Dear Reader,

Welcome to 2016’s first edition of the GATE Journal! This is our second volume ever, and we are excited to be publishing again. After producing our inaugural edition last year, we began to think of what should come next. GATE, short for Global Affairs Theoretical and Empirical, is Arizona State University’s first undergraduate global affairs academic journal. We wanted to maintain the quality of scholarly work that we were so proud to publish in the first issue while still producing new editions regularly. With the start of the school year we added eight new staff members to help us with our mission. After receiving a diverse and impressive array of submissions, we felt confident that we could publish this winter.

As GATE’s full name highlights, our hope for this edition and all others is to connect the theory of academia with its real world implications. This goal can be realized only through the strength and variety of our submissions, something we were happy to see materialize in the past few months of the submission process. The Winter 2016 edition of GATE includes five peer-reviewed articles with topics from HIV in South Africa to the Assad regime’s resilience in Syria to the historical impacts of the Habsburg’s fall. In addition to these longer scholarly pieces, we hope you will enjoy our account of a recent speech given on the Arizona State University Tempe campus by Reza Pahlavi, the last of Crown Prince of Iran. We would like to thank all of the authors who submitted works; their insightful analyses offer new lenses through which to view these subjects of global affairs.

We thank you for reading our first edition of 2016. We are always accepting submissions for future issues, so all members of the ASU community are encouraged to submit works that fit GATE’s scope. Read, digest, and enjoy!

Ty Clarke and Adam Silow

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If you would like to offer your own opinion on a matter discussed in any of our issues, we encourage you to write a letter to the editors. We will publish appropriate responses in upcoming issues. Please send your letters to gatejournal.asu@gmail.com.

Special Thanks To:

Chase Fitzgerald for designing our logo
The ASU Center on the Future of War for sponsoring the GATE Journal
ASU students for providing the funding awarded by the USG

www.gatejournal.org
gatejournal.asu@gmail.com
submissions.gate@gmail.com
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Local Profiles
Crown prince visits ASU with a message of democracy, peace, and regime change

by ADAM SILOW & TY CLARKE

“We need equality not just in the law and under the constitution, but in our heads and hearts.” Emphatic calls for democracy and civic engagement are not what you might expect from your typical monarch. Yet, Reza Pahlavi is anything but.

As the son of Iran’s last Shah and heir to the former Persian throne, Pahlavi, 55, is a crown prince with ideas that might surprise many Americans. On October 16, 2015, Pahlavi, who is described on his Facebook page as an “advocate of secularism and parliamentary democracy,” visited Arizona State University (ASU) at an event sponsored by ASU’s newly created Center on Political Thought and Leadership. The center, founded in 2014, regularly hosts events and has been provided seed money in the form of a five year grant worth $1.129 million from the Charles Koch Foundation. It also received an additional one million dollar donation from Dan and Carleen Brophy. Addressing a packed room of ASU students and members of the Phoenix community, Pahlavi spoke about Iran’s current state of affairs and where he hopes to see its political future heading.

After being exiled from Iran at the age of 17 when his father Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the Shah of Iran, was overthrown by the Islamic revolution in 1979, crown prince Pahlavi came to the US to earn a degree in political science from the University of Southern California and complete his Air Force training. Since then Pahlavi has traveled around the world promoting human rights, encouraging democratic processes, and working to “highlight the plight of Iranians under the Islamic Republic.”

Shay Khatiri, a sophomore at ASU, helped make Pahlavi’s appearance possible. An Iranian-American
majoring in political science and economics, Khatiri is involved with the National Union for Democracy in Iran (NUFDI). He first met the Crown Prince in February of 2015 for a NUFDI fundraising event, where Pahlavi expressed interest in coming to speak on campus. Khatiri has a close relationship with Dr. Donald Crichtow, the Director of the Center on Political Thought and Leadership. After discussing it, the two worked with Pahlavi to arrange his appearance next time he was in the state. According to Khatiri, the goals were to raise awareness about the current situation in Iran and form a unity with Americans, particularly Iranian-Americans, with a commitment to a regime change and democracy in Iran.

“I had the opportunity to bring a high profile speaker and I figured, why not?” Khatiri said.

Iran has of late been heavily covered by U.S. media outlets in relation to the recent nuclear deal between Iran and the P5+1 powers (the US, UK, France, Russia, and China plus Germany). Part of Khatiri’s desire to bring Pahlavia to ASU was as a way of demonstrating the importance of foreign affairs and the effects they have on American lives. Pahlavi argues, “Iran’s problem is much more than the nuclear agenda.” He supported the deal conditional on it being tied to agreements on diplomatic transparency, respect for human rights—particularly for media, unions, and NGOs—and for secular groups in Iran.

“If we want to achieve true change and avoid bloodshed… the only answer is empowerment of the people,” said Pahlavi.

This led Pahlavi to establish the Iranian National Council, a coalition of Iranian political opposition groups, in 2013. The Council advocates free elections in Iran, has its own media outlet in the country, and carries out international lobbying with governments and world leaders. Pahlavi also spoke at length about the need for not only free and fair elections, but also for what comes after.

“Debates often focus on new government structure, but not on its content. We need a road plan for the short-term, medium, and long-term. We need to think about it now.”

Thus, Pahlavi has worked with the Council to create committees focusing on specific topics, such as international relations, the environment, and technology. This is meant to galvanize civil society groups around issue areas and also prepare governance structures and expertise.

“This window will occur, and shame on us if we don’t maximize our capabilities,” said Pahlavi.

In the future Pahlavi sees many changes in Iran. He hopes to see a future Iranian constitution based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He sees himself as an environmentalist and believes that an oil based economy is unsustainable, even for Iran.

Pahlavi’s speech is one of many events that the Center for Political Thought and Leadership hosted in the fall and will continue this spring. It offers a certificate in Political Thought and Leadership to ASU students with an array of courses meant to promote civic engagement, political liberty, and economic well-being.

The Center posts upcoming events on www.facebook.com/Center4PTL/.
Alexa Magee, a senior at ASU majoring in global studies, recently completed a seven-month internship in The Hague, the Netherlands, in the building pictured above, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). There she was the Media Office and Outreach Programme Intern. A former GATE staff member, Alexa recently sat down for an interview with Ty Clarke. Here is the conversation that followed.

GATE Journal: What did you do with the ICTY?

Alexa Magee: I worked with the Media Office and Outreach Programme in the ICTY Communications Section. I wrote and edited external and internal publications for the Tribunal and also helped journalists and researchers answer their questions about the ICTY.

GATE: What kind of projects did you work on?

Alexa: I worked on two main projects. The first was "ICTY Remembers: The Srebrenica Genocide 1995-2015," a commemoration website for the 20th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide in Bosnia (http://www.icty.org/specials/srebrenica20/?q=srebrenica20/). The second was "Fifteen Years of Outreach," a book detailing the Outreach Programme's work connecting the ICTY to the people living in the former Yugoslavia.

GATE: For those who don’t know, can you explain why it was necessary to form the ICTY?
Alexa: In 1993, the UN Security Council established the ICTY in response to the atrocities taking place in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. The atrocities took place in the context of a war, beginning in 1991, between countries that were part of the former Yugoslavia.

GATE: How successful have they been in prosecuting the people responsible for these atrocities?

Alexa: The ICTY has indicted 161 people for serious violations of international humanitarian law in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. There are ongoing proceedings for 12 of those people and concluded proceedings for 149. 80 were convicted and sentenced, 18 acquitted, 13 referred to national jurisdiction, 30 indictments withdrawn or deceased, and two retrials. However, no fugitives still at large. The ICC and the ICTR both still have/had (the ICTR closed) fugitives.

GATE: This is obviously a grave issue to be working on. Do you think the knowledge of the severity of these actions affected the way you and other staff at the ICTY worked?

Alexa: I think the severity of the issues pushed people to take their jobs extremely seriously and contribute extra effort, especially when interacting with people directly affected by the atrocities. This is particularly true when a witness travelled from the region to the ICTY. He or she is given a lot of support and treated with the utmost respect.

GATE: What was your contact like with those directly affected by the genocide?

Alexa: I didn’t work with many people from the region, except for my colleagues. The victims and witness who travel to The Hague often don’t speak English or would prefer to have a translator present, but many of my colleagues fled the war to live and work in the Netherlands. Even over twenty years later, the events still impact them.

GATE: How did your internship change your views on international courts?

Alexa: Before my internship, I didn’t spend much time thinking about how important communication is for international courts. These courts typically don’t have police forces that can go enforce their decisions. Communicating with local populations and keeping a high-profile within the international community can go a long way towards helping the court achieve its goals. I think that’s something the ICC, in particular, has struggled with. The internship showed me how justice is really complicated and personal. Very few people agree on what justice means, which makes the court’s job - especially when it's housed far away from the victims - very difficult.

GATE: What did the ICTY do to combat this issue of communication?

Alexa: The ICTY was the first tribunal since Nuremberg (editor’s note: the Nuremberg trials took place in 1945 and 1946). This meant it had to come up with its own court structure and particular goals within its general mandate. The ICTY realized that including and protecting people from the region should be top priority - the success of trials largely depends on the willingness of witnesses to come and testify. It created the Outreach Programme and the Victims and Witnesses Section (VWS) to both explain what the court was doing to those in the former Yugoslavia and support witnesses who traveled to testify through protection measures, relocation after testimony, etc. The ICC does this too, but I think because of its reach, outreach activities have been stretched thin. It works on cases from many different countries, and it is expensive and difficult to create a successful outreach campaign for all of them.

GATE: With that in mind, do you think tribunal courts focusing specifically on one country are the
best option for achieving justice?

Alexa: I’m not sure about that. I think the international community started experiencing tribunal fatigue. There were also hybrid courts for Cambodia and Sierra Leone established around the time of the ICTY/ICTR. Individual courts and tribunals are costly - both in terms of time and money. I think it would be ideal if each country had the resources and ability to process its own criminals through its own justice system, but until that happens, I think more support should be given to the ICC with the aim of producing a greater connection to local populations.

GATE: Looking into the future, how do you think international courts could improve their efficacy and reach?

Alexa: Recruiting people from the region if possible. Funding internships for students would be ideal. I think that would bring a needed level of expertise and allow a younger generation to feel invested in producing change through justice.

GATE: How do you think this experience changed you personally?

Alexa: I think I experienced a level of complexity to international justice processes that I couldn't have gotten from a textbook or lecture. There's so much emotion - hurt, frustration, hope - behind all of the dry legal procedure. It's a really weird juxtaposition and makes achieving justice, which is thought to be fair and isolated from emotions, really difficult but worthwhile.

GATE: What was your proudest moment of your time at the ICTY?

Alexa: My proudest moment was actually the day I left. I realized when I said goodbye to everyone in the office, that I had really gotten to know them and would miss them. I tried my hardest to learn from all of their experiences and views, and getting to know them all meant a lot to me. Most people in my office were from the former Yugoslavia so their experiences gave me perspective while I was working.

GATE: What advice would you give a student interested in pursuing an internship like this?

Alexa: Work really hard on your application and apply no matter how unlikely you think being accepted is.

GATE: Thank you for your time, Alexa. It was a pleasure gaining your insight.
Peer-Reviewed Articles
The vacuums of power that emerged in the aftermath of the First World War were exploited by Adolf Hitler and his ideologues, Joseph Stalin and his successors, Slobodan Milosevic and his allies, and now Vladimir Putin and his cronies.

After the Habsburgs

Examining the consequences of the dynasty’s fall

by WESLEY JEFFERIES

Abstract

The collapse of the Habsburg monarchy was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the twentieth century. The vacuums of power created due to the overthrow of the House of Habsburg and the dissolution of Austria-Hungary transformed the Empire into something roughly resembling several small and independent nation-states. This contributed to the circumstances allowing for the rise and expansion of Nazi Germany, the tragedies of the Second World War, the partitioning of Germany in particular and Europe in general by the Soviet Union, and the reemergence of ethnic and nationalist tensions after the end of the Cold War.

Vacuums of power are a recurring feature of contemporary geopolitics in which central power and authority disintegrates and results in territorial fragmentation. Vacuums of power, when introduced in a strategically important territory, have a destabilizing and often destructive impact on the regional balance of power. Similar to how vacuums are understood in a physics sense, vacuums of power tend to be filled with a myriad of other forces which, in either perpetuating chaos or establishing a new hegemony, either prevents a balance of power from existing or inhibits the maintenance of constructed norms and values established by international law. This paper applies this concept in the examination of the historical forces that led to the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy and the continuing structural consequences in Europe.
Background

U.S. President Woodrow Wilson announced at the end of the First World War that the world had been “made safe for democracy.” His ideology, which he declared universally applicable with or without the consent of the peoples he intended to “liberate”, proposed that something resembling what he considered ethnic self-determination was one of the surest ways to guarantee world peace and the spread of freedom (Woodrow). This Wilsonian conception of ethnic self-determination requires territorial fragmentation in some places and nationalist consolidation in others. This included the division of the Austrian Empire roughly along the lines of its constituent nationalities and gave Germany a new legitimizing principle from which to continue unabated its policy and vision of pan-Germanism, despite its defeat in the First World War.

Klemens von Metternich had foreseen the possibilities of the decline of the Habsburg regime in the face of increasing agitation by nationalists and populists. It would not have escaped old Prince Metternich that this process would likely be accelerated by the incompetence of a particular generation of statesmen and politicians. He may not have divined, however, that the entire world order would have been destroyed by the same in one of the most destructive conflicts in history. There were ominous signs, to be sure, of a collapse of the world order that the Concert of Europe had orchestrated. The 1848 revolutions that threatened to destroy Metternich’s tremendous legacy in Europe and led to his resignation and exile was a significant contribution to the decay and eventual destruction of world order. Meanwhile, the seemingly endless series of tragedies, crises, and defeats that marked the Emperor Franz Josef’s tediously long reign could hardly have been much cause for enthusiasm or hope, least of all for Metternich himself whom the decrepit emperor later recalled from exile to serve as an informal adviser if only to duly ignore nearly every counsel the great man offered (Palmer 1972).

The more immediate causes of the disintegration of Austria-Hungary was not so much defeat in the First World War, but rather the cost of the victory achieved, similar to the dissolution of the British Empire in the aftermath of the Second World War. Austria-Hungary’s quarrels, unlike Germany, had never been with the Western powers and for quite some time British and Austrian interests were assumed to run parallel as a matter of course (Kissinger 1973). Further, Austria-Hungary’s ultimate defeat in the war was not the result of its inability to beat its own enemies strategically, which was duly accomplished, but rather its failure to make a separate peace with the Western allies and the pernicious and persistent efforts of Germany, ostensibly an Austrian ally, to sabotage any peace negotiations with the nationalities of the former Russian Empire.

The negotiations surrounding the end of the eastern front of the First World War surrounded a classic issue in the European tradition of continental conquest: the question of the alignment or partition of Poland and its periphery. The Polish populations in Europe, of whom the Russian Tsars had so magnanimously appointed themselves as their kings and protectors, could not have said to have exhibited a tremendous amount of sympathies with either the Tsarist regime or the Bolshevik coup. Under the leadership of Jozef Pilsudski, who would later go on to build the foundations of the modern Polish state, Poland aligned herself with the Central Powers and against Russia (Rothschild 1990). The most significant Polish contributions to the war effort were manifested in the Polish Legions and the Polish Auxiliary Corps, which fought in the eastern front under Austrian command and leadership (Wargelin 1997).

