Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

We are happy to present our Fall 2014 issue of the Journal of Undergraduate International Studies. This is our 17th issue publishing the best in undergraduate work in policy, economics, culture, conflict, and many other aspects of the ever-growing field of International Studies. The seven articles published in this journal will take you around the world, from the politics of religion in Europe, to issues of security in the Arctic, to social justice movements in the Americas, and more. We hope that these articles inform, offer insight, and suggest new questions and concerns to encourage further innovation across a wide range of global issues.

As always, we owe special thanks to the Coddon Family Foundation and the Letters and Science Honors Program. The support of both of these organizations is essential to our work, and we would not be able to continue without them. We would also like to thank all authors who submitted work to this Journal. Even if their pieces were not selected, their commitment to the study of international issues is a crucial aspect of academic work in the field, and an example of the importance of undergraduate research worldwide.

We hope that you enjoy the excellent pieces by our authors, and appreciate the hard work that both authors and editors have put in to ensuring this publication’s success. Thank you for reading!

Grace Leppanen
Editor-In-Chief
Journal of Undergraduate International Studies

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The cover photograph was taken by Amaya Phillips, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

_Fes, Morocco._ As I sat outside on the roof of my hotel in Fes, Morocco I had a bird’s-eye view of the city life. Sitting on top of the roof I could hear the ringing prayer voice of the Muzim. I had never felt more at peace.

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his essay examines the politics of the veil in France and the United States: comparing the political policies that reflect secularization in the two countries, exploring the significance of the veil in contemporary society, and the impact on Muslims immigrants. This question is explored by examining these policies and how they translate in society by examining the headscarf as a symbol; observing the impact specifically on female Muslim immigrants, and their inclusion into society. This essay concludes by discussing secularization and religion in modern society in a greater context.

France and the United States share secular beliefs; they both constitutionally declare neutrality toward religion, and their legislative and judicial processes are removed from institutional religious control. Similarly, their secular policies are aimed at reinforcing democracy and unity, but for both countries, the consequences include the exclusion of religious minorities from civic society and engagement. France has developed an identity as a country of immigration, with immigrants making up 7 percent of the French population. However, it continues to struggle with the conflicts between its modern identity as a multiculturalist society and its historical secular principles and philosophy. The Muslim population of France reached an estimated 6.5 million in 2013. Similarly, immigrants make up 12.5 percent of the American population, with roughly 3.5 million Muslim citizens. The issue of the headscarf in both America and France reflects the challenges for Muslims to incorporate their religious beliefs into their everyday lives in secular societies whose core values are in conflict with Islamic beliefs. This paper will examine the politics of the veil in France and the United States: comparing the political policies that reflect secularization in the two countries, exploring the significance of the veil in contemporary society, and the impact on Muslim immigrants. I will explore this question by examining these policies and how they translate in society by examining the headscarf as a symbol; observe the impact specifically on female Muslim immigrants, and their inclusion into society. The first section of my paper provides a theoretical framework and a literature review. The first part of my analysis will focus on the historical context of the French political and educational policies, specifically focusing on the policy of “laïcité.” The second part will examine the historical and cultural background of America’s secular political policies, focusing on the conservative and liberal approaches toward secularism. The final section will examine the symbolism and significance of the headscarf in Western context and the impact of the secularist policies, specifically on Muslim female immigrants and their inclusion into civil secular society. I will conclude by discussing secularization and religion in modern society.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this paper will be utilizing the work of Peter Berger, Emilie Durkheim, and Max Weber. Peter Berger believes the central function of religion is to protect the individual from anomy, because religion serves to provide sacred legitimation for our
socially constructed reality. Berger believes society is socially constructed through the processes of externalization, objectivation, and internalization:

"Externalization is the ongoing outpouring of human being into the world, both in the physical and the mental activity of men. Objectivation is the attainment by the products of this activity (again both physical and mental) of a reality that confronts its original producers as a facticity external to and other than themselves. Internalization is the reappropriation by men of this same reality, transforming it once again from structures of the objective world into structures of the subjective consciousness."

It is only when these three moments are understood simultaneously that we can view society in through an analytically adequate perspective. Humans construct a world through externalization, and then believe that world to be tangibly real through objectivation. It is through internalization that humans take the meanings of the objectivated world and apply them to themselves. Internalization is the reappropriation by men of this same reality, transforming it once again from structures of the objective world into structures of the subjective consciousness.

According to Berger, humans have a need for and impose nomos, the societal norms we possess, represent, and express through internalization. Without nomos, people would perceive reality to be lacking in order and meaning. I will be relating Berger’s concept of internalization to how Muslim women use the meanings of their religious practices in the context of the societies they exist in, and apply those meanings to the formation of their identities. The headscarf and the religious community it belongs to connect the individual to a network of beliefs and worldviews that help maintain their objectivated reality.

I will be using Emilie Durkheim's concept of religion and the sacred. Durkheim states that religion “is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden—beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community...all those who adhere to them.” Durkheim also distinguishes between the profane and the sacred. The profane are things in life that reflect the ordinary daily business of the individual and are smaller, private activities. The sacred are things that reflect the welfare and interests of a group of people. The sacred is superior, power, set apart, and deserving of respect. The headscarf can be viewed as a sacred object connecting the individual to sacred traditional values, as well as a tool for navigating the profane aspects of modern society.

I will also be utilizing Max Weber’s idea that tensions exist between religions and different spheres of society, specifically focusing on the religious tension involved between the political and erotic spheres. Weber contends that tension especially exists in prophetic and redemptory religions as society moves toward consciousness and rationality through knowledge. Religion conflicts with the political sphere because the governmental system is entirely depersonalized. Weber states the political functions of justice and administration are unavoidably and continually regulated by pragmatic reasons of the state, to safeguard external and internal distribution of power. The political man acts rationally and without regard to other people. Love is a central aspect of religion with a unified God, and love demands brotherliness. There is no brotherly or neighborly love in politics. I will be relating this concept to the tension that exists between politics and religion in contemporary society, focusing on how the secular political philosophies conflict with a Muslim woman’s ability to practice her religious beliefs.

Weber believes religion is especially in conflict with the erotic sphere, as sexual love is the greatest irrational force of life. Sex offers a salvation in this world that religion cannot, and glorifies animalistic human relations. Weber states that salvation religions assume the character of brotherly and neighborly love, and sexual love is the direct opposite of that. "The erotic relation seems to offer the unsurpassable peak of fulfillment of the request for love in the direct fusion of the souls of one to other." The religious ethic of brotherhood critiques this erotic experience and maintains that eroticism must not be separated from brutality; otherwise it is a source of conflict and increases the tension between
religion and sex. The erotic sphere competes with devotion for God, and is seen as radically opposite to the functionality, rationality, and generality of religion. This concept can be applied when examining the headscarf in a sexual context. The headscarf can be seen as a way for Muslim women to work out the tension between Islam and the erotic sphere, and to navigate appropriate gender practices in the midst of Western culture that celebrates open sexual mores and free gender relations.

Literature Review

I used three main scholarly sources in my paper. In her book The Politics of the Veil, Joan Wallach Scott argues that France’s legacy of colonialism still continues today, as evidenced in the ban on the headscarf. Scott examines the role of sexism and the history of racism embedded in the issue. She believes the headscarf law only worsens ethnic and religious differences, even though it is meant to maintain societal unity. Scott then links the discrimination against North African immigrants in France to their societal standing as former colonial subjects. The headscarf controversy brings to the surface the issues of France’s previous role as a colonizer and its current role as a home to an ethnically mixed population, where Muslim men and women can never be regarded as “fully French” because of the stigma attached to their origin.

In his book Secularism and State Policies Toward Religion, scholar Ahmet T. Kuru focuses more on the politics of secularism and discusses different secularist approaches towards religion and how secularist beliefs manifest into policies. He argues that there are two different types of secularism—passive and assertive. Kuru also claims that there is a division between liberal and conservative beliefs on religion in America. He identifies two groups: evangelicals who are mostly conservative, and people with no religion who are overwhelmingly liberal. While the conservatives support protection of morality and family values, liberals endorse multiculturalism and individual freedom. Two terms often used to define liberal and conservative approaches are “accommodationist” and “separationist.” The conservatives are usually more inclined to support state accommodation of religion, while liberals want to protect the separation of religious and state institutions. The third main scholarly sourced I used is volume 68 of the Sociology of Religion journal, Muslim Integration in the United States and France. This source has several articles with key points of information relating to the headscarf issue, focusing on how Islamic practices are adapted and negotiated in France and the United States.

French Historical, Political and Educational Policies

The French attitude towards secularism is based on the anticlericalism response to the presence of an ancien regime, the alliance of hegemonic religion and monarchy. In 1905, France passed the “Law of Separation between State and Churches,” known in France as the “law on laïcité.” “Laïcité,” which translates to “secularism” in English, is at the core of the foundation of France’s formation as a nation. Laïcité purportedly protects the freedom of belief by guaranteeing that one can exercise his or her faith without interference by others, as long as his or her beliefs are not harmful to others. Since the French Revolution, the state has sought to protect individuals against pressures from intermediary and community bodies, particularly religious bodies. The principle of laïcité is deeply embedded in the French belief of the proper role of religion in the public sphere and is considered to be the essence of French values.

France’s political philosophy is one of “assertive secularism,” which requires the state to act in an assertive role in barring the public visibility of religion. France prides itself on creating a social model that allows identities to be conceived within a class-based society structured around work instead of ethnic differences. This social model is intended to guarantee the representation and interests of various groups.

The law banning the headscarf was passed on March 15th, 2004. In Article 1, it states: “In public elementary, middle and high schools, the wearing of signs or clothing which conspicuously
manifest student’s religious affiliations is prohibited.”21 While the law applies to all “conspicuous” religious symbols, it was directed at Muslim girls wearing headscarves.22 In 2008, France’s highest administrative court upheld a decision to deny Faiza Silimi, a Muslim woman, French citizenship because of her decision to veil, stating she: “[h]ad] adopted a radical practice of her religion incompatible with the essential values of the French community, notably with the principle of equality of sexes,”23 and therefore did not fit the conditions of assimilation set forth by France’s civil code. Cases such as Silimi’s illustrate that although laïcité is supposedly the heart of France’s republican identity, the values of equality, neutrality, and tolerance are not practiced when related to religious beliefs and practices that threaten the national French identity. In her case, there is an inherent incompatibility between the implementation of laïcité and her religious and cultural values.

France prides itself on a national identity based on its founding principles of liberté, égalité, et fraternité, but the creation of social movements and uprisings objecting to the treatment of immigrants in France throughout the past forty years demonstrate the unrealistic vision of these values as the foundation of the French republic. The French policy of laïcité has “historically implied a loss of ethnic identity and pressure to conform to standard civic model taught largely in French schools.”24 The standard for becoming French remains what it has been: assimilation or same-ness. Unless North Africans give up their Islamic beliefs and traditions in the public sphere, they could not fully be recognized as French. Culture differences must be considered private and have nothing to do with an immigrant's identity as a member of the French republic.

Secularism is the rationalization for the implementation of the ban.25 Headscarves were seen as an invasion of private religious matters in the shared secular school space and against the policy of “laïcité.” Joan Wallach Scott states the ban on the headscarf had “…underlying motives: the desire to eliminate rather than address the growing challenge to French republicanism posed by the aftermath of its colonial history.”26 Scott argues that the law forbidding headscarves was a symbolic statement in the battle between the French republic and its believed enemy, Islam. The law forbade headscarves only in primary and secondary public schools. Women in the street were allowed to dress as they chose and were not considered a threat to the fundamentals of the secular nation. The role of the French public school site is necessary in reinforcing the republic’s beliefs, because schools are vital in enforcing and disseminating republicanism, creating France as an indivisible nation.27 As a result of its history of secularism and the importance of maintaining the republic’s values for unity, the integrity of the republic rests on a firm refusal of religion in the schools.

Religion in America

The historical origin of secularism in the United States differs greatly from France, and as a result, the dominant American ideology is one of religious pluralism tolerating public religiosity. America was formed as a country with different Protestant churches, which influenced its attitude toward religion. While France’s ideology is one of assertive secularism, America’s dominant ideology is passive secularism, “which requires the state play a passive role by allowing the public visibility of religion.”28 A student’s liberty to display religious symbols in America highlights the differences in political policies between the two nations. In April 2004, the US Justice Department interfered when a student was banned from wearing a headscarf at a school in Oklahoma because of the dress code policy, and stated, “No student should be forced to choose between following her faith and enjoying the benefits of a public education.”29 Equality is a core American value; every individual is considered to have the equal right to be free to make autonomous decisions about the self.30 State policies toward religion in the United States are more inclusionary than in France, but policies concerning religion in schools are greatly affected
by the ideological struggle between liberals and conservatives.

