative consequences have the ability to not only alter and individual's perception of the opposition, but to build up a psychological aversion to finding common ground. The criminally deviant acts of terrorist groups could result from being classified as a deviant rebel group. By giving them this label and disregarding their message, they are left to find new means of achieving their goals. This, unfortunately, often comes in the form of violence, only furthering the cyclical nature of the issue. Violence is the only way they feel their message is heard, but it is that same violence that causes the international community to disregard their message as radical. Social defeat is not the only explanation for violent acts committed by non-state actors, but research suggests that it may be a significant motivating factor in the formation and proliferation of such groups.

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AT WHAT COST?

NIKOLETTA KARAPANOS

"We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children."
–Anonymous

Year after year, it has become increasingly more convenient for consumers to obtain their desired products. Amazon now has two-hour delivery, produce such as starfruit, a product native to Southeast Asia, is sold in our supermarkets, and Chipotle can be eaten in Frankfurt, Germany. Although efficient transportation is a supporting factor in the growing consumeristic realm, the power of globalization and international trade must also be acknowledged. Globalization has elevated many businesses to the international level, allowing them to operate globally. This current era of globalization has facilitated the improvement of the global economy, and the development of international trading policies has allowed capitalist societies to grow. Every nation can now be connected through access to technology, trade, and political affiliations; a global village of sorts.

The decline of religious and dynastic control over nations in the eighteenth century, primarily speaking of the Enlightenment period in Europe, allowed for human "thought" and opinion for a nation. One of the most significant movements that has sparked other forms of capitalism is the mass production of print, the phenomenon political scientist Benedict Anderson calls "print-capitalism". Print-capitalism refers to the effects the printing press had on a nation's people; it provided the people with books and articles in a vernacular language and discourse, something which they could collectively identify with. This mass-produced commodity gave nations a homogenous vision, a collective thought, and a sense of unity in the concept of nationality.[1]

Nationalism can be viewed as the transfer from an individual person's identity to a culture that is mediated by literacy and a central government on sovereign land.[2] Benedict Anderson has given nations a new perspective with the term "imagined communities". It entails that nationalism isn't something as natural as we have perceived it to be, but rather something in relation to psychology. Anderson defines the national community as "imagined" because members of a nation don't personally know each other yet are subconsciously conditioned that they are connected. The sense of commonality through the national community is merely in the imagination, contained within imaginary national boundaries.[3]

The nation state is created by the institution's society as a unifying force that can regulate behavior and secure political goals that are seen fit. Nationalism has specific goals that nations adopt to ensure national security and a competitive edge in the global capitalist and political arenas. This global competition, prompted by nationalism, feeds technological and scientific feats and pushes human innovation to its limits. The ambition to compete against other nations has sparked a desire to accumulate and produce weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. Competition may drive advancement but too much competition could lead nations to conflict.

Gross domestic product (GDP) is a universal marker to measure a nation's success and prosperity.[4] Capitalism infers that the more resources a nation provides, the more it will grow. The more a nation grows, the more its people use the domestic resources, which

The conflict between capitalism and the environment is the fight of the century. (Image: Flood Wall Street)

means less resources for the nation. The less resources, the more difficult it is for the nation to grow. However, the larger the nation, the more resources necessary to maintain a growing population. The free market expands, but economic growth does not equate to the realities of social prosperity.[5] Capitalist economies have shifted nations' priorities from protecting and ensuring public health to internationally competing for the highest GDP.

Nationalist goals require capitalism in order to preserve the unique identity and territory of nations that compete with the rest of the global economic competitors.[6] Efficientism is a philosophical idea with origins in economics. Economic efficiency entails maximization of the production of services and goods in order to jumpstart economic development.[7] Efficientism means maximizing production in order to maximize profits. Similarly, maximizing GDP would mean maximizing a nation's success as an international competitor. This logic, however, does not particularly entail maximizing the conservation of our atmosphere or environment.

Natural resources are required to fulfill capitalist agendas. If demands are based off of efficientism and the goal of the nation is to maximize profits, then production requires maximizing the use of natural resources too. Deforestation, animal habitat loss, species extinction, global warming, air pollution, and depletion of Earth's finite resources are just a few of the environmental issues deriving from the irresponsible actions of competitive production. The sustainability of the environment suffers because nationalist countries allow capitalist agendas to deplete their own nation's

resources.

Given that nationalist goals drive capitalism, is capitalism sustainable to the political goals of nationalist countries? By not implementing effective policies, at what cost is the idea of maximization of profits at the expense of irresponsible environmental sustainability altering people, species, and resources on Earth? Capitalism cannot serve to please everyone at once. With that said, is it destructive to the nationalist order?

THE PROBLEM

Capitalism fulfills the desires for liberty and prosperity, important aspects in nationalistic values, but it also has the ability to damage the very platform that allows for the survival of humanity: our Earth. The influence and power that corporations possess are irrefutable, and democracy has allowed them to undermine the citizenry's environmental needs.[8]

The social costs of exploiting the environment are rarely considered in a typical cost/benefit analysis in the corporate world. The costs of capital (technology), labor, and of extraction, royalties, licenses and processing add up to equal the amount of the total cost of production.[9] It is nearly impossible to calculate the social and environmental costs within the cost of production, but this doesn't mean the costs should be excluded from the equation. The cost of pollution and disposal from the production process, scarcity value of depleted materials, intergenerational environmental damage, and the health problems caused by environmental damage and depletion

cannot be given a monetary value.[10] Environmental damage will make the elites of society, the ones who exploit land and people for capital gains, wealthier in the short run, but the potentially irreversible danger of the reality will cost humanity more than just money in the near future.

Capitalism itself has positive intentions and has proven to be the most efficient mechanism for allocating resources, promoting human ingenuity, and improving the lives of communities.[11] It maintains that when a viable resource has been exhausted, the market will utilize human ingenuity and eventually produce an alternative. This may soon be invalid, as human ingenuity has its limits. The consequences of depleting the earth's finite resources, such as health, permanent environmental damage, and animal extinction, have slowly transgressed with properties of irreversibility.

Many societies' cultures are having to adapt to the new realities that capitalism and unregulated restrictions have helped create. China has proposed spending upwards of $360 billion on renewable energy by 2020[12]. However, pollution from industry and transportation in the highly populated cities of China still remains an issue and has caused nearly consistent smog to cover the landscape. Instead of addressing the environmental issue of air pollution, oxygen stations and bars have been set up as solutions to, literally, mask the issue.[13] It has even become a norm to buy bottles of oxygen, like in American culture, among others, buying bottles of water. In Delhi, India, firecrackers, a common sight at Diwali celebration, are banned so as to not add to the air pollution or create unnecessary fires.[14]

Other cases take on more inherent cultural changes. The Kayapo, an indigenous group on the edge of the Amazon, have undergone dramatic changes through the growth of modern influence on their tribal culture. One of the Kayapo tribes lives in Gorotire, a reserve owned by the Kayapo and recognized by the Brazilian government. In 1982, gold was discovered in Gorotire which led to an invasion of 3,000 Brazilians.[15] The Kayapo community allowed the outsiders to exploit the gold and timber in exchange of a portion of the profits. After opening up a community bank account in the nearest city, Gorotire exploded economically. They purchased a light aircraft and a Brazilian pilot to protect their land, making them the first Amazonian tribe to have an air force.[16] The health of the community improved because there was money to build better houses and hire teachers to educate the children.[17] Video cameras and televisions were even purchased to record special ceremonies and to document the Kayapo culture.

The short-term reward gave the Kayapo a taste of modern life, but when the long-term effects settled in, the immediate benefits showed immediate challenges. The village soon became a waste-land as a result of thousands of miners constantly working on the reserve.

Mining was environmentally straining the land and damaging the rivers and banks, and malaria and sexually transmitted diseases began to affect the native population.[18] The Kayapo's subsistence strategy changed from hunting and gathering to going to the supermarket and buying food. A monetary system entered their culture, and the mine made the Gorotire's Kayapo two million dollars annually. The money seemed to be no match to their longing of returning to their previous culture.

Some of the Kayapo in the community are advocates of closing down the mine so as not to further disturb the land and culture that lives on it.[19] Advocates want the future generations to still be able to hunt on the land and in the forest that is currently being depleted. They want them to have the opportunity to go on tortoise hunts, a ritual necessary for the naming of a child. The ecological imbalance and the shifting of culture has caused distress on the Kayapo, since the mining will likely make some aspects of the Kayapo culture physically impossible. Because their culture is reliant on the surrounding environment and nature for the performance of ceremonial rituals, hunts, and festivals, ensuring the return of an ecological balance would promote stability to the tribe's vital cultural resonance.

Instances like the Kayapo don't need scientists to prove that industrial activity is destroying the environment or shifting the culture: the effects are visually evident. Competition, a nationalist value, has allowed the global village to advance in technological and scientific terms. This advancement has made evidence of environmental and climatic change factual with empirical evidence. Why are the same nationalist countries that are pushing technological advancement for capitalistic gain also avoiding the realities that are emerging as a result?

Societies that have been organized along capitalist lines embody a drive for capital accumulation. Accumulation demands more accumulation, sometimes without a desired end or motive.[20] This cathartic cycle holds many implications for environmental conditions. The constant want for accumulation requires us to convert the planet into production mode. Basically put, excessive capital drive converts the earth into commodities.[21] The declining global environmental conditions combined with the excessive consumeristic habits of people and corporations results in a downslope effect on our planet's valuable resources.

Capitalism cannot -and was not designed to- regulate the unsustainable growth it has unleashed. Capitalist dogma presents an ideal or philosophy that every capitalist endeavor must be accompanied by an economic reward that overshadows the initial cost of the risk. This philosophy controls how global environmental regulation (or absence thereof) is dictated, which offers humanity more barriers in the process of preventing the catastrophes of the

overly dynamic change in climate.[22]

With the presence of a global village, environmentalism has become a true international issue. It is often thought that nations are responsible for all happenings and resources within their borders. Now that it is apparent that all of humanity will share and bear the effects of climate change, environmental degradation does not discriminate; it influenced all nations across borders.[23] Therefore, putting politics before science will not move our societal problems closer to resolutions.

Because capitalism itself cannot impose regulations on implementing sustainable efforts within the market, global policy makers must step up. Nations may not be inclined to enforce such regulations unless there are beneficial incentives present.[24] Political parties in developed countries will make themselves available to the corporate realm in various aptitudes because the corporate realm can make their money available to those political parties.[25] There is no sovereign power that has authority over autonomous nations, and, in regards to government regulation, corporations, to an extent, are sovereign entities which have chosen maximization of profit over a healthy planet.[26]

Corporations hold an undeniable power and influence, especially because 51 out of 100 of the largest economies are corporations.[27] For comparison, as of 2017, Wal-Mart's revenue of $458 billion[28] surpasses Norway's GDP of $397 billion.[29] The interest of corporations, however, overpowers the necessities of an unhealthy planet. Environmental regulation is often discouraged in the corporate domain because it is cheaper to exploit the environment than to protect it.[30] Our environment costs, such as landscape degradation and animal extinction, to name the least, will continue to accumulate if we continue to believe the false notion that corporations are creating a long-term profit.[31] Monetary debt will be the least of our fears when an irreversible debt with concerns to clean water, natural resources, fresh air, and an earth capable of sustaining a rapidly growing human population come due.

The people that are losing the most in this arena are those who have no voice in these matters. Those who will bear the results of environmental irresponsibility are those who are unable to vote, those incapable of fighting for justice, and most importantly, those who do not live in a democracy. This places a restriction on indigenous and minority rights. Even for those that do live in a democracy, most capitalistic endeavors are taken care of outside of the democratic process, so even they do not have the power to make the most change.[32] However, this does not mean that nations do not have the authority to make change for the long-term effects that will help sustain the planet.

IMPLEMENTING REGULATION

The most reasonable and effective way to correct anthropogenic climate change is through the very sources that created it: humans. Unfortunately, it has been proven to be more complicated than that since global politics have been resistant to the process. Even when environmental policy has been implemented, it is difficult to regulate and rarely has shown to be effective. "A new WHO air quality model confirms that 92% of the world's population lives in places where air quality levels exceed WHO limits."[33] As of 2016, six of the top ten most polluted cities are in India.[34] Although India's government has imposed many environmental regulations, its cities' pollution crisis prove the ineffectiveness of regulation.

There have been various approaches to environmental regulation. Domestic Western governments used the command-and-control method. This meant that legislators would implement a command such as setting targets for emissions levels. Penalties would be imposed by delegated agents when standards were violated.[35] This approach has shown to be relatively effective but cannot solve the environmental issues at hand because some of its weaknesses tamper with the extent of the effectiveness. Some of the weaknesses, at the international level, include the ineffectiveness of confronting these increasingly damaging environmental issues because international environmental law causes treaty congestion, this means there is too much law coming in too quickly, which slows down the process to regulation. At the domestic level, command-and-control regulation has been condemned as costly and insensitive to the context of the local environments at question.[36] This state-centered hierarchical approach is no longer the exclusive response to the entirety of environmental issues.

With the "invisible hand" vision failing to materialize itself as individuals and corporations are not promoting "public interest" or, in this case, environmental responsibility, a market-based approach was tested. Light-handed initiatives developed in the 1980s and 1990s which were business-led and self-regulatory approaches.[37] These had limited success because they were not enforced fully by large industries. The interest gap between the public in environmental protection and that of the private business sector in profit-making is substantial enough to where light-handed initiatives didn't fulfill the desires of both interest groups.[38]

In 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio, also known as the Earth Summit, failed to reach a consensus to stop deforestation globally. Environmentalists, businesses, and community leaders set out to establish the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), a voluntary, market-based approach to certify and promote safe and forest-friendly products by ensuring responsible management of the world's forests. This is an example

of responsibility taken by non-governmental actors to protect and endorse sustainable practices under a non-profit organization. However, because FSC is voluntary, it is not an absolute solution reducing our ecological destruction.

If state-based approach and market-based approach cannot be effective separately, a shift to an integrated policy may be the solution. In the 1990s, when ecological degradation and its accompanying issues persisted, "new environmental governance" (hereafter NEG) developed.[39] NEG is composed of the government, non-governmental organization, civil society, and the private sector. They independently arrive at decisions to meet a common goal but can also function as an interdependent system. NEG is still evolving as a concept, but it is globally trending and coexisting with the phases of the globalized market.

In order for NEG to be effective, transparency, flexibility, and inclusiveness is required from the public, private, and non-governmental stakeholders.[40] This way, through collaborative and adaptive methods, solutions can be developed to be inclusive to local environments and benefit all stake-holders which contributed to it. NEG, as a new and flexible process, has the capabilities of coping with the complexities that environmental problems raise.[41]

However, this system of governance is also accompanied by flaws. Some actors involved are self-interested and eager to dominate and benefit economically. It is uncertain whether NEG can effectively cooperate with the early stages of environmental regulation, and whether it is compatible with command and control principles.[42]

Evidently, not one method of regulation is suited to regulate all economic and environmental problems. It will take a variety of systems, numerous trials and errors, and hours of negotiations to confront the global encounters of anthropogenic climate change.

There is no doubt that the United Nations plays an important role in bringing the world's nations together to solve injustices. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was held in December 1997 in Kyoto, Japan. There, the Kyoto Protocol (hereafter Kyoto) was adopted with purpose of reducing greenhouse gas emissions through global marketplace protection.[43] Kyoto works with the free market and within the principles of democracy and capitalism to improve and reestablish clean air, water, land, and overall global environmental health. Although Kyoto works on a global scale, its power begins from the bottom up, in which democratic governments have the aptitude to regulate the effects we have on the environment.[44]

The necessary emissions reduction targets can be met if the interests of the corporations, representative governments, and other environmentally inclined non-governmental organizations are focused towards a common goal. The European Union serves as a very influential factor in the political aspects of Kyoto. Membership in the EU requires agreement with Kyoto Protocols and it eventual ratification.[45] The European countries no longer act as single nations when bargaining and ratifying international policies. Often times their domestic policy is decided by a collective stance with the EU on the issue. This serves as a leverage in allowing the EU to be a main agenda setter in the eyes of international institutions.[46] This has put the EU at the forefront of achieving global climate regulation.

The first ever legally binding global climate agreement was signed by 195 countries at the Paris Climate Conference. Governments agreed to keeping the global average temperature below 2 degrees Celsius of the preindustrial temperature.[47] Cooperation, understanding, and support is asked of developed countries, who have agreed to make efforts to assist developing countries. This highly ambitious agreement has good intentions, but may prove to not be ambitious enough. Although 195 countries pledged and signed the agreement, the global average temperature is still expected to rise well over 3 degrees Celsius by 2100.[48] These global efforts do not go unnoticed, though. Some progress is better than none in this ongoing and very dangerous sequence of events.

CONCLUSION

Rapid change calls for rapid adaptation. Humans have existed and endured thousands of years of climate change and environmental struggles because of their remarkable ability to adapt to change. Capitalism surely has the human culture wanting more, and with the help of nationalist principles such as competition and national security, nations will not cease to want more, too. The earth has taken care of the human species through its evolution, and now it is time to limit the anthropogenic destruction we are inflicting upon it.

With the cooperation of all humanity, regardless of class, nationality, or sector, improvement and conservation is possible with common goals. Short-term effects and gains are blinding to the long-term consequences of an earth that can no longer sustain the human race. There should be no "sides" or enemies in the fight against global depletion, but nations competing to sustain their people and remain competitive in the global markets have posed hurdles in the race for the sustainability of our planet. Nationalist values are supplemental to building that competitive edge, but we must eliminate the "imagined communities" mindset and adopt one of unitary defense to save humanity.

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THE EFFECTS OF GLOBALIZATION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIONS

SARAH ORTIZ

"Those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means."[1]

Globalization—we hear this word everywhere. The image that comes to mind with the word globalization is usually a picture of the world surrounded by people holding hands in celebration. The connotation of globalization is often positive, as mixing peoples and cultures typically results in understanding and tolerance. However, the effects of globalization may also be ambiguous, neither good nor bad, as exemplified by a ritual in China and the television show *The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills* colliding, resulting in a platform for activism in the US and the rest of the international world. The city of Yulin in China practices a ritual of eating lychee berries and dog meat during the summer solstice. It is said that this tradition is done to deflect heat during the summer season and promote fertility and virility in men. Although the eating of dog meat has been practiced for over 500 years, the *Yulin Lychee and Dog Meat Festival* has only been held since 2009.[2] Due to the fact that this festival is recent, many people oppose it and have fought to expose the practices as torture toward animals. Activists and critics state that the animals are not humanely treated; in fact, there are dogs that are picked off the streets, placed in small cages and killed in unsanitary ways.[3] So, how does a popular television show come into play? Lisa Vanderpump is a Beverly Hills socialite and a well-known dog lover. When an animal activist showed Vanderpump what was happening in Yulin, she used the television show to campaign against the festival to place pressure on China to ban the practice. China has not banned the ritual. During the show, Vanderpump was filmed at rallies, protests, and even spoke at a congressional hearing to stop the Yulin festival.[4] She maximized

her platform by using her television program and social media to make every effort to bring awareness to this subject.

The significance of Vanderpump's efforts is not only the awareness that she brought forth, but the demonstration of how cultural rituals can be easily supported or rejected by a Tweet, Facebook post, or television program for millions to read and watch. Forms of mainstream and social media are all products of globalization; they are the beacon of information in our world today. Globalization can be described as "ready availability of highly efficient computer and media technologies led to ever-faster exchanges of information and entertainment around the world….the growth of multinational corporations restricted national economies on a global scale….an array of international governing bodies."[5] Using mediums of technology allows users around the world to gather information quickly on a number of topics.

Rituals such as the *Yulin Lychee and Dog Meat Festival* have come under scrutiny by the public questioning their legitimacy and purpose in the culture that practices them. As Vanderpump provides information on why the people of Yulin eat the dog meat during the festival in the television program *The Real Housewives of Beverley Hills*, she then discredits the ritual by claiming that the reason for eating the dog meat to bolster fertility and virility is "bullshit."[6] This bold statement to discredit another culture's ritual is nothing new or shocking. However, what is shocking is the number of people who will support claims such as Vanderpump's without doing their own research on the topic and will take her claim as truth, and view the culture that practices this ritual as being barbaric and ruthless. She

is imposing her western standards on a culture which is an example of cultural relativism. Cultural relativism is using one's own cultural values and norms and placing those guidelines upon another culture. Vanderpump's celebrity status on this matter tempers the way people on a global scale understand and judge this ritual. And by using her status she has criticized a culture's ritual and perpetuates ignorance. Globalization has made it effortless to protect, assist, or renounce another culture's practices. It is safe to say that all aspects of culture and our worldview have been affected by globalization. As a significant aspect of culture is religion, there are many effects of globalization, both positive and negative, on religion, ritual, and spirituality.