This gave Poland, apart from its customary role as a target of avaricious territorial annexations, unusually significant clout in post-war negotiations intended for peace. The aspirations of the Poles under Pilsudski’s leadership could be summarized in two points: First, Poland wanted to exist as an actual country separate from any suffocating attachments with either Germany or Russia. Second, Poland wanted to continue to exist as an actual country both in fact and in name longer than just a temporary period, as was the pattern in the past whenever Poland had previously been guaranteed a state only to be flippantly erased from the map. Following the example of Trieste in 1382 in its struggle to separate itself from Venetian control, Poland sought a personal union with and protection from the Habsburg dynasty in order to accomplish this fact. Trieste, which had previously gained more autonomy and prospered
far more within the Austro-Hungarian Empire than it ever had when ruled by their Italian compatriots from Venice (Thaller 2009), offered an encouraging example to the Poles. Of course, there were many among those Poles agitating for that arrangement who simply saw such a union as simply a temporary expedient towards a transitional phase to independence. Such a plan would have had far higher chances of success than had ever been the case with the mercurial and personalized autocracy of the Romanov dynasty. The far greater saw opportunities overall in thriving within a multinational framework than in being assimilated into invisibility and irrelevance by powers with a decidedly non-pluralist character.

This prompted westward-looking Ukrainians into seeking a similar arrangement with Austria-Hungary (Wargelin 1997). The Russian Empire had surrendered and collapsed, there were successive victories over Italian forces, and the British were communicating to Viennese diplomats a willingness to make a separate peace apart from Germany and Turkey (Wargelin 1997). These circumstances alone might seem to suggest that an empire that had already been considered an anachronism in the Napoleonic era had survived into modernity, having triumphed in an industrial war, with tremendous moral authority and significant territorial aggrandizement. Of course, historical processes are never quite so facile.

"These circumstances alone might seem to suggest that an empire that had already been considered an anachronism in the Napoleonic era had survived into modernity, having triumphed in an industrial war, with tremendous moral authority and significant territorial aggrandizement. Of course, historical processes are never quite so facile."

A united, independent, and autonomous Ukraine, as envisioned in Kiev, included not only those same provinces of Galicia and Ruthenia but also the remaining Polish provinces with substantial Ukrainian populations (Wargelin 1997). A failure to accommodate the Ukrainians might lead to the humiliation and eventual collapse of the provisional Ukrainian government and give way to a revolution in Kiev supported by the Bolsheviks. A failure to accommodate Polish aspirations would lead to the collapse of negotiations with Poland, conceivably similarly weaken the provisional Polish government, and give Germany a scope for unilaterally requesting that the ancient empire become a German satellite, allowing German occupation and annexation of significant portions of what would have been a restored Kingdom of Poland in union with the Habsburg dynasty, and provide support for further German annexations in the Low Countries while participating with Germany in direct hostilities with the Western powers (Wargelin 1997).

Meanwhile, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, apparently having most generously appointed himself a global champion of the virtues of ethnic self-determination, began to promote the independence of the eastern European nationalities from either Austria, Russia, or Germany and specifically called for a “united, independent, and autonomous Poland,” the form of which he did not seem to care to elaborate on (Wargelin 1997).

Never mind that territorial and political disputes between Poland and Ukraine, two countries that did not really yet exist at the moment regardless of Wilson’s pontifications, began to emerge as another volatile complication in the peace negotiations. The “united, independent and autonomous Poland,” as envisioned by the Poles themselves, included the former Russian provinces of Galicia and Ruthenia that Poland had herself ruled for centuries before their annexation by the Russian Empire and Poland’s partition.

The temptations provided by the imminent spoils of war inspired a malicious avariciousness on the part of Berlin that directly conflicted with both Austrian and Polish aspirations. Paul von Hindenburg and Erich von Ludendorff, both of whom would later make significant contributions to the ideological influence and political power of Adolf Hitler, made increasingly burdening, absurd, and one-sided demands on their supposed Austrian ally. Their demands amounted to
intervening in, and ultimately devouring, the rest of Poland.

That such terms were even being negotiated in the first place with either the Poles or the Ukrainians inspired a dangerous envy amongst their fellow Slavs within the Empire, who were neither included nor consulted in the plans for a confederation with Poland and Ukraine (Wargelin 1997). The Compromise of 1867, which concluded with Emperor Franz Josef in order to appease a growing and increasingly demanding Hungarian population, provided a significant degree of devolution to the extent that a separate parliament met in Budapest with independent budgetary and legal responsibilities. The Slavic nationalities received no such arrangement and in many regions subsequently resented the hegemony haughtily exercised by Hungarian authorities over them (Kohn 1963). Now it seemed as if similar arrangements were being offered to Slavic populations outside the Empire while those Slavic subjects who had lived, worked, and fought under the Habsburg dynasty for generations were to again be offered nothing.

Attending to all these developments from the Kremlin, the Bolshevik regime, with preventing the extension of the Habsburg monarchy into the former Russian Empire, enthusiastically supported Wilson’s sanctimonious proclamations about ethnic self-determination. Of course, they reserved to themselves the interpretation of what self-determination actually meant and offered to determine peoples’ self-determination for them. To that end, they denounced westward-looking Ukrainians seeking protection from Russian domination as “counter-revolutionary” and thus demanded political control of Ukraine (Wargelin 1997).

Further machinations were found in Poland, where German agents were spreading rumors that Vienna had already given its assent to the demands that Austria-Hungary partition Poland with Germany and agitating for resistance against this presumed perforidy and betrayal of Poland’s trust (Wargelin 1997). The fear of the consequences of Austria-Hungary’s possible weakness in the face of German aggression in Poland was not ameliorated by the fact that Ludendorff and Hindenburg themselves had put forth what amounted to the first plan in modern European history for mass ethnic cleansing. They had not only wanted Poland repartitioned, with only a small region around Lublin and Warsaw left for a vestigial Polish state, they also proposed the removal of all ethnic Poles, along with anyone of Jewish descent, from any planned German territorial annexations (Holborn 1982).

So much for Poland and Ukraine. One way around these complications may have been to conclude a separate peace with the Allied powers and terminate the one-sided alliance with Germany. With this accomplishment, perhaps Austria-Hungary could have concluded a partition of Ukraine with Poland while simultaneously arranging a personal union with Poland. A trilateral union of Austria, Hungary and Poland would then have been the intended result (Wargelin 1997). Aside from German pressures and the possibility that a one-sided alliance could give way to unilateral intervention and occupation in Austria-Hungary itself, there was one other pressing issue that made the lives of Viennese policymakers and diplomats all the more difficult: the physiological imperative to eat.

The denouement of the First World War on the eastern front and the apparent triumph of Austria-Hungary in that theater also coincided with a massive famine that was threatening millions of people across the northern and western reaches of the empire with starvation. This detail of the circumstances surrounding the negotiations made many other alternative scenarios in resolving the war impossible or irrelevant. There was a legitimate fear that people from the hills of Prague to the Adriatic coast would be facing similar conditions to those experienced by Russian serfs. In this case, there was very little point in mediating any territorial disputes or keeping the designs of neighboring regimes in check if half the population was in revolt or dead for want of nourishment. Ottokar von Czernin, the Austrian foreign minister and an ethnic Czech, reported as much in a telegram to the Emperor Charles saying “Although the subject does not apparently fall directly within my competence, I must nevertheless call the attention of Your Majesty to the fact that hunger riots in northern Bohemia would necessarily have a pernicious effect on foreign policy” (Wargelin 1997).

Ludendorff and Hindenburg seized upon this life or death situation to hold the Habsburg dynasty and its subjects hostage. Germany found another bar-
gaining chip to “influence” the peace negotiations for eastern Europe and communicated its intention to provide relief for the subjects of the Habsburg monarchy, if only they would submit to all the other demands they had made (Wargelin 1997). Hungary, which provided much of the Empire’s foodstuffs, faced a decline in its own harvests and, to prevent unrest in its own territories, sharply curtailed exports to the northern and western provinces. Cooperation between local Hungarian authorities and Vienna on feeding the rest of population was running into a standstill for the reason that Hungary simply did not have any surplus food to offer. Requisitioning food supplies from Poland before they were even granted a state would have neither been adequate nor politic. The only available options for an emergency infusion of food into the Empire was from Germany and Ukraine. The Habsburg monarchy could either continue the circular negotiations for a separate peace with the Allied powers while its subjects starved to death, or it could give in to Prussian interference in its foreign policy and internal affairs. The previous roster of one-sided German demands was culminated in what amounted to an ultimatum.

The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, formally concluded between the Central Powers and the Bolshevik regime, brought Russian participation in the First World War to an end. The terms were effectively of benefit only to Germany and Turkey. Russia made significant territorial concessions to Germany while Poland was partitioned between Germany and a nominally independent Ukrainian state. Strikes and demonstrations spread in Poland, interrupting emergency food shipments to Austria-Hungary, while the Polish Auxiliary Corps that had served alongside the Central Powers during the war defected to the Bolsheviks. Meanwhile, the Russians reneged on the treaty after the Germans began to make additional demands that were not originally agreed upon and hostilities resumed when Germany demanded that Austro-Hungarian troops join them in one last adventure into Russia or else they would stop any and all emergency food shipments being sent into the Empire, whether they were from Germany, Poland, or Ukraine (Wargelin 1997). Germany took the further step of coercing Austro-Hungarian troops to follow them into now resuming hostilities with the Savoyard Italian forces. Austria-Hungary’s armed forces were falling apart with successive mutinies while unrest was spreading amongst all nationalities. The Allied powers began to encourage and recognize separatist agitators in the Empire in forming provisional governments and independent nation-states.

**Analysis**

In his negotiations with Napoleon Bonaparte, Klemens von Metternich frequently mentioned how the empire he represented united tens of millions of people of great ethnic and linguistic diversity in the heart of Europe and kept them “in check.” (Kissinger 1973). With the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy and the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, this was no longer the case. The peace effort in eastern Europe and the negotiations to ensure the protection and autonomy of Poland and Ukraine ended because the power mediating them now ceased to exist.

Meanwhile, as the Allied negotiators sought fit to redraw the map of Europe according to the fashionable doctrine of self-determination, they confirmed the division of Austria-Hungary into small and vulnerable nation-states. Germany herself, who was principally responsible for prolonging the war long after the presumed strategic objectives had been achieved in defending the integrity and safety of its supposed ally, suffered no such divisions. While the idea that geopolitical fragmentation along ethnic and cultural lines somehow made the world safer could be used to legitimize the destruction of Austria-Hungary, it could not be similarly used for any such partitioning of Germany because it had been explicitly organized as a nation-state with a single ethnic core. Germany
suffered no such collapse or divisions apart from a few token territorial concessions to Poland and France. The only significant structural change of any lasting effect was the expulsion of the Hohenzollern dynasty, a non-negotiable demand of the Allied powers, and subsequent attempts to prosecute the weak and marginalized Emperor Wilhelm for war crimes. The drafters of the Treaty of Versailles enabled for the prosecution of the bombastic figurehead in Article 227 with “a supreme offence against international morality and the sanctity of treaties.” King George V declared his cousin “the greatest criminal in history” and his prime minister David Lloyd George proposed to “hang the Kaiser” (Ashton and Hellemann 2000).

No such proceedings were suggested against those that actually ruled Germany and oversaw the criminal conduct of the war. Ludendorff and Hindenburg, after presiding over defeat in a war that left over 16 million dead, quietly retired to the respectable roles of war heroes and elder statesmen. The German national project itself, which had proved a threat to the European balance of power from its inception, had been left virtually untouched and almost unquestioned. Socially and psychologically, the body politic of the German nation-state retained the sense of ethnic unity and a collective historical memory that had been constructed under Prussian unification and domination. Indeed, in casually dismissing French fears that German irredentism was imminent, Woodrow Wilson explicitly opposed any notion of further threatening the territorial integrity of the German nation-state (Kissinger 1994). This was contrary to his high-minded ideal that there were never any structural causes to international conflicts. World peace could be ensured simply through something resembling ethnic self-determination, the emulation of American governing institutions, and the moral weight of public opinion. The punitive measures imposed by the Treaty of Versailles did little else besides humiliate Germany and did very little to actually weaken her. Ironically, she emerged from her defeat even more socially cohesive than she was before (Kissinger 1994). The only other power on the Continent that could possibly muster such strong force and sense of unity was Russia, which had also suffered its own defeats and humiliations in the war. It held its own list of petty grievances against the drafters of the Treaty of Versailles from whom Russia never received an invitation.

In the course of her defeat in the First World War and the subsequent civil wars and revolutions, the Russian Empire collapsed and its Tsarist regime gave way to the Soviet experiment and its vision of world revolution. Russia emerged from her upheaval with her own list of grievances to bear and increasingly cooperated and collaborated with Germany in putting together a vision of how the European order devised in Versailles should be changed. When Poland attempted an invasion of the Soviet Union, Germany explicitly welcomed the prospect of Poland being destroyed by Russian arms (Kissinger 1994). Before and in the aftermath of that war, Weimar Germany and Soviet Russia were in close communication with one another and actively conspiring to dismantle the post-Versailles world order and revise the map of Europe that it represented (Smith 1956). As early as 1920, German and Russian representatives were already beginning discussions that would culminate in plans for the partition of Poland and the former territories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Erickson 2001, Debo 1992). To that end, Russia offered Germany facilities from which to develop arms and train troops deep within Russian territory in order to re-militarize the country away from the ever-prying eyes of Allied inspectors (Gatzke 1958, Dyakov and Bushueva 1995).

It should not have come then as a dramatic surprise that the Soviet Union and Germany, under the new Nazi regime, then proceeded to partition Poland as planned while Germany herself occupied all the territories of the former Habsburg monarchy. It is worth mentioning here that one of the few sources of active resistance against the encroaching Nazi regime was the Habsburg dynasty itself (Brook-Shepherd 2003). History had not yet forgotten the Habsburgs despite the hopes and aspirations of those who considered their destruction and the division of their peoples as somehow representative of progress.

Dr. Otto von Habsburg, the sole heir to the Emperor Charles, was welcomed by Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt as the de facto leader of the small Austrian resistance against the Nazi regime (Brook-Shepherd 2003). Roosevelt, in stark contrast to his predecessor Woodrow Wilson, was notably lacking in any self-righteous prejudices against the Habsburgs. He invited the wandering archduke to the U.S. to form something resembling an Austrian government-in-exile while privately proposing to him the possibility of a
Habsburg restoration (Brook-Shepherd 2003). Winston Churchill, for his part, looked upon the idea with agitated excitement, writing: “I am extremely interested in Austria and hope that Vienna may become the capital of a great Confederation of the Danube...the separation of the Austrians...from the Prussians is essential to the harmonious reconstitution of history” (Churchill 1950).

The idea proposed by Roosevelt, Churchill, and the Archduke Otto was unceremoniously rubbished by Joseph Stalin. The Soviet leader had rightly perceived that a Habsburg restoration would effectively be as much a check against Soviet designs in Europe as much as it was intended to be a check on German expansionism. The increasingly frail Roosevelt, following an emerging pattern of accommodation, put the idea aside in acquiescence to Stalin's wishes, much to Churchill's chagrin. Roosevelt perceived, wrongly as it turned out, that Soviet-American cooperation would survive well past the end of the war (Isaacson and Thomas 1986).

The end of the Second World War saw the downfall of a totalitarian regime seeking global conquest and the expansion of another promoting world revolution as an avowed principle of its foreign policy. The Soviet Union unilaterally occupied half of Europe, subjugating every nationality of the former Habsburg monarchy save the Austrian Germans, and creating a de facto partition of the continent that Churchill denounced as an “iron curtain.” (Churchill 1949). When the dissolution of the Communist bloc finally arrived, it was followed by the gradual unleashing of ethnic and nationalist tensions that had been simmering for almost a century.