While liberals and conservatives have a shared interest in defending passive secularism, they have differing secularist ideologies, such as prohibition of religion in the public sphere, organized school prayer, and state funding of religious schools. Kuru argues that religious demography is a crucial aspect of the ideological argument; the divide between liberals and conservatives occurs through different civic associations, Congress members, Supreme Court justices, and presidents.31 Religious affiliations and interpretations are correlated to an individual’s identification with a particular political belief.32 Two terms are often used to define liberal and conservative approaches, accommodationist and separationist. The liberals lean to want to protect the separation of religious and state institutions, while conservatives are usually more inclined to support state accommodation of religion. “The rising religious diversity in the US has constituted an important basis for the liberals, whereas the conservatives still find strong popular support in American society, which is more religious than many other Western societies.” 33 While the conservatives support protection of morality and family values, liberals endorse multiculturalism and individual freedom. Kuru stresses the role of individual agency in American history, citing the role of individual beliefs “throughout the ideological struggles to reinterpret passive secularism and state policies toward religion...certain structural factors [affect change] [but] it is up to human agents to adopt particular ideologies, get organized around them, and struggle to transform conceptions and policies.”34

The Significance of the "Veil"

In America, wearing the headscarf is a religious practice that allows young women to create a cultural space for themselves; “it is part of a larger identity project by second generation Muslim youth to negotiate their dual identities as Muslims and Americans and gives [young women] the opportunity to be part of both worlds.”38 The wearing of the hijab can be a way of navigating tradition and modernity, a way of escaping parental authority while having the freedom to enter otherwise forbidden spaces and greater opportunities for integration into society. The headscarf can also be seen as a way for Muslim women to work out the tension between Islam and the erotic sphere, to navigate appropriate gender practices in the midst of Western culture that celebrates open sexual mores and free gender relations. A girl’s choice to wear a headscarf can be her way of outwardly displaying public religious identity and piety, as well as a way of managing the opposition between her religious values and Western societal values regarding sex and gender. The hijab can be a way of connecting to Islamic heritage and history while currently living in American culture. In the U.S., an individual does not have to make a choice between one’s national identity and one’s spiritual commitments. 39

French lawmakers cannot understand why women would want to
wears the headscarf, or conceive the headscarf as being anything other than personally oppressive and politically dangerous. However, from the perspective of the Muslim women who wear the headscarf in both the U.S. and France, most women interviewed revealed the decision to wear a headscarf was a personal choice that was part of an individual quest for spiritual values they found lacking in their communities. The headscarf may be a way for the women to assert their religious autonomy, religiosity in defiance of the secular state. “The stress in religiosity is upon… the importance of self-achievement, attempts to reconstruct a religious community based on the individual commitment of the believer in a secular environment.” Berger believes the consequences of secularization involve a problem of a lack of meaningfulness, because secularization breaks down the socially constructed reality and therefore undermines the function of religion. Muslim women may see the headscarf as a solution to this problem of meaningfulness. This concept connects to Emilie Durkheim’s belief that religion is social and fundamentally interpersonal. Religion can offer meaning, organization, and structure that are absent in modern cities, and unite religious believers in commonality; “[there is] the interdependence and complementarity of a people whose commonality rests precisely on their need for one another, despite (or because of) their reducible differences.”

The headscarf fits into Durkheim’s concept of the sacred because it has a symbolic value. It represents value, tradition, and meaning; it is a symbol of what is important. There is no single meaning of the headscarf. Rather, there are many complex meanings to the choice to veil that cannot be reduced to simple categories. The choice to wear the headscarf can also be viewed as the adoption of Western individualist values. Employing Berger’s concept of internalization, Muslim women choosing to veil can be viewed as becoming a product of Western society. They have learned the objectivated meanings of individualism. They identify with and are shaped by the Western concept of individualism; they now not only possess these meanings, but also represent and express them in their own terms. There is only one interpretation for the veil in the French belief system—the concept that individualism might also be a form of faith is unacceptable.

In the midst of navigating the chaos of modern society, the headscarf can be seen as a religious legitimation for Islamic beliefs in secular society, and can help to maintain an Islamic cultural identity in secular Western societies.
Impact

Social theorists Emilie Durkheim and Max Weber postulated the secularization thesis, which states that modern contemporary life and society make the religious way of life and beliefs unbelievable and improbable. The French ban on the headscarf illustrates this concept: by banning the headscarf, lawmakers are asserting that those who practice Islam are literal foreigners to the French way of life and force Muslim women to choose between inclusion in society and their religious beliefs. The French ban on the headscarf creates opposition between individual autonomy and cultural constraint. Scott argues that the nation has never been as homogenous as it conceives itself to be, and that the French government renders non-negotiable exactly what is supposed to be ensured through the policy of laïcité, the integration of different kinds of individuality. The French approach implies it is unacceptable that individualism might also be a form of faith. The only meaning for the veil is the Islamic belief that women are sexually dangerous, inferior, and in need of security.

The state believes they are rescuing girls from oppression and obscurity from their traditional communities by exposing them to new opportunities of secular freedom and knowledge, even if it means expulsion from public school. The legislation that was intended to provide new opportunities for women actually denies them the choice by forcing them to make a choice: wear the headscarf and be expelled, or remove it and attend school. In order to justify imposing their laws on young women, the French government has had to victimize the girls and paint a portrait that they are being denied the right to choose by their oppressive, traditional communities. Unless North Africans give up their Islamic beliefs and traditions, they cannot fully be recognized as French.

Scott argues that North Africans are already discriminated against in the job market and geographically segregated, living in “separate enclaves on the edge of cities, at once invisible and visibly distinct from residents of city centers.” Scott discusses the growing issues of immigrant assimilation in conjunction with lack of social upward mobility for Arabs: increasing conditions of poverty, and social displacement. For young people from impoverished immigrant communities, Islam can offer a way out of the demeaning circumstances of a compromised French nationality. Even if Arabs give up all aspects of the Islamic faith that obviously mark them as different from the French mainstream, they are still being kept on the margins of a society they supposedly belong to. The headscarf ban can be seen as a way of eliminating the differences Muslim and Arab populations represent and a way of imposing the “superior” French political and culture views.

Conclusion

The French government has used the politics of the veil to establish their own political agenda. Weber’s concept of tension between society and religion is present in France; the tension exists between the laws and policies of the national government and its citizens who practice religious beliefs that challenge the secular principles and philosophy of the nation. In her book, Scott argues the veil was singled out as the intolerable difference of Muslims from the French, but the real issue is one of racism and sexism. The visibility of the veil was a physical manifestation of the unavailability of Muslim women, a perceived threat to French masculinity. Since Muslims don’t share the same French values of sexual equality, they are considered to be different and inferior. The “secularism” that is supposed to protect and promote equality creates a deeper racial divide, and the headscarf law is a way of avoiding acknowledging the economic, social, and racial boundaries that exist. The headscarf was regarded as a key component of national cohesion to President Jacques Chirac, who believed banning the headscarf was a way of ensuring that “social differences” would not splinter the unity of the nation. The law allows the French ruling class to avoid addressing the fundamental problems that need serious attention,
such as unequal employment, high unemployment rates, and need for healthcare to protect elderly immigrants.

The secularization thesis claims religious influence will continue to weaken and decrease in power in modern society because the circumstances of modern life present both organizational and cognitive challenges to the existence and endurance of religious beliefs and institutions. The French government has been threatened by Islam’s existence in France, so perhaps religion has more power in modern society than France acknowledges. Modern individuals have many spheres within which to construct meaning, define their world perspective, and form identities that threaten and compete with the religious way of life. However, as evidenced in examining Muslim women in America, religion can offer meaning and legitimation that fills gaping holes left by modern society. Tensions between religion and other spheres of life have and will continue to exist, but religion has immense power because it addresses the emotional needs of an alienated humanity. Peter Berger believes the central function of religion is to protect the individual from anomie, to help understand and deal with chaos. If individuals are alienated from their community and their world begins to collapse, they will seek solace and legitimation in their religious beliefs. While practicing religion, such as Islam, in secular modern society may come with challenges, we still need religious legitimations to maintain our reality. Religious symbols, such as the headscarf, are powerful because they convey the most important value in life: the feeling that reality is meaningful, not random chaos.

The impact of American secularist policies is far different than in France; the emphasis the United States places on the creation of an autonomous personal identity, independence, and equality creates opportunities for Muslim Americans to integrate into society and create a cultural identity for themselves. The headscarf emphasizes their Muslim identity while allowing them a degree of autonomy, depending on their personal situation, from a dominant American non-Muslim culture or their Westernized, assimilating parents.58 The freedom to wear the headscarf is a valuable response to their circumstances as members of a minority faith living in between two cultures, and “They are able to carve out some autonomous cultural space with a public symbol that visibly repudiates the overly individualized culture of dominant American society and gives them some room to feel at home and to prosper in both worlds.” 59 Muslim women who choose to wear the headscarf depend on the legitimacy of religion to give them the ability to be good Muslims while simultaneously offering them the chance to be public American women.

Endnotes
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(De)Constructing Security in the High North
Prospects for Conflict and Cooperation among Arctic States
by Brianna Brown

The Arctic region has taken on new geostrategic significance as a result of emerging physical and political developments, but has yet to develop a comprehensive governance framework. I demonstrate that the traditional international relations theories used to describe the region – neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism – are insufficient in explaining the dynamics of Arctic relations. Rather, I argue that our understanding of this region would be improved largely by a critical approach. This approach stresses the discourse surrounding Arctic relations, and provides a more complete understanding of how security operates in the current global order.

Introduction
The concept of ‘security’ has become a focal point of debate since the end of the Cold War, as its application has been extended over a host of non-military issues to supplement its traditional focus on military concerns. During the Cold War, security issues were relatively straightforward as the ‘nature of the threat’ was clearly defined and the West positioned itself politically, economically and militarily against the Soviet Union. The fall of the USSR removed this East versus West security fervor, increasing the diversity of emerging security issues. As a result, the scope of security studies has also become more diverse, leaving the discipline without “a common understanding of what security [is].”¹ In 1991, Helga Haftendorn, a specialist in international relations and Arctic problems, proposed that a new understanding of security should “concentrate on much more than the traditional focus on the military security of the state, and include economic, ecological and domestic aspects of security.”² Neorealist scholar Stephen Walt countered this claim and explained that such expansion would “destroy [the field’s] intellectual coherence.”³ Nevertheless, debate continues as to the relative role of traditional and non-traditional forms of security; as Steve Smith quips, there is an “increasing insecurity of security studies” as the dimensions of the field become progressively more difficult to define.⁴

Security studies of the Arctic region provide a prime example of this conceptual ambiguity in contemporary affairs, with the conflation of military, economic and environmental security narratives impeding a precise understanding of the issues at hand. In the past two decades, the Arctic has taken on new strategic significance as both physical and political developments vastly changed the stakes of state relations. Climate change and decreasing ice cover has highlighted the region’s fragility, presenting both immediate and long term implications for the populations who reside there as well as for the planet as a whole. As such, environmental and human rights concerns have surfaced as security issues. However, as the sea-ice retreats, the region becomes more accessible, opening it up to a range of new economic opportunities. The most important of these opportunities is the increased viability of Arctic shipping lanes and the improved access to the Arctic’s

¹There are eight recognized Arctic states: Canada, Denmark (including Greenland), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the USA. All eight are permanent members of the Arctic Council and are referred to as the Arctic Eight (A8). Of these, only Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia and the USA are littoral states and are sometimes referred to as the Arctic Five (A5).

Brianna Brown. Brianna Brown will be graduating next spring from McGill University, with an honours in Political Science and a major in Economics. With a primary academic focus on international relations, she is interested in “opening the black box” to determine how domestic features inform foreign policy decisions. Brianna wrote this paper while studying abroad at Sciences Po, Paris.
natural resources, including oil and gas. As economic power buttresses national power, the littoral states(1) have expressed strong interests in securing these emerging economic opportunities.

Recent political dynamics have also increased the significance of the Arctic. With the dissolution of the Cold War, Arctic interaction was able to move beyond strategic calculations between the two superpowers and their allies. On the one hand, this led to a “reinvigoration of northern diplomacy” wherein Arctic states could reevaluate their interests toward one another.v Specifically, they were free to engage in political and economic cooperation with former adversaries, and intergovernmental forums such as the Arctic Council held great promise. Conversely, the fall of the USSR epitomized the realist structure of anarchy by revealing an “essentially ungoverned space” in the High North.vi Indeed, although several intergovernmental organizations have emerged, the Arctic thus far lacks a comprehensive security regime, leading many scholars to predict an ‘Arctic gold rush’ or ‘scramble for the Arctic’ as the states attempt to “unilaterally grab as much territory as possible.”

This political environment is further complicated by a current global shift from a unipolar to multipolar order, in which the United States no longer has absolute dominance. As a littoral state, Russia has an obvious interest in securing the Arctic as it strives to increase its global influence; the Arctic has also grown in strategic importance for several other emerging powers, such as China, Japan, Singapore, India and the EU. Each of these countries has announced an interest in Arctic developments.viii Whether these diverse actors are able to find a cooperative solution or not remains to be seen, but it is clear that the significance of the Arctic region will continue, for better or for worse.

In this paper I discuss the dynamics of cooperation and conflict in the Arctic region. I first analyze the behaviour of Arctic states through the lens of two traditional IR theories: neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism. I find neither approach sufficient in explaining the dynamics of Arctic behaviour. Neorealist accounts are overly alarmist and misunderstand the true nature of conflict in the region. Neoliberal institutionalism stresses emerging areas of cooperation, but is unable to explain why more robust institutions have not materialized. In comparison, I believe that a critical approach may provide a better account of state interactions in the High North, by questioning, “who security is for, how it is achieved, and what it means for whom.”ix Along these lines, I stress the importance of ‘framing’ and discourse, both in spatializing the region itself and in conceptualizing the relevant actors. I argue that such a social constructivist approach has considerable explanatory power in understanding the nature of cooperation versus conflict in the Arctic.

Traditional Rationalist Theories

Two competing frameworks have emerged to explain the dimensions of Arctic security. The first assumes realist premises of the nature of state behaviour; the Arctic is in this view “a setting for state-based competition, even military confrontation, over territory, sovereignty and vast mineral resources.”x Along these lines, ‘security’ has a primary focus on power maximization and projection. Neorealism also considers national interests in the context of contemporary global power shifts in an era of rising multipolarity. The second framework is grounded in neoliberal theory and emphasizes trends of cooperation in post-Cold War Arctic relations. It emphasizes...
the potential for collective security in environmental and economic terms while minimizing the threats so stressed by realist accounts and assigns a central role to intergovernmental institutions and norms of international law.