Religion is one of the prime features of each of our worldviews. Many of us have had some form of religion or religious practice in our lives and, although religion is central to most cultures, it can be difficult to understand. With five major religions and over 4000 religions practiced around the world today, awareness of other cultures' religions can be easily misunderstood[7]. According to Emily A. Shultz and Robert H. Lavenda, anthropologists who co-wrote *Cultural Anthropology: A Perspective on the Human Condition*, religion is one of the more familiar worldviews, but many scholars oppose the definition of religion because religion is a view that deals with the supernatural unlike any other worldview in culture[8]. Another difficult aspect of defining religion is that many definitions steam from western views on religion; many scholars have not taken into account how religion is practiced in eastern cultures and/or small-scale societies around the world. This is because many times the "winners "in history write the standards of the world, which include politics, religion, economics and society. The "winners" in history have the leverage and the economic affluence to do so. Anthropologists define religion as "ideas and practices that postulate reality beyond which is immediately available to the other senses." In other words, religion is both belief and actions[9]. A.F.C Wallace, another anthropologist, has categorized different components of religion as prayer, physiological exercise, exhortation, mana, taboo, feasts, and sacrifice[10]. With all these features that make up the definition of religion, there is ample opportunity to be misguided when it comes to understanding religion, ritual, and spirituality. Globalization is another opportunity to change, reshape, and alter religions and how they are practiced. In some cases, this can be positive.

Two religions that have had positive effects from globalization are Christianity and Islam. Christianity is the largest religion around the world and takes it beliefs from the teachings of Jesus Christ who lived and died 2,000 years ago. Islam is the fastest-growing religion in the world; it is based on the teachings of the Prophet Muhammed who lived around 1,400 years ago[11]. Technology has helped both of

these religions grow through the use of the internet, social media, and apps, enabling people to connect with others who have the same religious affiliations. Many Christians are making use of the internet, creating portals for their congregations to worship without even stepping into a church. Along with technology introduced by globalization, the creation of efficient transportation and migration has been another catalyst for the spread of these religions. People can travel and proselytize in more constructive and efficient ways. According to the *Pew Research Center*, Muslims will nearly approach the number of Christians by the year 2050[12]. Most of this is due to highly concentrated populations of Muslims with high fertility rates.[13] As these populations grow, the number of young people in these countries will more likely migrate to other parts of the world, leading to a higher spread of Islam.

Education is another effect of globalization, as education of these religions has encouraged tolerance with the understanding of Christianity and Islam and the people who are a part of them. Since people can use the internet and other forms of media to try to educate themselves on these two religious groups, they can make a better judgement on what these two religions are all about as a whole. Educating oneself on other religions through utilization of the internet, social media, and travel both reinforces and restores consideration, compassion, and the capacity to discern what is truth and what is not in regards to that religion and its practices. However, the more globalized we become, the more inclusive we are often leading us away from "tradition" causing some communities to feel threatened and marginalized.

The negative effects of globalization on religion are the result of fundamentalism and extremism. Many have heard these two words in the news and media, oftentimes using them interchangeably, but these words are two separate ideas. Fundamentalism is "attitude stressing strict and literal adherence to a set of basic principles."[14] Extremism is "the holding of extreme political or religious views, fanaticism. Beliefs that are very far from what most people consider correct or reasonable.[15] These two groups want to preserve the traditional ways of their beliefs in order to secure their identity through their religion. According to Dr. Anastasia Panakagos, an anthropology professor at Cosumnes River College, fundamentalists believe western domination is a product of God's wrath, and because of that wrath they need to return to more strict religious beliefs and practices[16]. They mean to restore tradition and religious piety. The rapid transition into globalization has made many feel that they have lost a part of themselves and they need to restore it and protect it.[17] Dr. Panagakos also makes note that identity politics is making a comeback; the idea is that "political action can be taken by a group who share an identity." [18] But with extremists their "political action" is usually mass violence. What is unnerving is that for some

extremists they feel not only their religious affiliation is under attack but so are other means of their identity. Some extremists have become a "hybrid" where they are not only focused on religion but ethnicity, race, or class as well.[19] Globalization for these two groups has not been attainable, which is why they revert to tradition or violence to maintain their views.

Looking at historical context and evaluating the outcomes of past events is necessary to comprehend why some people can easily transition from devout religious members to fundamentalists or extremists. International Relations (IR) scholars have seen links between the political actions taken in history and their consequences today.[20] They have seen the drift from religious practices to a more secular pivot which can cause many religious groups to feel threatened. E.S. Hurd, Professor of Global Politics and Religion at Northwestern University, presented the idea that there is a connection between foreign powers altering a whole nation-state that is not their own, and constructing a new society and culture by naturalizing and incorporating the foreign power's ideology.[21] The culture shock that is felt among the nationals living in the new world causes unrest and internal and external conflict. Not only are people trying to figure out how the change would affect their daily lives, but how the new ideology would affect local, state, and federal policies. And if the new adopted ideology is against former religious practices, then the members of the religion would feel that their way of life is being threatened. IR scholars recognize that foreign powers have great influence in which their political presence affects religions.

Some religious rituals, such as the *Yulin Lychee and Dog Meat Festival*, make mainstream news and some are rarely observed, such as a healing ritual for the !Kung (also known as Ju/hoansi or San). Rituals are integral parts of our lives. Rituals do not have to be religious in nature; they are "a repetitive social practice composed of a sequence of symbolic activities in the form of dance, song, speech, gestures, or the manipulation of objects, adhering to a culturally defined ritual schema and closely connected to a specific set of ideas that are often encoded in myth."[22] Rituals are often remnants of a religious narrative or myth and must be performed in a way that pays tribute to that narrative or myth.

There are several types of rituals including prescriptive, situational, technological, and protective rituals. Prescriptive rituals are rituals that are obligatory, such as keeping the Sabbath in Judaism and Christianity. Situational rituals are rituals that are performed in a moment of strife and struggle, and technological rituals are rituals that try "to influence or control nature in activities that affect human activities and well-being."[23] Lastly, as the name suggests, protective rituals are performed when protection and safety need to be ensured[24]. One way to understand rituals is that they are the actions

taken or observed. In a religious community, everyone has a place and purpose during a ritual, allowing everyone to be enriched by the ritual. Rituals are just as vulnerable to the effects of globalization as any other part of religion.

As communities move into globalization the transition can be unsettling. However, some religious communities have used this transition to make the best of it through syncretism and revitalization movements. Syncretism is "the synthesis of old religious practices with new religious practices (or a new way of life) introduced from outside, often by force."[25] Revitalization movements are "a conscious, deliberate, and organized attempt by some members of a society to create a more satisfying culture in a time of crisis."[26] When change is looming for communities and pressure arises, some will use the opportunity to merge two worldviews in order to keep some tradition of the past and to have one foot in the new culture.

One example of syncretism is when Haitians created the religious practice of Vodou. Vodou is the product of when a dominant group pressured a secondary group to conform to the ways of the dominant group, and yet, the secondary group was not given proper instructions on how to lead themselves once the dominant group left their country. "Vodou" means deity or spirit. It is a spiritual religion and it comes from the Fon language from West Africa[27]. In the 1700's, Haiti was a French colony. All the slaves were to be baptized and become Christians. However, once baptized, the French left. In doing so, they didn't give any other religious context to run their lives. In 1804, when Haiti became the first black republic, the Vatican cut ties with Haiti and most priests left[28]. Without the driving force of the French and the Vatican, Haitians kept most of the worship of the deities from West Africa in addition to the worship of Catholic saints, thereby creating Vodou.

Vodou is steadfast and defiant in response to change. It's a spiritual practice that told the world that they were the practitioners of their own lives and that they were not going to be forced into the way of life that the French or Vatican wanted[29]. In coping with drastic change, Haitians took the opportunity of keeping their old religious practices and incorporating some from the new world that would help them to create an identity in the new era that would survive.

Globalization can create spaces in religious communities that are turbulent and hard to process but with syncretism and revitalization movements, some religious societies have found ways to practice and create new rituals in order to remain in the ever-changing world. The new rituals provide a new identity that is adaptable and meets the community's needs. An example of successful revitalization of religious practices and rituals are found in the Bwiti religion. Bwiti is practiced by the Fang who are located in Central Africa.

Haitian Vodou altar

Bwiti was a religion that was being challenged by the French during French colonialism. Bwiti's views on the "below" (which is similar to a heaven) were being threatened by Christian thoughts on heaven being above, along with Bwiti's being treated terribly by the colonizers. How they revitalized their religion was by taking an "eboga", a drug that allowed them to cope with the colonizers' explanation of what life is supposed to be like for them. They also took the Christian god and their own gods of the "below" and merged them into the Bwiti pantheon. Lastly, they have a ritual that creates room for them to feel "one-heartedness" in a world that made them lesser. Through that ritual they are able to escape the harsh world around them and be in a place that is sacred and satisfying.[30].

Not all rituals in the era of globalization have been met with positivity; some have been watered down by globalization. In the Kalahari Desert, located in parts of Angola, Zambia, Namibia, and Botswana, lives a hunter-gatherer group known as Ju/hoansi. There are a few different Ju/hoansi groups with different languages but they all subscribe to the same reciprocity system. They are one of the longest living hunter-gatherer peoples in the world, and most of their practices are still being used today. However, many Ju/hoansi have trouble sustaining their lifestyle due to the emergence of capitalism in their communities. The Ju/hoansi have been forced out of their

lands by different government groups and have fought to retain some parts of their original lands. But between the introduction of capitalism and restrictions on hunting, it has been difficult for the Ju/hoansi to live as they once did.

Ju/hoansi have a unique religious view: they do not stress over religion and make it customary as many western religions. They have one higher god and a few lesser gods who act as the tricksters. They also believe ghosts cause most of their problems. Ancestral ghosts are called "gangwasi"[31] and they are important to their spiritual view because these ghosts cause both minor and serious issues. Since they are aware of illness and death, healers are very important in this society. The healing rituals they perform are situational and the healing is usually done by a "!kia dance" that takes place at night. Both men and women can be healers in this community and this ritual is observed by everyone. This and many other rituals are important for the Ju/hoansi, but since they have had a difficult time under capitalist society, they have had to find new ways to bring in resources for their family such as cultural tourism.

Cultural tourism is an effect of globalization and it can have negative outcomes. Cultural tourism can be seen as people wanting to visit and witness stereotypical cultural activities. Tourism in itself is not bad, but when people are seeking to find stereotypical scenes

of what they think cultures live as, it prolongs the ideas of people being "primitive," "exotic" or "backwards". This can promote racism and xenophobia, and the desire to step in and control another group. The Ju/hoansi will depict themselves in ways that make them look poor to sell to tourists so they can bring home resources. They have also performed rituals like the healing dance to tourists to create some form of income. Selling one's culture to groups of people over time can make that ritual superficial to the observers inside and outside the community. The ritual becomes something that is consumable for profit, which takes away from the sacredness of the ritual and turns it into work instead of a valuable part of the religious culture. In this instance globalization is negatively affecting the Ju/hoansi.

In addition to cultural tourism, another negative side effect of globalization on rituals is the ability of governments to control groups through economic means. Usually there are a few ways in which governments will manipulate their people. Some of these ways are by using force, propaganda to stir up strife, or by using economic means.[32] The Ju/hoansi became dependent on the economic system that was imported from Holland and the influence of neoliberalism from the UK. The government can, and has, controlled their migration, and by cutting off or even shortening their subsistence strategy means that the Ju/hoansi have been further manipulated by the government they live under. Governments can use religion to their favor: if there is a religion that people prefer over another, they can use that motive to implement policies to do what they want and act as a concealed hand conducting the people in ways that pits groups against each other for the benefit of the nation-state.[33]

Spirituality is an important element of religion that is also heavily affected by globalization. Spiritual is defined as "relating to, consisting of, or affecting the spirit."[34] Being spiritual is essential in some religions because connecting with one's own spirit or the spirits around them allows them to understand and be one with the supernatural. Many people rely on their spirituality to understand the world around them. They use their spirit and the spirits around them to explain an illness, determine the best time to harvest crops, decide who should marry who, etc. Spirituality is even seen in some western cultures as better suited to one's needs than being part of a religion and following religious rules and actions. In any case, spirituality is crucial and globalization does have a hand in changing the way people are spiritual.

How globalization has been positively affecting people around the world is through the spread of information on other religions as well as providing access to alternative forms of therapies that focus on the spiritual healing of a person. For example, war can be cruel to a person's psyche. The emotional and mental toll on a person's mind and spirit can cause great struggle in their life. In the western world,

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a frequent issue and makes it devastatingly difficult for veterans to move past the pain that accompanies war. The therapies in the US and other western countries often fail to fully address all the components of PTSD in veterans.

Edward Tick, a psychotherapist for over 40 years, has introduced a new form of therapy for veterans. He has been helping veterans, in particular Vietnam veterans with PTSD, by taking them on a warrior's journey. The pilgrimage to Greece allows the veterans to find peace and solidarity with the Greek warriors they have read about. Due to the nature of the Vietnam War and the public image of the U.S. government's involvement in the war, Vietnam veterans received little appreciation for the fight that they were called to do and many suffer from the pain of war when they return. Tick uses "Dream Healing" to help the veterans relive moments in the ancient Greek warriors' lives. By doing this the veterans work through emotions that they might be feeling[35]. Tick has provided a holistic view of the pain and struggle of the Greek warriors, physically and psychologically, to help all areas of the veterans so that they can be relieved of their pain and find peace.

As a negative result of the interaction of spirituality and globalization, the spirituality of the Asmat people of Papua New Guinea is under attack. The Asmat are a people that view the world as hostile, full of violence and revenge. The Asmat practiced head-hunting and cannibalism for hundreds of years. They believe that the practice of killing and eating of flesh allows for their ancestors and loved ones to pass through to the "Land of the Dead". These practices have stopped with Dutch colonization and later under the Indonesian government.[36] Once the Dutch came, many of the Asmat had to renounce their beliefs in favor of the Christian God. Missionaries took the pig, which to the Asmat was seen as an animal of valor, and turned it into a commodity for commerce.[37] But the hardest part for the Asmat life in the modern world is that the spirits that live with them are not able to be at peace which makes the Asmat unable to find peace. Spirits cannot find peace because they are not able to go into the "Land of the Dead"; they are forced to live in the villages, causing trouble and misfortune for the village members. The Asmat must use magic to keep the spirits at bay, which include rituals involving head-hunting and killing. But killing is not allowed and many of their resources to perform the other parts of the ritual are scarce.

The Sago Palm tree is at the heart of Asmat culture. Sago Palm is a head-hunter spirit and a head-hunter has Sago Palm spirit in them; they are one. The Sago Palm is needed to create "Bis Poles", which are intricately carved wooden poles of the ancestors that passed away; Sago Palms are limited. The Asmat would spend up to three months performing their ritual to put an ancestor spirit in the Bis

Pole and send them to the "Land of the Dead" with honor, but they cannot complete the rituals[38]. Since Asmat are no longer allowed to kill, the spirits cannot move on. Furthermore, oil was found in Papua New Guinea and, as a result, oil and lumber companies have cut down many of its trees including Sago Palm[39]. The oil and lumber companies are killing the tree that gives the Asmat life. The supernatural world is so prominent in the Asmat worldview that their own spirituality is being affected. If their ancestor cannot rest in peace, neither will they once they pass.

Imposing many of the western world's values and standards on the Asmat causes them to have lost their spirituality. It downgrades their purpose and worth in their community and in much of the world. Killing, head-hunting, and cannibalism are not socially acceptable but completely changing and forcing another society's values and world does not foster change. This causes people to feel left out from the rest of the world. It singles them out as having values that are wrong or bizarre. The fact that another society's worldview may seem drastically different from our own does not make it any less valuable. Globalization and learning about another's way of being spiritual can have the consequences of labeling another society as being wrong or something that needs to be changed.

The effects of globalization on international religion should matter to everyone as there is an imbalance when it comes to the positive and negative effects that globalization brings forth. The positive effects can create economic means, security and reliability in the modern world but only for a select few groups. Religious freedoms are dominated in larger societies that place pressure on small-scale societies to abandon their ways of life in order to be part of the global community. The negative effects grow in number and many religious groups are not able to keep up with global community standards. Certain religious affiliations have a disadvantage such as the Asmat and the Ju/hoansi. Economically they are dependent on Western means of income which cause a struggle within the community. In the large picture, they have no value towards the global economy if they are not financially stable and lack resources to trade with the rest of the world.

Socially, the values of these groups are being challenged and taken away. Religion is culture; it creates a shared language and gives a place and purpose to society. It also helps communities understand the world around them. When that part of someone is being threatened or challenged, it's disheartening. Being told to change one's whole life for a completely new one is frightening. Where then is their place to call their own? What is their purpose? How can they explain the world around them with the new context? Globalization is creating a chaotic world for many religious groups. Since globalization is seen by many people as something that is good for everyone, we are not seeing or understanding how troublesome it

can be for some.

What further complicates this process is there are foreign powers that are making decisions for other nations. In addition to foreign powers, there are economic powers such as multinational corporations (MNC's) that also have influence on the decisions made in other countries through economic means. MNC's have relied on resources attained through economic power plays, and many act as outside contractors in other countries.[40] If there is a resource they need they can pit two groups against each other so those groups fight and then the MNC's can obtain the resources they need. This means MNCs can use status, class, religion, and ethnicity to cause conflict amongst groups by employing more of one group over another.

Religion is holistic. It exposes the values that groups hold dearly and infringing upon these values is what sparks conflict over belief systems. In the *Yulin Lychee and Dog Meat Festival*, one side saw the ritual as cruel, gruesome and inhumane; the other viewed it as a normal practice, a prescription for keeping men fertile and the weather cool throughout the coming months. Without proper cultural discernment that anthropologists, sociologists, and historians apply to their subject matter, people will judge practices such as the *Yulin Lychee and Dog Meat Festival* superficially without diving deeper into their meaning. We have seen this happen throughout history and even in recent years. Religion has political implications; the dominant powers in a global world get to make the decisions of what religions are acceptable, what practices and rituals are pleasing, or that there should be none at all. Religion is something to protect, if not for ourselves, then for others whose cultures are being challenged. Means of sustaining globalization without infringing upon small scale societies have yet to be found. Despite this, it is still important to try and comprehend what these societies have to deal with in the era of globalization. We should not simply choose to be ignorant. It needs to be a priority to communicate on how we can work together in this globalized world.

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HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN INDIA: THE WRATH OF MODERN DAY SLAVERY

SOOVYA NAGIN

Preserving human rights and civil liberties has always been a constant struggle in India, and though they've established many policies to prevent the ever-growing business of human trafficking, the failure to enforce these policies has led to the increasing exploitation of individuals across the country. Globally, human trafficking has become the third growing industry that makes about $32 billion annually and is increasing as the international community and the countries themselves are failing to combat its widespread presence.[1] There are various forms of human trafficking which encompass but aren't limited to the following: forced labor, sexual exploitation of men, women, and children, as well as people smuggling and trafficking of tissues, cells, and organs.[2] Over 27 million adults and 13 million children are being trafficked around the world for various purposes. Human trafficking is a growing industry because the trafficker can constantly recycle the victim as long as they are physically capable and remain submissive to their owner. Therefore, unlike drugs or weapons, where profit is earned once, human traffickers constantly make money off of their victims especially in areas like India where a single sex slave earns at least 250,000 rupees a year (about $2,381). It should be noted that though $2,381 isn't much in the United States or elsewhere in the western countries, in under developed countries like India, the rate of $1 is about 105 rupees therefore $2,381 is considered tremendous amount of money.[3] Nonetheless, traffickers tend to use a variety of methods to condition their victims by subjecting them to gang rape, physical and mental abuse, confinement, starvation, threats to harm the victim's family and forced consumption of drugs.[4]

The ineffectiveness of the government and law enforcement officers in capturing and convicting the culprits has contributed to the industry's widespread growth. India has been the carrier and transporter of trafficking victims for more than 75 years and due to severe natural disasters and the overall weak economic structure, a sense of desperation has overtaken the emotions of the poor population. Poor families, for example, are more willing to send their kids away for a better educational system or for a stable job and traffickers take advantage of this desperation, inevitably. Nevertheless, the abhorrent truth about human trafficking suppressed in India will be further explored by analyzing the characteristics of human trafficking in the past as well as present governmental actions taken to prevent the viciously growing industry.