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It is beyond the scope or purpose of this paper to give a careful treatment to the conflicts that followed the dissolution of Yugoslavia. What is relevant, however, is the absence of the built-in ethnic conflict management system of the Habsburg monarchy and the subsequent failure of nearly every successor state to adequately implement anything similar. Notwithstanding the imbalances in internal autonomy introduced in the so-called compromise with the Hungarians in 1867, multiculturalism was almost mandated by the Empire's legal and constitutional structures (Konrad 1992). In an empire where nationalities more often than not overlapped each other in their spatial distribution, a system of corporative representation of nationalities was being advanced (Coakley 1994). The most striking examples of this were the December Constitution of 1867 and the Moravian Compromise of 1905. The December Constitution introduced a bill of rights for the nationalities of the Empire, declaring that they were all equal before the law and that each of the nationalities had an “inviable right to preserve and cultivate its national identity and language.” The Moravian Compromise, on the other hand, provided for the linguistic accommodation of the nationalities as well as their corporative representation regardless of whether they happened to be minorities or not in the provinces they inhabited (Konrad 1992). Schools and civic institutions were required to provide multilingual services to all ethno-linguistic groups accounting for more than 20% of a particular province of territory. Should families be unable to find a local public school for their children that provided instruction in their language of choice, the families could send their children to a private school at the state's expense through an early version of a school voucher system. Meanwhile, in the corporative system of representative government that was developed in the Empire, regulations concerning elections to
parliamentary seats took into consideration the inher-
ent numerical disadvantage that faced ethnic groups
that may be minorities in the province or territory they
inhabited.

This complex and sophisticated system for
acknowledging the various nationalities and providing
for their accommodation and representation collapsed
during the peace negotiations at the end of the First
World War and was one of the factors precipitating the
dissolution of the Empire as summarized above. No
such system with the same subtlety and balance was
to follow in the successor states to the Empire, either
in their independence or in their impending vassal-
age to Germany and Russia. After the end of Russian
domination in eastern Europe at the end of the Cold
War, the consequences of the absence of this conflict
management system and the return of the geopolitical
fragmentation of Europe became once again apparent,
first in the Yugoslav civil wars and now in the contest
between Russia and the German-led European Union
over geopolitical spoils in eastern and southeastern
Europe.

Despite its occasional assertiveness in the
international arena, its possession of nuclear weapons,
and its permanent seat on the UN Security Council,
France has been in a period of on-and-off decline since
the failures of Louis Napoleon (Kissinger 1994). Britain
is increasingly returning towards a policy of “splen-
did isolation” vis-a-vis the European continent. Once
again, power in Europe resides chiefly in Moscow and
Berlin. The only continental power with the historical
capacity to balance German or Russian hegemony was
the Habsburg monarchy (Gessner 1936). Both world
wars were preceded by either Russo-German collab-
oration or Russo-German rivalry (Kissinger 1994).
Germany, which has the potential to dictate policy
within the European Union, is not aligned with Russia
at the moment. Among members of Germany’s politi-
cal classes, corporate elite, and intelligentsia, however,
there is a significant Russophile constituency that pur-
ports to be able to offer a more sensitive and intelligent
understanding of Russian intentions than the standard
Western narrative (The Economist 2014). Unless An-
gela Merkel and her allies remain in power for eternity,
there is nothing to absolutely prevent a return of this
Russlandversteher. At present, however, the alternative
which we face is a similarly unpalatable Russo-German
rivalry over eastern Europe under the guise of the Rus-

sian Federation’s pretenses of protecting Russian mi-
norities and the European Union’s moralizing sermons
regarding international law. This is not and has never
been conducive to a stable regional or world order. The
vacuums of power created in the wake of the overthrow
of the ancient Habsburg dynasty continue to impact
Europe well into the contemporary period.

Conclusion

Shortly before the destruction of the Nazi re-
gime, Churchill had written “this war would never have
come unless under…modernizing pressure, we had
Driven the Habsburgs out of Austria and Hungary…
by making these vacuums we gave an opening for the
Hitlerite monster to crawl out of its sewer on to the va-
cant thrones. No doubt these views are very unfashion-
able…” (Churchill 1953). History has proved him right
on both accounts. The vacuums of power that emerged
in the aftermath of the First World War were exploited
by Adolf Hitler and his ideologues, Joseph Stalin and
his successors, Slobodan Milosevic and his allies, and
now Vladimir Putin and his cronies. Further, discus-
sions concerning the role of the collapse of this ancient
empire, in the heart of Europe, in allowing for these
crises and tragedies to transpire has never achieved
any lasting penetration into fashionable discourse.
Inevitable historical processes and inexorable forces of
progress brought about the downfall of the so-called
“prison of nations” or so the self-congratulating and
excubulatory narrative goes. One must not provide an
alternative explanation, for to acknowledge the disas-
ter that was the reckless revision of the old European
order would be to acknowledge the fallacy in assuming
that the establishment of international institutions and
the preaching of ‘universal’ principles somehow make
obsolete the enduring historical realities of geopolitics.
And that too is an unfashionable view.

The nature and consequences of power vacu-
ums are an immutable feature of geopolitics. The col-
lapse of a central authority or power with no adequate
replacement and the resulting territorial fragmentation
leads to the rushing in of forces that are invariably
uncongenial to either a balance of power or the norms
and values that international law presumes to define
and uphold. This principle of geopolitics would do well
to inform Western policymakers whenever participat-
ing in or encouraging regime change without reflecting
on its strategic and structural consequences.
About the Author:
Wesley Jefferies

Wesley J. Jefferies is a political science major at Arizona State University and a private tutor to the Saudi Royal Family. His research interests lie in the role of spheres of influence and vacuums of power in international relations. He aspires to get a column in a newspaper of record and earn tenure at a major research university.
Among global viral forecasters, there is a fear that the international bushmeat trade might spread known diseases or, worse, give rise to a worldwide pandemic involving a wholly new pathogen.”

Abstract
In Central Africa, the hunting and trade of meat derived from wild animals, termed bushmeat, has evolved from a millennia-old tradition to a global commercial industry. Growing populations and logging concessions have driven exploitation far beyond sustainable levels, leading to declines in most endemic species and the local extinction of multiple large mammals. In addition to its environmental threats, the bushmeat crisis has also developed into a public health concern. Over 75% of all recent pathogens—including Ebola, HIV, and SARS—have originated in wild animals, and there are fears that increased interactions between hunted wildlife and humans could lead to the emergence of a deadly new disease. Despite its risks, bushmeat still sustains the livelihoods of over 150 million people as a source of protein and income; any attempts to significantly curtail hunting and trade might result in worsening poverty, hunger, and malnutrition. Conservationists and scientists have attempted to address the issue through command-and-control measures, community wildlife management, and protein substitutes, but few of these efforts have shown any promise of definitively bringing a close to the bushmeat crisis in the near future.
Introduction

In Central Africa, the traditional practice of hunting bushmeat has developed into an expansive commercial industry that provides sustenance and income to an estimated 150 million people. Defined as any wild animal exploited for its meat, bushmeat forms the basis of a global, multimillion-dollar trade, with over 2 million metric tons of Central African game harvested every year. Although rich and poor alike participate in this trade, the hunters responsible for killing and butchering the bushmeat predominantly come from low-income communities in which salaries average less than $1.00 per day. For these individuals, hunting offers an appealing alternative or supplement to agriculture thanks to its low investment risk, affordable extractive technology, and the largely unregulated and decentralized system of the bushmeat trade.

On a typical hunting expedition, the hunter treks into the jungle on foot armed with nothing more than a locally-manufactured shotgun, although traps and dogs are used on occasion as well. The animals he targets include porcupines, duikers, civets, pangolins, bats, and cane rats, to name but a few. Non-human primates such as gorillas and chimpanzees are greatly prized, due to their larger size and higher market value, but their dwindling numbers mean that the hunter must venture farther from home, and likely into protected areas, to find them. If the hunt is successful, the bushmeat might be cooked or smoked to provide much-needed protein for himself and his household. The hunter would not likely reserve all the meat for his family, however; in northern Congo, an average of 36-52% of all bushmeat captured by hunters is sold to traders. These traders, in turn, supply local vendors and restauranteurs, some of whom cater to urban elites that consider bushmeat a luxury item worthy of a premium price. This taste for bushmeat is not exclusive to Central Africa. International trade networks are now believed to illicitly import 81 metric tons of African bushmeat into the United States every year. In Europe, 270 metric tons were trafficked through France’s Charles de Gaulle airport alone in 2010.

As worldwide trade continues to expand, so too does the informal bushmeat economy within Central Africa. Local growth has been facilitated by increasing human populations and widespread logging activity, which has enabled hunters to enter formerly undisturbed forests. With hunting already taking place at six times the sustainable rate, conservationists fear that the bushmeat harvest might soon lead to irrevocable environmental destruction, wiping out ecosystems and driving countless species to extinction. By bringing humans into close contact with wild animals, bushmeat has also garnered attention as a public health concern. Zoonotic diseases transferred from animals to humans have the potential to turn deadly, as recent outbreaks of SARS and Ebola have clearly demonstrated. Among global viral forecasters, there is a fear that the international bushmeat trade might spread known diseases or, worse, give rise to a worldwide pandemic involving a wholly new pathogen.

For some, these concerns are enough to justify an outright ban on the hunting and trade of bushmeat. However, the practical challenges that such a ban would inevitably encounter notwithstanding, it would place an enormous burden on the millions of people whose livelihoods depend on bushmeat. As conservationists and policymakers scramble to find less prohibitive solutions, necessity will drive hunters to continue to kill, butcher, trade, and eat the region’s wildlife, perpetuating a host of environmental, epidemiological, economic, and ethical challenges within and well beyond the forests of Central Africa.

A Threat to Health and Conservation

During his long treks through the Central African countryside, wildlife technician Joseph Diffo carries a single photo in his pocket. Whenever he comes to a village square, he takes out the picture and shows it to the people gathered there. A somber moment of silence usually follows. “Do you know what happened to this child?” he asks, passing around the photograph so that everyone can glimpse the image of the small boy sprawled on the ground, his body covered with dark lesions. Most of Diffo’s audience has seen such marks before, and the tale he tells them follows a familiar storyline. The boy was once healthy and vibrant, just like their own children. Then, one day, his father returned home from a hunting trip with the carcass of a dead monkey that, unbeknownst to him, carried monkeypox, a viral zoonosis belonging to the same genus as smallpox. After eating the bushmeat, the child fell ill and died within a matter of weeks.

Diffo recounts the boy’s story in an effort to
educate rural villagers about the health dangers of the bushmeat harvest. When handling bushmeat, the hunters and their families are frequently exposed to blood and other bodily fluids that could potentially contain infectious agents. If a parasite, bacteria, or virus comes into contact with a cut or open sore on a person’s skin or mucous membranes, it could make the animal-to-human jump and lead to a deadly infection. Although many, if not most, of these cases occur in rural, forest-dwelling communities, making them difficult to track, the scientific literature is replete with examples of zoonotic diseases in Central Africa directly related to the bushmeat harvest. 11 Between 1990 and 1999, for instance, 187 cases of human monkeypox were reported in sub-Saharan Africa, 47 of them fatal and all of them associated with hunting.12 Viral studies performed throughout the early 2000’s in Cameroon led researchers to attribute the country’s high prevalence of human T-lymphotropic virus, an RNA retrovirus linked with cancer, to “active and frequent cross-species infection” of individuals involved in bushmeat industry.13 Another retrovirus, Simian Foamy Virus, is estimated to infect 1.8% of all Central Africans occupationally exposed to non-human primates, mainly through bites and scratches sustained while hunting.14 Although the virus is not presently known to cause any clinical symptoms, its transmissibility and the tendency of retroviruses to rapidly accumulate mutations have raised fears amongst virologists that it might one day develop into a major public health risk.

Thanks to globalization and modern air travel, these infectious agents and their animal reservoirs are no longer confined to the villages and urban centers of Central Africa. A 2011 survey of five American airports uncovered attempts to smuggle bushmeat from several African species into the United States, including nine non-human primates.15 Pathogen screening of these samples identified a number of herpesviruses and retroviruses, Simian Foamy Virus among them.16 While potentially dangerous, the dissemination of pathogens like Simian Foamy Virus into America and Europe is not the primary concern of the world’s epidemiologists. What they most fear is the “rapid and potentially undetected global spread of a deadly new zoonosis.”17 The progression from animal disease to global human pathogen requires three steps: (1) transmission from a wild reservoir to humans; (2) direct transfer between humans; and (3) movement from a local epidemic to the worldwide population.18 While “While it is exceedingly rare for a disease to manage even the first step, zoonoses of animal origin nonetheless make up a full 75% of recently emerging infectious diseases.hey include the virus responsible for the most deadly pandemic of the past half century: Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), the infectious agent that leads to Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome, or AIDS.”

As a zoologist and wildlife technician, Joseph Diffo is also concerned about the threats that the bushmeat trade poses to the environment. During his childhood, the native Cameroonian loved taking long walks through the rainforests near his home to hear the chatter of their animal inhabitants. He still goes on the occasional hike, but now the songs and calls are more
distant, and far fewer in number. Diffò points to this “eerie silence” as the most striking reminder that the bushmeat harvest has taken a significant toll on Central Africa’s ecosystem.23 Large mammals in particular have suffered staggering losses, disadvantaged by increased targeting from hunters and their relatively low rates of reproduction. Throughout the region, hunting has led to significant declines in the populations of duikers, guenons, chimpanzees, mangabeys, and elephants, and has even driven gorillas to local extinction in Cameroon.24, 25 Researchers estimate that, if current rates of bushmeat harvesting continue, the total animal population in the Congo Basin will drop by 81% in the next 50 years.26 As animals become increasingly scarce, so too will the plants that rely on them for seed dispersal and pollination, effectively decimating one of the most biodiverse ecosystems in the world.27

Recent trends in population growth and logging concessions are only exacerbating the environmental destruction. With a human population that is on track to double in the next 30 years, the Congo Basin is certain to see an associated rise in both the demand for bushmeat and local participation in hunting activity.28 The emergence of widespread logging in the region has caused even greater concern, not only for the obvious and immediate impacts of deforestation, but also for enabling hunters to penetrate once inaccessible habitats.29 Although these logging concessions might generate substantial income for Central Africa, their more long-lasting effect will be to deprive the region of its most vital natural resources.

An Unfortunate Necessity

Kümpel et al. describe the story of the Biyogos, a family based in the forests of Equatorial Guinea for whom bushmeat was a way of life.30 They acquired some of their food from community and private gardens, but almost all of their protein came from the wild animals that the head of the family killed during his daily hunting trips. When asked if their food supplies were sufficient, all five members of the family claimed to feel moderately hungry at least half the time. On days the patriarch returned home from a hunt empty-handed (and sometimes there were stretches of two-to-three days where he could not manage a single kill), the three children would whine of stomach pains and try begging from neighbors. During these times, their mother would often plan to visit the closest markets, only to be thwarted by the dearth of adequate roads and public transportation. Even if she could regularly make the trip, however, she lacked the finances to purchase the goods her family truly needed.

The Biyogos’ situation is not unique. Many families in Central Africa struggle with food security. In rural areas particularly, bushmeat obtained through hunting or trading often represents the only feasible source of protein.31 A report by Robinson and Bennett on Equatorial Guinea and the Congo Basin showed that wild game constitutes 30-80% of all the protein consumed by forest-dwelling households, and nearly 100% of animal-based protein.32 This heavy dependency on bushmeat has no foundation in a cultural preference for the taste of wild game. Unlike urbane elites, who pay premium prices at restaurants to feast on gorilla and chimpanzee, villagers largely consider bushmeat an unfortunate necessity. In fact, a study of 17 villages in Equatorial Guinea revealed that many rural hunters abhorred bushmeat and viewed their occupation as “dirty” and “unsophisticated”.33 If alternatives to bushmeat were readily available, these hunters claimed, they would gladly change their diets.