Neorealist Accounts

The Arctic has long been an arena for traditional militarism, reaching its height during the Cold War; the Arctic was the shortest route between the two superpowers and consequently was “an important theatre for strategic air defense, early warning and potentially ballistic-missile defense,”xi as well as a hotspot for submarine activity. The initial years following the Cold War were characterized by a reduction of military assets and declining defense expenditure by all Arctic nations, foreshadowing the much-anticipated dividend of peace.xii However, since the 2000s there has been a reinvigoration of northern defense. This is congruent with neorealist expectations; while national policymakers may attempt cooperation, their actions are ultimately subordinate to the structure of the international environment, which is anarchic, and thus zero-sum. In this world, there is “no room for shared sovereignty,” and states will ultimately compete to secure as much of the Arctic’s wealth as possible, to gain a relative advantage over the other states in the system.xiii Parallel to land grabs by colonial powers in the 17th to 19th centuries, neorealists view an imminent ‘scramble for the Arctic’ as diminishing sea-ice extent reveals a wealth of territory and resources that Arctic states “are eager to secure.”xiv

Russian defense procurements have been interpreted by Nordic states as signaling a “reassertive Moscow,” particularly in the wider context of the 2007 cyber attacks against Estonia and the 2008 Russo-Georgian war.xv In a classically neorealist balancing strategy against a rising power, this was countered with the formation of a comprehensive Nordic defense mechanism – NORDEFCO – to coordinate against perceived Russian aggression in the region.xvi Joint military exercises between American, Canadian and Danish forces, conducted annually since 2008, are also suggestive of a balancing strategy, in which the three states evidently see Russia as a common threat.xvii These defense developments have led to an aggregate re-militarization of the Arctic region and emerging arms race between Arctic powers. To reflect this situation, Scott Borgerson, an International Affairs Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, compares the Arctic to the “desolate and resource-rich” Spratly Islands, where unclear ownership has resulted in “diplomatic gridlock, and […] eventually […] armed brinkmanship. xviii” Although the region has not yet seen any overt military conflict, the potential for miscalculation is growing, particularly towards Russia, who the Arctic states view with suspicion. Beyond purely military concerns, neorealists also predict robust competition in the economic sphere. They dismiss the UN legal frameworks for delimitation and enforcement as weak, and instead perceive that state relations take place in a “legal vacuum” that reduces the region to “a dangerous zone of clashing national interests.xx” While all states may have an interest in clear rules and regulations in the region, the absence of these induces states to resort to strategic competition to advance their own interests. Specifically, realists predict that increased accessibility of resources will lead “inevitably to a ‘resource war’.” xxi This is particularly regrettable given the economic and environmental fragility of the region; while there are very consequential pan-Arctic concerns, these are systematically replaced by a narrow, self-interested “desire to project power into and beyond the Arctic Ocean.” xxii

Recently, realist accounts have broadened their focus beyond Arctic states to account for global power shifts away from the post-Cold War ‘unipolar moment’ to an increasingly multipolar world. For realists, the prospects of such a shift are dim. As offensive realist John Mearsheimer famously asserted, “multipolarity naturally brings the possibility of war.” xxiii Especially, while multipolarity is predicted to increase competition throughout the international system, realists expect the Arctic to be “at the epicentre of such conflict” due to its enormous economic opportunities in both resource wealth and global maritime
Notably, Arctic riches are likely to lead to the “eventual increase in power” of Russia and Canada, the two largest Arctic states. Western actors are most concerned about Russia, as realists predict that Arctic development will make the West “vulnerable to Russian pressure” from its growing economic leverage. Nevertheless, Canada’s ambitions are also important, as it sees the Arctic as the only region where its policy can be truly distinct from the USA, fueling aggressive tactics to secure its northern frontier.

Additionally, the Arctic is gaining significance to non-Arctic states; the EU, China, and even equatorial Singapore have applied for permanent observer status on the Arctic Council. As an emerging power whose rise is dependent on energy flows and maritime trade, China’s role in the Arctic is a particularly interesting perspective. Currently, China imports the bulk of its energy from Russia and Central Asia through land-based pipelines, though as its energy needs continue to grow, it has begun to seek alternative sources, particularly ones not subject to regional instabilities. These alternative sources are largely dependent on maritime trade routes, with Middle Eastern oil – as well as much of China’s overall trade – reliant on unsafe waters of the South Asian Sea. China consequently has an obvious interest in the Arctic to alleviate two interrelated security concerns. It seeks both the Arctic’s energy resources, “to power its growing and hungry economy,” and maritime passage, to reduce its dependence on the Malacca Straits.

In addition, there is a simple cost-effective argument to northern passage: a circumpolar route would shorten Chinese-European distance “by at least 40% compared with conventional sea lanes.” While China will have difficulty asserting its specific interests in the Arctic due to the absence of a geographical stake, Arctic actors must be aware of the implications of Arctic governance on global power shifts and the rising role of China.

Neoliberal Institutionalist Accounts

Neoliberals agree with neorealists about a security dilemma, and the imperative that states must afford for survival. However, it challenges the pervasiveness of the security dilemma, and suggests ways in which “cooperation emerges and prevails” with great regularity in international affairs. Indeed, contrary to alarmist neorealist predictions, contemporary Arctic relations have been largely exemplified by a “spirit of cooperation,” which neoliberalists explain by emphasizing mutually shared interests and the growth of institutions designed to address them. Institutions foster common understandings, which facilitate cooperation on a range of issues.

Contemporary Arctic cooperation stems from Mikhael Gorbachev’s 1987 Murmansk Speech, in which he called on the Arctic to become “a zone of peace and fruitful cooperation.” The Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) followed Gorbachev’s speech, and in 1996 developed into the current Arctic Council – an intergovernmental forum charged to address “all common issues facing the Arctic.” This sequence exemplifies neoliberal institutionalism. Cooperation began with the environment, an issue on which all states could find common ground and has subsequently spilled over into several other policy issues. Recently, the Arctic Council was the forum where two key binding treaties were negotiated: the Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement (2011) and the Marine Oil-Pollution Preparedness and Response Agreement (2013). These resolutions are key developments in Arctic security relations and clearly acknowledge joint concerns of maritime safety and the environment, promoting them over state-centric interests. The Arctic Council also represents a radical development in international affairs, as indigenous groups were given permanent representation on the Arctic Council, ensuring that indigenous-specific concerns over human security will also be given due weight.

Arctic states have also pursued cooperation in more traditional areas of military and economic security,
recognizing a common interest in “a stable Arctic, governed by the rule of law.” xxxvii The Arctic Security Forces Roundtable was established in 2011 to “discuss shared challenges and exchange information” on military issues.xxxviii Moreover, Arctic states have begun to engage in joint military relations, for example joint exercises between the USA, Norway and Russia. xxix While realist balancing theory could explain cooperation among natural allies, cooperation with Russia evokes a more cooperative turn in Arctic relations. For territorial disputes, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) provides a clear legal framework.2 In addition to the 200-mile maritime exclusive economic zone (EEZ) awarded to all nations, any signatory state may make an extended claim to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) if “its own continental shelf extends beyond the 200 miles.”xli It is under this provision that Russia, Denmark, and Canada have pursued sovereignty over the Lomonosov Ridge, with small areas of overlapping claims over the North Pole. Despite some confrontation, all Arctic states have expressed that they approve of the CLCS. xli Moreover, while neorealists predict conflict over issues of resource procurement, there have been signs of cooperation on this issue, especially from Russia. More than any other state, Russia has an immense interest in stable Arctic relations because of the relative importance of the Arctic in Russia’s economy. Therefore Russia is showing a remarkable willingness to engage in “potentially restrictive international organizations” in order to ensure the “continuous and safe exploitation” of its territories. xlii

Deficiencies of Traditional Approaches

A realist approach evidently goes a long way in explaining certain aspects of Arctic security, especially the rise of military expenditures and exercises by northern nations. Moreover, it opens the door for the analysis of global power shifts and the northern interests of non-Arctic states. However, although it is wise to highlight the dangers that may result from the many disagreements in the region, by viewing the persistence of conflict as an inevitable characteristic of Arctic affairs, realism is unable to cope with the widespread success of institutions in mitigating the predicted security dilemma. The mechanisms provided by UNCLOS seem to do an adequate job of delimiting the continental shelf, with remaining issues “few and largely benign.” xliii For example, Canada’s strategy of “agreeing to disagree” with the USA over the precise status of the Northwest Passage continues to be “feasible,” as does its dispute with Denmark over the ownership of Hans Island. xliv Furthermore, while resource acquisition is no doubt important to state interests, a realist approach often leaves out the fact that “almost all potential resources are in undisputed territory, either on land or in EEZs,” meaning that their legal status is not in question.xlv Therefore, increased access to resources does not automatically translate into profitable exploitation, as development remains limited by the geographic difficulties and the “comparatively high cost of operating in the Arctic environment.” xlv

A neoliberal institutional account provides some remedy to these problems. It elevates the role of international institutions in state behaviour, which increases chances of cooperation and
is thus able to theorize why cooperation should exist. Nevertheless, despite positive advances in environmental, territorial, and security cooperation, Arctic institutions remain “nascent and malleable,” and do not represent a robust solution to the copious problems in the High North. Despite two remarkable initiatives, the Arctic Council is little more than a forum for discussing Arctic policy, with no powers for policy-creation per se. Moreover, it explicitly excludes security and defense cooperation, decreasing its potential scope. While joint exercises in security forces have begun to take place, they are limited, as national security interests prevent the disclosure of information and practices towards potential adversaries. There have been several proposals to supplement or replace the Arctic Council with a more robust governance structure, but all alternative proposals “run into heavy and unified opposition from the Arctic States.” I argue in the next section that both neorealism and neoliberalism share the same basic assumptions about the structure of the world and how we perceive international relations, which I believe to be misrepresentative of the true nature of state relations.

Critical Approaches

Smith asserts that the traditional ‘extremes’ of neorealism and neoliberalism “are in fact very close in their view of the world” as they are both based on an explanatory – rather than ‘critical’ – theory of knowledge. One of the greatest deficiencies of traditional (‘explaining’) theories, he argues, is that they take the world as “a given” without questioning its epistemological assumptions. In contrast, he favours critical (‘understanding’) approaches, which promote the explanatory power of ideas, through which global actors intersubjectively “construct both interests and identities.” I believe this approach is well-suited to the Arctic, and allows us a greater understanding of the discrepancies between traditional theory and practice. I specifically look at the role of discourse in constructing conflicting narratives in the Arctic, as well as the reciprocal expressions of identity. These are both broad expressions of social constructivist thought, disentangled into how states first conceptualize the region, and then mutually construct their relationships with one another. While not fundamentally opposed to basic precepts of traditional accounts, such as the primary focus on state actors or issues to be considered security concerns, it differs by inquiring into how international structures and state relations come “into existence, and how they might be changed.”

Role of Discourse

Arctic specialists Sebastian Knecht and Kathrin Keil define geopolitics as “the discursive practice by which intellectuals of statecraft ‘spatialize’ international politics in such a way as to represent it as a ‘world’.” In this vein, Ole Waever, a core member of the ‘Copenhagen school’ of critical security studies, highlights the role of conceptualization in security studies, declaring, “Security is best understood as a discursive act, as a speech act.” While Waever was particularly concerned with the implications of the use of the term ‘securitization,’ his description is relevant for a range of security issues. The way actors describe Arctic security has implications on how they approach the issues, with different conceptualizations giving more or less potential to cooperation. Thus, the ‘reality’ that actors take for granted is in fact only one possible reality that represents the intersubjective production of the speechmakers’ “imagination and the time-dependent political setting they are facing.”

Timo Koivurova, a Finnish specialist of international and Arctic law, uses a discourse-based approach to determine how alternative conceptualizations of the Arctic space have different implications for state cooperation. He takes two salient metaphors for the Arctic region – a ‘frozen desert’ and the ‘Arctic in change’ – and demonstrates how these narratives led to a change of priorities within the Arctic Council. The metaphor

3. The ‘Copenhagen school’ refers to the movement in critical security studies led by Barry Buzan and Ole Waever that shifted the referent object of ‘security’ from the state to the society, in recognition of the post-Cold War European security agenda. (Smith 84).
of a frozen desert presents the Arctic as “inherently vulnerable because of the cold and hostile environment,” and thus demands cooperative and comprehensive protection from all Arctic states. Conversely, the metaphor of an Arctic in change leaves the region open to competing claims to its emerging resources and ‘changing’ legal status. The first metaphor underpinned the establishment of the AEPS in 1991, which sought protection of the vulnerable system, without explicitly acknowledging economic and political change. The second metaphor gained prevalence with the 2004 Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA) that highlighted the “dramatic transformative process” undergoing the region. The shift in referent understanding of the region changed the focus of Arctic actors from climate change mitigation to the consequences of these changes, particularly for emerging business interests. Moreover, this shift “energized the redrawing of Arctic policies” and opened the debate on future governance schemes. As strategic planning consultant Keith Suter identifies: “As long as the Arctic was on the periphery of world politics, the legal and political confusion over its status was of little significance.” As changing definitions of the Arctic have increased its significance, a host of new actors have emerged to define the future of the emerging space. The image of an ‘Arctic in flux’ allows states to see the region in zero-sum terms and pursue narrowly defined national interest, distinct from recommendations of joint stewardship when it was rather conceptualized as a static and vulnerable place. This zero-sum world is conceptually different from that of a realist structure, as it is not presented as the ‘natural state,’ but rather one that has been created by the discourse of key actors.

While Koivurova’s account focused on how common narratives have changed over time, Leonhardt Van Efferink, a specialist in critical geopolitics, examines how alternative discourses may exist within the same political setting to create “the difference between either an inclusionary or exclusionary Arctic regime.” He examines the policy prescriptions from two think tanks in the USA, with the Heritage Foundation promoting a realist point of view and Brookings countering with a neoliberal narrative. Specifically, Heritage uses “representational practices to depict Russia as a threat,” justifying a policy of balancing by the remaining Arctic states to “build a Western presence in the Arctic.” In contrast, Brookings sees this conceptualization as “inappropriate” and argues that contemporary problems “require today’s powers to commit to collective security.” While both taking place within an identical objective context – the American perspective on Arctic concerns – these groups subjectively construct contradictory realities, which thereby support contradictory preferences for national policy formation.

Canada’s Arctic policy discourse is particularly notable, as national policymakers have increasingly emphasized a specific notion of ‘sovereignty’ rather than a broader understanding of security. Following Russia’s flag-planting in 2007, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper declared, “Canada has a choice when it comes to defending our sovereignty in the Arctic. We either use it or lose it. And make no mistake this government intends to use it.” This statement has problematic implications on prospects for Canadian cooperation in the Arctic. By suggesting that Russia’s action was an attack on Canada’s sovereignty, Harper made the rhetorical claim that the North Pole was indisputably Canadian. While this is a common perspective in the Canadian government, the pole is in fact currently situated in the high seas, and national claims to the contrary have yet to be adjudicated. Harper brushes over this legal situation, and instead enforces profoundly negative images of Russia to the Canadian population. While scholars may that this “strong rhetoric is more of a campaign strategy” than an actual reflection of Canadian concerns, we must understand how this discourse is internalized by Canadians themselves.