WHY IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING THRIVING IN INDIA

The fundamental theory of supply and demand sufficiently explains the growing industry of human trafficking in India. For example, when men migrate to major commercial cities for work or in the search thereof, then the demand for commercial sex is created. To fulfill this growing demand, a supply is created by traffickers who resort to any means to make money and mainly target young girls and women belonging to poor families.[5] In Northeast India, young girls and boys are often taken away from their homes and

sold in distant states for sexual exploitation and to work as bonded labor by so-called agents who lure the kids' parents by offering improved education, money, and an overall better life. These so-called agents are actually traffickers who play on the helplessness of poor families whereby instead of helping these kids to achieve a better life, the agents sell them in to carpentry units, beggars, brick kilns, as domestic servants, for sexual exploitation, and/or for organ harvesting.[6] In many tribal areas, the parents are kept under the delusion that by sending their kids off, they will be giving them a better life in terms of safety and education. These parents even pay these so-called agents to take care of their kids, but little do they know that they are feeding their kids into the mouths of danger.

FORCED MARRIAGE AND TISSUE/ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Often-times arranged marriage and forced marriages are misunderstood to be the same thing when in reality they follow two separate paths. In arranged marriages, families, friends, and/or community members help seek out compatible matches for two individuals who are in a mutual agreement to get married. There is full, free, and informed consent for both parties prior to and throughout the marriage where if even one individual loses interest in the proposal then they are able to withdraw their consent.[7] However, forced marriage is when either spouse, (usually the wife), is coerced into the marriage where the submissive partner or victim is manipulated in or forced to give consent through psychological and/or physical abuse.[8] Since the relationship lacks the full and free consent, it becomes a forced marriage rather than a marriage that's consensually arranged. However, in India, it's not just about forced marriage, it's about forced illegal marriages conducted between a significantly elder man and a girl under 18 years of age.[9]

Young girls are usually sold into these marriages by their own parents since they typically belong to extremely poor families. Once married, the girls experience physical, mental, and sexual abuse on a daily basis so that their spouse can ensure their submissiveness and loyalty.[10] More often than not, girls would get pregnant immediately after they get married because they can't afford contraceptives, causing them to have a higher chance of dying at childbirth as their bodies aren't developed enough to take on the immense stress or trauma of a full-term pregnancy. Sometimes the husbands become so abusive that the girls end up having a miscarriage before even knowing that they were ever pregnant. However, pregnancy rarely kept husbands from using violence. They have to maintain their superiority and absolute power, even if it meant the loss of their child.[11] Forced marriage is characterized as human trafficking because the wife or young girls are forced into a relationship that's illegal and discordant by one of the members who are constantly

exposed to extreme mental and sexual brutality once they are branded as someone else's.[12] The techniques used by the husbands to guarantee their wife's compliance are the same tactics used by traffickers to ensure that their victims are filled with enough fear to never rebel against them or escape.

The worst part of a forced marriage in poor villages is that the girls are too timid and fearful of doing anything to disrespect or dishonor their family, especially since their own family are the ones who force them into these marriages. In many cases, the girls manage to escape back home but indebted to the abuser, the parents send their daughters back, especially since in India once a girl is married off then they are told that they are to never return to their maternal home. The abuser often takes full advantage of this vulnerability. In the few instances that the family would speak up against the superfluous exploitation, the abuser would just hand them more money and shut them up. It should be noted that these girls are young in terms of being under the age of 18 which is the legal age for an individual to get married. So, the younger these girls are, the easier they are to manipulate, subjugate, and instill with fear as they are completely dependent on their abusers.

Organ harvesting is another gruesome way for traffickers to earn loads of money from their victims. Sometimes, when traffickers are done using their victims to the fullest, whether it be physical or sexual labor, they harvest their organs and sell them in the black market. After they auction the organs off to the highest bidder, they send the organs out to customers nationwide.[13] In 2008, in India, police busted an organ transplant ring where doctors were discovered to be active participants.[14] These doctors earned much as $37,500 from each kidney on the black market and had illegally transplanted about 500 kidneys. Many of the victims were laborers who were offered stable, well-paying jobs, only to find themselves being cut open at gunpoint. India has a huge imbalance between the growing demands for organs and the deteriorating supply available. This unsatisfied demand has become the driving force for traffickers to forcefully harvest organs and sell them for an exorbitant amount of money to desperate and wealthy individuals. In 1994, India made it illegal to sell kidneys for commercial gain in which lawbreakers are imprisoned for up to five years.[15] Since there is little research conducted on the issue of organ harvesting in India, it is very difficult to estimate the amount of people affected by this fast-growing industry. Research conducted by Geisinger Health Systems in Chennai, reveals that the victims were amongst the poorest in society who were either easy prey for organ traffickers or were looking forward to earning any cash to pay off their debts. Most of the time, willing donors only got a mere fraction of what they were promised. So, instead of getting $8,000, they would get $600.[16] Though there have been some arrests, the actual data of these

culprits receiving any form of punishment is obscure due to the corruption in India. Nonetheless, traffickers mainly target the poor population because of the easy access, high availability and overall vulnerability of the class, which unfortunately, India has a large supply of. With the corruption in India, traffickers have been able to and will continue to get away with their repugnant deeds until changes in the justice system are made.

INTERSTATE AND INTRASTATE TRAFFICKING

Every year, roughly 200,000 people are being trafficked in India. Approximately 90% is interstate trafficking while 10% accounts for international trafficking. In 2011, roughly 35,000 children were reported missing and more than 11,000 of these were from West Bengal.[17] More than half of the 200,000 trafficking cases are from Jharkhand, Karnataka, West Bengal, and Behar where the victims were taken from Nepal and other neighboring countries to these cities in India. Half of the world's slaves live in India in which Delhi is the hotspot for the illegal trade of young girls for domestic labor, forced marriage, and prostitution.[18] In 2015, among the girls rescued in Delhi, 194 were lured in the pretext of jobs, 7 were forced into prostitution, and 3 were sold to neighboring states.[19] About 60 percent of the human trafficking victims were in the age group of 12-16 years and about 83 percent of them knew who their trafficker was on a personal level beforehand. Most of the rescues were trafficked from West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha. In Jharkhand alone, more than 100,000 people are trafficked each year and 67 percent of these victims are brought into the trafficking ring by someone they know.[20] Jharkhand has a significant population of indigenous tribal communities who are among the most disenfranchised citizens in the country. About 9 million out of 32 million people are from tribal communities and 80 percent of the girls from the 9 million that are being trafficked.[21] There are some girls who are able to escape and find their way back home. However, in India's society, once a girl is no longer a virgin and that too before getting married, then she is seen as stigmatized and a disgrace to her family's honor. Therefore, in order to maintain their respect and dignity in society, often-times families refuse to accept their daughters back and would rather consider them being dead than alive. This causes homelessness or self-imposed prostitution in order to survive. By doing so, they expose themselves to the trafficking business and the cycle continues.

The most disadvantaged social strata in India are the lowest caste known as Dalits, religious minorities, tribal communities and basically anyone who is most vulnerable. Once captured, the victims of human trafficking are forced into labor in domestic sectors such as steel, construction, pickling, floriculture, wire manufacturing for underground cables, and many other physically strenuous jobs.[22]

Six girls rescued from traffickers in Mumbai

In addition to bonded labor, many children are forced to work as domestic servants, agricultural workers, in factories and as beggars. Often-times the kids begging on the streets in India are part of a begging ring whereby they are sent out to make more money by their owners. To make the most out of their victims, the ringleader would force young girls to have babies and they would either send them out to beg for money with their baby to gain more sympathy and money or they would put their babies up for sale.[23] Begging ringmasters often maim children, men, and women to earn more money, which why is there are countless beggars on the streets of India who have a missing limb or some sort of disability. Some may be genuine, and others are there to play on emotions to extort as much money as possible.

Girls and women that are subjected to sex trafficking are predominately from Nepal, Bangladesh, Burma, Asia, and Central Asia, and the prime destination for foreign and Indian female victims encompass Delhi, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Kolkata, Gujarat, and along the India-Nepal border. Nepali females are increasingly subjected to sex trafficking in Nagpur, Pune, and Assam.[24] Migrants from Nepal, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan, are forced in to labor through debt bondage and recruitment fraud as well as sex trafficking.[25] However, more specifically, the boys from Bihar, Bangladesh, and Nepal, are forced into laboring in harsh life-threatening conditions such as embroidery factories and coal mines, while, boys from Kashmir are usually sent off by rebellious separatists to join terrorist groups to fight against the Indian government.[26]

The most debilitating issue with the police force in India is that it reeks of corruption. It's easy for many traffickers and brothel owners to get away with their abhorrent practices with the help of corrupt law enforcement officers who take bribes from sex trafficking institutions and sexual services from trafficking victims and in return shield the traffickers from India's laws.[27] Since India is an under developed country with an abnormally large wealth gap, bribery tends to be the route many pursue in society.[28] However,

it's not just about the idea of bribery itself, it's far more horrifying and incapacitating when many officers and even political figures are participants in human trafficking themselves. Most families don't bother going to the police because they know that it's just comprised of greedy and corrupted individuals who use their power abusively.[29] This leads to thousands of unreported and unresolved cases that contribute to the struggle of the nation to be aware and vigilante about the issue.

GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTIONS

According to the U.S. Department of State, India has not been complying with the minimum standards in eliminating or at least preventing human trafficking from growing like wild fire. In 2016, the National Crime Record Bureau in India has, for the first time, submitted documents which encompass data regarding human trafficking investigations and convictions. However, though the data demonstrated dynamic efforts used to combat human trafficking, the number of law enforcement actions and overall convictions were disappointingly low.[30] Since the report was not comprehensive, the jail sentences applied to the convicted traffickers remained undefined.[31]

Nonetheless, to guarantee effective investigation and identification of trafficking cases, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) reassessed their approach in guiding the Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTU) and have been coordinating with other agencies across the nation to help refer the victims to reliable rehabilitation services. The government continues to fund shelters and rehabilitation institutions for men, women, and children across India.[32] They've also taken initiatives to issue additional orders to states to find missing men, women, and children in hopes to rescue trafficking victims as well. However, these plans remain inadequate and inconsistent with the actions executed by law enforcement officers. For example, they often penalize the victims for the crimes they've committed when they were being trafficked just to show the world that they are getting things done when in reality they are just punishing innocent victims.[33]

The government of India has failed to fully report on investigations, prosecutions, or convictions of government officials complicit in the human trafficking industry. In May 2015, eight Puducherry officers were terminated and charged with rape for a second time when they had assaulted four children who were rescued from a sex trafficking ring.[34] In February 2016, an official from the water resource department in Goa and his partner were arrested for leading prostitution rings.[35] In addition, the media has made a few allegations on some of the complicit governmental officials; however, no investigation or prosecution occurred and those officials continue to remain in office.

The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) worked alongside of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to increase the government's ability to protect and surveil the wellbeing of Indian migrant workers abroad.[36] The MOIA and the MEA launched a website called eMigrate where they registered foreign recruitment agencies to ensure that the agencies that their migrant workers were being sent off to were legitimate and not a trap used by traffickers. The MOIA opened up five resource centers in Chennai, Lucknow, Kochi, Hyderabad, and Gurgaon, where they offered counseling sessions for people considering migrant work.[37] These resource centers also offer support to migrant workers in distress by providing them with shelter and therapy. The MOIA and the MEA also worked alongside of the Central Bureau of Investigation to combat recruitment fraud and trafficking accusations in which they often revoked the recruitment agencies licenses. In 2014, local government officials in Delhi delivered an executive order to regulate job placement agencies; however, the implementation and enforcement of the order was relatively low.[38] Though the Indian military has taken initiatives to train their personnel regarding the issue of human trafficking, the government did not disclose information of initiatives to combat the growing demand for commercial sex or forced labor and they did not disclose any information about giving their diplomatic personnel any anti-trafficking training. The government isn't transparent with their plans, execution, and results regarding human trafficking within their borders, which makes it difficult to fully comprehend the severity of its influence and the measures, if any, taken to prevent it.

Human trafficking in India needs immediate attention because it not only destroys an individual's mental and physical state, but it strips them of their basic human rights. Girls that are at the age of laughter, playtime, dress-up, and immaturity, are being forced to experience horrifying events that stirp them of their innocence and the ability to ever be a cheerful kid again. Boys that should be playing with cars and airplanes, are laboring in harsh, life-threatening environments. For many, it takes away something all of us look back on and wish to live over and over again—our childhood. Human trafficking thrives in under developed countries because of corruption ridden societies in which people actually benefit from this parasitic industry. People love to turn a blind eye to human trafficking, because as long as it doesn't affect them then why should they care? The international community has turned a blind-eye to this issue because it's an "uncomfortable" topic to discuss. But then where does it end? How many lives have to suffer the wrath of human trafficking until everyone realizes that something needs to be done? Each second, millions of lives worldwide are suffering until we open our eyes and do something about it. Until then, justice will have to wait.

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THE WORLD THE WEST FORGOT: THE RISE OF CHINESE INFLUENCE ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

ISAAC C. COLEMAN

Since the late 1970's China has seen an average of nearly 10% economic growth annually, the most sustained growth in any major economy[1]. Chinese investment in Sub-Saharan Africa has allowed for the development of not only the Chinese economy but sustained growth in this region of the world as well. Through reforms China has been able to receive and, more importantly, to invest heavily into the less developed world[2]. Chinese investments have pushed China to become a global power, to develop strong ties with forty-five of the fifty-four nations in Africa, and even the construction of the first foreign Chinese naval port in Djibouti[3]. These ties and investments will continue to allow the Chinese economy to grow worldwide and this economic prowess will lead to the establishment of Chinese hegemony.

In the 1885 Berlin Conference, Africa was carved up between six European nations[4]. This led modern Africa to be defined by domination of local cultures by a foreign, more technologically advanced society. Since the release of the Zimbabwe on April 18, 1980, the continent has been abandoned by the West and its nations referred to as "shit-hole" countries. The problems of Africa are easily linked to the colonial era when the Western powers took natural resources and forced local populations into monoculture for their own economic advantage[5]. However, forty years after the last colony became free, we see what may become a new hegemonic power in Africa. The People's Republic of China (PRC) is beginning to exert their influence into Africa similar to the early days of European colonization.

While the PRC was communist for the first few decades of its existence, China has gone through many shifts beginning in 1979 with Deng Xiaoping establishing special economic zones that started to spur economic growth and transition China into a nation with a free market that we now see today[6]. To maintain the growth of the Chinese economy, China must find markets to sell products and sources of natural resources[7]. Potential markets need to be easy for the Chinese government to introduce itself into as well as have limited competitors, making Africa a prime target for Chinese investment and growth. The most significant fear for the African continent is that the rise of Chinese influence in the continent will usher in a new era of colonialism, one with a Chinese master as opposed to the classical Western one. These fears have historical precedent, yet the Chinese involvement on the continent is far more beneficial than any colonial system used by the Europeans. While they share similarities, such as the use of natural resources from Africa to spur industry in a different nation, the way that the PRC is taking these resources is one designed not to strip away from Africa but, instead, to help the African nations grow. The President of Senegal from 2000 to 2012, Abdoulaye Wade, wrote: "China, which has fought its own battles to modernise, has a much greater sense of the personal urgency of development in Africa than many Western nations[8]." From advantageous deals in Angola and other African nations that assist in the development of agriculture[9] to training African officials on how to develop their nations[10], China focuses on creating a robust economy in Africa that will allow for

the acquisition of more influential trade partners and help develop a stronger Chinese economy, while potentially bringing about the birth of Chinese hegemony.

Chinese financial investment into the African continent is the leading factor in the deals between the PRC and Sub-Saharan Africa, with the former investing billions in at least forty nations in the latter. These investments are misunderstood by many international aid organizations and reported as being far more extreme than they actually are. According to research done by John Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies the data used in AidData may be as much as over one-thousand percent overinflated. These numbers lead many to believe that China is heavily investing in Africa in a way never seen in the modern world[11]. While Chinese investment to the continent is massive, it is performed through zero-interest loans that require a comparable amount of resources for the technology or services offered to the many benefactors. Nations such as Angola, Egypt, Ghana, Zambia and others benefit from these agreements as they are provided with modern infrastructure and technology in exchange for cotton, tobacco, oil, and cashews[12]. While these trade agreements may seem predatory in nature, these deals are in almost precisely the same terms as a deal between China and Japan in the late 1970s that offered Chinese oil and coal in exchange for Japanese technology[13], which sparked the early growth of the Chinese economy and the boom of Japan from the 1980s until 2010 when China surpassed them as the second largest economy in the world[14]. With this example being set by the Chinese, it only makes sense that African nations would seek to follow in the footsteps of a healthy economy and allow similar trade deals as those that granted China its first steps to becoming a world power. The most substantial difference between the way China is investing in Africa and the way that the West has always involved themselves is that Chinese investments are required to be paid back; they are not aid. The years of highest aid to Africa from the West saw an increase in poverty from 11% to 66%[15]. Coupled with Western aid being dependent on government reform, this responsible lending from China has provided Africa with what is necessary for these nations to become potent actors on the world stage.

Financing the development of infrastructure is crucial to Chinese investment in Africa. China has invested roughly US$24.2 billion in transportation alone with 80% allotted to the construction and repair of roads and railways[16]. In Kenya, China is funding the development of an extensive railway, the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), which allows for the Kenyans to use modern infrastructure for the first time in over a century on an international scale[17]. This development of infrastructure is crucial in the development of an economy and the necessary growth for

these "third-world" nations so that China may have trading partners that are on a relatively equal footing. This modern railway, once completed, will add itself to China's Belt and Road Initiative, thus allowing for the New Silk Road to extend into the African continent through the Indian Ocean as well as for the original purpose of developing a Chinese-Eurasian trade rival to the American Transatlantic region[18]. This railway was designed to extend Chinese influence into Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo[19], allowing China to be the most significant dominant power in Eastern and Central Africa. According to Martyn Davies, the Director of the China-Africa Network at the University of Pretoria, China is "the biggest builders of infrastructure. They are the biggest lenders to Africa, and China-Africa trade has just pushed past $100 billion annually."[20], as of 2010. He continues that Africa is an incredible source of commodities that China will need as the economy expands and, because of this, China will continue to invest heavily in infrastructure so that these commodities can continue to be exported to China and push Xi Jinping's New Silk Road to overtake the American trade system and alliances.

Chinese motives behind the development of infrastructure in less developed countries are not altruistic. As China continues to reach for the height of power and potentially seek a hegemon status, it needs robust economies with which to trade and ally itself. Throughout the Cold War, the PRC maintained a stance of nonalignment with any significant power and currently has only one formal ally, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea[21]. This idea of nonalignment may begin to change as China continues to exert its influence on the African continent. China has developed over five-hundred educational courses for less developed nations, with more than a quarter of them being designed exclusively for African officials[22]. These courses are crucial for the development of ties with nations that the West has traditionally ignored or from resource-rich nations that have wanted to avoid the typical interference in their nations that the West typically requires. These developments and investments have made it so that China is seen favorably throughout most of Africa[23]. An estimated eighty-six thousand officials from Africa have attended these courses between 2000 and 2015, as well as tens of thousands from other less developed nations[24]. The inclusion of these courses have been instrumental in shaping the views of African leaders about China, and have served as a launching point to develop business ties to the Chinese government[25]. The purpose of these training sessions are threefold: to market technology, to promote Chinese consultants, and to seek open markets in which to sell. Both forms of marketing are primarily only taught as groundwork for future business opportunities, as most of the participants of these courses do not have the authority

Chinese and African oil workers.

to purchase any technology or to hire the experts on the respective technologies[26]. However, this strategy begins to show these nations that a Chinese alternative exists to whatever old technology left from the colonial era is currently in use. It provides China with free advertisement and, coupled with the zero-interest loans, provides China with the fundamental outlook to form formal alliances and begin to develop a hegemony of their own using resource-rich Africa as their primary support.

One of the most significant decision factors that African governments have for working with the Chinese government is China's non-intervention policy. This policy allows for economic stimulus in nations that would otherwise be spurned by the Western powers and their "obsession with democracy,"[27] such as Sudan and Zimbabwe[28]. The respect for national sovereignty allows China to make deals with nations that are otherwise untapped markets and can help to fuel these nations into blossoming economies. According to Dambisa Moyo, a Zambian economist, the West forcing its views of democracy on nations that are struggling to survive can be harmful and "forestall national development … as democratic regimes find it difficult to push through economically beneficial legislation."[29] She believes that "perhaps what Africa needs … is

a reliable commercial partner, not a high minded scold… Africa should take its lessons from a country that has recently pulled itself out of poverty, not countries that have been rich for generations."[30]

While non-interference is a great idea, it is not the most practical way to keep citizens safe when they are overseas. China has increased commitment to UN peacekeeping forces and the African Union to retaliate and prevent the murders of Chinese peacekeepers in Mali and South Sudan, the kidnapping of Chinese workers in Cameroon, and the assaults on Chinese managers in both Mozambique and Zambia. China has even established their first foreign military base in Djibouti to curb piracy along the Gulf of Aden[31]. These steps seem to be the first in ensuring Chinese protections are in place for all their workers as they migrate to Africa.