Due to the economics, geography, and infrastructure of Central Africa, however, alternative sources of protein are inaccessible to much of the population. One of the most popular livelihood strategies in other parts of the world, livestock farming, demands investment costs that are too prohibitive for the region.34 Even if enough rural villagers did possess the necessary capital and enterprise management skills, the prevalence of trypanosomiasis-carrying tsetse flies, combined with the absence of pastureland, makes livestock rearing nearly impossible.35 Fishing is not a legitimate option, either. Central Africa’s supply of seafood is simply too limited by the lack of adequate waterways and reservoirs to support a rapidly expanding population.36 Nevertheless, fish and domestic substitutes are still sold in markets throughout the region, where they are available mainly to urban populations. Although the timber industry has recently overseen the expansion of road networks in Central Africa, many forest-dwelling communities remain isolated from these markets due to poor infrastructure and public transport.37 Access to other forms of meat, however, does not guarantee that they will be selected over bushmeat. In the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Cameroon, market vendors on average sell bushmeat at
1/10 to ¼ the price of domestic alternatives, an enormous cost differential that especially influences the buying decisions of families earning less than $1.00 a day. 38

This last point alludes to another significant utility of wild game: its potential as an income generator. According to Kümpel, bushmeat in the Congo Basin serves as a substantial source of income for over 60% of the poor. 39 In many areas, it makes up more than a quarter of all household sales. 40 The additional capital provided by bushmeat enables families to procure not only more food, but also medical supplies, clothes, tools, and other goods essential for maintaining good health. 41

Attempts to curtail the bushmeat harvest would deprive poor families of a significant source of income and, more devastatingly, result in widespread protein deficiency. In the Central African Republic, where the malnutrition rate already stands at 30%, a further reduction in food production could lead to adverse health consequences such as slowed development, muscle loss, skin disease, lethargy, depression, and increased mortality. 42 The overexploitation of bushmeat has grown so dire in recent years that even reducing hunting to sustainable levels would, “shacke large swathes of Central Africa to hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition.”

**A Crisis without a Forseeable Conclusion**

Like the diversity of animal species that its name encompasses, the roles tied to bushmeat in Central Africa are many and varied. As a source of protein and income, it sustains the livelihoods of millions of people. As a possible reservoir of zoonotic disease, it has the potential to spread old pathogens and introduce newer, deadlier ones. As a natural resource, it is overexploited and rapidly dwindling, threatening the survival of the entire ecosystem. The principal challenge of overcoming the bushmeat crisis involves curbing the environmental and epidemiological risks of the industry without plunging the population into poverty and hunger. If hunting continues at its present rate, participants in the bushmeat harvest may not suffer any immediate consequences, but eventually their livelihoods will be threatened as the fauna and flora of the forest become increasingly depleted. With trade networks expanding and more people handling bloody carcasses, zoonoses will have greater opportunities to make the animal-to-human transition and develop into global pandemics.

However, imposing an outright ban on bushmeat hunting, as some have suggested, would be not only cruel but impractical. The area that would have to be patrolled is simply too great in size, and the governments of Central Africa lack the resources to adequately fund and equip the corps of guards required to enforce the law. 44 A more reasonable command-and-control measure would be to target the trade of bushmeat by arranging random roadblocks and market raids. Confiscating the game or charging a market tax would force traders to increase the price of bushmeat, likely leading to a decline in demand and sales.

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As profits drop, the price traders are willing to pay for bushmeat would fall, and hunters would be less inclined to participate in market hunting. By focusing on the bushmeat traders rather than the far more numerous and widely-dispersed hunters, this less costly form of de jure control would limit commercially-driven wildlife depletion without unduly burdening the poor rural villagers who rely on hunting to obtain food for their families. 45 However, in Central Africa, where fears of government overreach already run rampant, command-and-control measures could build resentment against national agencies, possibly resulting in retali-
tory hunting of endangered species. The government’s enforcement efforts could also fall victim to corruptible guards and alternative distribution systems.

Community wildlife management (CWM) offers a smaller-scale approach to addressing overexploitation. It is founded on the principle that the preservation of wildlife populations depends on the engagement and cooperation of the people living alongside them. The purpose of CWM is to incentivize conservation by placing ownership of natural resources in the hands of local communities, deepening their bond with neighboring wildlife and ensuring that they reap the economic rewards of its long-term survival. To be effective, communities must be able to distribute profits fairly among their members, protect their resources from free-riders, and, most importantly, value future benefits above the more immediate satisfaction of continued overexploitation. Although CWM projects have achieved great success in the savannah environments of Southern and Eastern Africa, their implementation has been less fruitful in the Guinea-Congolese forest zone, where trophy hunting and tourism are in far less demand. In forests with sufficiently large wildlife populations, meat-cropping presents a more commercially feasible enterprise opportunity, but to be successful it will require improved cohesion among communities and greater willingness on the part of Central African governments to devolve property rights to local villages.

Ultimately, however, the demand for bushmeat can only be curtailed through the availability of affordable substitutes. The barriers to large-sale livestock production have already been detailed, but collaborations between scientists and Central African natives have shown promising results in the areas of small animal raising, mini-livestock production, wild/domestic pig hybrids, and even beekeeping. Similar collaborations have also helped create a global disease reporting system, in which villagers use cell phones and other mobile devices to record cases of zoonotic infection that can then be tracked by epidemiologists. With this system, scientists are now better able to identify and contain outbreaks before they reach pandemic levels.

Despite these advances, the bushmeat harvest is still continuing to intensify and expand. In order to avert a widespread environmental and humanitarian disaster in the near future, the people of Central Africa, their governments, and international agencies will have to mount a concerted effort to limit the hunting and trade of wild game. Though the bulk of current research is focusing on command-and-control measures, community wildlife management, and protein substitutes, the bushmeat crisis cannot be effectively resolved without first addressing the economic and infrastructural circumstances that have driven so many Central Africans to sustain their livelihoods through a system of overexploitation.

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About the Author: Cody Frear

Cody Frear is a senior at Arizona State University studying anthropology and biology. Although his original plan was to pursue a career in law, he discovered his passion for medicine while volunteering at an HIV/AIDS clinic in The Gambia the summer following his sophomore year. He has had the privilege to take part in immunology and virology research at both the Biodesign Institute and the National Institutes of Health. In 2015, he completed his honors thesis on genetic trends in the vertical transmission of Lymphocytic Choriomeningitis Virus. His debut novel, "When Night Obscures the Sky", was recently published by Amazon KDP. He intends to attend medical school following graduation with the hope of someday working with underprivileged communities.
Introduction

As the HIV/AIDS pandemic has spread across the world, no other region has been more devastated than sub-Saharan Africa. Specifically, the country of South Africa has over six million citizens living with HIV/AIDS, which is the largest number of infected persons in the world. In 1995, just one year removed from the fall of the apartheid government that had been in place since 1948, HIV/AIDS in South Africa reached pandemic levels, presenting an enormous challenge for the government, which continues to this day. At the center of this public health crisis was Thabo Mbeki, South Africa’s president from 1999 to 2008. Upon assuming his position, Mbeki made some controversial comments on HIV/AIDS and treatment that generated many headlines in the media. While most of the scientific community and media denounced Mbeki’s views on HIV/AIDS as factually wrong and dangerous, Mbeki and his supporters, weary of possible economic exploitation and racial degradation by the West, approached HIV/AIDS as part of a broader problem of health in the country and not a unique threat. Rather than focusing efforts on HIV/AIDS, Mbeki advocated for “a war on all fronts” to combat not just HIV/AIDS, but other diseases that were associated with the “extreme poverty” in South Africa.

Backlash

While this plan of action may sound perfectly acceptable to most, the context in which it was delivered resulted in a storm of criticism of President Mbeki from many quarters. Mbeki made these remarks while speaking during his opening address to the 13th International AIDS Conference on July 9th, 2000, during the height of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in South Africa. What drew perhaps the most attention from this conference (held in South Africa itself, in Durban) was that the president chose to avoid references to HIV as the cause of AIDS, focusing instead on poverty as a strong factor in AIDS diagnosis. In September of that same year, Mbeki clarified his position:

“I am saying that you cannot attribute immune deficiency solely and exclusively to a virus. There may very well be a virus…. If the scientists... say this virus is part of the variety of things from which people acquire immune deficiency, I have no problem with that.”
This position on the cause of AIDS was under fire even before July 9th. An article published on March 25th in The Star, a Johannesburg daily, reported that Mbeki had personally replied to two separate letters addressed to him concerning the HIV/AIDS crisis. The first letter, jointly-written by the heads of two South African churches, one of the country’s constitutional judges, and the chairperson for the soon-to-be-held AIDS conference, criticized the government’s policy of not providing anti-HIV drugs to pregnant mothers. The second letter, written by a Cape Town immunologist, doubted the “individuals in leadership positions” who were questioning the link between HIV and AIDS. The article also quoted Jon Cohen, a writer for the journal Science, as saying that the questions Mbeki was asking of HIV/AIDS were “dead,” “old,” and “stale.”

Clearly, scientific-minded people, both foreign and domestic, were finding fault with Mbeki’s views on the HIV/AIDS situation. Even the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU, which formed part of South Africa’s coalition government at the time along with the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party) believed “that indeed HIV causes AIDS and that is not disputable” and that “…scientific evidence to support the efficacy of anti-retroviral drugs in the control of HIV/AIDS” could be readily found. COSATU’s willingness to criticize their partners in government is not a demonstration of their political power. Rather, it echoes the aforementioned South African leaders’ letter; it is a plea to allow antiretroviral drugs to be given to, at the least, HIV-positive pregnant mothers to prevent future HIV transmission.

**The Drugs (Or Lack Thereof)**

This idea that deaths could have been prevented if antiretroviral drugs had been made available in South Africa is central to the mainstream Western media’s view on the HIV/AIDS crisis in South Africa. A Harvard University study concluded that Thabo Mbeki’s “denial” of the causes of AIDS and the benefits of anti-retroviral drugs contributed to the premature deaths of 365,000 South Africans between 2000 and 2005, including 35,000 babies. The study, published in 2008, the final year of Mbeki’s presidency, would seem to hold Mbeki and his lackeys personally responsible for the deaths. This was the same line that most media outlets took when they announced the study’s findings; most notably, The New York Times quoted one of the study’s authors, calling South Africa’s public health response during this time as “bad, or even evil.”

Mbeki had supporters on his side, though, mainly from the African National Congress (ANC), his political party. In an article published on the ANC website, one Dr. Zweli Mkhize argued that the “media attention of unbelievable proportions” focused on Mbeki was being misplaced. The real issue for Dr. Mkhize was that “the cost of anti-retroviral drugs is far too expensive for South Africa and other African countries to afford.” In the ANC Today, the web-based newsletter of the ANC, the ANC stated: “As a country, South Africa cannot currently afford the use of antiretrovirals for wide scale treatment at their current prices.”

The argument against the prohibitively expensive treatment drugs was echoed internationally as well. Institutions such as Oxfam accused Western pharmaceutical companies and governments of “waging an undeclared drugs war against the world’s poorest countries,” claiming that patent laws created “corporate wealth” at the expense of “public health.” Reacting to these high prices, countries such as Thailand and Brazil sought to make their own HIV/AIDS drugs for their citizens by copying formulas and manufacturing the drugs. Though these actions brought pressure from the U.S. and the W.T.O. on patent infringement grounds, the message was clear, and pharmaceutical companies soon began cutting prices on HIV/AIDS treatment drugs. GlaxoSmithKline cut their antiretroviral prices by 90 percent while Pfizer gave one of its drugs to South Africa free-of-charge for two years. Despite these cost-cutting measures, however, the efficacy of the drugs was still doubted by Mbeki and the party. To quote the ANC, “There is a lot of evidence that where antiretrovirals are introduced without the necessary meticulous follow-up, which requires good laboratory support, then the outcomes are at times worse than if people had not been put on these drugs at all.”

**Black South Africans**

Mbeki and the ANC had their reasons for not trusting antiretroviral drugs, for wanting to “reinvigorate the debate’ around long-established AIDS-related science.” A product of exile and rebellion against apartheid, Mbeki understood AIDS science as having the potential to be an insidious method by which the white, Western world could seek to gain economic control over black Africa, similar to the way the colonial system saw expen-
sive manufactured products of Western origin be forced into the domestic markets of controlled territories. Many black South Africans were suspicious that the treatments for HIV/AIDS were produced by “high profit business… responsible for deaths especially amongst poor people who are unable to purchase these drugs.” Mbeki and the ANC were subscribers to this belief of AIDS profiteering and that is why they hesitated in making antiretrovirals available, for fear of becoming the unwitting victims of Western machinations. Mbeki described himself as “taken aback” by those who would “sacrifice all intellectual integrity to act as salespersons” for Western-made drugs, for in his mind they had fallen into the trap of colonialism yet again.  

Even after the widely condemned speech of July 9th that “…caused consternation among scientists,” Mbeki and the party felt no need to stray from their arguments. In the same article where they decried the high prices of antiretroviral drugs, the ANC went on to reiterate the president’s points from the Durban speech:

“While HIV/AIDS can affect anybody, it hits the poor hardest. The programme to combat the epidemic must therefore be part of the fight against poverty… The interests of public health and those of our people are better served by government investing in the all-round development of a robust public health infrastructure and health system…”

In the September 2000 interview where he acknowledged that HIV could be a cause of AIDS, Mbeki still maintained his “on all fronts” policy, saying “…if you accept that there can be a variety of reasons (for AIDS), including poverty and the many diseases that afflict Africans, then you can have a more comprehensive treatment response.”

Mbeki’s history as a freedom fighter who fought for the rights of black South Africans in apartheid-era South Africa and beyond no doubt led him to his aspirations of eliminating his people’s poverty. Once free from poverty, Africans would no longer be viewed as inferior people and they could finally become independent from the racism of the white world. As someone who had fought against apartheid, there was no greater dream than to achieve black independence from the powers-that-be. Naturally, adequate healthcare is necessary for the growth of a people and a nation. While some people put HIV/AIDS in a class above other diseases in terms of priority of treatment, Mbeki saw it as yet another symptom of poverty. What mattered to the president was that his citizens, mainly poor black South Africans, were dying as a result of poverty—it did not matter if it was TB, malaria, cholera, HIV/AIDS, or some other disease that physically did the deed. In Mbeki’s view, the 365,000 people mentioned in the Harvard study were already condemned to die as a result of their poverty, and it was Mbeki’s goal to help to alleviate poverty through an improved healthcare system. The president did not want to focus specifically on expensive HIV/AIDS drugs of dubious effectiveness if his citizens were going to remain in poverty and from any number of other infectious diseases.

For a time, the president retreated into silence following the AIDS conference, and it seemed that the situation might blow over if the government succumbed to the international pressure that it was receiving from all quarters. In October of 2000, Mr. Mbeki informed the National Executive Committee of the ANC that he would be withdrawing from the scientific debate of HIV/AIDS, saying that his contribution had “caused confusion.” Though Mbeki had removed himself from the public debate, policy was not soon in changing and by March 2nd of 2001, perhaps emboldened by a lack of consequences that his government was enduring, Mbeki was back at it, writing in a letter published by ANC Today:

“…we are all called upon to join in united action to mount an all-round response to the problems of health that face especially the millions of poor people in our country. That response requires that we attend to a number of things. Central to these is the fight against poverty.”