4. Russia submitted a claim to the geographic North Pole in 2001, but was not accepted by the CLCS due to insufficient proof. Canada made her official claim in December 2013. Denmark may also claim the pole, and has until November 2014 to do so. If claims conflict, CLCS has no powers of mediation, and the nations involved must resolve the issues themselves (Mazo, 2013).
and emotional investment in the Arctic, thus hampering “a broader regional spatialisation” conducive to cooperation.

Reiterated Typifications of Arctic Relations

In his seminal text on social constructivism, Alexander Wendt highlights the role of prior interactions – or “reciprocal typifications” – in determining the nature of interstate relation, specifically emphasizing the politics of trust as an important factor in establishing cooperation between states. This theory is helpful in understanding Arctic relations. Trust between NATO states and their allies allows for cooperation, while the lack of such trust explains how these states perceive a more confrontational Russia than perhaps is rationally justified.

During the Cold War, NATO members established a nuclear-armed Soviet Union as their foremost security threat. Neutral actors Sweden and Finland also had a history of viewing the USSR with suspicion. All states – including Russia, NATO actors, and neutral states – thus had a long history of determining their Arctic identity in reference to the realities of the Cold War. While the dissolution of the Soviet Union opened up the possibility for new relationships to emerge (and indeed, interactions significantly changed), prior perceptions nevertheless have an enduring influence on future interaction. Wendt argues that for cooperation to exist, it is “fundamental [...] that actors do not identify negatively with one another.” In contrast, the enduring negative perceptions between Russia and the other Arctic states have established potent barriers to cooperation. Although much cooperation has taken place, it is often “fragmented” and “brief” as cooperative engagements remain within a context of limited trust among Arctic actors.

The rhetoric employed in Scott Borgerson’s 2008 article, Arctic Meltdown, provides an excellent example of how Russia is often viewed from a Western perspective. Borgerson describes Russia’s 2001 submission to the UN CLCS, as an “ambitious annexation” equal in area to “the states of California, Indiana, and Texas combined”; this implies that Russia continues to be a belligerent actor, ignoring the rules of international law as it did under the tutelage of the Soviet Union. His description vastly misunderstands the legal nature of the claim, as Russia was acting legitimately under the CLCS, which was established under international law to grant littoral Arctic states sovereign exploitation over the resource-rich seabed of their extended continental shelves. Nevertheless, Borgenson portrays this legal submission as an aggressive state action to which other Arctic powers must respond. This article demonstrates how the Cold War mentality continues to plague northern states, promoting confrontational action and reaction, and thus validating claims of enduring cleavages.

A particularly prevalent fault line is that between Russia and the NATO group. NATO members, as well as Sweden and Finland, view Russia with mistrust and construct their Arctic policies along these lines. Conversely, Russia also views its Arctic neighbours with mistrust. Every other country in the region “can be seen through the prism of Euro-Atlantic ‘Western’ culture,” thus fueling Russian perceptions of isolation.

This isolation is fed not only from Cold War attitudes, but more recent developments that serve to validate these perceptions, particularly the eastward expansion of NATO and “growing defense cooperation among the Nordic states.” Considering NATO’s historical focus and the subjective meaning it has for Russia, it is natural that Russia would be wary of such developments, but purely rational approaches are unable to give a sophisticated account of the enduring security dilemma between Russia and the Western states. Taking the structure as given, both approaches recommend action within the context of Russia-NATO enmity, without questioning how that came into place. In contrast, a constructivist approach understands the intersubjective formation of security environments and, moreover, how these might be changed. Indeed, Russia has made several attempts to resolve the dilemma, and has tried to separate the Arctic from the rest of its foreign policy as an “IR ‘zone’ where cooperation,
a positive image and stable relations” are pursued. lxxiii Nevertheless, to truly come to a collaborative outcome, Russia must be “convinced to give up its lingering suspicion” of the alliance, as must NATO be convinced to reform its perception of Russia. lxxiv A social constructivist approach suggests that future cooperation may be possible, dependent on the ability of the Arctic states to re-form perceptions of one another.

Conclusions and Implications

In this paper, I surveyed the prospects for conflict and cooperation in the Arctic region with reference to key theoretical frameworks of international relations. I found that while neorealism and neoliberalism each have key insights in explaining the nature of Arctic state relations, they are unable to fully appreciate the dynamics of such behaviour as they are not equipped to transcend an explanatory approach. Along these lines, Knecht and Keil describe these traditional approaches as “enclosed in spatially fixed units,” which inhibits understanding of the intersubjective effects of policy discourse and political realities. lxxv For this reason, I believe that a critical approach, particularly social constructivism, has a key advantage over the traditional approaches. By looking at how security communities are constructed, rather than assuming an inevitable ‘given’ condition of insecurity, this approach offers solutions as to how international actors can transform security relations to “create the conditions for a stable peace.” lxxvi

Currently, two narratives characterize the Arctic region: one promotes a neorealist conception of zero-sum games and state-based competition and the other stresses the environmental and economic imperatives for cooperation. While the traditional approaches seek only to explain state behaviour within these two narratives, a constructivist approach understands that either narrative can be strengthened or diminished by the meanings that states (and other actors) attach to the region. Current trends in space-making practices in the Arctic region suggest a shift towards a conflict-centred understanding, as do ‘reciprocal typifications’ among key actors in the region. The Arctic has been increasingly conceptualized as a region ‘in change,’ leading both Arctic and external states to take what they can “in this legal no man’s lands.” lxxvii Moreover, specific conceptualizations by Arctic states, particularly by Canada, portray the region as a zero-sum battleground. Finally, actors in both Russia and the so-called ‘Western alliance’ continue to internalize narratives from the Cold War that limit the growth of trust and cooperation in pan-Arctic concerns.

However, the key advantage of a critical approach is its emphasis on the construction of international security structures, and thus the potential for such structures to be transformed. Therefore, while such an approach gives insight into how regional actors reciprocally perceive their neighbours as adversarial and thus create a tense security environment, it also gives insight into how these relations can be changed: through affirmative issue-framing in policy debates. Rather than stressing platforms of conflict, states in the region should highlight the importance of cooperation on emerging interest, and the mutual gains that can be enjoyed by all states in environmental and economic spheres. Russian foreign policy analyst Dmitri Trenin describes the Arctic as a “region whose very harshness requires cooperation;” lxxviii a constructivist understanding allows for states to move toward such cooperation. To be sure, such cooperation may be difficult, due to the path-dependent histories of regional actors. Nonetheless, progress is already apparent. Russia has signaled its willingness to “work through potentially restrictive international organizations,” and other Arctic powers would be wise to take this willingness at face value. lxxix Even so, there is still a long way to go, and states should now focus on confidence building exercises. Along these lines, the Arctic Council is a key organization in establishing cross-border communication, as are the emergence of joint exercises, particularly between non-military or paramilitary agencies. lxxx

Smith explains how the “field of security studies seem[ed] poorly equipped to deal with the post-Cold War” due to a
narrow conception about what counts as a security issue, and what intellectual approaches are deemed appropriate. lxii Since the Cold War, there have been vast developments on both issues. There has been a broadened definition of security to encompass a wider variety of threats, while a changing theory of knowledge has altered the way that actors interact with these threats. These developments have made it difficult to categorize security issues in a single, clearly defined conceptual box. However, as this analysis of Arctic security has shown, they have contributed to a more complete, and more constructive, perception of how security operates in the post-Cold War world.

Endnotes


iv. Ibid., 74.


xii.Ibid., 83.


xv.Ibid., 87.

xvi.Ibid., 90.


xxvi.Ibid.


xxxi. Gang Chen. "China’s emerging Arctic


1xvi.Ibid., 106.

1xvii.Ibid., 106.


1xx. Ibid., 106.


1xlix.Ibid., 106.


1xii.Ibid., 124.


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Van Efferink, Leonhardt A. S. "Polar Partners


In dealing with India’s economic and political development, there has always been an attempt to balance the country’s overwhelming presence of diversity with the accountability that is required of a large and efficient democracy. The sacrifice made in this balancing act has been the regularization of corruption as a means to inspire efficiency in governmental and day-to-day operations at the local level. For example, a traveller in Kolkata or New Delhi would notice that informal pay-offs remedy many cases of the organizational inefficiency that pervades everyday life. Moreover, the remaining disorganization does not seem to affect the political passion of the local communities. In Kolkata, one can witness countless party flags and billboards promoting the current chief minister, Mamata Bannerjee, plastered throughout the city. In this, one can see how corruption acts as an unusual method for organization in light of the country’s desire to consolidate their democracy through inclusivity and begin to recognize India’s democracy as a distinct entity, unlike those of the western tradition.

With its extreme diversity, India’s democracy has become a seemingly unlikely case study in the mechanics of successful constitutionalism. The mixture of communitarianism combined with influence from British rule has left a legacy unlike many other constitutional democracies. Although many formal institutions, like government, the rule of law, and economic growth, have worked to create an outwardly stable, yet bureaucratically inefficient, form of rule, there have been problematic aspects of India’s democracy. Institutionalized behavior, like India’s characteristic and systematic political corruption have stifled much of its economic and human development. When examining India’s entrenched governmental institutions in conjunction with corruption, it is important to consider the influence corruption has on establishing strong formal institutions in the country. Things like the rule of law, political life, and economic growth are all affected in one way or another by corruption. Before there is any attempt to analyze India’s political corruption however, a working definition of corruption must be introduced in order to contribute to the framework. In order to frame an analysis of corruption, it is helpful to consider the words of the political scientist Joseph Nye:

*Corruption is behavior which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private gains; or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private regarding influences. (1)*

It is because of corruption’s effect on institutions like the rule of law, political life, and economic growth that a question arises: How did the institutionalization of corruption become so commonplace in India?

India’s Historical Roots:
The Hindu, Mughal, and British Eras

India’s heritage is rife with the diversity of many different cultures. Much of this diversity is due to the settlement

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Beginning around 2000 B.C.E. and up until the Muslim conquest in the 8th Century C.E., the Hindu tradition dominated Indian society, with origins based in the Harappa and Mohenjodaro civilization. These civilizational foundations can be seen as primary shapers of contemporary Indian society. (2) It is in this period that the practice of Caste was established and institutionalized in Indian culture. The Caste system, which houses four different social classes on a hierarchy (i.e. Brahmins and Kshatriyas on top, Vaishyas in the middle, and Sudras on the bottom), reinforced the Hindu structure of feudalism and authoritarianism by way of a monarch. As a means of operation, the Hindu structure of rule consisted of a central monarch who ruled over separate principalities, which were overlooked by princes.

Evidence of corruption within the empires during the Hindu tradition is present and was commonplace among the officers serving the king. Kautilya (350-275 B.C.E.), an ancient Indian philosopher and Prime Minister to the Magadha Kingdom has been recorded on the routine corruption among officers in the Maurya Empire:

Just as it is impossible not to taste honey or poison placed on the surface of the tongue, even so it is not possible for one dealing with the treasury of the king to not misappropriate a portion of it in however small a quantity. (3)

The systematic corruption of the officers under the king became routine due to the importance of the officers' duties within the kingdom; they were integral in state administration.

Another testament to the presence of corruption within ancient India is the extent to which the officials used measures to combat political and economic corruption in the Hindu tradition. The preference of intellect over hereditary characteristics became a method of choosing individuals for administrative positions. By relying on merit, officials would avoid the pitfalls of nepotism. But because this measure did not deter much of the misappropriation, individuals in authority positions (i.e. Kautilya, the Prime Minister) were ultimately forced to distribute punishment to administrators responsible for illicit actions. (4)

When one examines the basic religious message of Hinduism, one finds the belief of tolerance; the prevalence of tolerance can be seen as a reason for accepting an offense like corruption within Hindu society. Moreover, since nepotism continues to account for a great deal of India's corruption, the Hindu emphasis on family can explain corruption as well. The desire to accrue wealth and stability for one's future generation of family can begin to explain the commonplace behavior of nepotism and misappropriation. (5)

However, even with the precautionary measures established in ancient times, the formation of Caste embedded the phenomenon of corruption in the Hindu governmental structure. The introduction of Caste not only placed a social hierarchy on individuals within society, it also determined who was able to obtain the credentials required to enter government. Due to the pervasiveness of caste, a perceived value of an individual became associated with job eligibility and propriety; lower castes were deemed unworthy of participating in government.

Furthermore, the regionalism displayed by the various principalities
contributed to the unruliness of the empire; the self-interested monarchy was unable to unite Indians around a single political structure and with this, failed to create constructive, stable political institutions. This failure left the various monarchies and regions of the Hindu tradition exposed to violent invasions from Muslim invaders. (6)

After the Hindus, what followed were centuries of Muslim attacks on the Indian population, the eventual invasion of Muslims of Turkish, Persian, and Afghan descent, and the establishment of the Mughal Empire in the 16th century. Prior to the Mughal Empire, Muslim rule resembled that of the Hindu tradition; the loosely aligned principalities failed to establish a unified geographic and political territory and often changed leadership. This changed when Mughal rulers, unlike the previous Hindu tradition, founded a centralized administration and more stable political institutions. With this, the reign of Akbar (1556-1605) commenced, bringing stability to India that it had never before enjoyed. (7)

When examining the Mughal Empire, especially during the reign of Akbar, it is important to denote the elasticity with which he governed. Although Akbar was accepting of the Hindu population and allowed for multicultural worship, the Mughal Empire, as a whole, did not incorporate Hindu life into government or society and quite often, they stifled it. This phenomenon led to the absence of caste from the government structure as well. Unlike the Hindus, the Muslim tradition failed to incorporate caste into everyday life within the administration and society. This is not to say that caste was abolished. The Hindu population still practiced the hierarchical structure; it just did not maintain the same widespread efficacy due to the Muslim oppression:

The religious tolerance of Akbar was only an exception, for his successors gave up this policy. Instead, following Islamic orthodoxy, they prohibited interreligious marriages, pulled down Hindu temples, and even imposed jizya (poll tax) on Hindus. (8)

The disenfranchisement of Hinduism within Mughal government facilitated the shift from a caste-based form of rule to, in Akbar’s case, a more secular reign and in the case of other Mughal Emperors, an Islamic-based one.