As China continues to invest heavily in infrastructure and training, it can be forgotten that China also invests in agriculture of many nations throughout Africa to help feed the Chinese and local populations. China has helped shift the agrarian focus from subsistence farming to more commercial farming by improving their efficiency, methods, and infrastructure. In Mozambique, for example, Chinese companies invested over thirteen million dollars in rice and cotton over the six-year period 2007 to 2012[32]. The

goals for this money ranged from importing industrial farming equipment to Mozambique to actually processing and cultivation of crops[33]. All of this money is being funneled into the Wanbao farm in Mozambique and, as such, is considered "China's largest agribusiness project in Africa."[34] This massive endeavor by the Chinese and Mozambican governments include two primary agricultural models. One in which local farmers learn about technical rice production to increase their productivity and another that serves as subcontracting to Chinese farms[35]. These two models have very different interactions between the Chinese and the Mozambicans. The training model requires the farmers to begin their training on small two and a half acre farms. Once they have proven they can move on to larger plots of land they must pay for half of the production cost up front for Chinese assistance, with the second half taken after the harvest[36]. On the other hand, the subcontractors are provided for by the Chinese companies[37].

In Angola, the first phase of investment was focused on providing infrastructure so that the farms they establish in phase two can be viable. The Angolan government has more control over the farms established in their country than did the Mozambicans; six of the seven farms are owned by the Angolans and not the Chinese[38]. Each of the seven farms operates under a model defined by a five-year contract between the Angolan Ministry of Agriculture and a Chinese partner company[39]. These contracts consist of China being responsible for land clearance, infrastructure construction, and plant experimentation in the first three years and then transitioning onto training on technology and management to the local Angolans in the final two years[40]. These farms are believed by many to be used for Chinese food use, yet the data shows that all products from these farms are for domestic purposes and not being exported to China[41]. The reason for this investment with no direct reward is explained by Mr. Wu Keqiang, the national representative of CAMC-Engineering in Angola, when he says, "If food security in Africa is guaranteed, international food prices will be stable, and this benefits China's food security indirectly."[42] Angola was once an exporter of grain that became a starving nation, but with the investments from the PRC, Angola is now on the verge of feeding its people and continuing to see the economy develop.

An area in which China is heavily invested around the world, as well as in Africa, is renewable energy. It has emerged as the world leader in this field. With Sub-Saharan Africa's need for electrification and China's goals of establishing a New Silk Road, this is the perfect region of the world to genuinely involve themselves for the production of energy and energy infrastructure. China developed or financed nearly 60% of Sub-Saharan Africa's hydroelectric power plants between 2010 and 2015[43]. As Sub-Saharan African economies continue to grow and develop, the more than six hundred million

people without electricity[44] will create a more significant problem that can stagnate the economies of these nations. This lack of electricity also keeps the agricultural sector, the most substantial job sector for most developing nations, from being able to modernize. It is estimated that these nations have "recoverable oil resources … for the next 100 years, coal for over 400 years and gas for 600 years, and renewable energy sources (geothermal, hydro, wind and solar) in abundance"[45]. As China continues to invest internationally, they have developed two primary forms of investments, upstream activities and power projects.

Upstream activities are used to provide China with the energy that they will require as their energy needs double in the next thirty years[46], this includes oil and coal. One of these primary upstream activities is focused on Angola, China's number one trade partner and supplier of crude oil[47]. Power projects are another critical Chinese investment, again used to reap the indirect benefits of assisting a different nation and the political clout that comes with it. Examples of Chinese power projects include biomass projects in Ethiopia, a coal power plant in Botswana, the Bui Dam in Ghana, a diesel power plant in Niger, wind farms in South Africa, and geothermal projects in Kenya[48]. China has ninety-six power projects, completed, under construction, or planned between 2010 and 2020[49]. Not only does China invest in the development of new plants and projects they also will have increased the power generation capacity in Sub-Saharan Africa by 10% in the same period[50]. China has developed up to 30% of Sub-Saharan Africa's total power generation capacity in the first half of this decade alone[51]. Chinese investments into energy in this region of the world will lend itself to the continued growth of what may become China's most significant trading partners as they seek the status of hegemon.

While Chinese investment and attention in Africa has seen an overall increase in the development and a strengthening of these economies, it has not been entirely beneficial to all people involved. China must face criticism from local leaders in African nations such as a former governor of Nigeria's Central Bank, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, when he wrote, "we must see China for what it is: a competitor. Africa must recognise that China—like the U.S., Russia, Britain, Brazil and the rest—is in Africa not for African interests but its own."[52] Many African workers are resisting Chinese investments and projects citing unfair labor practices such as poor wages and working conditions[53]. In Zambia, a nation that has had dealings with China since 1998[54], Michael Sata won his presidency in 2011 by using the rising anti-Chinese sentiment in his country[55]. These "sinophobic" feelings stem from the fears of a new colonial oppressor. As China continues to develop land and establish Chinese citizens as management over the local African workers or to replace entire industries with Chinese workers, it leads to massive

immigration into Africa. Fears of the Chinese have developed into rumors that the Chinese even import human flesh into Zambia for the locals to eat[56].

On the Wanbao farm in Mozambique the disparity between Chinese and Mozambican workers is not lost on the Mozambicans, and neither is the sense that the Chinese feel superior to anyone else they interact with, leading local farmers to resist the Chinese investments. Many farmers were displaced by the production of this farm and see it as a land-grab by the Chinese, even as the government of Mozambique attempts to reassure farmers that this is helping to fight poverty and to promote growth in their country[57]. The Chinese stance is that the Mozambicans are thieves, lazy, slow, and irresponsible[58]. They believe that the people were not using the land and it was going to waste before China came and taught the people how to correctly work their land[59]. As these challenges continue, it may become more difficult for Mozambique to attract other outside assistance and can lead to a halt in their already weak economy.

Not only are there issues with Chinese management and a fear of a new potential colonial master, but there also continues to be environmental concerns with the Chinese development in these nations. These fears are not unfounded as China refuses to allow transparency in most of their dealings and does not provide much effort in the way of environmental protection[60]. Unfortunately, these African nations would not be able to protect their environment if they put a priority on environmental issues[61]. In eight of nine African nations polled, pollution and environmental concerns ranked as the least important when compared to inequality and AIDS[62]. With the public less concerned with these problems and their nation's inability to handle these issues, or even to curb corruption, the call to hold China accountable is rather insignificant compared to the overall benefits of Chinese involvement on the continent. These concerns may cause some Africans to resist the continuing presence of the Chinese, but the overall benefits and outspoken supporters of China outweigh these negatives, leading to a 63% of Africans holding the Chinese as a very positive influence on the continent[63].

Chinese investment on the African continent has been in effect since the late 1990s and has lent itself to the rapid growth seen throughout Sub-Saharan Africa and pushed China to become the second most powerful economy in the world. These investments, while marred by controversy and the potential for the creation of a new colonial master on the continent, have become one of the leading factors in developing a part of the world that has been written off for over forty years by the West as the dregs of civilization, a den of disease and dictators. While China ensures that every investment they make will either directly or indirectly benefit China, they also are sure to keep the local governments as

placated as they can so that deals will continue. These agreements will continue to bolster not only the Chinese economy but the economy of Sub-Saharan Africa as well, leading to a cycle of growth. This continued growth will assist in solidifying Xi Jinping's most ambitious foreign policy, the New Silk Road, and will further cement China's role as a leading world power and a possible future hegemon.

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THE ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CITIZENS OF THE WORLD: CHILDREN

CARLIE STANFILL

As many people say, children are the future. As adults, we realize that the true future lies in the hands of our youngest and most impressionable citizens: children. This is exceptionally important for the world as we know it, due to the fact that children are being exploited all over the globe. The harsh reality is that countries with less economic stability are more likely to abuse and neglect their youngest citizens. Child abuse has been directly correlated with unemployment and poverty. Rates of abuse and neglect can be thought of as indicators of the quality of life for families, and maltreatment can be viewed as a symptom, rather than a cause, of difficulties in family and individual functioning.[1] As a result, overall rates of child abuse are relatively higher in underdeveloped countries with higher numbers of low-income families and unemployment. These children and their families unfortunately have no other way of making a living except to exploit any and all options they have available, even if it means making their children work in harsh conditions for insufficient wages or selling them to forced labor or prostitution.

There are many forms of child abuse; however, the main categories include physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. Forced labor encompasses each of these categories and puts the health of the children in jeopardy. Children who are forced to work long hours in horrible conditions are beaten down physically and emotionally. They are often-times brutally beaten for many different reasons, including but not limited to, not working fast enough, being distracted, and attempting to stand up for themselves. They

are also emotionally abused; they are called names and are deprived of a normal and healthy childhood. These children face a wide range of health risks and are directly prevented from receiving a normal and necessary education like other children have. There are approximately 250 million child laborers worldwide, with at least 120-million of them working under circumstances that have denied them a childhood and in conditions that jeopardize their health and their lives.[2] This large number is only one of the reasons that child labor remains such an important global concern.

Children are also sexually abused and exploited through forced sex labor, which can easily be deemed the worst form of child abuse. This includes any sexual act performed by a child of any age for any form of compensation. Worldwide, approximately 1 million children are forced into prostitution every year, and it is estimated that the total number of child prostitutes is as high as 10 million.[3] Typically, the children are not willing participants in the sexual act, but are being forced by adults who make the profit. Child prostitution is harmful to the child, as a direct violation of their human rights, and results in millions of deaths each year. Child prostitution also puts the child in a position where they are more likely to be physically and emotionally abused. It also compromises the child's psychological health, resulting in long term effects. Often-times these children develop anxiety, depression, and behavioral issues. Another huge issue with child prostitution is the possibility of them contracting STDs, HIV or AIDS from their abusers. Prostituted children are also commonly diagnosed with PTSD and are usually

at a high risk of suicide. They are at risk of becoming pregnant as a result of rape, which usually leads to forced abortions/miscarriages. A study of 475 child prostitutes in five countries found that 73% of participants had been physically assaulted while working as a sex worker, and 62% reported having been raped.[4] This problem is common and is occurring all over the world. Although it has been determined to be a global concern, child labor continues to be overlooked since research and solutions have become limited and inconsistent.

Children are considered to be a main source of income in developing countries and without it, many citizens of those nations

> *"...approximately 265 million children worldwide are being forced into child labor, which is approximately 17% of the worldwide youth population."*

fear further economic decline. Many third world countries consider child labor a necessary way of life. These countries believe child labor helps their country move forward towards further modernization and that it is inevitable for early stages of development. Child labor is also accepted in many different cultures and religions. In the majority of Hindu societies, there is a natural division of labor (castes), and members of lower castes should start training for their lot in life at an early age.[5] Little children can be efficient at many unskilled and semi-skilled tasks, and these children of the lower castes are actually made to work rather than attend school.[6] It is normalized in many cultures and any disagreement can be seen as forced Western influence. Others argue that the children must work to sustain life and that it would be harmful for them not to work due to the fact that they otherwise would have no necessary means for survival.

Not all child labor is necessarily harmful for children; however, if the child is becoming malnourished while working long hours in a hazardous environment, it is definitely harmful to the child's health. These children also do not attend school and often-times lack social interaction with peers. Some see household income as a positive outcome of child labor, however, it decreases overall school attendance and literacy rates as well as diminishes the health of the child. In a way, child labor is passed on from generation to generation due to the fact that child laborers grow up to be low-wage earning adults; as a result, their offspring will also be compelled to work to supplement the family's income.[7] In most situations, adults are unemployed because it is cheaper for employers to hire children who work for much lower pay. As a result, the unemployed

adults force their children to work to provide for the family, which contributes to a never-ending cycle that proves to be self-defeating. Child labor hurts the overall economy of these countries and in order for them to move forward socially and economically, they must respect the human rights of the children and protect their welfare.

As previously stated, child labor is the most common in the least developed countries. The prevalence of this issue is highest in sub-Saharan Africa. More than one in five children in Africa are employed against their will in stone quarries, farms, and mines.[8] Poverty remains the major reason behind this issue.[9] In this region, young children have the highest risk of being forced in to child labor and African regions have had the slowest and least progress in regard to this issue. Many sub-Saharan African countries are developing national plans and goals to combat this growing concern; however, progress has been very slow. In addition to low income and poverty, poor educational institutions are another contributor to the child labor issue. In the absence of a properly functioning education and labor system, child labor comes in high demand. Families need extra income or they cannot send their children to receive an education and, as a result, they send them to work instead. Many solutions have been proposed over the years to combat this issue. One of the most popular is creating financial incentives for families to send their children to school; this includes fixing the educational system. This has the potential to take a lot of time, money, and effort, but it would reduce the number of children being forced to work and would be beneficial to the children in many ways.

Recent data has determined that approximately 265 million children worldwide are being forced into child labor, which is approximately 17% of the worldwide youth population.[10] In order to understand how this problem got so out of hand, it must first be understood how the problem started. Child labor began as early as the 17th century with the start of industrialization in western civilizations. Industrialization resulted in families having to find work as a necessary means of survival. Families moved out of rural areas and into cities where there were large factories to employ them with low wages that were just enough to maintain survival. Although children had worked in their households for their families since medieval times, the nature of children's work began to change. This began in Britain, the first country to industrialize. Families either needed their children to work to provide, or they sold their children to big business owners who made a profit off of the abuse and neglect of the children whose labor was practically free. Once the first rural textile mills were built (1769) and child apprentices were hired as primary workers, the connotation of "child labor" began to change.[11] As primary workers, the children faced many forms of cruelty which included long hours, foul language, harsh and unsanitary working

A child working in a Bangladesh Sweatshop.

conditions, and an overall unhealthy environment. What happened to children within these factory walls became a matter of intense social and political debate that continues today.[12] Factories and mills were described as deplorable and even as a living hell by anyone who experienced them. Children as young as six years old worked in overcrowded factories for up to sixteen hours a day. Factory owners considered the immoral employment of young children as a necessary factor of competitive production, just as some countries consider child labor to be necessary for the economic improvement of their country still today.

Even as child labor laws began to be created, the number of child workers being exploited around the world began to increase. Congress passed the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act in 1974, which finally required states to establish reporting requirements in suspected cases involving child labor as a form of abuse.[13] This helped slightly, but not enough to make a significant difference for the victims. The use of machines became more common for mass production, which created simple one-task jobs easy for children, and they were in high demand as a cheap source

of employment. In this way, the industrial revolution directly resulted in the issues of child labor that still endure today. The industrialization normalized children as workers and the problem blossomed into a global concern. Today, most of the terrible things done to children as they are forcefully employed is done illegally and in secret.

The sexual abuse of children and the use of children in sexual labor began as early as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when adults from elite households in Europe sometimes treated children as sexual playthings.[14] This problem is far from new, but it has just recently begun to be considered a serious international issue. In the early nineteenth century, the public mainly focused on the victims of child abuse from the age of ten or younger, but by the end of this century they were beginning to recognize those from eleven to seventeen as well. Reformers fought to raise the age of consent to sixteen and to enact laws to prevent those younger than sixteen from entering pool halls, dance halls, and any place that sold intoxicants.[15] For a while, only the physical harm of children was considered after sexual abuse. It was not until the 1930's that psychological effects of

sexual abuse on children even began to be considered. Evidence of sexual abuse was often dismissed and overlooked with approximately 30 percent of statutory rape cases from 1896 to 1926 being resolved by marriage or financial payment.[16] There was little to no justice for the innocent child victims. From this point on, the problem began to be recognized and studied significantly more than in earlier years, however the issue still persists and continues to threaten the lives of millions of children worldwide.

Children are harmed both physically and mentally as they are forced into child labor. The hazardous work environment they are in contributes to their injuries. An estimated 6 million work-related injuries occur among children annually, which results in 2.5 million disabilities and 32,000 fatalities every year.[17] Children in bad work environments can easily be exposed to chemical toxins or could be involved in the common incidents, which include fractures, amputations, and crush injuries. For example, children who work in the carpet industry are exposed to repetitive movements, chemical hazards, inhalation of wool dust contaminated with biological agents, and inadequate working postures.[18] The kids can also be forced to endure extremely high or low temperatures as they work. Some of these conditions can be withstood by grown, healthy adults but are much more fatal for young children.

One of the biggest issues in child labor is the lack of schooling that the children receive. While working to support themselves and their families, these children have no time to attend school. They often work long hours each day. Even if they are able to attend school while not working, their hard jobs and malnourishment usually contribute to much lower test scores than those students who go to school while their families support them. Data from 12 Latin American countries found that third and fourth graders who attend school and never conduct market or domestic work perform 28% better on mathematics tests and 19% better on language tests than children who both attend school and work.[19] This research indicates that children's education is negatively affected by working even if they are also receiving an education. Many families either cannot afford to get their children proper education, believe that working is a quicker jump to their inevitable future, or simply don't care enough. This type of mindset is what keeps this self-destructive cycle in motion and what prevents these children from having a brighter future.

Some products are purchased by consumers who are unknowingly contributing to the employment and abuse of young children. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) makes it illegal for any country to ban products simply because they were made by children.[20] This means that there is a possibility of young, abused children producing whatever it is that one is purchasing and that money spent goes in to the hands of

their abusers. This also directly allows those abusers to continue employing kids for unfair, low wages.

Due to the terrible things that occur to children within the issue of child labor, many Developing countries have tried to come up with solutions to put an end to this problem. Oftentimes, factories are raided and the children who work there are rescued and the employers are arrested and prosecuted. Communities also work closely with local authorities in child labor free zones to get children out of these deplorable working conditions and back into school. Child labor free zones are beginning to work and become more common amongst other countries. However, the number of children working in developing countries is rising and becoming a great concern for the entire international community.

When the International Labor Organization (ILO) was formed in 1919, one of its main goals was to abolish child labour. The ILO's principal tool in pursuing the goal of effective abolition of child labor has been the adoption and supervision of labor standards that embody the concept of a minimum age for admission to employment or work.[21] From then on, proper age for employment has been linked to completion of compulsory schooling. The ILO also has the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), which was created in 1992 with the overall goal of the progressive elimination of child labor, to be achieved through strengthening the capacity of countries to deal with the problem and promoting a worldwide movement to combat child labour.[22] This program is the largest of its kind and has operations in up to 88 different countries. The IPEC project either uses direct action, legislation and policy development, advocacy and awareness raising, institutional development or social services as ways to target child labor in different sectors.[23] There are four main sectors of which child labor is distributed. The agriculture sector, which consists of fishing, forestry, hunting, and agriculture, which has the highest percentage of child workers at about 59%. The industrial sector, including factory work, construction, and public utilities has only about 7% of child workers and the domestic or household work has about 7% as well. The service sector holds about 25% and is considered hotel, restaurant, or retail work.[24] These projects for the individualized sectors have been used in larger scales in recent years and have made a greater impact on solving the issue. Although there are solutions like this one making great strides towards a brighter tomorrow, there are still rising numbers of child workers and a very long way to go until complete abolition.

One of the easiest solutions involves something that communities can directly contribute to. This solution is advocacy and awareness. Simply spreading the word and raising awareness for the problem can encourage people to become educated on the topic and help work toward a possible solution. The more people that

get involved, the better chance it provides these children of having a better life and a better future. There are innocent children being abused due to their forced labor, and this abuse is sadly invisible to the rest of the world. Although people can't see it, child labor does exist, and the more the international community grasps a better understanding of it, the better chance it has to find a solution and effectively put an end to it for the good of our future generations.

One way to effectively get involved in the fight against this heinous child abuse is to join the Global March Against Child Labour. The Global March Against Child Labour (Global March) is a worldwide network of trade unions, teachers, and civil society organizations that work together towards the shared development goals of eliminating and preventing all forms of child labor, slavery and trafficking, and ensuring access by all children to free, meaningful, and good quality public education.[25] These ambitious goals ensure that this organization can always use more volunteers to get involved in their progress. June 12th is now recognized as World Day Against Child Labour and helps act as a catalyst for the growing worldwide movement. This is a day to help bring about awareness and bring the crimes against the rights of these children to the light. Another unique way to help the children is through music which can help brighten their moods and encourage them that school and learning is the correct path. The Music Against Child Labour Initiative (MACLI), launched in 2013 by the ILO and some of the world's greatest musicians, calls on other musicians worldwide to dedicate a concert or song to the struggle against child labour.[26] The organization encourages people who want to get involved to contribute some type of music or participate in a get together with people from the community who can play or sing. Then, they can donate a concert or a song to the campaign. This music can potentially help change the lives of the children who are being exploited in the world of child labor. These might seem like very small ways to get involved; however, every little bit counts and every person who adds to the fight makes for a better chance of winning. The fight against child labor will be long and hard, but it will prove to be worth it in the end with the inevitable success of our greatest chance at a good future for our most important citizens, children.