Clearly, the president was not done arguing his side of the story. Part of his argument was that the Western community was portraying Africa in a negative light with racial connotations. Especially in the context of HIV/AIDS, Mbeki sought to fight against any sort of insinuations of African inferiority. Just three days after his July 9th comments, in an address to the National General Council, Mbeki declared that critics of the country sought to portray South Africa in the “worst possible light, falsely charging, for instance, that we are ‘the crime capital of the world,’ that we are a nation of rapists, that we are world leaders in corruption and that we lead humanity in deaths from AIDS.” Speaking in 2001, Mbeki described what he saw as racism in the way the West characterized HIV/AIDS in Africa: “…we are but natural-born promiscuous
carriers of germs, unique in the world... doomed to a mortal end because of our unconquerable devotion to the sin of lust.” The biographer of Mr. Mbeki, Mark Gevisser, who was given a copy of a hundred-page report written by the then-president in 2001 and circulated among high-ranking ANC members, describes Mbeki’s “HIV/AIDS thesis” contained within as informed by “centuries-old white racist beliefs and concepts about Africans” and “shaped by an obsession with race, the legacy of colonialism and ‘sexual shame.’”

**Conclusion**

Thabo Mbeki viewed HIV/AIDS as yet another “opportunistic disease” that preys on the poor and served as further reason to improve overall healthcare, while the Western-informed world viewed HIV/AIDS as a unique disease, above the rest in terms of its deadliness and a priority in terms of treatment. This divergence in the framing of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa helps to explain the extensive back-and-forth between Mbeki detractors and supporters in the media following, but also somewhat precluding, his controversial comments at the 13th International AIDS conference.

For Mbeki and his ANC supporters, antiretrovirals, the main drugs used to combat HIV/AIDS, were too expensive and not necessarily effective. They viewed these drugs and other medical advice from the West as having a potential underlying motive of subordinating black Africans to white Westerners and as being an extension of racist colonialism. For Western and some South African observers of the situation in South Africa, an overall focus to healthcare, as advocated by Mbeki and the ANC, was not the solution to HIV/AIDS. Specifically, the government’s refusal to acknowledge the effectiveness of antiretrovirals was the most harmful part of its policy and directly led to the deaths of tens of thousands of South Africans, as drugs were not distributed in sufficient quantities to infected persons. Regardless of the validity of either side’s claims, HIV/AIDS remains just as prevalent in everyday South African life as it did in the year 2000. The dichotomy of perspectives in the early 2000s, however, helped to focus international attention on the subject that it had not seen since the 80s. Nevertheless, this attention may be waning today as the world has seemingly passed on from crisis to management mode in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

**Endnotes**

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About the Author:

Jacob Zarate

Jacob Zarate is a sophomore at Arizona State University and Barrett, the Honors College majoring in Global Studies within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences in addition to pursuing a minor in Spanish. In high school Jacob's experiences with Tempe Sister Cities' Student Exchange Program as a delegate to Cuenca, Ecuador during the summer of 2013 fueled his lifelong desire to study the world around him. Jacob spent this summer studying abroad in Mexico, improving his Spanish skills while also learning about Spanish-American civilization and Mayan culture. Last semester Jacob was an intern with Phoenix Sister Cities and gained valuable insight into public and private dynamics of city development and sister city relations. This semester Jacob is returning to Ecuador as a State Department intern at the U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil to work alongside Foreign Service Officers as they manage U.S. diplomatic relations abroad.
The Resiliency of Authoritarianism: The Assad Regime of Syria

How One Dictatorship Resisted the Arab Spring

by SEEMA KASSAB

Introduction

For 45 years the Assad regime has controlled the Syrian people with an iron fist. For 45 years they lived in fear of speaking out to demand their right to freedom from dictatorial rule. March 15, 2011, however, marks the end of that silence as the Syrian people responded to mass demonstrations across the Middle East protesting oppressive authoritarianism. Tyrannical regimes across the region began to crumble as a result of the uprisings; however, even as the Syrian Revolution enters its fifth year, President Bashar al-Assad remains as resilient as ever. As the authoritarian leaders of Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya fell, Assad stands strong in the face of a mass uprising demanding his downfall. The Syrian Revolution began as nonviolent protests against the decades-long dictatorship first under Hafez al-Assad beginning in 1971 and now his son Bashar al-Assad, but it did not take long for the regime to respond with repressive force, seeking to quell the demonstrations as quickly as possible. Nevertheless, the regime’s violent response only strengthened the resolve of the Syrian people. The rebels took up arms, first to defend themselves and later to fight against regime security forces. The conflict has evolved into a bloody and catastrophic civil war between the regime and various rebel groups. It has become much more complicated than a fight between those for and those against the Assad regime due to the sectarian dimension it has developed, resulting in a medley of rebel groups identifying on different ethno-sectarian lines. Moreover, the involvement of foreign Islamist fighters made the conflict not only an Alawite versus Sunni battle, but also one

“Assad’s framing of the revolution as a war against terrorism has justified the continued fighting and the use of force by the military. While Assad’s conspiracy argument may have been challenging to defend, combatting terrorism is valid since terrorist-affiliated rebel factions actually infiltrated Syria from abroad.”
between hard-liners seeking an Islamic caliphate and moderate rebels for a secular government that excludes Assad. Now, the jihadist opposition has outnumbered the moderate opposition, discouraging the West from providing the rebels with significant military support from fear of resources falling into the wrong hands. They have even gained strongholds in the country, posing as major competition to Assad's power. As the regime and the rebels are becoming more radical and militarized, neither side appears willing to compromise with a political solution.

United Nations officials have described the conflict as the worst humanitarian crisis since the Rwandan genocide. Recent UN statistics report that 6 percent of the population of 20 million in Syria has been either killed or wounded during the conflict. In addition, it has resulted in over 210,000 casualties, nearly 4 million refugees, and over 6.5 million internally displaced persons. Aside from all the death, the Assad regime has also managed to torture, kidnap, rape, and use chemical weapons on civilians. The crisis has also had a disastrous economic impact on the country. From the start of the conflict through the end of 2014, the total economic loss in the country amounted to $202.6 billion. Also, in 2014 just over four in every five Syrians lived in poverty. Education is in utter collapse now that half of all school-age children in the country no longer attend school.

Despite the humanitarian crisis in Syria, the international community has failed to pursue an effective strategy for ending the war. The Syrian people continue to suffer, feeling as if no one hears their cry for help. Although Assad may not possess as much control over the country as he did before the uprisings, he has been able to hang on to power amidst a backdrop of falling dictators during the Arab Spring. Assad's resiliency has made him a distinct leader in the region. The interesting question here is how he has been able to persevere for four years. This paper will analyze the factors contributing to Assad's resiliency. The literature review will consist of existing theories on authoritarian persistence and Assad's power base in particular. The literature review will first discuss the political economy factors that helped the Assad regime maintain power before the 2011 protests. Then, the paper addresses how Assad adapted his resiliency strategies to the conflict environment. As the conflict is highly volatile, different resiliency factors can be at work at various points in the conflict. My research focuses on how Assad uses the media as a platform for displaying his own narrative of the conflict. Assad's use of the media as his propaganda tool legitimizes his rule, making it highly relevant to his persistence.

**Literature Review**

The literature review covers predominant scholarly theories on the persistence of authoritarianism in general and more specifically in the Middle East and Syria. Bellin studied authoritarian exceptionalism in the Middle East and North Africa. Bellin claims that authoritarianism persists because the Middle East fails to recognize the simultaneous absence of several prerequisites for democracy: a strong civil society, a market-driven economy, democratic neighbors, adequate income and literacy levels, and a democratic culture. Bellin attributes the failure of democratic transition in the region to the state's monopoly over the means of coercion, providing the government with the capacity to quell any instance of revolution and allowing authoritarianism to thrive. Dawisha agrees with the theory of the state's strong coercive capacity. Dawisha also attributes the resiliency of the Arab state to effective internal security apparatuses and agrees with Hinnebusch that party is a significant source of elite recruitment and patronage. Dawisha provides several theories of regime stability including the static theory, where the state has the capacity to respond appropriately to opposing challenges. The dynamic theory of stability, on the other hand, attributes stability to the inherent operations of the state, which are able to adapt to societal changes before they can exert pressure on the government.

Heydemann stated that coercion alone does not sustain Arab authoritarian regimes. He proposes a regional model called the national-populist social pact model, where multiple and often competing sets of “rules of the game” can benefit regimes through securing their interests and accounting for the ways that regimes deploy violence. This model accounts for the way in which formal and informal modes of governance interact to create certain bargaining and accommodation opportunities. The social pact prefers redistribution and social equity over growth, state centralization rather than market-oriented economies, and the protection of local markets from globalization. These qualities of a state result in nationalizations that strengthen and tightly regulate the state. Heydemann stresses that the social pact’s elasticity and fluidity con-

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tributes highly to authoritarian resilience in the Middle East.

Most of these theories for resiliency in the Arab world are applicable to Syria. Syria has a monopoly over the means of coercion, a state-centered economy with formal and informal modes of governance, as well as the ability to adapt to political and economic changes. Now to more specifically address authoritarian resiliency in Syria, I identify the predominant theories in the existing literature for the longevity of the Assad regime. The following theories confirm that regional theories for authoritarian persistence are applicable to Assad, but do not account for the entirety of his resilience throughout the conflict.

**Alawite Concentration of Power**

One of President Hafez al-Assad's strategies of sustaining power was his establishment of an Alawite-concentrated regime, appointing his kinsmen and family members to critical leadership positions. Building a loyal power circle was crucial to Assad's stability because he was able to use his kinsmen as "unrivaled political brokers" to create political outcomes in his favor. For example, President Hafez al-Assad’s brother, Rifat al-Assad, commanded the internal security forces and the Defense Companies, Syria’s paramilitary force, while Assad’s son-in-law, Adnan Makhluf, headed the Presidential Guard. President Assad’s Alawite clients occupied a majority of the top operational commands of the regime. The Alawi inner circle began to increasingly identify with their sectarian identity as they continued to recruit their kin into the regime. When the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood tried to overthrow the regime in the Hama massacre of 1982, regime solidarity was able to suppress the movement. According to Hinnebusch, despite the concentration of Alawis in the regime elite, Alawi dominance did not translate into sectarian rule as power-sharing still existed between the Sunni military and party officials. Since Assad was able to appease the Sunni elite within the military and party apparatuses, he was able to use their connections to the Sunni business community.

**State-Business Alliances**

Hafez al-Assad’s Alawite-concentrated regime held a historically-rooted antagonism with the conservative urban-Sunni business community. The majority Sunni population denigrated the Alawites and a relationship of mistrust developed between the two groups; however, Assad realized that they needed each other to maintain a strong, stable country. Assad could not isolate the urban business community because of the economic potential they would provide to the state. This was the motivation behind the economic liberalization implemented by Hafez al-Assad in the 1970s. Since a formal incorporation of the business community risked the stability of the political structure of his regime, Assad secured the interests of the majority Sunni population by creating informal ties between the private and public sectors of the Syrian economy. Members of the business community became unofficial partners of state elites known as the state bourgeoisie. According to Hinnebusch, Assad retained autonomy by balancing the authority between all the groups in his power base, and that included balancing statist and private sector interests against each other. When the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood attempted to undermine the authority of the regime in 1982, the state-business networks provided a support base for the regime. The uprising was quelled in merely 27 days as the regime initiated a massacre on the town of Hama, killing tens of thousands of people. The lack of formality and trust between the power-holders and the capitalists undermined the potential that economic liberalization could later have on the country’s development and productivity. Despite these limitations, Assad’s strategy of appeasing the capitalists through patronage networks stabilized his populist authoritarian regime.

**The Rentier Economy**

A system of “market-based cronyism” emerged from the economic liberalization and the alliances between the state and the Sunni bourgeoisie. The regime maintained public sector dominance through rent-seeking from the oil sector and foreign Arab aid, allowing Assad to magnify the scale of economic resources at his disposal and manage access to them in a way that solidified his authority. The regime’s rent-seeking also kept those loyal to it satisfied, thus stabilizing the regime’s security. Examples of these activities include controlled privatization of public sector assets delivered into the hands of regime cronies and oil proceeds that were directly handled by the political elite of the regime. Other sources of rents came from the liberalization of the previously regulated banking sector and that of foreign investment. When rents accrue to the state, they are distributed as jobs and
welfare benefits, making citizens highly dependent on the government. Rent-seeking also decreases the regime's accountability to its citizens because tax revenue is no longer needed. Thus, citizens are deterred from mobilizing to demand representation. Heydemann and Leenders argue that Assad's ability to create new sources of rents and manage his networks of patronage were central to the resilience of his regime.

Recombinant Authoritarian Rule

The longevity of the Assad regime is partly due to Bashar al-Assad's ability to reconfigure the patronage networks based on the changing economic and political conditions in Syria during the 2000s. Donati and Heydemann highlight Bashar al-Assad's capacity for recombinant rule to be crucial to the stability of the Assad regime after the death of Hafez al-Assad and before the revolution in 2011. During this period, Assad liberalized the banking, insurance, and external trade sectors of the economy. Banks became capable of financing imports that were previously financed by the black market and Lebanese banks. With regard to external trade, import restrictions were lifted, customs barriers lessened, exchange controls were relaxed, and exchange rates standardized. Syria also multiplied its free trade agreements with regional partners. These reforms took place after 2005 when Syria lost its rent sources from Lebanon as troops were withdrawn from there and rents from oil revenues that were declining. The new private sector activities became replacement sources of rent for the regime.

With economic reform also came an upgrading of the Assad regime's system of crony capitalism. Assad sought to form new alliances with businessmen that aligned with Syria's new economic trends. Consequently, he created two holding companies, al-Cham and al-Sourya, in which the regime encouraged key figures of Syria's business communities to join. Having the pact between the business bourgeoisie and the regime that was created during Hafez al-Assad's reign was extended. The members of the two holding companies procure capital, networks, and political support for the regime. In return, they are granted a share in the dividends that come out of the market-oriented sectors of the economy, as well as protection by the influential government elite.

Members of al-Sourya and al-Cham enjoy the benefits of making the most profits, regulations that are tailored to their interests, and connections to expatriate Syrian and Arab business communities. Assad's authoritarian upgrading of the political economy resulted in a “social market economy” that displayed an image of openness, but in reality overly relied on neopatrimonialism. In effect, the rentier economy was renewed.

Along with the renewal of the Assad regime's entrepreneurial clientele, came the reconfiguration of the NGO sector. Syria's NGO's enhance the regime's image of legitimacy, but in reality they are closely linked to the regime and are not NGO's at all. They actually preclude the potential for autonomous civil society. True activists are repressed and forced under restrictive rules and ambiguous legal standards. These NGOs are a part of the regime's clientele network, filled with sons of leaders, ministers, officers, and entrepreneurs.

Assad's authoritarian reconfiguration has highlighted the regime's recombinant capacity. Through limited privatization and patronage networks, Assad has been able to appease the Sunni and Christian business community, which in turn has contributed to his stability. Now that the economically-marginalized population of Syria has risen in protest following the Arab Spring, Assad's recombinant strategy may no longer be effective.