The Mughal governmental structure, unlike the Hindu kingdoms, was ostensibly operated by decree; however, at the local level, Mughal emperors were able to overcome the confusion and inefficiency of regionalism by adopting their own system of quasi-checks and balances. The duties of state officers were often undercut, or relied on the participation and efficacy of two other officials. For example, the finance officer and the military official offset the authority of the provincial governor. The finance officer was responsible for collecting and distributing remuneration and the governor could not receive money without the finance officer’s signature. Additionally, the military official encroached on the governor and finance officer’s land and inspected both of their ranks. (9)

These chief administrators, or the officers directly in charge of bureaucratic functions, did not have free range to make decisions. Rather, the monarch could heed their advice, but this rarely occurred and chief administrators were often ignored. Moreover, the Mughal bureaucracy was entirely developed from its military. All civil servants were enrolled in the military as mansabdars, due to the fact that they each were assigned a mansab, or official appointment of rank and profit. They also formed the official nobility of the country, and combined to constitute the army, peerage, and civil workers. The emperor, unlike the Hindu division of rule within bureaucracy, had sole control over the appointment of mansabdars, and remained the source of all administrative authority. The pay organization of civil servants consisted of a definite salary and often times the assignment of a jagir, or land allotment. These payments were “extremely liberal” considering the value of the money. Another important feature of the civil administration was the absence of a hereditary appointment; mansabdars only received a life-long claim to his estate and riches. (10)

Meanwhile, the Hindu devotion to caste was deemphasized during the Mughal rule. The lack of hereditary appointment and transition of wealth created an incentive to perform one’s duties
scrupulously. Without the embedded Brahmin elites in the government, and with the absolutism of Mughal emperors, the means by which corruption flourished (e.g. misappropriation and nepotism) were diminished from Indian governmental institutions. The system of checks and balances similarly curbed much of the corruption seen in the Hindu tradition as well. All of this is not to say that caste was eliminated from Indian society; in fact, due to Hindu nationalism as a reaction to Muslim occupation, caste on a social level was reinforced and strengthened within Hindu populations during the Mughal rule. 

What can be seen from the transition from the Hindu to Muslim heritage is the phasing out of the caste system as a mechanism to inspire corruption (i.e. hierarchical favoritism) due to the fact that many Hindus were expelled from governmental administrative duties altogether.

When examining the corruption within the British Raj, it is important to consider the fact that initially, the Indian population was completely alienated from the administrative system. The British created a governmental structure that used corruption to guarantee that the exploitative elements of colonialism would yield the maximum resources and profits available. Thus, the administrative corruption can be seen as a transition from individual interest within government to the interests of the East India Company, and ultimately the British Empire. The utilization of extortion and monopoly power by the East India Company created a regularity of corruption from an external aggressor. Still, the eventual political influence that the British instilled in Indian government gave rise to a political consciousness that bred the corruptive tendencies of party politics still practiced today. This dynamic highlights the importance of the administrative structure of the British-Indian government; because of the Western conventions surrounding government (the adoption of a bicameral legislature, a parliamentarian "past the post" voting system, and federalism), Indian government was bequeathed many of the corruptive tendencies that were regular under British rule.

The British rule in India started in 1757 when forces of the East India Company, at the Battle of Plassey, defeated Siraj-ud-Daula, the Mughal Prince of Bengal, which was a state within the empire. In terms of its historical trajectory, the British Raj can be explained in stages as Indians reacted to various social and political incursions. Initially, the rule of the East India Company was only interested in economic gain. Britain's military power's exclusive control of India's political institutions, but only in regards to revenue collection at first. This leverage allowed ruling members of the East India Company to obtain direct control over state revenue and misappropriate it to benefit the company. In actuality, the initial period of the British Raj was predicated upon illicit and corrupt practices. The objective of the East India Company to maximize profit led to actions like bribery and extortion of Indian officials, merchants, and rulers, which generated profits that would be used to finance roughly 2% of Britain's economy.

By 1813, the second phase of British imperialism in India emerged. The advent of free market economics and the industrial revolution inspired British rulers to DIMinish the East India Company's strangle hold on trade. In short, the British wanted to create a trade market and manufacturing within India, but at the same time stifle any opportunity for Indian competition. Thus, the 1800s led to a drastic change in the scope of
administration. Government became much wider to infiltrate village markets and exploit agricultural resources. The British also revamped the rule of law to facilitate a capitalist agenda (things like contract law became codified in Penal Codes and Civil Procedure). Additionally, due to a lack of British manpower to operate this widespread increase in administrative power, personnel investment began to take place, which promoted education and universalized the English language. (14)

With this investment in Indian culture and managerial collaborators, a middle class emerged. Professional occupations, such as lawyers, doctors, engineers, and teachers became commonplace in Indian society. These newly empowered Indians also began to occupy positions within British-Indian government administration but still sympathized with the exploited lower classes. From this class, a mediating force developed between the British elites and Indian lower classes. (15)

The influence of British-Indian administration inspired a political consciousness and the belief that a strong and stable government was essential for all Indians. This belief led to an institutionalized government structure, which materialized with the 1947 independence and partly remains to this day. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms (1919) divided authority between the central government and the states (establishing a system of federalism). Moreover, suffrage was expanded to include more Indian landowners, taxpayers, and more Indian representation in local governments occurred. But the full-fledged structure that is practiced today was not fully developed until 1935:

The Government of India Act (1935) of the UK parliament provided the structural link from the 1919 reforms to the 1950 constitution. The 1935 Act retained the federal features with different classes of constituent political units. Legislative functions were apportioned among them according to central, provincial and concurrent lists. The electorate was expanded from six to thirty million, covering about one-sixth of the adult population...British tutelage gave many Indians direct experience with the conventions, norms, practices and techniques of parliamentary debate and ministerial responsibility. (16)

With the expansion of the electorate came the inclusion of various Indians in the political system, an entrenched view of the importance of government to empower and protect the individual became widespread. The British Raj gave Indians an instrument to elevate themselves within Indian society, but only on British terms (e.g. landownership, the English language, and contractual property rights).

This is not to say that the British Raj facilitated equality through the political system however; in addition to the basic structure of government, corruptive practices continued through the inheritance of bureaucracy. Additionally, corruption and exploitation due to Caste, like in the Hindu Tradition, was exacerbated because it was combined with colonial social classification, which included racial categorization and thus diminished social inclusivity for Indians. Despite a push for more inclusion in government, this hierarchy discouraged Indian participation in bureaucratic agencies such as the Indian Civil Service (ICS), an administrative aristocracy of less than 2000 officers, and left it as an elitist agency, detached from village India. It was not until India obtained its independence that more native Indians occupied the ICS and the administrative duties shifted from British to Indian development. (17)

Nevertheless, the British Raj and its administrative actions to preserve Western economic interests can be seen as the primary instigator of state corruption. This is particularly evident in the rise of Mohandas Gandhi and his movement of Satyagraha to expel British rule. Satyagraha, which literally translates to “urging of the truth,” was Gandhi’s attempt to inspire a greater sense of political legitimacy within Indian government and promote sovereignty. Furthermore, Gandhi’s movement has encouraged a greater sense of political accountability. Civil disobedience, the method that Gandhi used to protest the British, critiqued political corruption, but was also a testament to the importance of a legitimate and stable governing body. To this day, activists’ use of Satyagraha...
against political corruption is used to this day and draws attention to the abuses of power. (18) Thus, the corruption practiced by the British Raj was essentially the entirety of government operations. Unlike the Mughal and Hindu administrations, which used nepotism and misappropriation to garner individual wealth and success, the British Raj constructed a system that deprived Indians of infrastructural and human development to bolster British wealth and power. The legacies of the Raj were not entirely useless however; as one can see in India’s constitutional history, the mechanisms of the British influenced much of India’s present political activity and set the stage for party politics, judicial structure, and legislative bodies. Still, the history of British corruption, and the combination of Caste and colonial strata in government structure, created a need for corruption in politics, particularly for the non-elites. Much of the party politicking that followed British rule was operated through corrupt measures.

The Nehruvian Vision: Post Constitutionalism, the Congress Party, and the 1990s

When examining India’s legacy of corruption after the British Raj, it is important to understand that the structure of India’s constitutional government and the nature of corruption shifted. Corruption was not just a way for elites to further entrench themselves into the heights of Indian society; it was also a means for the lower classes to gain a foothold in Indian politics and create unofficial “policy” to support human development. To understand this, the dynamics of India’s party politics and the nature of administration must be explored through three particular points in time: 1947 and the beginnings an independent India, the formation of the Indian National Congress and its inclusiveness, and the post-Cold War Indian government in the 1990s.

Behind India’s drive for independence, Jawaharlal Nehru, India’s first Prime Minister, was the leading actor who gave India its constitutional spirit. After the British left in 1947, what followed in government was Nehru’s vision to unify India and be independent within international society. The formation of the Indian Congress as a nationalist movement for Indian independence was then transformed into what became the dominant one-party system of the Indian National Congress (commonly referred to as the Congress party). Initially, Nehru’s Congress system rested upon four factors: the personality of Nehru himself; the network of the unified political organization, which connected the country; a progressive ideology that could be broadened to meet the wishes of people on different sides of the political spectrum; and the access to patronage. Although one would not necessarily equate the rise of the Congress party with corruption, it is important to note that the party’s ability to tap patronage allowed for the monopolization of power and the winning of successive elections. The power enjoyed by the Congress party gave rise to predatory and clientelistic practices based on the knowledge that punitive responses would be difficult to enforce. Additionally, measures put in place to subvert this behavior started within congress and were rarely pursued, effectively undermining any attempt for the executive or judiciary to curtail corruption. When the opposing forces attempted to expose the Congress party’s corrupt practices, the monopoly power within the legislature proved effective at stifling them. (19)

The phenomenon of corruption within the Congress party illustrates the overarching theme of Indian democracy in general: the balance between democratic inclusiveness and government accountability. With the advent of civil society in India, the Congress party was integral in the inclusion of “non-elites,” which were a product of caste. It is in this sense that the corruption present in pre-independent India underwent a transformation due to the advent of democracy. Before further analysis of corruption however, an overview of the Indian constitution is necessary in understanding India’s communitarian background in regards to civil society.

Due to the Cold War, independent India took up a staunch policy of non-alignment and desired to balance Western individualism with Russian communism;
this desire can be seen in much of the constitution’s provisions regarding rights. In contrast to the natural rights and individualism enjoyed by its American counterpart, India’s constitution places an emphasis on group rights, which has given it a communitarian identity. This identity can be seen by the inclusion of limits on personal freedoms in order to serve the society as a whole:

The “fundamental rights” are conditional rather than absolute, attempting to strike a balance between individual and community rights. Thus Article 15 of the constitution prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, caste and gender; yet it also permits the enactment of special provisions designed to improve the lot of such disadvantaged groups as women and the outcastes. Moreover, the state may impose “reasonable restrictions” in the general interest. (20)

Because of a communitarian identity, the major goal behind India’s constitutional structure was to ensure a democracy in which equality could develop within the civil society. India’s presence of diversity also facilitated the communitarian identity in that splintered fragments of Indian political society were based on cultural signifiers. This resulted in India’s adoption of federalism as a means to address a myriad of languages, religions, and customs, all originating from different parts of the subcontinent. Diversity also introduced conflict into the constitutional paradigm of independent India. Exclusivist interpretations, arguing for a national identity in “communal” terms of cultural-religious homogeneity, clashed with Nehru’s paradigm of inclusivism, which characterized national identity in secular-political terms. (21) Nehru’s Congress party can be seen as a direct reaction to his policy of “New Nationalism,” or the reimagining of India’s national identity from a pre-modern fragmented state, to a unified national political movement.

However, Nehru’s vision required the only present tools of governance at his disposal, which predicated upon the maintenance of government institutions that were corruptly implemented by the British Raj. It was with this expansion of bureaucracy, which originated from the British to maintain an exploitative colonial oppression that corruption within the new national identity became embedded.

The die was cast and the bureaucratic apparatus multiplied rapidly with the expansion of the state’s functions. Unchecked proliferation of the bureaucracy and its functions, in the context of a legal system framed by a colonial ruler and an omnipresent state, led to the emergence of a politician-bureaucrat nexus which was a fertile ground to collude for mutual benefit. (22) India’s corrupt legacy can be seen partly as a result of its democratization; the growth of bureaucracy became the most effective means of unifying a deeply divided subcontinent. Although the trade-off of this enlargement of government resulted in an increase of corruption and inefficiency, Nehru made a coherent decision to ensure a unified national identity would materialize.

With this construction of an overarching government, Nehru’s inclusivity followed. To Nehru, India’s diversity became an advantage, something that could be responsible for the economic progression of the country, which had been exploited by the British. The idea of the communitarian identity and Nehru’s paradigm became related in that sense; the protection and empowerment of non-elites was a central aspect of economic growth and the building of a secular Indian identity. (23) In order to fully empower non-elites
however, political inclusion and state power needed to be allocated throughout the state and not just in the hands of British-educated elites. This caused corruption to become a legitimized norm because it served as a useful instrument to allow non-elites to occupy government positions. Without the occurrence of systematic corruption, non-elites would not have been able to construct parties and aggregate votes that limited shares of state power presented. Rob Jenkins describes the increase in clientelism within lower-caste politics:

Promising voters favored treatment is the stock-in-trade of political clientelism, and to the extent that such transactions take place on a group basis (where politicians are aggregated into parties, and voters into social groups defined by ethnicity), there should be little surprise that the rise of lower-caste politics has relied on the distribution of patronage. (24)

According to Jenkins, clientelism, resource appropriation, and similar methods of corruption allowed non-elite parties to obtain a foothold within the democratic government dominated by the Congress party, which, at the time of independence, consisted of elite members of society. (25)

Moreover, the personality of Nehru was considerably important in authorizing and perpetuating many of the corrupt party practices of the Congress; his outright dismissal of transparency allowed the Congress party to embed corruptive political tactics in the hopes of solidifying Indian civil society. (26) To Nehru, the goal in constructing a democratic identity separate from other developing states would act as a theme until the advent of Indira Gandhi in the mid 1960s.