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EXAMINING DEFORESTATION AND INDIGENOUS LAND RIGHTS IN BRAZIL'S AMAZON RAINFOREST

ELLA LOCKHART-RALSTON

It's no secret that the Amazon Rainforest has been subject to deforestation to a level that has sparked international conversation on the limit to which we as humans can utilize it's resources. Preservation of this massive rainforest has fueled tensions between environmental activists, multinational companies, and the indigenous peoples who call the Amazon rainforest their home. The rainforest stretches for 2.3 million square miles across South America.[1, 2] There are nine countries that share portions of this forest, but the largest portion lies within Brazil's Northwestern borders. The Amazon is indeed the world's largest tropical rainforest and is known for its powerful rivers and extensive, rich biodiversity. It's not difficult to understand why this rainforest has been subject to mass deforestation, as private and public markets have pushed for extraction of the many resources within it.[3]

In recent years, reduced to a recession and bouts of corruption in the government, Brazilian leaders have loosened restrictions for international and domestic companies to expand their interest efforts within the Amazon Rainforest. This is especially evident with the current President, Michel Temer, who has been increasingly chastised by the public for his rollback on Amazon Rainforest protections that included many programs and government institutions that served to protect and preserve indigenous peoples livelihood.[4] The Amazon's struggle for purpose and protection reach further than national policy in Brazil; this is a multifaceted issue for the growing world economy. The extensive involvement of multinational corporations is responsible for the logging, mining, damming, agribusiness and other various other industries that make their mark on the Amazon rainforest. The current livelihood of indigenous communities in the Amazon Rainforest is at conflict with the interests of industry taking priority over their lives, land rights, and culture on a global front.

Land and energy intensive industries like logging, mining, and agribusiness have all immensely contributed to deforestation. The rainforest supports the climate, habitats and the biodiversity that exists within the landscape of the Amazon rainforest. These are all affected by the future of development. The deforestation in the rainforest is caused by the industries themselves and the urbanized infrastructure that facilitate industry development like roads and cities. The industries are extracting resources from the Amazon and have been for decades.[5] Its existence is not new, however, with an increase in consumer demands both internationally and domestically and with state policy support, the rate of development is increasing.[6] Globalization plays a role as well as it connects industries and opens the door for multinational corporations and foreign private investments. For example, by clearing rainforest into pastures for cattle ranching, an industry is committing a direct act of land conversion and habitat destruction.[7] The mining industry has also shown to be reckless and unorganized; it's miners bypass authorities and create irreversible damage to the rainforest in the process.[8] As these projects grow, they serve both domestic and international enterprises. Many methods employed by miners

and loggers are often illegal and violent, and contribute to tension between indigenous groups that can result in violence.

There are government institutions established to oversee protections and land disputes for Brazil's indigenous population in the Amazon Rainforest. The first government institution that served to protect indigenous groups and their land rights was the Service for the Protection of the Indians (SPI) established in 1910.[9] This group was widely popular with indigenous groups for its founder's moral reputation. Candido Randon's SPI was responsible for successful legislation that prohibited violence against Indigenous people and recognized their ownership of land among other values. However, with a military government installed by coup in 1967, the SPI was replaced by the National Foundation of the Indian (FUNAI), this began a period of weak support from the indigenous and a mixed, corrupt reputation. The purpose of FUNAI is to work between indigenous groups to offer peace and protection for indigenous as well as overseeing land disputes between native groups and the industries that encroach upon those lands. While the military government was in power from 1964-1982, the FUNAI was used as a puppet of the state and did not intervene on violence used against the indigenous over land disputes, allowing agribusiness to grow further into the Amazon Rainforest and the protected lands within.[10] This past has negatively affected the relationship between indigenous leaders, activists, and environmentalists who often protest and criticize the policies enacted by the FUNAI.

One of the largest issues for FUNAI and the indigenous population that it oversees is a result of the agricultural industry in Brazil's Amazon Rainforest gaining more land; land that belongs to tribes like the Gamela. The Gamela and other Amazonian tribes have clashed violently over land disputes.[11] In 2017, the FUNAI suffered 44% in cuts to its budget, which severely limited their ability to properly administer over the growing number of land disputes that come from a furthering of the Amazon frontier as industry developers push on. The FUNAI have openly stated that they do not have the numbers of staff necessary to resolve the difficult land disputes that continually come their way.[12]

The conflict between the Gamela tribe and land developers is not uncommon, as Brazil has earned a dangerous reputation for environmental advocates and indigenous groups who oppose the land being taken for logging, mining, etc. There were more than 20 land rights activists killed in 2017 alone, which is a quiet year compared to the 50 killed in 2015 and 30 killed in 2014.[13] Indigenous leaders credit the increased violence in recent years to the overall political crisis in Brazil's government.[14] In attempts to combat the recession in Brazil, the government has made plans to cut out more land for logging and agriculture to boost the

economy. "Nearly one third of territories demarcated for Brazil's indigenous people have faced invasions from illegal loggers or farmers," as claimed by Clebel Cesar Buzatto, a researcher, for the CIMI advocacy group.[15] Violence is just one common method employed by groups serving international and state capital interests when they want an easy fix to solve the problem of land disputed with the indigenous communities.

The history of indigenous legal protections in Brazil has had its controversial moments, specifically when it has attempted to define whom these indigenous protections and land rights apply. Brazil's 1988 Constitution stated that indigenous people possess inalienable rights to their lands. However, up until that point there was very limited legislation offering protections for these communities. The first legislation that established indigenous land rights was the Indian Statute of 1973. Not only did it place the indigenous under FUNAI's guardianship, but it also gave them "special tutelage" and a classification shared by minors, the insane, and married women. This tutelage was also established as an agency of the executive branch, not the judicial branch—which means that indigenous rights are held to the executive branch and whomever fills that role and his/her administration's influence and party.[16] Furthering the complication of indigenous identity and rights was a document obtained from the FUNAI in 1981 titled "Indicators of Indian Identity." This sparked protest and outrage among the indigenous and their supporters. The document was supposed to serve as a checklist for FUNAI to categorize and define where one draws the line between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples by using traits like: primitive mentality, undesirable biological, psychic and cultural characteristics, and the existence of body hair."[17] This was just one attempt of many by the Brazilian government to categorize and distinguish their indigenous population through the FUNAI. The document's existence came to light during the 1980's when land conflicts between the indigenous and private land developers were growing in the name of agribusiness, energy projects, and other state and international enterprise.[18] Brazil's struggle with indigenous identity is evident through their controversial attempts to define what it means to be indigenous. The sad consequence is that the definition is usually at the expense of the indigenous people.

The land conflicts between industry and the indigenous began to increase as Brazil's government found loopholes to mold indigenous identity for the interest of private and state enterprise. State governments will often support the interests and development of corporations in their states and/or compete for foreign investment.[19] From state and international development in the Amazon Rainforest comes a large profit from the various industries like agribusiness and mining. And because the legality of

Deforestation in western Brazil

indigenous identity could be easily manipulated, it was. Legislation under the Indian Statute of 1973 stated that those indigenous that were integrated into society could lose their indigenous status and be classified as an "Integrated Indian," thus losing ownership of their land.[20] This ongoing struggle for protected identity recognized by Brazil's government and the land rights associated with it has pushed many indigenous people and groups to engage politically for their interests.

However, the emergence of indigenous groups entering the political arena has resulted in a massive increase in participation in international organizations. One major milestone was when the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations was established in 1982 and helped "give grassroots organizations direct access to the UN."[21] Many felt that the proper way to deal with the indigenous groups was to help integrate them into urbanized society through enrollment in schools and increased interaction and participation in business. One of the first allies to support these indigenous movements was the Catholic Church, who had spent decades working against them and now supported them beginning in the 1970's. The training of Catholic bishops helped indigenous groups form the Missionary Indigenous Council (CIMI) in 1971 and still works to provide

research and empowerment for indigenous groups both in and around the Amazon basin today.[22] Around the same time that the church moved in to support indigenous political initiatives, professional anthropologists came to assist as well. Studies concerning indigenous legal strife and mistreatment produced by anthropologists helped influence public policy in a monumental and legitimized way for the empowerment of indigenous communities.[23] They added to the fight for the indigenous people's rights and offered criticism to current policies being enforced by the government.

The 1980's ushered in a new era of growth for indigenous political movements and the fight to secure and preserve their land rights and culture. The issue of development in the Amazon began to show up on the radar of international conversation, thus catching the attention of NGO's and various activists. These international, non-state actors were interested in indigenous rights and biodiversity being threatened by an increase in development in the Amazon Rainforest.[24] Interestingly, the movement was able to win over international support before national/domestic support. This is because indigenous leaders have repeatedly faced exclusion in the national political arena.[25] Indigenous identity is also not seen as compatible with Brazilian national identity and economic progression and it is because of this obstacle that working with non-state/international organizations has proven to be successful in efforts to secure their future, livelihood, and culture within their communities and the Amazon rainforest itself.

During the 1990's, indigenous struggles within the Amazon rainforest were attracting the attention of multiple mega-NGO's like Environmental Defense Fund, National Wildlife Federation, Nature Conservancy, and the World Wildlife Fund.[26] The union between indigenous communities and global environmentalist organizations helped bring support both through activist empowerment and a global audience like never before. While the media began revealing the extent of global warming, deforestation, and declining biodiversity, the indigenous were able to elevate their cause on a global scale and network on their own terms. Growing visibility of indigenous community leaders that brought attention to indigenous human rights and identity at the same time as stressing the need to preserve the Amazon rainforest and its vast resources contributed heavily to calling attention to their plight. Out of these new exchanges came "middle ground," as described by Beth Conklin Ph.D., an Anthropology professor at Vanderbilt University, in which indigenous communities were forming economic ties with eco-friendly companies and eco-tourism.[27] The partnership between these two parties provided a way in which the Amazon's indigenous communities could make these economic decisions concerning their own land and labor on their own terms.

They were able to reach these negotiations by finding a common ideological ground on the basis of not only saving indigenous lives, but saving all lives through preservation of the Amazon rainforest by keeping it's ownership in indigenous hands.[28] Studies conducted for ethnobiology and cultural ecology revealed to the western world just how vast the indigenous' knowledge and productivity contributed to sustainable resource management techniques they used to increase biodiversity in the Amazon rainforest.[29] This information legitimized support for indigenous political movements, providing evidence that they were the best equipped to cultivate sustainably. With a common goal of preserving the Amazon Rainforest, the partnership between the indigenous and environmental groups helped support the cause for indigenous land ownership.

The boost in exchanges between indigenous communities and eco-friendly corporations often resulted in cooperatives, a linkage in economic interests that fit its own niche for those who shop with an environmental consciousness. These cooperatives are also hailed as the successful productions of the "middle ground" between the Amazon's indigenous communities and international businesses capitalizing on the eco-consumption appeal. One of the most famous and well-documented relationships is that of AmazonCoop founded in 1998 and The Body Shop, a cosmetic company based in the UK.[30] An AmazonCoop founder described the purpose of this economic relationship and its socio-economic justification:

"Our society no longer allows Indians to stay in their culture. The Indians need to be prepared to compete in our society, while respecting their own culture. FUNAI needs to prepare them to compete in our society, to walk their own path. The idea is not that they change to become a part of our culture, but that they learn to defend themselves in the city. To learn to do business.[31]"

While it points out that it would be impossible for indigenous communities to retain the status of "uncontacted" due to globalization and the rising market for resources that lay within their land, the best option is to equip them with the training and knowledge to be active players in the global economy, while maintaining their culture and livelihood.

All of the development in the Amazon brings into question: "who owns the rainforest? Who is responsible for its land, regulation, upkeep, and future?" Do the Amazon's indigenous tribes have ownership like they and Brazlian constitution claims? International law gives forests the status of a sovereign natural resource and leaves policy to the state to which the Amazon rainforest falls in the political borders of.[32] This would include nine countries in South America, with Brazil exercising the largest influence by its size, physically and economically. With Brazil's more recent trend in allowing private and international business

to come to the table, this opens the door for internationally driven developments. Sometimes these operations operate outside of state regulations and policies.

In response to the growing presence of MNCs and other industries, a conversation pertaining to how these changes would be addressed globally emerged. In 2007, some of the largest nongovernmental organizations for international human rights came together to draft what is referred to as the "UN Norms," which served to list what duties should be required of multinational corporations that employed across the globe—a document that was adamantly opposed by the International Chamber of Commerce and International Organization of Employers because it was viewed as counterproductive economically for its overreach.[33] Outlined within the document were human rights, including indigenous rights, that pertain to international business and law. It also contained rights that are not globally agreed upon, environmental management and the principle of "free, prior and informed consent" of indigenous peoples and communities, which resulted in the two major committees disapproval.[34] These duties assigned to multinational businesses for human rights are broadly undefined and currently not enforced at every tier of industry. Even assigning multinational corporations with duties regarding enforcement of human rights can attract criticism on the basis that it would inhibit the prosperity and spirit of business, which is to be risk-taking and entrepreneurial in nature.[35] This argument also claims that businesses should not be performing duties of the state, like policies and protections including those listed above regarding indigenous land rights and labor laws due to the fact that it may conflict with the foundations of capitalism at the expense of the indigenous people. While this outlook sounds practical, it shows the recklessness that comes along with extended corporate influence over the Amazon Rainforest and also provides further evidence for why land ownership of the Amazon should remain at a local level and preserved for indigenous communities. However, all parties would agree that first and foremost, the state should be the administrator of human rights protections and enforcement.[36] And while the duty of protection against multinational corporations and their interests is expressed within various UN human rights treaties, the enforcement and depth is mostly neglected.[37]

It is apparent that finding the solution to global resource management within the Amazon rainforest is no easy task. The rainforest supports an abundance of life that stretches from biodiversity on the rainforest floor, to the indigenous tribes and their communities who have inhabited the Amazon rainforest for centuries. And with an ever-changing international political

landscape, understanding who exerts ownership and responsibility over this land becomes difficult with so many players vying for title. However, indigenous groups have shown the value in keeping resource management at a local level through their activism at the grassroots and international levels. This is because those who know the land as their home are best suited to cultivate it in a sustainable manner, provide a positive future versus the option that furthers control of resources further away. Granting control of environmental resources to outside industry and foreign enterprise often result in irresponsible and irreversible destruction and deforestation. The preservation of Brazil's Amazon Rainforest and its abundant biodiversity is advantageously compatible with the preservation of the Indigenous communities, their rights, cultures, and livelihood.

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THE FUTURE OF CUBA: THE TRANSFER OF POWER AWAY FROM THE CASTRO FAMILY

BRANDON PLATH

Cuba present day is a direct result of its revolution. Fidel Castro overthrew President Fulgencio Batista in 1959 with the goal to make Cuba a nation focused on its people and providing for them. Castro was imprisoned for his failed attack on the Moncada Garrison in 1953 and became the leader of the communist movement when he fled to Mexico after being pardoned from his crimes. The revolution did not start off well: the forces that returned with Castro were decimated by security forces as soon as they landed in Cuba in 1956. That was not the end of the revolution, the battle continued over the next three years. The war ended in 1959 with victory belonging to the revolutionaries. With his victory, Castro took the position of prime minister, from 1959 to 1976. In 1976 Castro elevated himself to the presidency where he wished to continue the communist revolution for his people.

The Republic of Cuba has been under the control of the Castro family for nearly six decades. Fidel stayed in power until 2006 when he handed power over to his younger brother, Raul, due to health problems. The younger Castro has been leading for nearly a decade, but now wishes to pass the torch on to a younger member of the Cuban Communist Party and, for the first time in sixty years, the world sees someone outside of the Castro family take the presidency of Cuba. Miguel Diaz-Canal is now the president and is expected to make changes to the socialist/communist structure of the State. An example of this is his support for an increase in internet access for the public as well as a decrease

in the prices imposed by phone companies to encourage use of cell phones.[1] The way that the world will see Cuba will depend entirely on the changes that will result from the Diaz-Canal presidency over the next few years.

To understand the potential consequences of the transfer of power, it is very important to understand the evolution of Cuban politics since the beginning of Fidel Castro's political power until present day, the moves that the Communist Party made to shift from a capitalist economy to a centrally controlled economy, and the changes the Cuban government has made in the last decade in an effort to bring back economic growth. The government has given a significant amount of attention to the effects of agrarian reform and the positive potential that it could have on its socialist economy. There have been four distinct agrarian reforms since the Cuban revolution: the first being in 1959 immediately following the revolution; the second in 1963, the third in 1993 and the last in 2008.[2] Agrarian reform first became of interest for solving the population's problem of hunger and poverty. There was little hope in other alternatives due to the fact that an industrial revolution never took place. The state took advantage of the infrastructure created by the Spanish to continue harvesting sugar and, with the successful allocation of monetary funds, the reforms are able support the only profitable crop on the island. These reforms were created in the hopes of changing the path of the economy. With changes in government following Raul Castro's retirement from office and his expected retirement from

Fidel (left) and Raúl Castro during a 2001 session of Cuba's National Assembly

the Communist Party in 2021 we expect to see future reforms regarding technology designed to allow Cuba to participate in the globalized economy.

The 1959 agrarian reform had as its main focus the nationalization of farm lands and the elimination of foreign investors from the agricultural sector. The First Agrarian Reformation Law gave land previously owned by foreign investors to those who worked it, benefitting more than 100,000 peasants.[3] This was the first step in Fidel Castro's plan to give Cuba back to the Cubans and it had a positive effect on the economic situation for the lowest class. The goal was to give the lowest classes of society a chance at a meaningful life, and while it did not promise riches, it did promise an opportunity to eat and prosper with one's family. This was the idea of socialism in Cuba, that was somehow perverted by the United States to be seen as communism. The agrarian reform reflects an original idea of the Cuban Communist Party and is one of the initial reasons that the government was isolated by capitalist governments in the West.

During the 1960's when this reform began to succeed, the capitalist world feared the spread of socialism and communism and the consequences these two concepts could bring to their economies and governments. A common theory during this time was the "falling domino" theory, stating that when one state fell to communism so would another.[4] President Eisenhower originally addresses this theory in relevance to Indochina; however, the concept is the same. Cuba falling to communism

would likely lead to the introduction of communism to Central American and Caribbean trading partners. In response to this reform, the United Nations, under the advice of the United States, decided to place trade embargoes on Cuba in an effort to pressure the Cuban government to work towards embracing a capitalist economy again. This pressure actually gave true identity of anti-Imperialism to the Cuban government as they came to despise the West and this led to the second agrarian reform law which was created to better represent what the government wanted. Cuba felt isolated at this time and decided to pull away from the international community which, in the eyes of communist regimes, was against them.

The Second Agrarian Reformation Law of 1963 was an extension of the first, giving the government rights to nationalize any property or buildings with more than 67 hectares, or a quarter square mile. This law initially put the Cuban government in possession of more than 65% of the country's land.[5] The Second Agrarian Reformation Law also left room for the law to expand and over the course of two decades this law changed to give the state rights to over 80% of Cuban territory. The growth in state-owned land was an attempt to support the public in one of the only ways that they could: through agriculture. The first and second agrarian reforms are responsible for a large focus on the scientific and technological progress in agriculture development. Unfortunately, the amount of scientific research done in the agricultural sector did not do much to increase production due to

budget constraints and the little amount of new practices being incorporated into farming. The advancements in the agricultural sector really only helped to counter the lack of manpower and the decrease in productivity.[6] Much of the research and growth in the agricultural sector is due to aid provided by the Soviet Union and other communist states given in the form of loans, petroleum, and technical advice.[7]

The fall of the Soviet Union is one of the main reasons for the changing path of the Cuban Communist Party as it now looks for a way to support itself without the help of the USSR. This change can be seen in the Third Agrarian Reformation law of 1993 which was effectuated in response to shortages, the limitations of technological advances and the lack of an agricultural workforce. In response, the government decided that it would be best to undo the first two agrarian reformation laws and try to shift back to the private agrarian sector again. This attempt at the private sector marks the movement toward a capitalist economy as the government decided to privatize a large part of the state-owned property. The Third Agrarian Reformation Law brought state owned property down from 80% to 40%.[8] This took place during the "special period", also known as the "Periodo Especial", an extremely difficult time for the Cubans during which their trade to Eastern Europe was cut by nearly 90%. The decrease in trade from their former communist allies left Cuba subject to rations and scarcity; increased sanctions by the United States also hurt, causing the future to look bleak.[9]

Between 1993 and 1996, however, the government began to implement new policies that were essential in halting the economic downturn. These policies included the legalization of holding and the circulation of foreign policy, authorization of self-employment, the transition of state farms into agrarian cooperatives, tax reforms, an agricultural free market and the reauthorization of foreign investment laws.[10] The "special period" gave Cuba the incentive to radically change its economy in an effort to combat the suffering of its people. This objective had become achievable with an average annual GDP growth of about 5% from the late 1990's through the early 2000's.