Monopoly over the Means of Coercion

Another contributor to authoritarian perseverance is the regime's ability to maintain a monopoly over the means of coercion in the state. Authoritarians can ensure a loyal military apparatus by sustaining patrimonial linkages between the regime and the military. Both Hafez and Bashar al-Assad were able to do this by infusing the coercive apparatus with kin and members of their Alawite clan. For example, Hafez al-Assad appointed his brother Maher Al-Assad as the Republican Guard of Syria's Fourth Brigade. Eva Bellin concludes that a robust coercive apparatus is
able to suppress democratic initiatives, precluding the possibility of political transition.20 With authoritarian regimes, the official head of state is usually dependent on the coercive apparatus for survival; therefore, the two institutions are closely allied. The 1982 Hama massacre demonstrated the military’s contribution to regime stability at a time when its rule was under threat by the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood.21 The high costs associated with the massacre failed in deterring Assad from ordering the military to use full force to suppress the potential revolution. When the uprisings in Syria first began, Assad’s concern for military defec-
tion caused him to depend on the military units that were completely Alawite in suppressing the protests. Despite military defections, the Assad government forces have remained resilient due to strong patrimo-
nial ties. When the military is organized along patri-
monial lines, the fate of the military is aligned with the fate of the regime. This is the reason that Rifaat al-As-
sad did not hesitate to shoot demonstrators in Hama in 1982, as well as the reason for the military’s continued ruthlessness today.22

Post-Revolution Authoritarian Upgrading

Syria has continued to face unstable political
and economic conditions after the uprisings began on
March 2011. Heydemann argues that the regime was
able to adapt to the dynamics of the conflict in a way
that contributed to its preservation.23 Even before the
uprisings in March, Assad formed a special committee
that declared failure on the part of the Egyptian and
Tunisian regimes since they did not instantly repress
the protests. As soon as protests broke out in Syria,
the Syrian government responded with lethal force.
The peaceful protests transformed into full-fledged
military offensives as the protestors took up arms to
defend themselves. The regime responded with inter-
nal institutional alterations and policy modifications.
The regime reconfigured its security sector, such as the
armed forces and intelligence and security apparatuses,
to confront forms of resistance that it was previously untrained for. It also incorporated loyalist shabiha
militias - the regime’s thugs - into a state-sponsored
paramilitary known as the National Defense Forces
(NDF). After being used to brutalize civilians, specifi-
cally Sunnis, the NDF were eventually fully integrated
into the security apparatus by the regime. Additionally,
Assad continues to apply both a patrimonial and sec-
tarian strategy of placing his kin and Alawite loyalists
in positions of the military and security apparatuses,
fortifying the cohesion of formal institutions.

Leveraging Strategic Relationships

The Assad regime also owes much of its survival
to its ability to leverage its strategic relationships
with international allies. According to Ospina and
Gray, Assad has isolated himself from the international
community, except for long-time partners Iran, Hez-
bollah, and Russia.24 Assad’s survival is in line with
Hezbollah and Iran’s interests because Syria has always
been Iran’s main transit corridor to Hezbollah. With-
out Assad, Iran would have no direct path for supply-
ing arms to Hezbollah. Therefore, Iran has supported
the Assad regime militarily by sending military and
security advisors to aid in combat effectiveness. Also,
Hezbollah has sent thousands of fighters to fight along-
side the regime. Not only have Hezbollah and Iran
provided military support to the regime, but they have
also supplied financial assistance in the form of loans
and contracts. Iran provided Assad with a one billion
dollar credit line. Russia has also been a crucial ally
to the Assad regime, providing air support, arms and
money. More importantly, Russia has served to legit-
imize the Assad regime by continuously vetoing UN
Security Council sanctions against Assad.25

The Fragmented Opposition

Part of the Assad regime’s resiliency stems
from its ability to stand united amongst the numerous
and fragmented rebels. While the rebel groups clash
based on varying ideologies, the Assad regime neglects
ideology and focuses on maintaining whatever is left of
its power base. Although Islamic extremists constitute
the majority of the rebels, they remain divided along
several different lines and frequently fight amongst
each other. Moderate rebels have fought against their
Salafi counterparts, Syrians against foreign fighters,
and Arab-Salafists against Kurdish forces. The in-
tra-rebel sectarian and territorial clashes have rein-
forced Assad’s position of power because while they
were distracted over territorial disputes, Assad and
his cohesive circle of cronies reasserted control over
previously liberated areas. This year the opposition has
been diverted from their war against Assad by having
to open a second front against the Islamic State of Iraq
and Syria (ISIS), the most radical of the jihadist fight-
ers in Syria. Even Jabhat Al-Nusra, Al-Qaeda’s main
affiliate in Syria, has been fighting against ISIS. The
moderate rebel groups such as the Free Syrian Army
(FSA) do not receive as many financial and material resources as the jihadist groups who are supported by the Gulf States. The fractured opposition has given Assad the momentum to persist and has validated his branding of the war as a “fight against terrorism.” As the militant Islamist component of the opposition strengthens, the regime's legitimacy strengthens, making Assad's rule a more viable alternative to Islamist rule in the perspective of the Western nations.

**How Strong are all these Factors Today?**

Scholars attribute Assad's resiliency to a combination of the factors reviewed above. However, the conflict is changing every day and some of the factors may no longer be applicable to the current situation in Syria. The political economy factors of persistence were legitimate explanations of the resiliency of both Hafez and Bashar al-Assad before the conflict began in 2011. However, the present day situation in Syria has escalated to the point where political economy justifications are no longer valid. State-business alliances are deteriorating significantly as businesses in Syria are hardly operating anymore and as the regime targets the Sunni majority that once dominated the business community in Syria.

Furthermore, Assad no longer attains a monopoly over the means of coercion like before. Over 8,000 pro-regime military personnel from a mainly Alawite region of Latakia have reportedly been killed since the beginning of the revolution, along with thousands of other Alawites from different regions. Assad's Alawite support base may be deteriorating as certain Alawite clans build resentment toward Assad, reflecting Assad's favoritism toward the so-called al-Kallasieh clan, to which his family belongs. He has protected this clan in an isolated coastal region away from the war while other Alawite communities are forced to fight in the front lines against the opposition. Some regime soldiers have defected into the Free Syrian Army, which now controls certain parts of the country. ISIS has grown to control its own areas of the country as well, declaring Raqqa the capital of its self-proclaimed Islamic caliphate and forcing civilians in the northern city under its authority. Additionally, Heydemann’s theory of regime adaptation to the conflict may contribute a partial explanation to Assad's resiliency; however, it does not completely encompass the crux of it. The fragmented opposition, along with Assad's international allies, have certainly also contributed to the Assad's strength and legitimacy.

The question remains as to how Assad is able to continue to perpetrate mass crimes against humanity and repression of the Syrian people under the watch of free leaders of the world, such as the United States, the UK, and France. Assad has not been held responsible for violations of international law. The international community continues to turn a blind eye to the blatant evidence of inhumanity because of the way in which Assad himself has framed the revolution and the civil war. As the quantity of Assad's discourse, mostly through interviews, has risen, Assad has increasingly focused on legitimizing his authority through portraying an image of himself in the media as an ally in the global war on terror rather than an enemy of liberty. Therefore, a closer look at his rhetoric in the media is warranted in order to analyze how Assad's narrative contributes to his resiliency throughout the civil war in Syria.

**Methodology**

The dynamics of the civil war in Syria are constantly changing, meaning that various factors with varying degrees of influence can be at play sustaining Assad's position of power. After a careful study of all the resiliency factors presented by the authors in the literature review, I hypothesize that there must be some other factor at play inhibiting the international community from intervening in a war that the UN refugee agency, UNHCR, has deemed the “biggest humanitarian emergency of our era.” In an effort to go beyond the current literature, I decided to focus on Assad's discourse in the media. By analyzing Assad's interviews and speeches, I found Assad's rhetoric to be highly relevant to his tenacious presidency. I was able to identify Assad's strategy of framing the revolution as a foreign insurgency against his government rather than an uprising of the Syrian people to protest for freedom from authoritarian rule. In denying the presence of a rebellion against his government, Assad falsely reassures the international community that there is no need to take action against his rule.

The qualitative research for this study focused on Assad's discourse through public speeches and interviews from the start of the revolution in March of 2011 through the present day. I follow the progression of Assad's rhetoric, analyzing the changing messages that
Assad portrays to both his country and the rest of the world. I begin by examining the inauguration speech Assad delivered when he first became President in 2000 in order to compare the discourse from the time of the conflict to baseline rhetoric. I then study a total of three speeches delivered by Bashar al-Assad and 8 interviews between Assad and various media outlets based around the globe. The first speech was delivered shortly after the uprisings began on March 30, 2011. The second of Assad’s speeches addressed the state of the Syrian crisis as of January 2013, and the third was his inauguration speech in July of 2014 after he was “re-elected” President. The speeches, aimed at consumption by the Syrian people and the Arab world, were delivered in Arabic. I analyzed the speeches as given in Arabic, as well as the English translations.

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While the speeches were targeted towards Assad’s domestic audience, the interviews conducted throughout the course of the conflict were targeted toward international audiences. The interviews I analyzed include three with American media, as well as separate interviews with British, French, Russian, Lebanese, and German media outlets. I gathered this data from Syrian regime-controlled news outlets, opposition news outlets, and media outlets from various countries. I follow the progression of Assad's rhetoric, keeping the targeted audience in mind, in order to discover how Assad’s use of the media advanced his position as head of the Syrian state. I proceeded to categorize the primary data based on their platform. The media outlet and language used in Assad’s discourse indicated the audience whom Assad was targeting in that particular discourse. The reappearing themes that dominated Assad’s interview responses and speeches revealed Assad’s careful planning of the evolving nature of the conflict, as well as the way in which he manipulated the crisis to sustain and legitimate his position of authority.

**Analyzing Assad’s Message**

The analysis reveals several consistent themes that are incoherent with the reality on the ground in Syria, but at the same time appeal to the interests of the West and Western allies. Assad’s discourse was minimal before the conflict; his inauguration speech on July 17, 2000 was one of his major speeches before the war. He referenced the need for economic reform, as well as the need for the Syrian people and the government to work together to achieve this goal. Before the revolution, Assad made it seem as if he was willing to work with the people toward economic development and modernization; however, time has proven that his dictatorial form of governance lacks concern for the fate of the people.

Throughout his 2000 inauguration speech, he never once mentioned terrorism; whereas his discourse presented throughout the conflict is flooded with rhetoric on terrorism. I identified four main themes that Assad fed to the media after the people rose in 2011: combating terrorism, fighting rising sectarianism, uniting against a foreign threat, and having the support of the Syrian people. I analyze each theme more deeply below. Assad has framed the conflict as a war against foreign terrorism and extremism. Although the rise in Islamism has allowed these frames to become more legitimate, Assad has spun the war to make his rule seem like the only legitimate alternative to extremist rule in Syria.

**Combating Terrorism**

The most prevalent theme of Assad’s discourse by far is combating terrorism, appearing in every post-revolution interview and speech that I analyzed. From President Assad’s first address to the Syrian people after the uprisings on March 30, 2011, Assad made...
it clear that he was not recognizing the uprisings as a revolution. Rather, he labelled them a “foreign conspiracy” intended to undermine Syria’s national unity and stability. Assad attributes the start of the killing to the conspirators, claiming that the government was as clueless as the Syrian people, “and did not understand what was happening until acts of sabotage started to emerge.” Assad notes that not all of the protestors were conspirators, but they were citizens who had “good intentions but were misled.” Assad claims that “they mixed up three elements: sedition, reform, and daily needs.” He notes that the latter two factors were covered up by sedition, discrediting the theory of a rebellion occurring against him.

Assad planted the seed that grew into an Islamic extremist opposition force when he released extremist prisoners from Sednaya prison shortly after the start of the rebellion - this is how the Syrian-based faction of ISIS was born. Assad fostered the terrorism he claims he is devoted to fight, justifying his narrative that he must defeat the foreign Salafists seeking to establish their own Islamic caliphate in his country. ISIS did not grow from the initial protests like Assad claims; rather, it took advantage of the chaos in Syria, making the country its safe haven. ISIS was able to gain battlefield experience and attract financial support from the Gulf States who sought to overthrow Assad. Members of Syrian rebel groups that lacked resources, or just needed to support their families were enticed to join ISIS as well. Assad continues to indirectly prop up ISIS because the reality is that the two sides actually make each other stronger. ISIS represents itself as the only alternative to Assad while Assad purports that he is the main force in defeating ISIS. Yet, evidence shows that they have been strategically ignoring each other on the battlefield. Assad has been targeting the moderate opposition and avoiding ISIS. According to Jane’s Terrorism and Intelligence Center, only 6 percent of regime counterterrorism operations target ISIS as of November 2014. While Assad claims in all his interviews and speeches that he is combating terrorist-affiliated organizations in Syria, the evidence proves the contrary.

Once Islamists flooded the opposition, Assad became justified in replacing the term “conspiracy” with “terrorism” in defining his opposition, just like he had planned. The term terrorism is often used as a political tool. Bruce Hoffman attributes the term’s contested meaning to the fact that usage of the term has changed over time to accommodate the political discourse of each successive era. The media and the West’s classification of Islamist opposition groups in Syria as “terrorist-affiliated organizations” allowed Assad to use the term as a political tool as well, justifying his regime’s actions by labelling them counter-terrorism operations.

Assad’s first interview applying the “combatting terrorism” frame was with American-based ABC’s Barbara Walters on December 7, 2011. Assad claims that “from the very first few weeks we had those terrorists. They are getting more and more aggressive, they have been killing.” Throughout the interview, Assad repeatedly references terrorism as the force he is fighting. Even the mere fact that ABC provided Assad with his first platform to feed Western media his narrative contributes to his international legitimacy as head of the Syrian state.

Furthermore, President Assad delivered a speech before the People’s Assembly, the Syrian parliament, on June 3, 2012 focusing on the growing terrorism in Syria aimed at undermining the homeland. He asserts that there must be a distinction between terrorism and the political process in order to move forward in Syria and discredit the terrorism. Assad classifies the destruction of infrastructure and declining provision of basic resources on “acts of sabotage by terrorists.” So far, Assad’s message is consistent to both the West and his own people: the war is not between the government and the Syrian people, but between the Syrians and terrorists.

One month later, German media conducted an interview with Assad on July 5, 2012. Unlike the Barbara Walters interview, this interview was with a German regime apologist, Jurgen Todenhofe. Todenhofe is known in Germany for being an anti-war advocate and critical of Western policy toward the Middle East. The interview was another platform allowing Assad to convey the same message regarding terrorism in Syria. He clearly stated that “the rebels are an amalgam of
al-Qaeda and other extremists and outlaws who have escaped the police.” He goes on to claim that the highest percentage of people is being killed by gangs, Al-Qaeda, and other outlaws or extremists.

Only a few months later, Assad interviewed with Russian-based RT. The interviewer, Sophie Shevardnadze, called Assad “a well-educated man who has fallen victim to media demonization.” Assad was offered an interview with another ally, where he could frame the conflict as a war against terrorism. He asserts that “terrorism is his enemy,” and substantiates this claim by referencing Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch whom recognized the terrorists that captured government soldiers and executed them as war criminals. The interview made no mention of the inhumane treatment civilians have received at the hands of the Assad regime, including barrel bombs and chemical weapons.

In January 2013, Assad delivered his first speech on the Syrian crisis since June 2012 to a crowd of his supporters at the regal Opera House. He addressed his concerns about terrorist groups attacking his homeland. He claimed that Syrians were rebelling against these groups, not his government, labelling the crisis as a “fake revolution.” Assad pledged to continue as president of Syria “as long as there is one terrorist left,” despite international demands that he step down. As in every speech and interview before this, Assad adhered to his view that the crisis was a foreign-backed conspiracy against him rather than an uprising against his family’s decades-old rule. “Is this a revolution and are these revolutionaries? By God, I say they are a bunch of criminals.” According to Assad, the “criminals have killed experts and intellectuals to spread ignorance, attacked infrastructure, prevented kids from going to school, and taken away electricity, communications, fuel, and medicine,” all acts perpetrated by none other than his regime.

On May 30, 2013, Assad granted Lebanese-based Al-Manar TV an interview. In this interview, Assad says that the Syrian people were deceived and led to believe that there was a revolution against the failings of the state, but the reality was that terrorists invaded the country. Now his soldiers must fight the terrorists. He discredits the effectiveness of the Geneva Conference, a diplomatic attempt by the UN and international partners to find a political settlement in Syria, in that it would not stop other states from financing the terrorist groups nor would it stop gangs from carrying out their criminal activities.