Under Nehru’s reign, political corruption was controlled under the umbrella of the Congress. It was not until his daughter, Indira Gandhi, became Prime Minister that Nehru’s vision began to disintegrate and corruption became an rampant part of the national political culture. Like her father, Gandhi's personality played an important role in the shape of Indian democracy and the presence of corruption. Originally employed as a puppet by her father’s political allies, her refusal to fulfill this role caused a split in the Congress party. Gandhi’s new Congress won the election of 1967 and a new era of corruption and plebiscitary politics materialized in India. (27) During which, she would change many corrupt tactics employed by the old Congress in a successful attempt to consolidate her own power and usher in populist rule.

As prime minister, Gandhi introduced an increase in direct rule. This maintained public favor by focusing on aid to the poor and detached itself conveniently from party politics. Similar to the case of many developing states, Gandhi’s new Congress became an instrument to stifle opposition within government. In order to obtain this power however, Gandhi reformed many of the corrupt practices of her opponents. Direct contributions from big businesses to the Congress were banned and Gandhi began a campaign demonizing industry. By doing this however, Gandhi cut off her own party’s main supply of funds and the only legal means by which to obtain them.

Thus, Gandhi’s regime ushered in the era of “briefcase politics,” (28) new type of illicit state corruption, was ushered in under the Gandhian regime. Briefcase politics, “a phrase used to describe the transfer of vast amounts of black money in the form of cash into the coffers of the Congress Party,” (29) became a new type of illicit state sanctioned corruption. “Black money” would be obtained via tax evasion, black market operations, and other means used to bypass regulations and accrue illicit funds to support the party. In this, one can see the shift from pure patronage (a Nehruvian method) and the actual concrete funding of government action through illicit means. The issuing of licenses and other bureaucratic duties became mechanisms by which black money would be funnelled into government, and ultimately, the Congress party, which maintained its dominance within Indian government since independence. Moreover, the practice of Gandhian corruption caused the cost of elections and campaigning to increase astronomically, further securing Gandhi’s concentration of power as prime minister:

"A single candidate’s election expenses," according to one observer of the 1971 elections, ranged "anywhere
from Rs. 100,000 to Rs. 10,000,000.” The Overseas Hindustan Times put the total cost of the election at somewhere between 250 and 500 million rupees, while others later placed it as high as Rs.750 million. By the end of the decade, estimates placed election costs at somewhere between 1.7 and 2 billion rupees. (30)

The strengthening of Gandhi’s political power eventually led her to engage in a period of plebiscitary rule after her re-election in 1971. In this, one can see the legacy of Gandhian corruption as a means to empower non-elites and become socially institutionalized. The populist gestures of Gandhi, most of which relied on eliminating poverty and empowering poor non-elites (her 1971 election slogan being “garibi hatao” literally translating to “abolish poverty”), facilitated a human development that in turn created a favorable sentiment in Indian democracy, regardless of whether it was legitimate. Like most populist rulers however, Gandhi’s cult of personality eclipsed political initiatives aimed at development. In 1976, Gandhi declared an infamous “state of emergency” in a desperate effort to preserve her regime, during which human rights were suspended, and much of the political opposition was imprisoned. What followed was an incompetent Janata party victory in 1977. This was short lived however and Gandhi was able to stage a comeback mainly because the Janata party was unable to formulate effective policies and governance. (31)

Gandhi’s re-emergence in the 1980s can be seen as the initial decline of Congress party dominance. After the Janata party victory, Gandhi’s continued pursuit of centralized state power, which began to erode state governments and undermine federalism, led to the rise of smaller parties. This political mobilization allowed for smaller parties to gain local traction and force national parties (e.g. Congress and Janata) to form coalitions to win the national stage. With the advent of the 1990s, the Congress party’s loss of power and ideological elasticity, through the plebiscitary rule of Indira Gandhi, led to a rise in political mobilization and the formation of local parties. This event ushered in a transition to the single party rule that was present for much of independent India. Now, Congress and its opposition relied not just on intraparty strength, but the varying desires of local communities. Indian diversity, instead of being the Nehruvian umbrella for a unified Indian identity, became a driving force behind the formation of a coalitional structure within government. Since the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty, there have been three major coalition governments: the Bharatiya Janata party (BJP) in 1996 and a minority-ruled Congress coalition from 1991-1996. This coalitional structure has affected political corruption in India in three ways: First, the increase of competition in national and local elections subsequently increased a demand for corruption. Because political parties became less centralized and less corporate, the traditional forms of funding (e.g. business, foreign contracts, and black money) became less secure. Additionally, the increase in election costs fuelled corruption as well. Although the amount of money rarely had an effect on elections, the fact that politicians believe it did caused black money fundraising to continue. Increased competition also multiplied costs due to bribe givers’ need to spread the risk of corruption to several parties. (32)

Second, political mobilization within non-elite communities (i.e. lower castes) was accomplished primarily by the supply of patronage. In many Indian states, demands for patronage took the form of fiscal and caste populism (e.g. general subsidies, weak financial regulation, oversight, or indifference to scams). In defense of these actions, new political leaders claimed that they had been indulging in the same actions as the Nehruvian Congress party. Although undoubtedly corrupt, state level populism united poorer groups and created new opportunities for political empowerment and it constructed a new breed of political activists who bridged a gap between government and public interests. Moreover, the perception of corruption within the lower castes differed from the predominant middle class distaste. To the underprivileged, where institutional forces have often worked against them, this type of corruption became seen as a “strategy
of survival.” (33)

Third, with the pervasive normative patterns of corruption in government, anti-corruption movements were used as a tactic by which coalitions could capitalize on their opponents’ exposure and corruption. This policy encouraged citizen activism against political corruption and inspired investigative responses into misuses of public office. The outcome of this activism, however, led to many ineffective responses; selective policy that was able to rolled back became standard lip service and was not enough to stifle the normalized traditions of political corruption. (34)

Corruption Moving Forward: Finding the Balance

After examining India’s legacy of corruption from its ancient heritage to the 1990s, it is evident that the trajectory and nature of corruption shifted to suit the needs of the respective political societies. With the advent of democracy, a watershed moment occurred in regards to Indian politics and national identity; corruption became embedded as an intrinsic characteristic of the Indian political experience. Unlike ancient India, where a more traditional form of corruption plagued administration, the personalities of democratic rulers employed corrupt tactics to extend a national legacy that remains today. It is in this that the transition into a democratic society facilitated the role of corruption and institutionalized it within Indian politics. Since independence, this has caused India to wrestle with two competing notions of democracy: the increase of both inclusion and accountability. Institutionalized corruption is evidence that India’s democracy is deepening in some respects (i.e. inclusivity) and weakening in others. (35) This binary understanding within Indian politics allows corruption to be viewed as a mechanism and highlights the vital role corruption played in deepening Indian democracy vis-à-vis the inclusion of stratified non-elites.

However, this is not to say that pre-independent India had no effect on democratization and corruption; the sound institutions left by the British were vital to Nehru’s vision and facilitated the formation of large bureaucratic corruption. In short, India’s past, along with the personalities of democratic rulers collided to form a unique democracy in which the presence of extreme diversity was addressed and a unified democratic identity was excavated from it. In the context of this trajectory, an additional problem regarding the future of Indian democracy arises. Political inclusiveness is not a sole means of establishing an efficient democracy. But in order to shed corruption and match political inclusion with accountability, it will need to be banished as a normative method of conducting day-to-day business. If the future of Indian democracy is to continue to deepen, the continuance of non-elite political empowerment and a non-selective reaction from political parties must be used expose corruption in the hopes of establishing a universal reform. Such action ultimately hinges on the entrenched public attitude towards corruption and its continued effectiveness within Indian society.

Endnotes
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7. Ibid., 16-17.
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The Walls of Belfast and Jerusalem
Urban Barriers and Transitional Justice
by Jillian Neuberger

Walls are a common feature of post conflict urban areas. They stand as constant reminders of a community divided, but given the rise of urban violence in internal conflict it is clear that walls can be important to conflict resolution. This paper investigates how walls can be used effectively by, and addressed through, transitional justice. It argues that by investigating the use of walls in Jerusalem and Belfast it is evident that urban barriers are important, but must be used along with strict timelines and broader strategies targeting the social, political, and economic causes of intrastate metropolitan violence.

Introduction
Cities have long served as societal hubs and today’s cities continue that legacy. Modern metropolises hold large numbers of people, include considerable diversity, and are known for inspiring innovation. However, cities are more than bright lights and skylines. They are also overcrowded places with shockingly high population density and finite resources. They are plagued by crime and social violence and haunted by contentious pasts. Cities are a unique social experiment in diversity and centralization; because of this they face equally unique challenges, especially during conflict. Urban areas are often the sources of intrastate conflict due to the large populations and diversity they boast, therefore they require special attention within conflict resolution. However, cities do not always receive the specialized attention they deserve, and many times tools of transitional justice are employed in these spaces uncritically. An example of this is the use of walls as tools of transitional justice in discord-ridden areas. All cities in the world are “divided” in some way; separated by wealth, races, language, with relatively homogenous ethnic enclaves. But, in some places where the friction between these separate groups has erupted into the particularly dangerous urban warfare, these divides are physically manifested as walls or urban barriers.

Such manifestations, as a way of dealing with conflict, are both successful and problematic. It is undeniable that walls are important tools of transitional justice, especially given the rise of urban violence in internal conflict, however when not used strategically and critically they can become a hindrance later on in the reconciliation process. This paper attempts to answer the question of how walls can most effectively be used by, and addressed through, transitional justice. It argues that by looking at the use of walls in Jerusalem and Belfast it is clear that urban barriers are important in transitional justice but that they must be used along with strict timelines and broader strategies targeting the social, political, and economic causes of intrastate metropolitan violence.

This essay will endeavor to demonstrate this by first discussing the place of walls within transitional justice historically and today. It will also evaluate the success of peace lines in Belfast and in Jerusalem. Then, by comparing these two cases it will highlight trends and new strategies to be used to maximize the positive effects of walls in the future.

Conceptualizing Walls as Part of Transitional Justice

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Walls in Transitional Justice

Walls are more than objects. They play a crucial role in the spatial and social structure of a city. This paper is based on this premise, and the idea that “Walls do not simply exist. They play both positive and negative roles in controlling access, use of space, and in creating a sense of security and belonging – or insecurity and exclusion – in the urban environment.”

Since walls, in their recent urban form, are important sites in their own right they also have a unique history and purpose based in recent cosmopolitan developments. Specifically, developments refer to the recent trend towards urban violence and the dividing of cities, which followed the rise of intrastate conflict post World War II. Lately, especially in the 1990’s, there has been a splintering of states into “statelets” controlled by ethnic groups fighting within nation states, and since cities are home to great considerable diversity they bear the burden of this growing polarization.

Social separation and cultural difference has erupted into violence in many divided cities, and such violence exposes “what lies in store for a large, and perhaps growing, class of cities on a trajectory towards polarization and partition between rival communities. In the early twenty-first century, this class includes Montreal, Monrovia, Dagestan, Washington D.C, Baghdad, Dili, Buna. Novi Sad, Kigali, Singapore, Cincinnati, Kirkuk, and Oakland.”

There are many divided cities, and as some of these places continue to separate into homogenous sectors and polarization becomes physically manifested it is important to look at cities further along in this division, such as Belfast and Jerusalem, in order to problem solve and respond.

Due to these goals of management and response, it is also important to look at these cities, and the walls that divided other parts of transitional justice. In general, “transitional justice efforts are not limited only to post-conflict situations and countries where a regime change from authoritarian rule to democracy has already occurred.”

Measures like walls that are taken to create negative peace, the absence of war, are crucial to pursuing transitional justice regardless of what stage of the conflict they’re created in. Negative peace is, according to literature surrounding transitional justice, an important part of improving the legitimacy of state institutions and moving towards the positive peace that is crucial to reconciliation, making walls an important part of transitional justice.

 Also, beyond being a tool to create situations conducive to transitional justice, walls are often the targets of such justice. Urban barriers divide cities and can prevent long-term reconciliation in a number of situations; therefore, after walls are used to prevent violence, they can become barriers to the reconciliation...
that transitional justice often strives for and by necessity they subsequently become the focus of transitional justice. Positive peace, the goal of resolving indirect institutional violence that follows negative peace, relies on decreasing social distance and building healthy relationships and equitable institutions. This means that the very walls that were crucial to the negative peace process become problematic to the following positive peace process, and urban barriers become targets of transitional justice rather than tools. Both of these dynamics, and the place of walls as tools and targets, locate walls squarely within transitional justice. It is only by understanding the dual relationship between urban barriers and transitional justice in divided cities that actual reconciliation can be pursued in these areas.

Walls in Historical Context

Urban polarization and the construction of walls within cities have been increasingly problematic for transitional justice in recent years. The use of these walls increases with the increase of urban warfare. As intrastate ethnic conflicts plague the post-Cold War world cities, mass casualty attacks in urban areas become the goal of conflict and this means that there are rising numbers of civilian or nonaligned causalities along with growing posttraumatic stress issues. With the shift towards ethnic or religious “statelets,” “the scale and intensity of psychological trauma suffered by noncombatants has risen proportionately. Divided cities are emblems of this overwhelming loss, dislocation, and prolonged anxiety.” The increase of violence in cities, a product of rising polarization and intrastate conflict, has led to a greater number of civilian victims and to broader constant stress as city dwellers are essentially living on the front lines of conflict. This stress can have long lasting effects, is incredibly dangerous, and is also one of the main drivers behind the building of urban barriers. Along with the desire to decrease the number of violent events, the stress caused by urban warfare inspires citizens of conflict-ridden cities to personally build, and request the construction of, walls. The walls then become important ways of giving the victims a sense of security and decreasing the availability of conflict spaces in cities. However, before delving into case studies of urban barriers it is important to understand the duplicitous nature of walls. They are successful, as mentioned above, but they are also dangerous. Walls are the causes, symptoms, and cures of social strife, all at the same time. To start “they solve a profound, longstanding problem in a superficial, temporary way.” They are proven to dampen violence and decrease localized conflict but they also can lead to the spread of violence outside of the cities and the internalization of difference. Similarly the physical manifestation of social division can lead to “The construction of isolated ethnic clusters which defy liberal principles of tolerance and pluralism in favor of rudimentary group survival.”

Overall, within transitional justice, walls are seen as valuable since they provide victims with a sense of security and temporarily decrease physical violence, however they often increase social distance and animosity. The case studies will challenge and provide deeper insight into these conceptions of walls in urban conflict, but it’s important to have an understanding of the basic discourse and historical context surrounding walls before looking at specific examples.