Unfortunately, with the end of the "special period" came the return of communist era ideologies. In 2003, the government began undoing these progressive laws and returning the country to its pre-1990 economic laws and production.[11] These laws focused on disrupting the black market and ensuring that all goods within the country were being controlled by the government. This also included the Ministry of Foreign Trade taking control of all foreign market transactions and the government disbanding the agricultural free market. The legal end to these laws did not completely undo the progress made

during this time. In modern day Cuba, many of the markets and privately owned businesses are still allowed to conduct business because of the changes and investments made during the "special period".

While the "special period" did not last longer than a decade, it is important to note that the government had accepted the idea that capitalist policies could help their economy grow and that foreign investment is still allowed in Cuba. This has led to the growth of a tourism sector in the economy. Another policy that wasn't disbanded at the end of the "special period" was the agrarian reformation law of 1993 which gave a large part of the state owned land back to the private sector. This law was later expanded in 2008 with the fourth agrarian reformation law which continued the privatization of publicly owned land. This reformation law helped to reduce the amount of state owned land to only 25% and the majority of the land being sold to peasants and farming cooperatives.[12] As Cuba comes into a more global economy, it is important for the government to re-embrace the types of reforms that were implemented during the late 90's and early 2000's.

Cubans have had a hard time connecting with the world due to a lack of accessibility to the internet. It has been mostly isolated from the process of globalization and the incorporation of Cuban culture into the globally shared culture. About 5% of the Cuban population can access the uncensored world wide web and when they do, the internet connection is incredibly slow.[13] The average cost of internet is $15 for 128 kbit/s for 30 hours or $110 for the fastest speed of 2 mb/s for 30 hours.[14] The cost of internet in Cuba is too expensive for the public and only a small portion of the population is able to access it.

Because of the difficulty of accessing an open internet, an alternative to the internet was created by academics to give the Cuban population access to digital content. This alternative is called "El Paquete Semanal" and can range anywhere from 1-3 dollars weekly.[15] The Paquete is an offline version of the internet, giving its subscribers access to hundreds of American movies, Revolico (similar to Craigslist), and Spanish newspapers. This situation is not ideal for the rise of the technological era; however, with the passing of power this year away from the Castro family we can hope to see legislation that will make the internet more accessible for the average Cuban citizen.

President Miguel Diaz-Canel acknowledges that Cuba is behind in internet accessibility. Progress has been made in the last few years regarding availability of internet. Since 2011, the percentage of people who had used the internet at least once in that year rose from 23.4% to 40.3% .[16] This increase in internet usage is a result of the reforms imposed by Raul Castro that have

made internet more accessible, such as a fiber optic cable being laid to the island from Venezuela in 2013 as well as 118 internet cafes that opened because of it later that year. Another big trend that followed this development was that of internet blogging and the creation of a citizens' journal in Cuba which gave the public some freedom of opinion regarding their lives and the social structures.[17] This is a sign that the public is looking to have more reliable and cost-effective access to the internet. However, the public is still too reliant upon the Paquete for their digital content fix. As a consequence, there has not been a large amount of internal political pressure on this issue.

The Cuban government has shown interest in allowing the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector of their economy to grow with the help of the United States; however, they have also shown that their interests lie in censoring the internet, much like the People's Republic of China has. China has the world's second largest economy, which also supports the presence of an open market, even though the government supports socialist and communist legislation. This open market has helped the growth of a capitalist economy within China, though this freedom has not extended into online freedom for the public. China has enacted laws that force websites to be reviewed by government officials to make sure that the website does not contain any sensitive information pertaining to the Chinese government. Other laws enacted by the government force all users to sign up for online forums using their real names. Chat room administration is responsible for anything that is said in chat rooms.[18] If these policies are incorporated by the government, we can expect to see very few changes regarding the social status of the average citizen in Cuba.

It is believed that Miguel Diaz-Canel will not support harsh regulations in the ICT sector, like the older members of the Cuban Communist Party do. Considering that he, as a public figure defended young bloggers who posted relatively critical information about Cuba, it is relatively safe to assume that this is a show of his beliefs regarding a more open media. 19 This is promising for the future of anti-censorship in Cuba as it is currently ranked in the top ten most censored countries in the world according to the Committee to Protect Journalists. Cuba is placed in tenth place behind Eritrea at number one, Saudi Arabia at third and China in eighth.[20] Cuba is one of the most restricted and censored countries in Latin America. Hopefully, a more global presence in Cuba will offer an opportunity for an open market and widespread internet access.

> *"A great deal of the president's platform remains a mystery. … Consequently, it is difficult to predict most of the changes that will take place following Castro's retirement."*

The imprisonment of journalists is no longer a common consequence in Cuba. Journalists and bloggers need to seek protection and asylum in the various embassies throughout Havana, in part because they are in need of an efficient internet connection to post their articles to an uncensored internet server. Although long detentions are no longer common for the sole reason of critical journalism, the government is still known to harass, surveil and detain journalists for short amounts of time to deter their critical writings.[21] The situation is still not ideal for journalism, but Cuba has made many improvements in its structure to support social changes. We will see the most technologically advanced Cuba since the beginning of the Cuban Revolution. A modern Cuba will most likely take into consideration the rights of the public and, if technology continues to be a focus of Diaz-Canel administration, we may see major changes in the social structure of Cuba. As information and opinions come in from all over the world we could, potentially, see a change in support from the public as well. While this is a possibility, it is also possible that the people can change the world's perspective on the situation in Cuba and show that the society is content with the lives they are living.

A great deal of the president's platform remains a mystery. He has been keeping his counsel on key issues so that he does not end up competing against Raul Castro before Castro fully passes power onto the new president. Consequently, it is difficult to predict most of the changes that will take place following Castro's retirement. One position that Diaz-Canal has taken is a harder approach to a more liberalized economy. What may come from pressure by the communist party. Miguel Diaz-Canel has also taken an anti-American position in response to Donald Trump bringing back some of the pre-Obama embargoes and laws against travel to Cuba. Another consequence of the Trump Administration's removal of Obama-era laws and freedoms with Cuba has created an uncertain atmosphere around the future of relations.

The initial success of Diaz-Canel will depend in part upon his ability to avoid the Trump Administration while still inviting foreign investment to expand the growing tourism and growth in the ICT sectors. The future of Cuba on a global scale is still uncertain, but many changes are going to be made possible with the change in leadership. With Miguel Diaz-Canel receiving the blessing of President Raul Castro, we can expect to see many changes in the political structure that will facilitate the growth of the economy. By examining the patterns of reforms throughout

the history of the current Cuban government as well as the outcomes of other modern day communist governments we are able to predict the approach to be pursued over the next decade.

Miguel Diaz-Canel is the future of Cuba and, if he maintains his position regarding the ICT sector, the world will see a more globalized Cuba within the next five years, one that will both share its culture as well as receive cultural influences from the world. A globalized Cuba holds the potential to change the political and economic structure of the island as well as bringing about positive trade relationships with both the United States and Latin America if the situation is handled delicately enough by all involved parties. The world has waited six decades for the reincorporation of Cuba as a cooperative global player. There is a good possibility of its cultural and political reemergence within the next five to ten years following the end of the Trump presidency.

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LAST RESORT:
POVERTY IN MEXICO AND DECISIONS TO ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

COREY-SHAE HURLEY

Poverty in modern days is a nation's consequence to government officials setting flawed systems to the country's economic growth. Governments with high poverty rates have been recognized for having historical corruption, including foreign investments, which has led to dependencies, as well as causing economic recession. High poverty rates have strenuous and perpetuating consequences in correspondence with social economic issues such as education, low wage rates, low health care access rates, high unemployment, and little to no public involvement in political policy. Political parties push policies that maintain their power but there is some attention that goes to the aspect of responsibility for their country and its people in terms of economic stability. Opportunities are slim for those in poverty and many of these situations drive individuals and families to risk their lives in search for prosperity; stooping to positions of criminal behavior becomes the only option for some. Some are so desperate they would risk their life and their families lives, which include children most of the time, and travel on foot to find a more secure life. The effects of illegal immigration have been negative and positive in matters of social economical growth for those who suffer from poverty. Mexico has been a primary example of these disadvantages that those in poverty have endured.

Deeply rooted ideals have driven Mexicans to uproot their family to seek greater things. Opportunity has been seen through work expansion and education, but nearly half of the country lives at or below the poverty level. Many Mexicans decided to flee to the United States seeking refuge from the corruption that has been traced back to the early twentieth century through bad trade deals, land reforms, and economic agendas that are in favor of the upper-class that had led to exploitation of the working class and poverty-stricken areas. Due to these causes in corruption there has been a noticeable spike in malnourished citizens, infant mortality, and illiteracy.[1] The fear of corrupt officials and violent gangs who commit public murders to prevent citizen retaliation has pushed many civilians to take drastic measures. Attempting to migrate through legal channels has shown to take a great amount of time and large amounts of currency to complete the process. The requirements are strict and many of the Mexicans in poverty attempting to go through the legal channels have not and may not be able to meet these requirements.

Since the election of 2012, under the current government of Enrique Peña Nieto of the Partido Revolucionario Institutional (PRI), there have been reforms instituting a teacher's union, economic reform deals (including ones with the United States), the use of Public Security Ministry, as well as a National Guard. Peña Nieto enlisted ten thousand recruits to aid in combatting the drug cartels, in what has become known as the 'drug war'.[2] Since Peña Nieto's election there had been a rise in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to 2.3 percent by 2017.[3] But, since 2014, there had been extensive corruption scandals against government official's involvement in money laundering and drug trafficking. The most poverty-stricken cities in Mexico have reports stating that officers

have been in affiliation with powerful drug gangs who have been enforcers of terrorism.[4] Examples of inflicted terror have been seen to affect those who are in positions of power specifically by this sector of, this is the reaction to the threat education has on exposing and challenging political policy that favor corrupt government officials. Poverty is still striking half of the country and with current situations inflicting terror in the citizens, there is a desperation with many of the people to seek a lifestyle of security. Considering migratory forces, illegal immigration from Mexico to the United States is roughly one third to a half of the illegal immigrants that travel to the U.S. seeking improvements, though there isn't a definitive form of measurement for illegal immigrants.[5] Many of those in poverty are left with no other way.

The country has functioned under a Catholic belief system where prejudices toward women and femininity are the norm. Women are reduced to a submissive state of mind in which they experience the highest exploitation. There is a demographic in illegal immigration that show women and children fleeing tyranny, survive on the smallest amounts of resources braving death, sex trafficking, and overall discrimination for a chance at a better life. In perspective, the experience men face from gangs and unemployment, they are often subjected to recruitment, death from denying recruitment, or leaving the country entirely to find better prosperity. The psyche of those who illegally immigrate are based on variables that cannot be measured, but these are primarily the patterns and conditions that push people to personal betterment and hopes of sending a form of security back to their families.

The current state of Mexican-United States relations has waned with the 2016 U.S. election and the promised border wall. The reaction to President Trump's campaign speeches of Mexican immigrants being "criminals and rapists" have caused a higher state of discrimination. Mexico can be a nation that betters the citizens and lowering the poverty levels. What can be done for the citizens to prevent them from going to the lengths of illegal immigration? Changes need to occur for Mexican citizens to prosper in relation to families not committing illegal acts in desperation.

Women fall victim to being sold into sex trafficking at the hands of the coyote, cartel, or government officials.[6] Situations of husbands being taken from homes in the middle of the night by cartels, the next day children coming home from school to see a man murdered in front of them, leaving hours later for the border. There is a risk of death when making the decision to go through channels of a coyote and there are risks of death from staying. There have been reports by Mexican and U.S. border patrol finding those who have died from severe dehydration while attempting to cross the border and those killed to send a message of who's in control of their freedom back to their families.[7]

Citizens suffering from violence and poverty continue to face adversity in. What drives a person to engage in illegal activity, what pushes a person to leave their homeland? Immigration has been a great opportunity to those seeking security and success, but what happens when someone doesn't have the means to achieve it; what is it that they must give up? There are many questions to situations that are very much circumstantial.

Education enrollment rates are at their peak and younger generations are enjoying the opportunities of earning special skills for legal migration as well as rising within their own nation to positions of officials, doctors, teachers and lawyers. Much of this is in response to the use of remittance from family in the United States. Currently, half of the Mexican population is still within the poverty rate and the number of Mexicans that have illegally immigrated have reflected that. The Mexican government faces huge humanitarian violations in the lack of response to gang violence and corrupt officials. Despite the rise in the GDP, security for the poverty-stricken population is a continuing problem.

Uneducated women have many struggles with being taken advantage of in ways men typically don't experience. Many who are forced into labor for the drug cartels will be forced into sex trafficking as well as other criminal acts such as violence, drug trafficking, and sometimes murder. There are too few opportunities for women who live in poverty and the majority are left with the responsibility of being the sole provider of one or multiple children. The increase in social welfare programs that ensures mothers can care for their children and see that they have an education has proven to give better structure to better their lifestyles. For the amount revenue that the nation is capable of obtaining, it has not been put into aiding the lower class to become a part of working society, especially considering the disadvantages of lower education and gender. The United States provides opportunities that Mexico is currently lacking, and history has shown the success of those who attain an American lifestyle.

The word "illegal" is typically seen as a negative connotation in criminal activity. Describing a person as being illegal or a criminal for the act of crossing a man-made border is an idiosyncrasy in terms of why a person is put into that position. There are truly evil people that have put aside their morals for personal gain. And for many who are below them, they cannot escape this reality considering growth of violence. Border walls are in demand in the U.S. and that the government takes steps to further prevent illegal border crossing. As mentioned before, there is no distinct finding on the number of illegal immigrants in the U.S. who have crossed the border or who have overstayed their visa. There is a larger prejudice towards those of illegal border crossing though they suffer more dangerous obstacles than those who have gone the legal route. But

in the end, they are still just people trying to secure a lifestyle that is secure and prosperous.

IMMIGRATION: EARLY 20TH CENTURY THROUGH PRESENT DAY

The authoritarian regime of Porfirio Díaz had a largely negative effect on the people of Mexico. With the rise of federal power, Díaz had opened the door to economic liberalism and agrarian reform. Deals were signed in 1894 with the United States on terms of the Terrenos Baldidos, lands that had been rich in oil, and the farm lands called ejidos that were governed by the state. This had massive short comings to the labor force which incited the exploitation of the workers.[8]

The introduction of oil companies increased the need of other textile industries, and goods that were being exported experiencing a decrease in resources which had a significant effect on the nutrition of the working class and the poor; other misfortunes included an increase in child labor and infant mortality.[9] The twentieth century brought despair in terms of social economic wellbeing, and the Mexican citizens staged a series of revolts; laborers and their families needed to find better means to survive. Díaz and the United States president, William H. Taft, approved a deal for a thousand agriculture laborers for migration to Colorado and Nebraska in service of the sugar beet harvest, it was recognized as seasonal work only.[10] The fall of the Díaz regime during the Mexican revolution of 1910 had an influx of those who illegally immigrated, many of these people were fleeing from exploitation and violence of the revolution. Migrant workers expanded beyond agriculture and many found jobs in mines and rail road corporations Though living conditions were sub-par, there was money to be earned which gave them hope of becoming prosperous.[11] For many, this is still a force in the system of immigration, only one or two family members could afford to make the journey, which meant leaving family behind.

Immigration policy has changed since the 1900s and is reflected in both countries. The Burnett Law of 1917, passed months before U.S. declaration of the First World War, required that immigrants needed to pay and register or be deported. During this time, there was a considerable increase in deportations. But this came at a price when the First World War began when there was a new need for laborers where U.S. men were sent overseas. The intensity of the war brought great disparities during those times and there was a push for the naturalization of 60,000 people for enlistment; approximately 70,000 immigrants fled back to Mexico to escape recruitment.[12]

Mexico struggled after the discovery of oil. The United States had rights to land used by U.S. corporations and through contract renegotiation, Mexico was able to buy back the land and monopolize oil with the formation of Petroleos Mexicanos (PEMEX).[13]

Although Mexico-U.S. relations had been strained during the Second World War they were still able to establish the Bracero Program which was for agricultural, rail road labor, and other special skills positions in the U.S. to replace men sent to war. They were temporary workers that would have to return to Mexico at the end of their contract. Under the Bracero Program, immigrants were not to be drafted into the army.[14] In the twenty-two years that the program had been in place, roughly 4.6 million Mexicans participated in the Bracero program.[15]

After the Bracero program ended in 1964, the United States had fewer issues with migration. U.S. agriculture continued to see the value in the cheap labor illegal immigrants provided. The Mexican economy, however, faced high inflation that pushed the exchange rate to 20 percent of the U.S. dollar during the 1970s', reaching 60 percent in '76.[16] Until 1980, the United States experienced different issues created by United Farm Workers union who questioned the need of immigrants when U.S. citizens needed jobs as well. Illegal immigrants were estimated at a quarter of total immigrants in the California at that time.[17] Mexico faced low production after huge inflation in 1982 due to foreign borrowing and a rising national debt. This also caused a hinderance in production jobs for young workers.[18] In 1986, the Simpson-Rodino Act put tougher regulations on fines, border patrol, and assessing those who have maintained a job since 1982 in possible naturalization.[19] Many Mexican villages that suffer from poverty never receive information regarding these requirements continue to attempt to migrate as they know others have done in the past. Many, because of their low education, are misguided and are likely to be forced into criminal activities, willingly or unwillingly. They are even pushed to illegally immigrate for criminal purposes.

President Salinas de Gortari, elected in 1988, was a United States trained economist who helped construct the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). In negotiations, Salinas agreed to many of U.S. policies as there was great benefit to both countries in regard to immigration labor. Immigration reform was approved for NAFTA in 1994 which addressed the length of time an immigrant can stay. Under the AgJOBS Act of 1999, status of legal immigrants had new requirements of skill sets in specific labor; this was only if one could prove employment for a company in the last 150 days.[20]

The aftermath of September 11th attacks in the U.S. has caused the U.S. to bolster its security at the Mexican border. Despite this, illegal immigration has not had much change. Mexico refused to give the U.S. aid at the United Nations regarding U.S. claims of Iraqi involvement in terrorism and this caused rifts between the two nations to deepen.[21] To survive, citizens resorted to illegal activity that helped fuel the rise by declaring war the drug cartels. Felipe Calderón, of the Partido Accion Nacional (PAN), began his

campaign against the gangs and drugs. The Cartels have influenced terrorist behavior within Mexico, including things that have gone unreported due to citizen's fears of becoming the next target, the government has turned a blind eye.

One of the many benefits in migrating to the United States is the ability to send remittances back to families still in Mexico. There isn't a direct way of measuring illegal immigration, but in consideration that the majority of those who have migrated to the U.S. on a legal basis usually have the capability of bring direct family with them. The correlation of sending remittances back to addresses in Mexico is typically associated with illegal status.[22] Because of the difference in exchange rate, those receiving money from the U.S. are able to afford more than before. Mexican citizens who receive remittance use this money to survive given that Mexico's wages aren't livable wages.[23] There is a higher possibility of those still in Mexico to eventually afford to travel to the U.S. through legal means.

The process obtaining a visa may be a direct in Mexico, but for many in poverty there is no way to afford it. It often requires traveling long distances to the United States Embassy in different cities, which have been primarily located along in Mexico, of, and also the U.S.-Mexico border. Many of the most poverty-stricken

> *"The process obtaining a visa may be a direct in Mexico, but for many in poverty there is no way to afford it."*

cities in Mexico are located many miles south of the border.[24] Migrants are typically faced with enormous amounts of paperwork, application fees, lawyer fees, all the documentation, along with periods long of time for processing and approval. Denial is very common for those of a lower-class status. There are limitations on the number of visas for specific visa categories that can be issued. For example, only 65,600 immigrants on temporary work visas are allowed in for a two-year period.[25] There are different restrictions and time-based situations for other forms of visa entry and the process to be complicated and drawn out.[26] For those who are poor or people fleeing violence, this is a process that ultimately hurts the momentum of attempting to migrate to another country through the legal channels. The consideration of using a "coyote", which is a desert guide for illegal immigrants, has proven to be more negotiable in time and money. This poses great risk for crossing the border. Coyotes have always been able to take advantage of those in vulnerable positions.[27] This, unfortunately, leaves travelers vulnerable to the subjection of different types of criminal activity.