Assad did another exclusive American interview with CBS’s Charlie Rose on September 10, 2013, after it was proven that Assad had used chemical weapons on civilians. Rose asked Assad whether he takes responsibility for all 100,000 lives lost at that point in the conflict, for the million refugees, or for the destruction of the country. Rather than providing a direct response, Assad claims that “it depends on the decision he made, and he made the decision to protect the Syrian people from terrorists.” Rose is aggressive with Assad, questioning him on how the reality on the ground in Syria contradicts his perspective of it. Rose mentions that only 15-20 percent of the rebels are affiliated with Al-Qaeda or other foreign extremist groups and at least 80 percent of the people fighting Assad are Syrians. Assad’s response is that “it is impossible to know because when they are dead, they don’t have any I.D. We look at their face. They look like foreigners, but where are they coming from? The majority is definitely Al-Qaeda and this is what concerns us - not the nationality.” Later on in the interview, Rose claims that most people believe that the majority of the rebels are not members of Al-Qaeda. Assad gets himself out of the same accusation by stating that “the U.S. bases its wars on the wrong information, which is why it always fails.” Once again, Assad is able to falsely define the war as his attempt to defeat the infiltration of terrorists from abroad.

On the June 3, 2014, Assad claimed to have won the presidential election. At this point in the crisis, ISIS had gained major headway in the war, allowing Assad to portray his rule as a more valid option than rule by the Islamic State. In his inauguration speech, Assad claimed that the refugees fled Syria because of the armed terrorists occupying parts of the country. Not only was Assad elected in an utmost corrupt election, because the only citizens can vote are those in government-controlled areas, but he also avoided all the responsibility for targeting civilians and denying them resources essential for survival.

Assad’s most recent interviews were arranged with American-based Foreign Affairs and the UK-based BBC. The Foreign Affairs interview was on January 26, 2015, in which Assad blatantly denied the existence of a moderate opposition. Assad stated in the interview that “what’s left, what Obama called the ‘fantasy’, what he called the ‘moderate opposition”—it is not an oppo-
position; they are rebels. Most of them joined Al-Qaeda.” Here, Assad is given the opportunity to speak to the American public amidst talks of arming the moderate opposition in Syria.

On February 10, 2015, almost four years into the revolution, BBC correspondent Jeremy Bowen was still asking questions about how the conflict began. Since his first interview, Assad’s responses to those have remained consistent. He rejected evidence of peaceful demonstrations in the 2011 uprisings, claiming once again that protestors used deadly force from the start and that the policemen that were killed in the first few months of the conflict being evidence of that. Bowen’s article in the New Statesman is titled, “Bashar al-Assad interview: Jeremy Bowen meets Syria’s great survivor.” Even though Bowen’s questions in the interview may seem aimed at revealing Assad’s brutality, this title refers to Assad as if he has already won the war.

Assad’s framing of the revolution as a war against terrorism has justified the continued fighting and the use of force by the military. While Assad’s conspiracy argument may have been challenging to defend, battling terrorism is valid since terrorist-affiliated rebel factions actually infiltrated Syria from abroad. Not only are they fighting in Syria, but they are also gaining strength. Meanwhile, the moderate opposition forces in Syria, including the FSA, are weakening as their financial and material resources are either hijacked by the government or simply unable to reach them. This weakness created a vacuum, which allowed for the emergence of extremist foreign opposition groups, such as ISIS and Jabhat Al-Nusra, seeking to establish an Islamic caliphate in a chaotic region. As the events of the conflict have unfolded, Assad’s framing of the war as a fight against terrorism now appears effectively strategic. The criminals that were nonexistent in the beginning became a reality, working entirely in Assad’s favor. Assad’s classification of ISIS and other extremist organizations as “terrorist” resonates with every audience from the Middle East populations and governments to the United States. It shifted the world’s attention away from his regime’s actions and toward ISIS’s terrorism, giving him the legitimacy he needs in order for his rule to seem like the only viable alternative to Islamist control of Syria.

**Battling Rising Sectarianism**

The rise in Islamic extremist groups fighting in Syria handed Assad the opportunity to convey another message that legitimized the use of force by his regime: battling increasing sectarianism in the country. The foreign opposition groups brought with them their radical Sunni ideology into Syria. As these opposition groups gain more membership, their ideology becomes more powerful, which does Assad a major service. It makes him appear that by combating the terrorist groups, he is also combating their radical ideology pervading Syria. There is evidence, however, that the rise of sectarianism is attributed to none other than Assad himself. According to Housam Darwisheh, Assad introduced official propaganda that added to the threat of sectarianism by highlighting armed gangs, Salafi, militants, and foreign conspiracies. In fact, Assad’s rhetoric on sectarianism was apparent in his first speech addressing the uprisings, before the rise of ISIS:

> In the beginning they started with incitement, many weeks before trouble started in Syria. They used the satellite T.V. stations and the internet but did not achieve anything. And then, using sedition, started to produce fake information, voices, images, etc. they forged everything. Then they started to use the sectarian element. They sent SMSs to members of a certain sect alerting them that another sect will attack them. And in order to be credible, they sent masked people to neighborhoods with different sects living in them, knocking on people’s doors and telling each that the other sect has already attacked and are on the streets, in order to get a reaction. And it worked for a while. But we were able to nip the sedition in the bud by getting community leaders to meet and diffuse the situation. Then they used weapons. They started killing people at random; because they knew when there is blood it becomes more difficult to solve the problem.

Assad fabricated stories of conspirators soliciting sectarian attacks, planning the sectarian element of the war from the very beginning. Once again, Assad got exactly what he wanted when radical Islamist ideology permeated the country, increasing sectarian tension in the region. Assad exploited sectarianism when he released Sunni Islamist militants from prison so they could fight alongside the opposition. As a result, the Free Syrian Army, found itself fighting not only against the regime, but also Islamist militants.

Despite the fact that Assad fostered the sectarianism, he tries to validate his efforts to counter it
through his interview with Lebanese Al-Manar. Assad blames the terrorists for attempting to divide Syrian society with sectarian slogans. Assad states that “even though they [terrorists] were able to infiltrate certain pockets in Syrian society, pockets of ignorance and lack of awareness that exist in any society, they were not able to create this sectarian division. Had they succeeded, Syria would have been divided up from the beginning.” Assad’s message through this quote is that he is succeeding in defeating the sectarian mantras of the “terrorist” opposition and that sectarianism was absent from Syrian society before the revolution. However, Assad’s alliance with Iran since the 1980s, as well as Hezbollah in Lebanon, created a Shia sphere of influence that penetrated Syrian culture.

Additionally, in Assad’s interview with CBS in September 2013, Charlie Rose asks Assad if the civil war is transforming into a religious war. Assad responds by reiterating that the war started partly as a sectarian war, referring back to his stance on foreign conspirators inciting conflict in March 2011, but that the war no longer has a religious element. However, Al-Qaeda “uses Islam as a pretext and as a mantle and as a cover for their war and for their terrorism and for their killing and beheading and so on.” In this interview, Assad emphasizes Al-Qaeda’s use of radical Islam as their motivation for terror. Since the Syrian people are against their ideology, it stresses the increasing sectarian tensions damaging Syrian society. Therefore, Assad depicts himself as the moderate force working to counter pervasive sectarianism associated with the rise of ISIS.

Promoting National Unity

Another common theme that showed through Assad’s rhetoric is Syrian national unity against a foreign threat. As the presence of foreign fighters in Syria surged, the reiteration of this message helped Assad gain more traction—it gave the civil war meaning, and legitimized the use of force by his regime. When Assad portrays the Syrian people as unified under the Syrian government, he hopes to send the message that the strength of a unified Syrian body will help in defeating the threat of the jihadist ideology that had entered Syria.

From the start of the conflict, Assad utilized the national unity rhetoric. In his first address to the Syrian people on March 30, 2011, Assad expresses his willingness to bring the people that incited the violence to justice to “bring about national unity rather than disunite the Syrians. Let it be for strengthening the country rather than weakening it, for putting an end to sedition rather than enflaming it. Let us act as quickly as possible to heal our wounds and restore harmony to our larger family and maintain love as our unifying bond.” Assad’s speech is aimed at rallying his country under a sense of patriotism, “the real force which protects Syria at every juncture.” In blaming the killing on foreign conspirators, Assad is able to represent himself as the guardian of a unified Syrian population.

Assad’s speech to the People’s Assembly on June 3, 2012 delivers a similar message. Assad states that “terrorism will not break the will of the Syrian people and Syria will ever remain the castle of steadfastness and it will recover and witness the defeat of its enemies.” In this quote, Assad attempts to communicate that every Syrian has a common enemy: the terrorists. Furthermore, towards the end of a speech in January 2013, Assad lays out a political solution to the crisis which revolves around “Syrian-led dialogue among the people of Syria.” Assad cites the UN Charter and international law to stress Syria’s sovereignty and independence in deciding on a political solution. He also claims that a new constitution subject to popular referendum will be formed. By excluding international actors from having a role in a political solution, Assad emphasizes the importance of Syrian unity in successfully ending the conflict. Assad points out the optimistic part of the civil war, contending that “such war is confronted through defending the homeland in parallel with a reform that is necessary to all of us, which may not change the reality of war, yet it strengthens us and reinforces our unity in the face of the war.”

The same theme comes across in Assad’s 2014 inauguration speech, where he addresses the country as if the Syrians voted him into power. He congratulates them for “denying all forms of hegemony and aggres-

“When Assad portrays the Syrian people as unified under the Syrian government, he hopes to send the message that the strength of a unified Syrian body will help in defeating the threat of the jihadist ideology that had entered Syria.”
sion with their patriotic consciousness.” It also shines through during the Foreign Affairs interview, where Jonathan Tepperman mentions the division of Syria into “three ministates:” areas controlled by the government, those controlled by ISIS and Jabhat Al-Nusra, and areas controlled by the Sunni and Kurdish opposition. Tepperman asks Assad how he will unite the country again. Assad responds by saying that all the Syrians within those ministates still believe in unity and are still united under the Syrian government. Assad’s message of uniting against a foreign threat aided him in moving the world’s attention away from his actions and toward ISIS. With talk of the United States partnering with Assad to take down ISIS, the US could potentially ally with a ruthless dictator, and it seems justified to American politicians since rule by ISIS could be worse than rule by Assad.

Maintaining Popular Support

Although it is hard to believe that Assad would actually convey to the media that he has the support of the Syrian population, he does so nonetheless, and his confidence in it is striking through the course of his rhetoric. It first emerges in his interview with Barbara Walters. As Walters questioned Assad’s resolve in having the support of the Syrian people, Assad remained defiant, claiming that “the majority of Syrians are in the middle, meaning they are not against [him].” It appears again in Assad’s interview with Russian TV when he claims that “the problem is not between me and the people….how can I be here if the Syrian people are against me?” Furthermore, in Assad’s interview with CBS, Charlie Rose asks Assad if he would ever step down given the current situation. Assad asserts that he cannot quit on his country unless the public demanded it, and furthermore asserts that obviously the public supports him because he could not have lasted for two and a half years otherwise. However, this message prevails only through interviews with foreign media outlets. In none of his speeches does Assad convey that he has the support of his people because in those speeches his people are his audience. The truth remains that a totalitarian regime has many other ways of persevering that rarely include popular support. Assad also claims that “Syria could not have withstood against the West and Saudi Arabia without the support of the Syrian people.” He goes on to mention that the Syrian population condones the military because without it, “it could not do its job and advance.”

In the interview with Foreign Affairs magazine, Assad portrayed unwavering self-assurance that the people of Syria are still behind him. When asked how he will ever put Syria back together again, Assad responded with: “the Syrian people are still with the unity of Syria; they still support the government.” BBC’s Jeffrey Bowen takes it one step further by asking Assad how he can violate international humanitarian law in the name of protecting his people. Assad avoids giving a direct response by spinning his own rhetorical question at Bowen: “you are talking about somebody or a government who is killing its people and the people supporting the government. This is a contradiction. There’s no logic in it. What is the answer? How can you have support and kill the people at the same time?”

In summary, the four dominant themes of Assad’s discourse represent the targeted messages that Assad aims to get across to both his domestic and international audiences. After examining the speeches in both English and Arabic, it appears that the messages are consistent across languages. It is important for Assad’s message to stay uniform across all audiences because he must convince both the Syrian population and the international community that the civil war is a result of terrorist infiltration and that he is the legitimate president of Syria. This fact strongly supports why Assad cannot waver in his rhetoric. Assad has succeeded in convincing the world that he is the only logical force for defeating the terrorist infiltration, conquering sectarian tensions, achieving a unified Syrian body, and doing it all with the support of his country.

Conclusion

All the reasons explored in this paper for Assad’s resiliency point to his intelligence as a relentless dictator. His portrayal of the conflict in Syria as a war against terrorism to both domestic and international audiences in the media established him as a necessary agent in defeating the terrorism. Assad constructed his strategy of nurturing the terrorist opposition from the initiation of the revolution. Once the influence of Islamic extremism grew strong enough, Assad was able to legitimize his rule as a more viable alternative to rule by ISIS, or any other jihadist group seeking power in Syria. He claims that he is reversing the sectarianism that has permeated Syrian society as a result of the influence of Islamic extremism; however, sectarianism in Syria existed long before the revolution and only intensified with the rise of Islamic militants. His
rhetoric emphasized his willingness to defeat the influence of terrorism in order for a political solution to be determined in Syria. According to Assad, that solution would be solely determined by the Syrian people. He consistently propagated Syrian unity throughout his discourse, as well as his attainment of the Syrian people as allies in the conflict to justify his authority to the international community. Foreign media outlets have been eager to provide Assad with the platform to spread these messages, which also helped legitimize his image.

Assad’s ability to use the media as a way to distract the world from regime brutality and devastation of society is unique in the Middle East region. He is unmatched among authoritarian Arab leaders in his deceptive persona and Western appearance. His abilities to both communicate effectively in English and dodge tough questions in an eloquent manner are unparalleled regionally throughout the Middle East and North Africa. Assad and his wife also maintain a Western appearance in their media interactions unlike other Arab leaders, which appeals to Western countries and their perception of Assad’s legitimacy. Gadhafi in Libya, Ben Ali in Tunisia, and Mubarak in Egypt all lacked these characteristics that aided Assad in gaining international legitimacy through his use of the media. Assad’s discourse also impacts his audience inside Syria as it aims to rally whatever internal support he has left, reassuring his current Alawite supporters that he is the leader they need for a prosperous Syria.

As the international community shifts its attention away from the actions of the Assad government and toward combatting hardline Islamic radicalism, Assad, Iran, and Russia have taken the opportunity to offer the U.S. their partnership in crushing the influence of ISIS. The focus on ISIS terrorism abroad has done Assad the service of removing his name from the headlines. People watching the news are left thinking that Assad may not be as harmful as was once presumed, and that the downfall of ISIS is a higher priority.

As much as the theories in the literature have contributed to explaining Bashar Al-Assad’s resiliency, the influence of Assad’s narrative in keeping him in power continues to increase. His rhetoric delivers the impression that he is the solution for Syria. Assad aims to show the world that he is the moderate force against radical Islam. He presents himself as Syria’s guardian, the only agent willing and strong enough to reverse the effects of the war and unite a peaceful Syria. Unfortunately, this message resonates with the international community, saving it the effort from intervening in a complex and volatile situation. With the world so focused on defeating Islamic extremism, the spotlight is off the Assad regime. Assad and his cronies are left unscathed as the Syrian population dwindles by the day.