Peace Lines in Belfast

The Walls and their Creation

A key example of walls in conflict and post-conflict situations are the peace lines in Northern Ireland, particularly in Belfast. The violence that wracked Belfast during the Troubles – 1968-1998 – led to the creation of a number of urban barriers and walls, called peace lines, that still exist today. They demonstrate trends in the use of walls in situations of transitional justice and the need to consider using strict timelines and broad social, political,
and economic programs alongside walls when responding to cities plagued by local terrorism.

The peace lines of Belfast were built during and following The Troubles, a time of sectarian violence during the second half of the twentieth century between republican Irish Catholics and loyalist British Protestants. These tragic events, which ended in the deaths of around 3,600 people and the injury of thousands more, were based in a tradition of disenfranchisement and social distance. British Protestant and Irish Catholic animosity can be traced all the way back to Oliver Cromwell’s violent response the Ulster Rebellion of 1649 and the ensuing penal laws of 1697, which legalized the disenfranchisement of Irish Catholics and created a culture of separation and victimhood that exploded during the Troubles. This trend of cultural antagonism, political suppression, and the rise economic instability (including the significant and disproportionate unemployment of Irish Catholics) led to the creation of paramilitary groups and the beginning of urban terrorism in Belfast and Northern Ireland at large. This violence seemed unstoppable at the time and led to the citizen, and then later the municipal, building of urban barriers and peace lines that still divide Belfast today.

The peace lines were originally erected in the face of mass government failure, specifically the failure of Belfast’s police force due to inability and apathy. The police were unable or unwilling to respond to violence, so the people themselves – especially the Catholics who received the least police support – responded: “physical barriers constructed by anxious residents appeared along the perimeters of several Catholic enclaves in the area, hastily assembled from telegraph poles, hijacked bakery vans, municipal buses, upturned cars, scaffolding, and paving stones.” The citizens of Belfast were plagued by a never abating terror every moment of their lives; they lived in a war zone, so they struggled to reclaim their city and sense of safety through the building of urban barriers. These walls were later fortified and made permanent by the government and the British Military. The government saw the popularity and success of the walls and responded accordingly. The British Military, similarly, responded practically to a situation beyond their control. Much like the police, the military were overwhelmed by the new threat of urban warfare, underprepared, and outnumbered so they relied on the fortification and further construction of city walls to attempt to decrease violence. Then, the walls were quickly demographically and mentally accepted and supported. The destruction of houses in the conflict, along with the prospect of relative safety and peace of mind provided by walls "drove a process of homogenization that contributed greatly to the overall social destabilization of the city, intensified the emblematic significance of territorial boundaries, and reshaped Belfast in the decades following 1968." Essentially, the building and reinforcement of walls in Belfast was the product of the process of homogenization and separation inspired by the success of
The Walls of Belfast and Jerusalem: Urban Barriers and Transitional Justice/Jillian Neubergert

early walls, deeply rooted social tension, and the failure of the police and military to respond to conflict.

That is the general story of the creation of the walls, but it is also important to consider the walls themselves. The peace lines of Belfast were originally built spontaneously with “no overarching logic [that] guides their placement with respect to the city as a whole, rather, the walls are built in direct response to specific and chronic episodes of local violence”xviii. This means that the majority of the walls were created in direct response to previous violent conflict or terrorist attacks, and also located in what were previously interface areas between Catholic and Protestant communities. In addition, their spontaneous nature means that they vary in size and material (the tallest being around 40 feet).xix

In terms of porosity, the walls were built to completely stop pedestrian entrance, but they also have open-ended lengths and do not surround or sealxx. In addition, the porosity of the walls changes; gates and interfaces are unlocked on regular days but locked and fortified during more dangerous times. This facet of the peace lines represents the way in which the walls of a conflict situation reflect the nature of said conflict. Two distinctive features of the Troubles, and sectarian violence in Northern Ireland as a whole, are the link between the calendar and conflict – since Protestant marches in July often end in brawls and sectarian violence even today – and the common occurrence of violence at interface locations in working class areas. xxi Walls have adapted and formed in response to these particular contextual features, so they are located cutting through, or off, interface locations and have adjustable porosity to respond to calendar violence in July but also allow movement in January.

The Impact of Peace Lines in Belfast

The impact of peace lines in Belfast

With an understanding of the history and nature of the peace lines, their impact on the present can be evaluated, and such evaluation suggests that modern Belfast has a complex and nuanced relationship with the peace lines. One of the most evident results of these urban barriers, which are still in existence today, is the social distance they create: “Peace-lines reflect a number of past realities rooted in conflict and violence but their continued existence in a post-conflict state ensures a lack of contact and therefore lack of empathy for the perspectives of the ‘other’ side. It enables singular narratives to continue to exist, be reinforced and remain unchallenged.”xxii By encouraging the separation of British Protestants and Irish Catholics the walls have decreased violence but increased otherization and the transmission of old hatred to younger generations who are hearing only one version of the Troubles and Northern Irish history. This being said, some argue that the walls have been used to encourage dialogue through the creation of wall murals and discussion over the walls, but generally they’ve further entrenched religious and ethnic divides within the city rather than encouraged plurality and coexistence.

This extension of conflict through the continued use of walls is quite controversial; in fact “Peace-lines are famously the only security manifestation associated with the Troubles that have continued to expand since the conflict ended.”xxiii For example, in 2008 a 15-foot high weldmesh peace line was built by the perimeter wall of the Hazelwood Integrated Primary School. xxiv Today, expansion of the walls has largely stopped, however the future of peace lines and the social divisions within Belfast are unclear. In 2013 First Minister Peter Robinson vowed to remove all walls by 2023.xxvi However, later that year it was reported that “Walls separating...
Catholic and Protestant areas of Belfast will only come down with community consent, [and that] Northern Ireland’s justice minister…David Ford said [that] moves to dismantle the so-called ‘peace walls’ would only work ‘if it is done with communities, rather than to them.”xxvii The problem here seems to be the lack of a widespread desire to remove the peace lines. Many still fear the resurgence of violence, and there will always be a reason to be afraid. For instance, in April of 2014 in Larne, a city in Northern Ireland, a mob of 60-100 masked men broke windows and damaged property. The event is thought to be the work of the UDA (The Ulster Defense Association) a British Protestant loyalist group, and though no one died and the motive behind the rampage remains unclear, every incident like this provides the fearful survivors of the Troubles with one more reason to keep the peace lines standing.xxviii Broadly, Northern Ireland as a case study shows the potency of walls as tools of transitional justice. They are a powerful response to urban terrorism that reestablishes personal feelings of security and can quell violence, however the current divisions that still plague Belfast prove that walls can also prolong conflict through social separation. Belfast also demonstrates that if not responded to, manifestations of conflict – in this case walls – and the cause of the conflict – in this case sectarian division – can remain as painful reminders in their cities long after the actual struggle.

Dividing Jerusalem
The Walls and their Creation

Jerusalem’s complicated situation, as a city of tremendous importance that many lay claim to, is well known and much discussed. In fact, “Jerusalem is among the most contested cities in the world, characterized by an unremitting struggle for territorial control—neighborhood-by-neighborhood and even house-by-house.”xxix In the past four decades, Jerusalem has been walled, unwalled, and rewalled; it is scarred by physical and social barriers that affect all aspects of life.xxx The roots of conflict in Jerusalem are conflicting desires, the desire to create a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital and the desire to create a Jewish state with Jerusalem as its capital. Since British occupation Jerusalem has seen separation on the basis of religion and ethnicity, and even before the walls this paper will discuss how “Jerusalem was physically and functionally divided into Arab and Jewish zones in a patchwork configuration, not monolithic territories on either side of a dividing line...ethnic clusters of an increasingly homogeneous nature created informal social boundaries in the city. These were the precursor to Jerusalem’s subsequent formal and physical partition.”xxx This polarization of the metropolis was drastically increased by the involvement of other adjacent nations, particularly Jordan. It was between Jordan and Israel that the first line between Arab and Israeli Jerusalem, which would later become a wall, divided the city. Jerusalem was officially divided by a ceasefire between Israel and Jordan on the 30th of November 1948.xxxii

The line and the wall that follows this official separation was, and by many people is still, referred to as the Green Line, the Dayan-al-Tal Line, and the Armistice Line. It served as “Almost a hermetic seal between eastern and western sectors, passable only by privileged persons at the crossing nicknamed the Mandelbaum Gate.”xxxiii It was eventually dismantled following the Six Day War in 1967, however it didn’t stay that way for long and left behind societal scars.xxxiv It exacerbated huge economic differences and emphasized Jerusalem’s existence as “a highly divided city in which one side is thriving while the other is just barely surviving.”xxxv It also increased homogenization and social distance between ethnic and religious groups – mainly Israeli Jews and Palestinian Muslims – in a lasting and damaging way.

The Impact of the Green Line and the Creation of the Security Fence

The divisions formed by the Green Line still exist in Jerusalem; its legacy is visible in the Jerusalem community, but also even more obviously in the physical rebuilding of this wall. In October of 2002 Israel began construction on a "security fence”.xxvii This new wall was
built in response to increasing violence and mounting tension, “work began on approximately 570 km of wall and fence stretching from North to South and conforming to the former green line for about 11 percent of its length, with substantial deviations to the east in order to embrace far-flung Jewish settlements in the West Bank.”xxxviii The re-walling of Jerusalem is largely the product of two contextual factors: increasing violence along with previously formed social distance and prejudice. The earlier existence of the Green Line normalized the idea of a divided city, and its success as part of an armistice legitimized walls as a way of responding to urban conflict.

The memory of the Green Line “remains a fold in the mental map of all Jerusalemites, defining perceptions of vulnerability.”xxxix Few people moved across the site of the old Green Line, even after 1968, and this incredible social distance made the recent rebuilding of walls seem more like enforcing a norm than partitioning a city. When these social conditions of internalized difference met with increased violence Israel began the creation of urban barriers.

In 2001 and 2002 there were 95 occasions of large-scale suicide bombings, terror in Jerusalem generally peaked during this time, and citizens of Jerusalem from all religious and ethnic backgrounds felt threatened. They turned to a previously successful form of self-defense, the walls, when the police, espionage networks, and military seemed to be failing, and it was fairly successful. The argument that peace could only be found in separation was, unfortunately, then bolstered by the fact that “considered in conjunction with military action, improved intelligence, and the like, the barrier’s results have been quite striking. Since the partial construction of the barrier, terror attacks in Jerusalem between 2002 and 2004 have been reduced by 90 percent and casualties reduced by more than 84 percent”xlii However, before the success of Jerusalem’s security fence is trumpeted, it is important to look at the pervasive and serious impact of both the security fence and its predecessor, the Green Line.

While the security fence, much like the Green Line and even the peace lines of Northern Ireland, seems to provide physical security it actually deepens social separation by increasing the cultural, political, economic difference between the two sides of Jerusalem. To start, building the barrier has very tangible financial consequences, which increases the anti-Israeli sentiment that provokes the violence the fence was meant to stop. The fence “Costs 2.7 million per kilometer and costs Palestinians about 14.5% of West Bank territory formerly east of the Green Line”.xlii Also, beyond land and money, the wall costs Palestinians “the freights, services, and opportunities afforded by citizenship in Jerusalem [which] diminish measurably east of the former Green Line, fostering ongoing conditions of relative deprivation due to an unbalanced allocation of resources.”xliii This is especially dangerous since the past, and at this point the present, has demonstrated that tension in Jerusalem is consistently exacerbated by problems involving money and employment in the Palestinian section.xliv Conflict is also spurred by the plummeting standard of living experience by Palestinians in every area of their life, even beyond issues of employment, as discussed by Jon Calame and Esther Ruth Charlesworth in...
their book Divided Cities:
The constrained movement of Arabs within the Palestinian areas has led to a localization of activity in all spheres... Some functions, such as clinics, schools, and graveyards, depend on economies of scale and cannot be decentralized. In Ar Ram, for example, the dead used to be buried in the Old City, which now lies across a very congested checkpoint, so the bodies are kept in the freezer at the local hospital until such time as transport can be arranged.xlv

Stories like these show how “The barriers erected in response to Palestinian terror have had profound effects on Palestinians. For those living in areas proximate to the barrier, the costs—both monetary and human—are large.”xlvi Walls can, as they have in Jerusalem, entrench unfair power dynamics that foster a sense of victimization. This is especially problematic since feelings of victimization, disenfranchisement, and abuse are driving causes of urban violence. Victimization is then accentuated by the social distance between Jewish Israelis and Muslim Palestinians. Decades of separation has led both sides to fear and not know the other, and it is concerning that very few seem willing to really understand their “enemy”. Through violence and wall building “a particular side does not have to face the uncertainty of trusting its enemy; that side can attempt to secure itself by taking matters into its own hands. Palestinians turned to terror to deal with Israelis, and Israelis turned to the barrier to deal with Palestinians.” xlvii However, these methods of coping are clearly counterproductive and despite the decrease in violence caused by the creation of urban barriers they do have some dangerous side effects.

This leaves many people wondering about the future of Jerusalem. Much like the future of peace lines in Northern Ireland, the future of urban barriers in Jerusalem’s is unclear. The city could see reunification or permanent partition. Many argue that due to the important cultural heritage Jerusalem houses it must reunify and reintegrate. However some studies, such as one titled “Group Segregation and Urban Violence” and published in the American Journal of Political Science, suggest that – assuming social conditions remain stagnant – the safest path for the city is the permanent and stringent partition of East and West Jerusalem. The article says that a return to the 1967 divisions before the Six Day War – which reflects the most considerable structural changes, most restricts mobility, and transfers the most authority to the Palestinians of all proposed plans – should actually lead to a predicted 52% decrease in violent events and 32% decrease in the number of neighborhoods affected by violence. Meaning that, “a return to the 1967 boundaries can be expected to significantly reduce the points of friction and to decrease, but not eliminate, incidents of violence.”xlviii This is an extremely divisive scenario, even though the general premise that Jerusalem should be permanently partitioned is espoused by many and is even included in the prominent Geneva Initiative. xlix Urban development firms, like the Israeli SAYA, have actually drafted plans to create barriers meant to provide security permanently and also “blend in with the urban landscape”, they are clearly planning on the creation of permanent walls throughout Jerusalem. However, these plans for permanent partition do not certify doom for the future coexistence of humanity; all of these plans rely on the continuation of social distance, terrorism, and suppression. If conditions in Jerusalem were to change, the value of urban barriers would likely also change. This glimmer of hope is why it is so important to critically study walls as tools of transitions and search for solutions for the problems they cause and respond to.