CARTELS AND CORRUPTION: THE FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL

The growing violence has contributed to the influx of illegal immigration out of these poverty-stricken zones. Lack of education and efficient funds to procure the correct documents needed creates a situation of limited options. There have been times the terrorist behaviors of the cartels give some only a few hours to flee, and, in desperation, the use of a coyote became common. Prices are negotiable, fluctuating on the current economic state of the United States economy.

Cartels like "La Familia Michoacana", of the Mexican state Manchaca, began aiding the poor, supporting churches, and local businesses, while also supporting the wealthier community and dealing in illegal business.[28] Those who have notably used violent actions are "Los Zetas" and the Gulf Cartels located in the south of Mexico. Businesses in violent areas are faced with decreasing business and revenue and many risk moving to cities closer to the United States-Mexico border in hope for better business.[29] In a vicious cycle, violence is commonly preceded with unemployment rates which creates more violence.[30] According to multiple surveys and the Mexican Population Census of 2010, drug cartel related crime and violence takes place in areas where the population has the lowest education and highest unemployment rates.[31] Money earned by drug cartels has risen the GDP 1.1 percent, GDP reached 2.3 percent in 2007, which makes the Cartels major contributors to Mexico's revenue.[32]

The election of Enrique Pena Nieto and the transition of political parties, from the Partido Accion Nacional (PAN) to Partido Revoluciaro Institutional (PRI), caused gaps in power while the economy was still struggling; this further induced vulnerabilities to corruption and a reported in violence.[33] One of the many issues is combatting the corruption within the police force in which police participate in or ignore crimes committed by drug cartels. Officers were recently involved in the abduction of forty-three college students, and there are connections to the extortion of civilians that have led over a third of the population to believe there is corruption within the police force in connection with the cartels. Mexico City has seen an increase of drug violence of 41 percent in the past twenty years of the declared 'Drug War'.[34] Violent situations have also placed a terrorist pressure for those to stay in submission of the government and for those of lower education to provide cheap labor for the cartel drug trade. There is security in recruitment because rebellion has shown backlash from police and cartels.[35] Murders happen during the day and have become more prominent. Little is being done to protect the citizens. For them taking matters into their own hands, illegal immigration has been the last resort.

STUDENT ARTICLES

PATRIARCHY IN EXPLOITATION

The majority of Mexico maintains religious beliefs in Catholicism and Christianity. Patriarchy and position within society is clear for men and women, and with this force there are patterns of exploitation for both sexes. The machismo male dominance, particularly portrayed by the men in the work force, is set with a standard to provide for the house. Men in Mexico who face poverty-stricken situations have decisions to make for their families regarding prosperity. Drug cartels search for the uneducated and low skilled men for cheap labor; the pressure of achieving a better life for one's family has been an effective motivator for those to commit criminal acts.[36] Remittance is commonly known for the Mexican citizens; families will spend all they have to send one family member to the United States. Work for an illegal immigrant is difficult to find with many U.S. corporations considering the consequences, sending back remittance is also a risky situation that could lead to capture and deportation. To leave one's family is not an easy decision and staying in Mexico puts them at great risk of drug violence and government oppression.

For the wife of an immigrant, there are many variables that she must face for the family's security. Work for a woman is harder to find in an unemployment plagued city. They are also bound by stereotypical work fields, such as waitressing, nursing, and, typically, special hand crafts work. Many must travel long distances and risk being physically and sexually assaulted. Risking illegal immigration, women traveling alone or with children have a higher risk of exploitation along the way.[37]

The changes in social structure have left many citizens living live of desperation, perhaps even defeat. Providing for a family is difficult and made harder due to dwindling employment opportunities and low wages. Desperate, many turns to criminality, drug smuggling and violence.

The U.S. has shown itself to be a land of opportunity and those in struggling communities in Mexico may attempt to better their lives by illegally immigrating. Policies created by the US government hinder legal immigration through expensive fees and long waiting periods as visas are processed for approval. For many, the risks of using a coyote poses extreme dangers but is the only way. There is hope for those who choose this path: they may be declared "illegal" but they are surviving and providing for themselves and their families.

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RAPE OF THE CONGO

BIBI HAWA AMIRI

When referring to a 'holocaust' one automatically thinks of the Holocaust of WWII led by Germany's Adolf Hitler, but going back in history, that's not the only holocaust the modern world has witnessed. In the late eighteenth century, Congo became a victim of imperialism. It was conquered and solely ruled by King Leopold II of Belgium and became the largest private property owned by an individual. Congo was not a colony of the Belgium government but rather a colonized territory of King Leopold II. The obsession to establish Belgium as an imperial power led to widespread atrocities in the region.

King Leopold II took over the throne after the death of his father, King Leopold I, in 1865. During this era, Great Britain, France, Portugal and Germany were all imperial powers with colonies scattered around the globe. Throughout the 1870s, King Leopold II established a reputation as a patron and a humanitarian who strived to spread the word of Christ and convert souls to Christianity and introduce civilized living to the people of Africa. Although he demonstrated himself as a humanitarian advocate, privately, he desired expanding his territory into the African continent, and more so in Congo.[1]

By 1876, to promote his humanitarian work, King Leopold II hosted an international conference for explorers and geographers to develop Africa. In 1879, he hired Sir Henry Morton Stanley and sponsored his voyages to explore Congo. Sir Henry Morton Stanley's voyages were less for exploration and more for exploitation of the natives. Sir Stanley advocated on the King's behalf, in which he built roads, established trading posts and acquired land to the King's favor.[2] by making treaties with the tribal chiefs who unknowingly gave up their land to the King of Belgium, Sir Stanley gave King Leopold II legitimacy in his possession and power over Congo and its natives.

When the industrial revolution emerged in Europe, western powers scouted for resources beyond their borders and found themselves in Africa. During the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, European powers, along with King Leopold II of Belgium, carved up the African continent for plantation use, industrial products, production of factory goods, and harvesting its natural resources. They also agreed on free trade among the colonies to better facilitate trade throughout the continent. All imperial powers were present during the Berlin conference during the decision making and carving up an entire continent… everyone, except the Africans whose lands were auctioned without their consent.[3] Their justification for their act of invasion was solely based on the "White Man's Burden". The imperial powers took it upon themselves to civilize the "less superior race" (non-whites) to introduce them to Christianity and the civilized lifestyle for the good of the people.

King Leopold II started pressuring imperial powers to recognize Congo as his territory. He proclaimed himself the rightful king of Congo by addressing his government and stating: "King of the Belgians, I shall be at the same time sovereign of another State. This State will be independent, like Belgium; and, like her, it will enjoy the benefits of neutrality". Eventually the United States and many of the European powers acknowledged his newly claimed territory which he called the Congo Free State.

Since the Congo Free State was solely under King Leopold II's rule, it didn't consist of any government institutions, thus making King Leopold's rule unrestrained by a parliament or government. He ruled like a plantation with no law but his own. King Leopold II was initially very successful in exploiting his newly claimed territory. He was mostly interested in acquiring ivory, gold, and/or any precious stones. With the rubber boom in the 1890s, Leopold II shifted his focus from ivory to rubber. The central African rainforest was enriched with landolphia which was a rich source of rubber and gave Congo the lead in the rubber industry.[4]

In order to amass his fortune, King Leopold II used horrific methods to achieve his goals. To enforce his laws, King Leopold II took extreme measures whereby he enslaved the native Congolese by and through his administrators. At first, they were used for the purposes of hunting down elephants for ivory as well as porters, but with the rubber boom the focus shifted from ivory to rubber harvesting.[5] Force Publique, or Public Force, was the acting army whose members were local natives and officered by Belgians. Force Publique controlled labor, quelled revolts and enforced the collection of rubber and ivory.[6] The brutality didn't just end with enslaving the native population, however. Force Publique raided villages and took women and children hostage while the men were sent into the rainforest to collect a monthly quota of wild rubber. The women and children were held hostage for indeterminate periods of time until harvest quotas were met and subjected to unsafe and aggressive conditions while being held; these conditions extended to rape and murder. If the quotas were not met, family members would be harmed or tortured.

This form of open air prison was established throughout the Congo Free State. The use of bullets came with a hefty price: for every bullet used, a Force Publique soldier had to bring legitimate proof of use, which was often a hand.[7] When the villagers failed to meet the quota of rubber, they were punished savagely. Not meeting the criteria meant that one of their family members would lose their hand or foot, sometimes both. This was a common practice that was imposed throughout the Congo Free State. In 1896, a German newspaper reported that 1,308 hands had been collected (chopped off) in just one day.[8] These extreme measures drove the villagers to rebel against the inhuman conditions imposed by their colonial power but the rebellions were violently put down. The dead bodies of the rebels were put on display to spread fear amongst the natives and discourage any future rebellion.[9] As a sign of horror and to spread terror amongst the villagers, a colonial administrator decorated the road leading to his house with the skulls of slaughtered Congolese.[10]

With the Congolese people being enslaved, they worked nonstop to provide for the ruthless king. Rubber harvesting was

an extremely difficult task. When the rubber workers inevitably collapsed from exhaustion, starvation, and/or disease, Force Publique would shoot them. The Congolese were worked to death as they endured horrible conditions. They were used as human machines where, no matter what happened, labor would not stop. Even if the worker's feet bled from too much walking, they were covered in tar so that labor could continue.[11] King Leopold II took colonial power to a whole new extreme. He depopulated an entire country that was 77 times larger than Belgium by half. During King Leopold II's rule between 10 to 23 million Congolese were killed due to disease, starvation, torture and/or killed by Force Publique directly.

King Leopold II exploited the Congo Free State in every possible way. From its land and resources to its people and animals, anything that could bring profit to King Leopold II was exploited to the extreme. By creating the Congo Free State, King Leopold II destroyed the unique identity that differentiated tribes and villages from one and another. Depopulating the Congo Free State wasn't just done by killing the natives but also by selling them off to slavery to the Europeans powers. To avoid the rise of any trade rivals within Congo, King Leopold II ratified laws that prevented any European trader from trading directly with the Congolese and from paying for rubber with African currency. Europeans could only exchange goods in a barter system with Congo Free State.[12]

While King Leopold II was draining Congo of its people and natural resources he was building extravagant structures in Belgium, such as the magnificent palace to display his spoils, the Royal Museum of Central Africa. With the wealth that he had acquired from Congo Free State, he built the monumental Arcade du Cinquantenaire in Brussels, and in Eastern Belgium, he built a heavily fortified military base which was instrumental in preventing the advancement of German troops in WWI. King Leopold II also built human zoos exhibiting African natives in their primitive states in which Africans were imprisoned and viewed by the public just like caged animals.[13] He expanded his kingdom on the blood of the Congolese.

Though King Leopold II's stated primary purpose was to spread Christianity and "civilize" the native Congolese, he dehumanized and exploited them. Nonetheless, King Leopold II allowed Christian missionaries to visit the Congo Free State. Missionaries witnessed the atrocities first-hand which eventually led to King Leopold's inhumane crimes being exposed to the world. Missionaries, travelers, and young idealists went to Africa for work or exploration but unexpectedly found themselves witnessing one of history's first modern genocides.[14] The pictures of men, women, and children with their hands cut off, brutal enslavement, and forced labor over the native population spread like wild fire in

Europe and in the United States. A campaign was evolving in Great Britain and the United States to end atrocities in Congo and for King Leopold II to renounce his colonial rule and ownership of Congo.[15]

The first international protest occurred in 1890, due to public concern over the violations of human rights in the Congo Free State. The protests escalated when a British trader, Charles Stokes, was sentenced to death due to illegal trading in the Congo Free State. This further increased Britain's involvement into the matter of Congo. After extensive criticism, King Leopold II agreed to bring reforms in Congo, but failed to implement them.

In 1903, a document was written by British diplomat Roger Casement. The Casement Report cataloged and described atrocities committed in the Congo Free State under King Leopold II's rule. The Casement Report played a major role in exposing King Leopold II's crimes which led to the eventual involvement of Belgium's government and the seizure of Congo from the King. In his report, Casement interviewed Congolese natives who testified about the conditions under King Leopold II's ruthless rule. A Congolese native stated "I ran away with two old people, but they were caught and killed, and the soldiers made me carry the baskets holding their cut-off hands. They killed my little sister, threw her in a house, and set it on fire".[16]

In another interview conducted by Casement with a refugee from the rubber producing regions, he echoed the racism, oppression, and the sense of "white-superiority". The native stated:

We had to go further and further into the forest to find the rubber vines, to go without food, and our women had to give up cultivating the fields and gardens. Then we starved. Wild beasts—leopards—killed some of us when we were working away in the forest, and others got lost or died from exposure and starvation, and we begged the white man to leave us alone, saying that we could get no more rubber, but the white men and their soldiers said: 'Go! You are only beasts yourselves.[17]

In another documented interview of a Congolese by Casement, they said:

As we fled, the soldiers killed ten children, in the water. They killed a lot of adults, cut off their hands, put them in baskets, and took them to the white man, who counted 200 hands… One day, soldiers struck a child with a gun-butt, cut off its head, and killed my sister and cut off her head, hands and feet because she had on rings.[18]

After visiting a village Casement wrote:

At a village I touched at up the Lulanga River… the people complained that there was no rubber left in their district, and yet that the La Lulanga Company required of them each fortnight [every two weeks] a fixed quantity they could not supply. Three

forest guards of that company were quartered, it was said, in this village, one of whom I found on duty, the two others, he informed me, having gone to Mampoka to convoy the fortnight's rubber. No livestock of any kind could be seen or purchased in this town, which had only a few years ago been a large and populous community, filled with people and well stocked with sheep, goats, ducks and fowl. Although I walked through most of it, I could only count ten men, with their families. There were said to be others in the part of the town I did not visit, but the entire community I saw were living in wretched houses and in visible distress.[19]

Although the news reported that Congo Free State was a fruitful colony for Belgium, they failed to report the atrocities taking place within the State of Congo.

The report conducted by Roger Casement shook the world by revealing the atrocities of the Congo Free State. The London Times refused to publish the original report due to the traumatizing information it contained. As international criticism and condemnation of King Leopold II grew, there was no way of hiding his crimes, the world became aware of his crimes against humanity. The Belgium government and King Leopold II came to an agreement to hand the Congo Free State to the government of Belgium. Thus, in 1908, the government of Belgium annexed the Congo Free State and established the Belgian Congo.

Annexing the state from King Leopold II didn't necessarily mean independence for the Congolese, it was simply to take King Leopold's private state. The annexation of Congo also didn't end the enslavement of the native Congolese, nor did it put an end to the exploitation of native lands. The rubber industry was too profitable for the Belgian government to end, and they acknowledged that if they continue with the old methodology of King Leopold II, the Congo Free State will be left with no natives which meant no work force. Thus, the Belgian government reduced killing Congolese.

Although the world acknowledged King Leopold's barbaric massacre of the Congolese, he was never charged with any crimes against humanity. King Leopold II died peacefully in his palace in December 17, 1909, he was given a royal funeral. The people of Belgium may have forgotten what their king did, but the people of Congo will never forget the crimes committed against them and their ancestors.

Decades after King Leopold II died, the terror he had planted in the Congo continued to grow. The Belgium government continued to exploit the state and its people. The atrocities continued, but with more finesse so that the Belgian government didn't have to face a dramatic depopulation. Even under Belgian rule, the lives of the natives didn't improve much. The young were left without education, there was no healthcare or infrastructure for healthcare and living conditions were abysmal. Belgian Congo

took its independence in 1960 and was renamed as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). There is nothing democratic or republican about this modern state. The DRC suffers tremendously to this day due to lack of human rights, medical assistance, education and stability.

Although the international community is present in Congo by and through their peacekeeping missions with 22,000 personnel assisting the government in reducing violence, strengthening security and promoting peace, it has not helped Congo stand on its own. Paramilitaries and the use of terrorism has deep roots within Congo's government. Imperial roots have been sewn deep into the governmental system of Congo, and, to this date, the country is governed by a corrupt ruler. Currently, the Democratic Republic of Congo holds an estimated $24 trillion in untapped minerals with diamonds accounting for most of that wealth.

After Congo got its independence from Belgium in 1960, Patrice Lumumba, the leader of the Mouvement National Congolais (MNC), was the first president to be elected democratically.[20] Though Lumumba was supported by the Congolese, he was seen by western powers to secretly hold communist values which led to the United States' desire to remove him from power. The fear of communist uprisings gave the United States legitimacy in getting involved in Congo, however, they mainly got involved to ensure the safety of their continued investments in the diamonds. Ten weeks after Lumumba was sworn in, General Mobutu Sese Seko carried out a coup d'état in which Lumumba was killed by firing squad and, though evidence of the U.S. and Belgium's government involvement in his murder have emerged, nothing has been done about it. When Mobutu took power, he institutionalized widespread corruption and looted the country of $4 billion until he was ousted by rebel leader Laurent Kabila. In 2001, Kabila was assassinated, and after a short-lived civil war, his son Joseph Kabila was democratically elected to become president in 2006. The country has a long history of chaotic events and exploitation. And though it may have simmered down with its newly found government, the country and its people will always be scarred by the horrifying history introduced by King Leopold II.[21]

The exploitation of Congo for its natural resources to enrich the Belgium empire, led to depopulating an entire state and stripping them of their freedom and dignity all in the name of profit. Imperial powers have exploited nations around the world. They stripped them of their resources, oppressed their people, raped their women, killed their men, and then sung the song of democracy. By establishing the Congo Free State, King Leopold II destroyed the link between the people and their homeland, the effects of which would endlessly ripple through time. The

Democratic Republic of Congo has yet to come to a clear definition of what democracy really stands for, but even the illiterate is aware that democracy isn't something as catastrophic as what Congo has experienced. It doesn't take a well-educated individual to differentiate between justice and injustice. Unfortunately, inhumane characters such as Leopold II shaped history and their detrimental policies have disfigured the masses in the worst ways.

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IRAQ AFTER 2003

ANONYMOUS

I was born and raised in a small city in Iraq. I was 13 years old when the American and British armies invaded Iraq in 2003. I saw the invasion, war, and the political consequences firsthand until I left Iraq in 2014. I had to flee my country because of the threats I received for working with Coalition Forces; I was there until the last troops left Iraq. I would like to share my story.

Saddam Hussein dictated Iraq for almost thirty-five years and drove the country into three terrible wars. The first war was with Iran, which lasted for eight years from 1980 to 1988 and resulted in massive fatalities on both sides. The second war, the First Gulf War, began in 1991 as result of the August 2, 1990 Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. Iraq lost the war due to American, Arab, and European support for Kuwait. The third war, the invasion of Iraq, began in 2003 and resulted in the capture and execution of Saddam Hussein. The consequences of this war since 2003 continue to linger today in Iraq.

The First Gulf War caused tensions between Iraq and the U.S. to arise. The reasoning behind the enraged tensions were because the American government forced Saddam Hussein to leave Kuwait due to the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait that lasted seven months. The American government encouraged the Shiite, in the southern province of Iraq, to revolt against Saddam Hussein in 1991. After offering American support, the American government changed their minds because they did not want to invest their funds into the rebellion. In doing so, they gave power back to Saddam and allowed him to crush the rebellion through the use of military helicopters. The majority of the rebels were captured while the rest

escaped to Iran where they lived in exile. After Saddam Hussein was defeated by American forces, the United Nations placed many sanctions against Iraq. From 1991 until 2003, Iraqis lived under the United Nations embargo, and the Iraqi people struggled to survive under Saddam's iron hand. The situation in Iraq was far from ideal especially for the Shiite living in the southern province; the Iraqi people thought there was no escape from Saddam's regime. The Americans even did not want to overthrow the regime until 2003 when U.S. President, George W. Bush, blamed Iraq for the September 11, 2001 attacks and claimed they were in possession of weapons of mass destruction. Though Saddam brought about Iraqi instability, the failed state of Iraq is a direct result of the actions and inactions of the US overthrowing President Saddam Hussein in 2003 which left a power vacuum, allowing radical fundamentalist organizations like al-Qaeda and ISIS to rise to power.

The main powers who led the 2003 invasion were the U.S. and Britain, attacking Iraq from all directions. The U.S. and British armies invaded Basra, Iraq which shares borders with Iran and Kuwait, through Kuwaiti lands. Basra and the southern province of Iraq is predominantly Shiite, so the coalition forces thought they would be easiest to control considering they lived in the worst conditions under Saddam's persecution of people from that sect due to the fact that they are associated with Iran and because Iran is a Shiite government. The Shiite wanted Saddam Hussein to be removed from control, but they were afraid to help the Americans and the British because of what consequences they might face if

Students walk past a U.S. soldier in Baghdad's Ameen district on October 14, 2008. (Courtesy of Thaier Al-Sudani / Reuters)

they failed; they were afraid that the coalition forces would back out like they did in 1991 resulting in another massacre of the Shiite people. This fear caused the southern provinces to fight the Americans and the British harder than any other place in Iraq.