Assad’s persistence throughout the revolution and the civil war highlights his competence as a manipulator. This study does not reject any of the current theories on Assad’s post-2011 resiliency; however, it suggests that the pre-war theories of authoritarian longevity are no longer significant. The study confirms that Assad’s image and utilization of the media contribute to his regime’s authoritarian stability in a way that no other Arab dictator has attempted to emulate. Assad tailored this strategy to work effectively with his personal characteristics. Despite the Assad regime’s monopoly over the means of coercion, patronage networks, international allies, fractured opposition, and ability to adapt to the dynamic forces of the Syrian conflict, Assad’s resiliency may have been threatened if not for his manipulation of the revolution and his ability to effectively spread his narrative of the conflict to the world.

This study not only contributes an additional explanation of Assad’s resiliency, but also applies to authoritarian resiliency in general. The effectiveness of Assad’s strategy of manipulation through the media points to the importance of global perceptions of world leaders. In this era of globalization, the international community’s perception of a state may be more significant to authoritarian resiliency compared to the own population’s satisfaction with its country’s leadership. The media has a powerful role in shaping people’s attitudes of a situation, and Bashar al-Assad has been and continues to successfully capitalize on his knowledge of that. The stability of authoritarian regimes in the future may rely more heavily on the leader’s ability to emulate Assad’s manipulative qualities, which contribute to influencing the views and actions of the international community.
Endnotes


2. Ibid, 66.


5. Ibid


10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.


15. Heydemann, S., & Leenders, R, Middle East Authoritarianisms: Governance, Contestation, and Regime Resilience in Syria and Iran.


19. Ibid.


26. Ibid.


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About the Author: Seema Kassab

Seema Kassab is currently a first-year student at the University of Michigan Law School. She received her undergraduate degrees from Arizona State University in Business Economics and Political Science with a certificate in International Business. She is dedicated to international human rights issues, the humanitarian crisis in Syria being her top interest. After law school, Seema plans on pursuing a career in international law.
“As history continually highlights the changing tactics of terrorist organizations, it is necessary to identify the goals of terrorism in order to fight and eradicate radical violence such as that perpetrated by ISIS.”

Investigating Hostages
Determining the Goals of ISIS
by AUDREY HOPKINS

Introduction

Terrorism appears to many as an irrational, brash, and destructive means to express ideals. However, as economists Todd Sandler and John Scott point out, terrorists are rational because they are economically aware of their goals and how to use the least possible resources to achieve them. Essentially, they are savvy businessmen and economists with vicious aspirations. The current world events and conflicts in the Middle East, particularly the rise of ISIS, have engrossed all nations in a collective effort to determine the best way to eradicate radical terror organizations.

One such interest focuses on the victims of terrorism and how, if proven true, terrorist organizations choose their targets. Armborst suggests that the ideal type of terrorist attack is one with complete substitutability of victims, concluding zero interest in “age, sex, religion, nationality, worldview, or political function”.

ISIS has employed hostage-taking tactics targeting individuals from various nationalities with no apparent pattern. Yun noticed the trend in 2007 when he wrote of three main factors contributing to the increase: globalization, modification due to military disadvantages, and recognition of the attention-grabbing power of hostage-taking and kidnapping.

The victims of ISIS hostage situations have been...
diverse in all aspects of humanity. In the pursuit of understanding, does ISIS target specific nationalities as hostages? If so, what is their goal? And does the foreign policy of target nations determine the threat level to its citizens abroad? First it is necessary to gather information regarding the motivations of terrorist organizations, their target demographic, and the influence of foreign policy on those choices. Then it is possible, within the context of the history of Islamic fundamentalist terrorism, to analyze the potential goals that ISIS has, and better understand how to counter them.

**History**

The history of terrorism in the Middle East will give context to the environment that has facilitated the rise of ISIS and their tactics. Lentini and Bakashmar identify a new type of terrorism, present since the 1980s in the Middle East, that academics call “New Terrorism.” It has been identified with, among other factors, “increased lethality” and “an increased role of religion, including religious fanaticism,” whereas formerly terrorism appeared to be a “predominantly secular phenomenon.”

Previous to the increase in hostage situations, there was a spike in bombing and suicide missions. Devji notes that these types of attacks “are fixated on the infrastructure that makes life in general possible,” and in turn, makes the terrorist committing the act a martyr. He goes on to explain that martyrdom “is noble…because it allows Muslims to exhibit the fundamentally human virtues of courage and sacrifice.”

This thought process, again, stems from an incomplete and selective view of Islam, skewed to the purposes of the organization. However, these tactics began to change with a transformation in the leaders of Al Qaeda's strategies. A particular example that may have led to increased violence in Islamic fundamentalists is Osama bin Laden's 1998 declaration “that removed the distinction between civilians and military personnel.” Then, Al Qaeda's leader Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi adopted beheading tactics and his influence facilitated a “very high casualty rate by executing [Al Qaeda's] hostages in 17 out of the 22 cases where the outcome was known.”

**ISIS**

In an investigative article with statements by various victims of ISIS hostage situations, Callimachi attempts to gather information about their goals through the experiences of the targets. ISIS took American, British, Italian, French and Spanish hostages, again indicating that the differences in kidnapping negotiation policy by states has little effect on terrorist targets. However, Callimachi reports that one of the victims noticed a pattern. He stated that “the kidnappers knew which countries would be the most amenable to their demands, and they created an order based on the ease with which they thought they could negotiate.” Another victim agrees and says, “their kidnappers had identified which nations were most likely to pay ransoms.” After first negotiating the release of the Spanish and French hostages, the remaining hostages had the following experience:

The three American men and the three British hostages were singled out for the worst abuse, both because of the militants' grievances against their countries and because their governments would not negotiate, according to several people with intimate knowledge of the events.

In this case, though the targeting procedures did not appear to be guided by foreign relations regarding negotiation, the subsequent actions by the terrorists were directly related to them.

**Motivations**

Lentini and Bakashmar recognize that hostage-taking is one of the oldest forms of terrorism and is generally used for a specific purpose in attaining the goals of the organization. I have recognized four distinct motives that pertain to hostage-taking and kidnapping for terrorist organizations across the spectrum, including religion, public attention, finances, and politics. Though these motivations pertain to terrorist groups in general, they assist the investigation of ISIS's reasons for engaging in hostage-taking. Each of these motivations will be further discussed and often supplemented by Yun's intensive study of 764 terrorism incidents between 1969 and 2006 from the Institute for the Study of Violent Groups (ISVG) at Sam Houston State University. Though these definitive motives have evolved over years of study, Auerbach agrees that “to identify exact motives has become difficult. The lines are often blurred.” Therefore it may be necessary to
use a combination of motives to describe any one organization’s intentions.

Religion

One of the most powerful motivators of terrorism is religion, which is certainly true in the case of a radical Islamic group such as ISIS. In Yun’s study, 450 out of 764 groups were motivated by a religious or ideological affiliation, of those, 38 percent were Islamic.¹⁵ Terrorists in the Middle East commonly misquote and ignore certain religious texts in order to justify an ideologically unjust war. The Quran contains values of peace and righteousness, “these verses represent a message of justice in the conduct of war and the importance of adopting a conciliatory approach during periods of conflict” that jihadist terrorists frequently disregard.¹⁶

With a wrongfully justified goal, many Islamic terrorists believe that they are above the law of the earth and feel that humans who do not believe in Islam are not worthy of life. With this in mind, Yun and Roth also note that “Islamic hostage-taking groups are more likely to execute their hostages compared with non-Islamic groups.”¹⁷ In general, “religion as a force-multiplier tends to make terrorists more violent and lethal;” however, in the specific case of Islamic radical terrorists, Yun and Roth state that “those that are seen as enemies of Islam are destined to be destroyed.”¹⁸ By fulfilling this creed, Islamic terrorists feel as though they have succeeded. Lentini & Bakashmar write that for them, “taking the life of an enemy is a step closer to fulfilling a divine mission.”¹⁹ Therefore, for terrorists in general, religion is a fundamental motivation, however, an additional motivation of violence for Islamic fundamentalists like ISIS.

Public Attention

Another motivator for the use of hostage-taking is public attention. Though this has not always been a primary goal through this tactic, over the years terrorists have learned its value in attaining this objective and “actively utilize this tactic for their causes.”²⁰ Lentini & Bakashmar note that hostage-taking crises are “emotive stories for global media consumption.”²¹ Since these cases are so contentious, many media outlets want to cover them as stories that catch the public’s attention.

This is particularly important in the case of ISIS as they maintain a strong social media presence and often film their abductees for circulation and recruitment. In a study done by Jenkins, Johnson, & Ronfeldt, they found that “in almost all cases the terrorists at least attracted substantial public attention to their cause and identity, a major goal that was explicit or implicit in their actions.”²² So whether it was a primary goal, or happened to be an unexpected side effect, public attention was a common factor in the outcomes of the hostage-taking situations.

It is also important to discuss the decision to execute a hostage. In the case of public attention “a hostage-taker may decide to execute a hostage for shock value or to induce fear.”²³ This adds an increased tension and value to the story for the media, which spreads much more quickly and over a wider audience base. On the other hand, Yun expresses the danger of media coverage on the accuracy of our understanding of execution. He says that “a foreign hostage’s chance of execution is low” but is “exaggerated due to high-level media attention.”²⁴ This plays directly into ISIS’ goals of widespread circulation and infamy in order to increase fear and recruitment.

Finances

This motivator is the most well-known and classic of motivators for criminal hostage-taking as a whole. In the study done by Yun, overall, of the known demands, ransom was the most frequent request.²⁵ He also notices that the opinion of kidnapping for ransom has changed into that of an “opportunistic and profit-motivated business.”²⁶ Additionally, compared to other financing options for terrorist organizations, asking for ransom in a kidnapping or hostage situation can have a lower risk and higher return for the group considering it generally results in either a ransom paid or peaceful release with fewer violent altercations. ISIS does not particularly rely on funds from hostage-taking and this may not be a strong motivator for the group, though it does certainly supplement their income.

Politics

There are examples from all over the world of terrorism perpetrated by an ostracized or radicalized
“Americans are, in a sense, more valuable as a bargaining chip even for local demands with the government fearing pressure from the United States. With the United States being a major global power, other nations fear the backlash of a local terrorist group taking an American hostage. A local government may be more likely to concede when an American is taken in order to avoid major retaliation from a very powerful country.”

This explanation could parallel with a religious, public attention, or political motivation. All of which are goals that could be furthered by a foreign hostage in lieu of a domestic hostage. Yun continues with specific nationalities of the foreigners: “Americans (52 cases) were most frequently taken hostage, followed by Turkish (27 cases), British (17 cases), French (14 cases), and Italians (14 cases).” Americans have significantly higher numbers than other foreign hostage cases. From the Jenkins et al. study, in cases where American officials and citizens were kidnapped, two-thirds of them continued with the terrorist organization making specific demands to the local government; only 3 of the recorded 14 cases had requests made to the US government. The authors believe that this could be due to an inflated sense of American importance in the global arena and an increased willingness of the local government to make concessions if Americans are at risk. Americans are, in a sense, more valuable as a bargaining chip even for local demands with the government fearing pressure from the United States. With the United States being a major global power, other nations fear the backlash of a local terrorist group taking an American hostage. A local government may be more likely to concede when an American is taken in order to avoid major retaliation from a very powerful country. Yun and Roth agree, “a foreign hostage has a higher trading or exchange value…there is a higher level of pressure for the hostage’s safe return.” Now the question becomes what type of foreign policy, if any, can reduce the threat of kidnapping for citizens abroad.

**Foreign Policy**

Countries across the world vary on the policy
of kidnapping negotiation with terrorists, or criminals of any kind. The United States has historically adopted a firm no kidnapping negotiation policy with any type of criminal, foreign or domestic. Yet, Americans are the most frequently kidnapped. Concluded earlier, this may be due to Americans’ perceived value for negotiating with local governments. However, as Jenkins et al. concluded, “government policy towards negotiations did not appear to have a direct relationship to future terrorist kidnappings. There are both cases of continued kidnappings of that nationality with a refusal to negotiate and cases in which the government did negotiate and concede with terrorists and no further kidnappings were recorded.”\(^{36}\) The authors further stated that they were “inclined to argue that the influence of American policy on the frequency of kidnappings of American officials has been marginal.”\(^{37}\) Supporting that foreign policy may have little to do with target nationalities, France does negotiate with, and often pays ransoms to, terrorist organizations. However, the French are significantly lower on the target list. Though this foreign policy may have some effect on nationality targets for terrorists, it does not appear to be a strong correlation.

**Conclusion**

After assessing motivations, targets, foreign policy effect, and history, it is possible to make a statement regarding ISIS terrorist tactics. As an offshoot from Al Qaeda, and from publications by the groups, ISIS is religiously motivated. Additionally, as exemplified by their demands, they are financially motivated in their tactics. Finally, their use of severe hostage treatment and focus on foreign targets indicates the motivation of public attention. Though foreign policy regarding negotiation with terrorists does not appear to have an effect on certain nationalities’ safety abroad, once a target becomes a hostage, the foreign policy impacts the treatment of the hostage. As history continually highlights the changing tactics of terrorist organizations, it is necessary to identify the goals of terrorism in order to fight and eradicate radical violence such as that perpetrated by ISIS. With this information, policy and decision-makers can better understand the root causes of hostage-taking from particular terrorist groups and respond in a more targeted manner to demands. This will dispel terrorist hostage-taking on a more detailed level and can be customized to specific terrorist groups.

**Endnotes**

2. Armborst, Modelling terrorism.
4. Lentini and Bakashmar, Jihadist beheading, 309.
6. Ibid., 179.
7. Lentini and Bakashmar, Jihadist beheading, 310.
8. Yun, Implications of global terrorist, 150.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Lentini and Bakashmar, Jihadist beheading, 308.
16. Lentini and Bakashmar, Jihadist beheading, 305.
17. Yun and Roth, Terrorist hostage-taking, 743.
18. Ibid., 740.
19. Lentini and Bakashmar, Jihadist beheading, 311.
20. Yun, Implications of global terrorist, 137.
21. Lentini and Bakashmar, Jihadist beheading, 312.
22. Jenkins, Johnson, and Ronfeldt, Numbered lives, 21
23. Yun and Roth, Terrorist hostage-taking, 742.
25. Ibid., 148.
26. Ibid., 149.
27. Jenkins, Johnson, and Ronfeldt, Numbered lives, 19
28. Ibid., 6.
29. Yun, Implications of global terrorist, 152.

30. Ibid., 149.

31. Yun, Implications of global terrorist, 149.

32. Auerbach, Ransom, 169.

33. Yun, Implications of global terrorist, 149.

34. Jenkins, Johnson, and Ronfeldt, Numbered lives, 26

35. Yun and Roth, Terrorist hostage-taking, 741.

36. Jenkins, Johnson, and Ronfeldt, Numbered lives, 28

37. Ibid., 32.

**Bibliography**


**About the Author**

Pursuing degrees in Computer Information Systems and Global Politics, Audrey is driven to finding the best applications for the intersection of technology and international relations. Through the course of her studies she has enthusiastically pursued subjects ranging from ethical diamond mining in Sierra Leone to repercussions of international aid in third world countries. More recently she has uncovered a deeply rooted passion for national security and is taking that in the direction of nonproliferation technologies and treaty verification. Audrey will be in Washington, D.C. this summer with ASU’s Capital Scholars program where she hopes to pursue nuclear monitoring policies. After graduation, she would like to attend graduate school studying national security and nonproliferation then begin her career. Her hobbies include reading, playing intramurals, and watching the Bachelor with her roommates. She would like to thank the GATE Journal for challenging her in the writing of her piece.
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