People were happy and excited for the new impending era of American democracy after the removal of Saddam Hussein, especially in the Southern region of Iraq and Kurdistan, the Northern region of Iraq. Many people thought that America was going to transform Iraq into a successful, democratic state using free elections and genuine candidates who cared about the country's wellbeing, but they received the opposite. Since there was no government, the Iraqi people expected the coalition forces to protect the country, but they did not protect the country; industries such as factories, ministries, universities, public libraries, and banks were looted and destroyed. Some Iraqis wanted revenge for Saddam Hussein's regime and they decided to overtake government offices and destroy the infrastructure, and again the coalition forces did not care. The only things the American and British government cared to protect were the oil reserves because it benefited them directly, while essential Iraqi institutions did not. This was not democracy, it was anarchy.

While I was in a riverside city, I witnessed two separate incidents of destruction and looting. The first incident was at the

Iraqi Central Bank, where someone bombed the main gate of the bank. I then saw people break in and steal money while the British forces stood by right outside the bank doing absolutely nothing. Instead of saving the bank, the coalition soldiers shot the looters on their way out and took the money for themselves. Another time, while I was walking along the same river, I witnessed a lady in her fifties, carrying a small computer screen that she stole from the a hotel. I was curious, so I decided to start a conversation with her by asking her if she needed any help, but she declined. When I told the lady that her "TV" was not a television, but a computer screen, she threw it in the river.

Many people accused the Iranian and Kuwaiti governments of burning the libraries and the universities while others blamed the coalition forces and Peshmerga, the Kurdish army, for the destruction and looting. The people in the southern region of Iraq might have the right to blame the coalition forces for looting; however, in the northern province of Iraq, Kurdistan, the Peshmerga forces were the ones who allowed the destruction to happen. Peshmerga had entered the cities of Mosul and Kirkuk before the Americans. Rather than protecting the cities from looting, like the way they fiercely protected their own region, they allowed looting and the destruction of schools and libraries. The city of Mosul is majority Sunni and Baathist meaning they were

radical supporters of Saddam Hussein and anti-American. A local tribe leader hid Saddam Hussein's two sons in his home where they would fight their last battle before being killed by coalition forces .

Iraq experienced a short-lived period of peace for six months after 2003. People were waiting for a new government to be installed, free elections, and a stable economy. Exiles of Saddam's reign, like the Shiite rebels from the Iranian war and prominent religious figures, made it back to Iraq and were waiting to become part of the new government. Since there was no government after the invasion, the coalition forces acted as a temporary government. The British forces settled in Basra and took over Saddam Hussein's palaces and government buildings. Many people were without jobs and means of survival so the British attempted to rebuild the infrastructure. The British had previous experience in the region since they were the ones who throned the first king of Iraq in 1921. To avoid trouble in the region with the locals, the British invited Basra tribe leaders into Saddam Hussein's palaces and even visited some mosques to ask for their cooperation. British forces offered tribal protection, money, and employment to tribe leaders. In turn, they contracted tribe members to rebuild schools and other essential public institutions. Unlike Saddam, British forces were not tough on the local people and negotiated with the tribal and religious leaders rather than trying to dictate and force their rules onto them.

A detrimental mistake to U.S. foreign Policy was the appointment of Paul Bremer to run the U.S. coalition forces authorities from 2003 to 2004 in Iraq. Bremer became the most powerful man in Iraq, comparable to the type of power General Douglas MacArthur possessed in postwar Japan. Bremer's first action was the de-Baathification order, which identified and removed Baathists from their jobs and offices including teachers, engineers, and lawyers. Bremer wreaked further havoc across Iraq by dissolving the army and removing Baathist government officials. His actions brought about very serious consequences. Baathists who were fired by Bremer's law had no place to go and no means of survival. Left with no other options, they joined the opposition.

Baathist army officers who fought the three wars under Saddam Hussein's regime were experts in the military field and left with no jobs; Al-Qaeda offered them security and refuge. The Nazi-like order handed over skilled military men who could have helped coalition forces rebuild Iraq, to rebel leaders. American and other world leaders admitted that Bremer's strategy in Iraq was a disaster. Bremer's de-Baathification order created new enemies for the coalition forces and encouraged anti-American radical organizations like Al-Qaeda to fight for control. UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan said, "You cannot disassociate the situation in Iraq today from the U.S intervention of 2003. Because not only did

the intervention take place, but they dismantled the Iraqi Army, which was the tool of Saddam to maintain law and order" . Later, Britain's former Prime Minister, Tony Blair, admitted that the U.S and the U.K made an extensive number of mistakes and were not properly prepared for the removal of Saddam Hussein from power. Tony Blair had also apologized for the poor and incorrect intelligence about the presence of WMDs . Former U.S. Speaker of the House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich, described Paul Bremer's policy as "the largest single disaster in American foreign policy in modern times."

Bremer established the Governing Council and he chose twenty-five people to be members based on their religion and region; there were thirteen Shiite, five Sunni, five Kurds, one Christian, and one Turkmen members. The formation of the Governing Council was one of the primary causes of the Iraqi sectarian civil war. The majority of these members were living in exile before 2003 and had struck a deal with the U.S and the U.K

"Baathists who were fired by Bremer's law had no place to go and no means of survival. Left with no other options, they joined the opposition."

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governments before the invasion to secure themselves seats in the government; these members did not represent the Iraqi people. The Governing Council did not understand the political situation, or the hardships people endured living under Saddam Hussein's rule. The French had installed an almost identical form of government in Lebanon back in 1936; it was a failure. Lebanon's government is still struggling and unstable because their government was formed based on religion, sects, and regions . A government based on religion, historically, has almost always been unstable and resulted in a failed state. Even with this proven history, Bremer still installed the Governing Council. Why? This question has not been answered until today.

Many Iraqis were not happy about the establishment of the Governing Council and its members. Therefore, some of the religious leaders rose against the coalition forces and the Iraqi interim government in 2004 to 2005. Muqtada Al-Sadr, one of the young Shiite leaders, called upon the Iraqi people to rise up, fight, and kick the coalition forces out of Iraq. In 2003, Al-Sadr established a militia called the "Mahdi Army." The Mahdi Army attacked the British in Basra and the American military in other Shiite Iraqi provinces. The Mahdi Army targeted Ayad Allawi, the June 2004 to April 2005 interim Prime Minister of the Iraqi Governing Council. They almost killed Allawi in the city of Najaf, a

Shiite province. Allawi's guards had to shoot aimlessly into crowds to protect him from the assassination attempts. Allawi was against the de-Baathification process and the dissolution of the Iraqi army. Allawi attempted to reinstate the Iraqi Army, but the new Iraqi army was weak as many of those that enlisted had no prior military experience.

The coalition forces were not well enough educated on the Middle Eastern region to be able to calculate the aftermath of the invasion. Next to the invasion and the creation of the Iraqi Governing Council, one of the biggest mistakes America committed in Iraq was in 2004 when they changed the name of the operation from liberation to occupation. The simple change in classification resulted in driving the country into a period of militant resistance. Many Iraqis realized that the Americans did not come to free them from the dictator Saddam Hussein as they claimed but, instead, came to control the wealth of Iraq.

The American and British government showed their true interests when they allowed all the industries to be looted except the oil industry because they protected it. Before the invasion in 2003, the Iraqi oil industry was blocked to Western companies since the Baathist party nationalized the Iraqi oil industry in 1973. The cake was ready to be cut and the American and British companies were waiting for their share. According to Gen. John Abizaid, the former General of the U.S. Central Command and Military Operation in Iraq, the war in Iraq was all about oil . The idea of invading Iraq formed in 2000, and there was a report in 2002 that the Iraq oil should be open to foreign companies as soon as possible. In 1998, the CEO of Chevron, Kenneth Dree said, "Iraq possesses huge reserves of oil and gas-reserves I'd love Chevron to have access to."

Many people welcomed the idea of foreign companies operating in Iraq, since that would improve the economy and decrease the unemployment rate after the invasion in 2003. However, the absence of a strong government in Iraq led to the creation of multiple militias and political parties to fill the gaps. People who were working as contractors and subcontractors with foreign companies were subjected to death threats, as the militias saw them as traitors. In 2005, a friend won a sub contract with the Coalition Forces. He hired me, and I was in charge of twenty people. On the third day, four people approached me in a black 1991 Toyota and threw a bullet at me and told me to go home along with my team if we wanted to live. My team and I had to quit our jobs if we wanted to keep our heads on our shoulders. The local government was corrupted and could not protect itself from the militias. The British were even forced to leave Saddam Hussein's palaces and settle far away from the center of the city because of the daily attacks on them. Rich and educated people were subjected

to kidnaps; therefore, the majority of the them had to leave the country and be refugees in Syria, Jordan, Turkey, and Iran.

Baghdad, the capital of Iraq, went through a terrible time after the invasion. Since the security situation was out of control, the government had to increase police checkpoints. In Baghdad, people dressed as policemen and killed other people based on what they identified as. For example, if an individual was from a Sunni city entering a Shiite city, that person would be killed by the fake officers at one of those fake checkpoints. If you were to ask Iraqis who lived in that region at the time, you would find many of them had two names with two identifications. In March 2006, a friend graduated from Baghdad Engineering University, and while he was waiting in line to get his degree at his graduation ceremony along with 100 students, a suicide bomber detonated a bomb in the middle of the crowd and killed the majority of the students. My friend's family was barely able identify his remains. Some other families could not recover any of the bodies or identify their children/relatives. According to British medical journal report published in 2004, The Lancet estimated that more than 100,000 people were killed after the invasion. The same source published another report in October 2006 that estimated more than 655,000 people were killed. The Lancet took body counts based on trusted media, but the possibility that many deaths were not accounted for by the media would likely place the real number closer to 655,000 .

December of 2005 was the first year for the Iraqi people to experience free elections. However, many Sunni people did not participate in the elections. Undoubtedly, there were free election that were under the supervision of the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI) with help from United Nation electoral experts .The UN electoral experts helped and advised the IECI; however, I do not consider them to be free elections for two reasons. The candidates were corrupted because they paid people to vote for them and offered various household items such as blankets as incentives. Other candidates collected names of young people and promised them a job if they won the election. Also, the religious schools blessed the preferred party and encouraged the Shiite people to vote for that party's candidates in promises that the chosen candidate would rebuild Iraq. In reality, the elected candidates turned out to be corrupted. The free election votes actually came from the people's religious leaders because the people trusted their authority due to their religious leadership. In the end, Islamic Dawa party won the election with the majority of the votes and chose Ibrahim Al-Jafari on May 3, 2005 to be the Prime Minister. Al-Jafari did not last long as prime minister. The Sunni and Kurds were not happy about Al-Jafari being the Prime Minister of Iraq as he failed miserably to provide security to the Iraqi people. In May 2006, Islamic Dawa party, had him step down

and replaced him with Nouri Al-Maliki as new Prime Minister for Iraq.

Al-Maliki was an Iraqi politician who fled Iraq in 1979 and settled in Syria and then Iran until 2003. He was the speaker of the Islamic Dawa party, one of the Shitte parties in exile. He came back to Iraq after the coalition forces removed Saddam Hussein. Unfortunately, when he became the Prime Minister of Iraq, he inherited an unbearable mess from the previous government. Militias were in control of provinces, not the central government. Al-Qaeda attacked Iraqis regularly, resulting in many, frequent casualties. Baghdad was in the middle of sectarian civil war and suicide bombers attacked on a daily basis. After Saddam Hussein's execution under the Al-Maliki administration, Baathist supporters attacked the government in retaliation. Kidnappings, murders, displacement of people, and threats were the norms in Iraq in 2006. Many people were forced to leave their houses and escape to neighboring countries out of fear.

I was in my city when it experienced a terrible security situation in 2006. The province was under the control of the militias, and parties were fighting over oil and power. The British Army launched an operation to clean up the city of the militia and help the local government to take over. One thousand British soldiers participated alongside two thousand three hundred Iraqi troops. The operation resulted in a failure because the Iraqi police was not ready to take over and the militias were stronger than the police. Iran played an important role by supporting Mahdi Army militia to attack and kill British soldiers. According to a British officer who served during that time, the Iranian government paid young people up to 300 dollars each to attack British soldiers . The British were defeated and were forced to withdraw. The militias considered this a victory and became stronger in the region as a result.

There were two actions that improved life. The first action was taken by a Shiite religious leader, who called all the parties to sign a treaty and established the Law Support Council to stop the killing, abusing, and fighting, and improve the situation to a more peaceful level. He had managed to invite the majority of the parties' leaders, politicians, and religious people as well. The majority of the parties signed a Treaty called Al-Zahraa which would stop the violence and protect the civilians. After signing the treaty, the situation improved, but some of the parties refused to sign it.

Al-Maliki took bold action against both the Sunni and Shiite militias; many people thanked him during his first term for improving the security situation in Basra. After he managed to improve the Iraqi Army skills by coordinating with Americans trainers, he launched an attack on the Mahdi Army in an operation in 2008, also known as the Battle of Basra. Al-Maliki had to do

something since the militias controlled the economy, in particular, the oil sector, and Basra contributes around 40 percent of Iraq's annual oil revenue . The life in Basra improved significantly afterward and Sunni people did not have to leave the city since the government defeated the militias and applied general laws. The Iraqi Security Forces controlled the ports and replaced the militia's checkpoints with Iraqi police. However, that did not put an end to the militia completely. I worked with the Coalition Forces from 2009 until they left in 2011. Our army base used to get attacked by the Mahdi Army at least twice a day. Specifically, in 2009, we spent most of our nights inside the bunkers because of rocket strikes.

Sunni provinces were not happy about Al-Maliki policy since he was a strong ally to Iran, which is predominantly Shiite. Al-Maliki won his second term in the election of 2010 and became Prime Minister again in 2011. The people in Anbar and Mosul considered him anti-Sunni and the most corrupt Prime Minister. Al-Qaeda and ISIS soon found the right people and ground to take over. After the U.S. troops withdrew from Iraq in 2011, Iraq became worse as ISIS took control of three provinces. Unfortunately, the people of Anbar and Mosul welcomed ISIS in their areas and worked with them to take over the country. Sunni people in Mosul and Anbar were happy to cooperate with Al-Qaeda and ISIS to defeat Al-Maliki. One of the Sunni activists said to the New York Times, "I did not like ISIS, but ISIS will be the only Sunni militia who can fight against the Shiites." Al-Maliki might have missed treating to the Sunni provinces, but they have no right to cooperate with extremists like ISIS to defeat the central government. ISIS captured Mosul completely by 2014 and Al-Maliki was blamed. Three Sunni provinces out of eighteen provinces in Iraq were under the control of the Islamic State by 2014.

Iraq had another free election in 2014 and had to choose a new Prime Minister. Dr. Haider Al-Abadi, an Iraqi Shiite politician, who fled Iraq during the Saddam Hussein regime and settled in London, won the election. Al-Abadi was a member of Islamic Dawa party; he returned from exile to Iraq after 2003 to be part of the new government. His two brothers were killed by Saddam Hussein while he was in exile because they were members of Islamic Dawa party. Al-Abadi was welcomed by Kurds and Sunni people because he was less prejudiced than Al-Maliki. He had a tough task, which was to clean up Iraq from the spread of ISIS. Al-Abadi maintained a good relationship with Iran and the United States. He received support from western powers to liberate the city of Mosul and Anbar from ISIS control. The school of Shiite issued a 'Fatwah' or legal decree for Shiite people to form an Army, "Al-Hashid Al Shaabi", to help the central government to defeat ISIS and free the Iraqi people after they were trapped in Mosul and

Anbar. Shiite people, with support from Iran, managed to work under the command of Al-Abadi. The American government and many Sunni people were not happy that the Al-Hashid Al-Shaabi participated in the Mosul operation against ISIS. Many people feared and questioned what the Shiite militia would do after ISIS was pushed out. That was the main concern behind their objection; however, Al-Hashif Al-Shaabi and the Iraqi army backed by western powers managed to defeat ISIS and free the people of Mosul and Al-Anbar from the radical Islamists. After fighting for three years, Al-Abadi declared victory on 7 December 2017 after defeating ISIS and regaining control of all the Iraqi-Syrian borders.

The government in Kurdistan participated in the battle against ISIS; however, they decided to claim the areas that they freed to be under their control. On 23 September 2017, they held a referendum seeking to be an individual country that would be located in the northern region of Iraq. Turkey, Iran, the U.S, and the UN were against the idea of Kurdistan being separated from Iraq. In addition, the Kurdistan government had decided to take Kirkuk, since it is considered one of the richest provinces in Iraq with large oil reserves. Al-Abadi moved quickly to solve the issue between Kurdistan and Baghdad and Kurds are still part of Iraq; however, Iraq is still not a stable country.

Clearly, the United States, with its allies, failed miserably after they removed the regime of Saddam Hussein. They did not account for the aftermath of the invasion, which resulted in terrible consequences. They did not find weapon of mass destruction in Iraq, and Saddam Hussein had no links to Al-Qaeda. The extremists filled the gaps after Bremer dissolved the Iraqi Army and issued de-Baathification law. The country went to sectarian civil war and mass immigration to neighboring countries began. Many Iraqis agree that Saddam Hussein was a ruthless dictator, but the Iraqis did not kill each other during the period of Saddam Hussein regime. Before 2003, there were few issues between Sunni, Shiite, Kurds, Turkmen, or Christians, and there was no Al-Qaeda. People were able to travel anytime within the country without having the fear of losing their lives, and neighboring countries respected the Iraqi sovereignties.

After 2003, the Iraqi borders were free to everyone because the coalition forces were busy protecting themselves from dangerous militias. Six provinces were under the control of Al-Qaeda. The war cost the United States a ton of money and many soldiers lost their lives in a war that had no threat to American homeland security. Many veterans continue to suffer today and several of them have taken their own lives. The sad part is that the oil in Iraq was the true target behind the invasion and the aftermath of the invasion has seen these oil fields fall into disarray in their ownership. Because of the American government and western

power's failure in Iraq after 2003, people missed Saddam Hussein's dictatorship. Even though Saddam ruled with an iron-fist, he still provided security for the people and had a stable economy. Many Shiites died under Saddam's rule, but after his execution, both, Sunni and Shiites were persecuted and continue to be slaughtered in sectarian conflict even to this day. The current government in Iraq failed miserably at the attempt of having a stable government and providing the people with security from terrorism. Removing a dictator is not a solution to bring democracy to the region and freeing its people. The removal of a dictator or regime would create chaos such as we see today in Libya. Unfortunately, the United States is insisting on taking down dictators in the Middle East. The example of Iraq and Libya were not enough for American policy makers, and they still want to remove Bashar Al-Assad from Syria which would also be the true cause of anarchy. Truly, if the United States hadn't invaded in 2003, Iraq may have been a stronger and much more stable country today under a dictatorship.
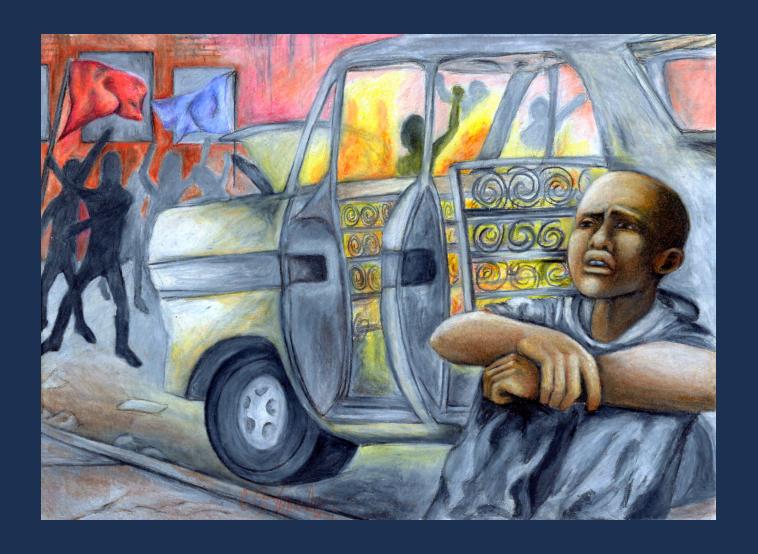
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"*The World is on Fire.*" by Corey Shae Hurley

Back Cover Design
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