Trend and Solutions

Trends

The comparative evaluation of the use of walls in Belfast and Jerusalem, as conducted above, demonstrates a few key trends and conclusions regarding the current use of urban barriers as tools of transitional justice: walls are built under conditions of punctuated change; they respond to violence sparked by social distance and various forms of suppression; they are exacerbated by the failure of formal peacekeeping organizations; and once built, it is difficult to physically and mentally remove or augment them. The first trend, the creation
of walls during times of punctuated change, refers to the fact that “urban managers in both cities promoted walls as a pragmatic, temporary reply to urgent security crisis.” This is a basic definition of punctuated change, a more complex definition is provided by H. Savitch and Grab Yaakov in “Terror, Barriers, and the Changing Topography of Jerusalem”. This article explains that:

Punctuated change is underlined by a combination of circumstances characterized by (1) an extremely shortened or telescoped time span; (2) the presence of an abrupt crisis that threatens to seriously harm, negatively transform, or even destroy a social order; (3) a volatile environment in which response is unpredictable; and (4) a set of presumed solutions whose efficacy or effects are unknown.

These conditions are extreme, and it is difficult to complete major risk benefit analysis in situations like these, so any solutions to the problems caused by walls need to consider this.

Another similarity between the use and creation of walls in Belfast and Jerusalem is the role of the police and military. In both of the divided cities discussed, the inability of formal peacekeeping institutions to protect cities and citizens led to the government or the people building walls to better protect themselves. This is particularly evident in Belfast. The peace lines of Belfast were originally built by citizens, in response to an unwilling and incapable police force.

Their fear for their own safety led them to create scattered blockades, which were later fortified by an overwhelmed military, and formalized by an unstable government. Similar developments can be seen in the creation of the security wall in Jerusalem. When security forces were unable to respond to the elusive threat that terrorism and the surge of suicide bombings created, they built walls as a way of trying to control a danger they could not lay their hands on. Understanding the institutional failures that prompt the creation of urban barriers is central to finding sustainable ways to use walls as tools of transition for cities and countries facing or recovering from conflict.

The final commonality between walls in divided cities is that they are built in response to violence sparked by social distance and various forms of suppression. Belfast and Jerusalem each had one group, broadly identified as the republican Irish Catholics or the Palestinian Muslims, that was repressed. They experienced high rates of unemployment and economic disadvantage, they were politically disenfranchised and discriminated against, and they felt a large cultural or social distance between them and their more powerful counterparts. This discrimination and suppression led to a feeling of victimhood that continues today in both of the case studies and that eventually sparked incredible and tragic violence, along with the creation of walls to keep the abuse at bay. Irish Catholic republicans were unemployed, they were goaded and taunted, and some responded in an unacceptable way. The same could be said of some Palestinians, but to disregard the roots of violence and simply think of it as cruelty is counterproductive. The attacks were sparked by feelings of victimhood that then created a sense of victimhood on the other side of the conflict – in the Jewish Israelis and the loyalist Protestant British. This perception of persecution led these groups to retaliate violently (which is particularly clear in the rise of Protestant loyalist paramilitary groups) and also to build walls for their own safety. This is perhaps the most telling of the trends regarding the use of urban barriers as tools of transitional justice, and it comments in an even broader way on empathy, contact, and understanding as general tenants of the creation of real peace.

Solutions

These trends, along with the case studies at large, prove that walls are both useful and dangerous in situations of conflict and transition. Such a conclusion leaves the means by which to use walls in a sustainable and safe way wanting. These means can be found in the problems and trends surrounding urban barriers. The findings of this paper suggest that the most inclusive solutions would be the creation of timelines when walls are first created and the implementation of social, cultural, economic and political reform.
The first solution, the creation of timelines, responds to the fact that walls are often seen as the only way victims of urban violence can reclaim their sense of safety and the fact that walls are built during times of punctuated change. Many of the negative consequences of walls come from the fact that they are internalized and thought of as central to security. However, if walls are created with the caveat that they will one day be taken down – especially if the “one day” is specified – people understand that these barriers are temporary and that more permanent and far-reaching solutions need to be found. This should decrease the resistance to the eventual removal of walls, and more importantly it should encourage people, governments, and cities to address the social, political and economic roots of conflict, rather than relying on the more superficial route of depending on walls and separation to stop conflict.

In addition, the use of timelines actually responds to the issue of punctuated change, though this may seem counterintuitive. In some ways the idea of creating timelines for walls that are built in the midst of conflict seems foolish. After all, walls are often created at the height of discord so it is almost impossible to know when or if removing them will become safe and tenable. However, the point of creating a timeline is not necessarily to predict the end of the conflict; the year of removal could be completely arbitrary and still be successful. The use of a timeline is important because it discourages people from relying too heavily on walls as the solutions to all of their problems. This means that even though governments, organizations, and people making decisions in life or death situations of punctuated change cannot fully evaluate the benefits and costs of walls, or implement some of the more long term strategies, they can use a simple timeframe to preemptively negate expected or likely pitfalls.

Another potential solution to the problems caused by walls, and something that would aid the use of timelines, is the implementation of social, cultural, economic and political reform. Obviously such strategies are luxuries and often have to be implemented later on in the transitional justice process, but overall they are very effective. Walls are created in response to deeply ingrained power dynamics that promote victimization and fiscal, social, and political distance. Combating this distance combats the otherization created by walls and decreases their need by decreasing the likelihood of a resurgence of violence.

These programs are not only successful and valuable in theory, their success can be seen in practice in the two case studies above. Some such programs are: cooperative efforts to promote tourism, the creation of new interface communal space, enfranchisement, and the restoration of the authority of peacekeeping institutions. This is not a comprehensive list of potential programs, merely a few examples. There are many more, including educational programs and development processes, but these are some proven, effective models.

The first example, cooperative efforts to promote tourism, can be seen on the
small scale in Belfast and Jerusalem. In Belfast murals on peace lines are large tourist attractions, and in the interest of promoting economic growth on both sides, agreements between nationalist and loyalists groups have been created to allow tours that show both sides of the wall and facilitate tourism in certain areas. This being said, walls stay up because conflict is still feared and since two sides of a conflict cannot seem to coexist, cooperative efforts to promote tourism both encourage coexistence and address the root economic cause of conflict. The Belfast murals have become such a prominent feature of Belfast’s landscape that they are advertised on the websites about the city, including the city’s official website. They represent a shared lucrative heritage and if they could be used to an even greater extent to encourage cooperation and close the sectarian economic gap it could decrease animosity towards integration. Similarly, in Jerusalem tourism seems to be one of the few sources of hope when it comes to cooperation. Even division and wall building proposals, like the SAYA proposal mentioned earlier, leave room for, and discuss promoting, the development of tourism in both East and West Jerusalem. Such tourism could help struggling Palestinian communities and potentially promote coexistence and cooperation on the basis of a common goal. Tourism is a good example of an economic program that can be pursued to deal with the problems caused by the creation and internalization of walls, though it certainly comes with its own challenges.

Another solution mentioned was the creation of new interface communal spaces. Such locations respond to concerns about social difference. In Belfast today some Irish Catholic children have never met Protestant British children and this separation, the manner in which Palestinians and Israelis in the same city live completely separate lives, is exacerbated by walls. If common spaces – shopping centers, parks, memorials, and more – were created, socialization might occur and promote a more connected society willing to remove peace lines and security walls.

Lastly, more political strategies and programs that could respond to issues created by walls are programs focusing on enfranchisement and the restoration of faith and authority in organizations. Post-conflict governing bodies need to regain the faith of the people. If oppressed groups feel that they are truly represented in their government they are more likely to have faith in that government’s ability to protect them and allow the removal of urban barriers. This enfranchisement has been seen in Northern Ireland, though it is less present in Israel. Similarly, people will be more willing to allow reintegration if they think there is a capable police or peacekeeping force that can protect them. The walls themselves were partially built in response to police failures and creating a more competent police force could make them unnecessary and encourage the communities to allow their removal. Overall there are a number of strategies and programs that can be used to respond to the problems caused by walls – such as timelines and social, economic, and political initiatives – and if they are used successfully they can allow cities in, and responding to, conflict to enjoy the security and violence reduction

"Walls can play a powerful and central role in transitional justice, but also that they need to be tempered with timelines and broader strategies targeting the social, political, and economic causes of intrastate metropolitan violence."
provided by urban barriers while also minimizing the negative effects of these walls.

Some argue that instead of using the above-mentioned programs the use of walls to divide cities should stop. However, disregarding the value of walls as ways of ensuring peace and protecting a very vulnerable urban population is irresponsible, and the fact that there are programs and steps that can be taken to decrease the negative consequences of walls suggest that walls can be successfully and usefully implemented. Though there are many opinions on the feasibility of ever truly doing this, this paper operates on the premise that walls are useful and their negative effects can be understood and corrected for. The investigation of case studies and general theory around walls has endeavored to support these assumptions, as well as the general need to both use urban barriers and counteract their negative effects.

Conclusion

Belfast and Jerusalem are just two of many examples of divided cities, however they are unique in that the division splitting these urban areas led to intense conflict and the use of walls during and following their respective countries’ transitions. Both cities are still divided by wartime barriers today, and by studying them a greater understanding of the positive and negative attributes of walls can be gained. These case studies show that walls can play a powerful and central role in transitional justice, but also that they need to be tempered with timelines and broader strategies targeting the social, political, and economic causes of intrastate metropolitan violence. This being said, these two cities ask as many questions as they answer. Belfast and Jerusalem are only two of a considerable number of cities that are divided today. They serve as a concerning omen of what may be coming for the other metropolises on the track to polarization and ethnicity-based homogenization. This questions why polarization and conflict within urban centers has increased so much in the past couple of decades. There are many answers to this query but very little definitive information and even fewer solutions. The future of the city as a social structure where polarization is reversed and plurality promoted is unclear. Even the concept of the city as a way of population organization may have become outdated, and walls are merely an attempt to stave off the inevitable. Hopefully this is not the case, but walls do stand as proof that greater efforts towards coexistence and integration need to be considered in urban centers all over the world.

Endnotes


ii. Jon Calame, and Esther Ruth Charlesworth, Divided cities: Belfast, Beirut, Jerusalem.


iv. Ibid.


vii. Ibid.


x. Ibid.


xii. Figure 1


xiv. It should be noted that in this paper groups are identified by largely shared characteristics, which is not to say that these labels apply to everyone in a group, or that any label requires membership in a group.


xviii. Ibid, p. 80.

xx. Ibid.
xxi. Ibid.
xxiii. Laura McAtackney, “Peace maintenance and political messages”, p. 95.
xxxiii. Ibid, p. 84.
xxxiv. Ibid, p. 85.
xxxv. Ibid.
xxxvii. Figure 3
xliv. Ibid, p 102.
xliv. Ibid, p. 163.
xlvi. Ibid, p. 163.
lix. Ibid, p. 139.
lii. Ibid, p. 239.
lvi. SAYA. “An Israeli – Palestinian proposal.”

Image Appendix
Figure 1: Peace lines in Belfast: Martin Melaugh, “peace lines (1),” photograph, 2007, CAIN Web Service - Conflict and Politics in Northern Ireland, http://cainulst.ac.uk/images/photos/belfast/peaceline/peaceline1r.jpg (accessed April 6, 2014)
Figure 4: Peace line mural:Antonio Olmos Observer, “The Cupar Way ‘peace wall’ which divides the Protestant Shankill Road from the Catholic Falls Road,” photograph, 2012, The Guardian,

Bibliography


Discerning Diaspora
Jewish and Arab Migration to Latin America and The Palestine/Israel Land Conflict

by Emma Northcott

Globalization and transnationalism have together shaped much of the discourse pertaining to Jewish and Arab diaspora communities in Latin America. This paper will explore this claim through studying the trajectories of Jewish and Arab migration to the Americas, recent Latin American opinions of the presence of these communities, and how transnationalism and globalism together impact the lives of Latin American Arabs and Jews as diaspora citizens, as well as global citizens with ties to a particular homeland. These global forces in addition to evolving nationalism in various Latin American nations together influence current attitudes and the role of ethnic salience in debates surrounding the Palestine/Israel conflict.

I. Introduction

The tandem trends of globalization and transnationalism have in general shaped much of the recent human rights discourse, which in turn molds the opinions of different groups regarding issues to which the discourse applies. One controversial topic in today’s global political sphere is the land conflict in the region shared by both the Israeli and Palestinian nations. Of course this issue incorporates many attached arguments, not only over land but over religion, civil rights, and even history of past events. The descriptions of such events, both past and present, as causal forces in the legitimization and de-legitimization of Jewish and Arab identity worldwide provides a context for comparative analysis in which we can formulate an examination of how this impacts people in given communities. This essay will analyze these topics in the context of the Jewish and Arab immigrant communities in Latin America.

In an age of exponentially increasing globalization and the technologies which enable it, transnational networks can widely project a community’s plight. This is particularly important in the case of the Israel/Palestine conflict, because there is much contention over which side is victim and which side is victimizer. The lack of clear-cut human rights discourse for this issue causes astronomical disparities in opinions and sympathies from communities all over the globe. Many diaspora Jews, for example, have strong transnational ties to the Israeli State but must come to terms with the very meaning of a diaspora mentality in their new home countries, where such sentiments can cause their neighbors to look upon them with suspicion. Latin American countries that experienced tremendous waves of nationalism during the twentieth century put great pressure on their Jewish immigrant communities for this very reason. The same can be said of Latin American Arabs, whose real or imagined transnational ties make them subjects of racism in their new communities. Perceptions about terrorism according to certain media sources also work to heighten racism and suspicion, particularly regarding Arab immigrant communities.

However, it is not merely external forces that cause tension for these...
immigrant communities in past and present conflicts. During World War II, strains within the global Jewish community were replicated and resurrected in diaspora settings, which led to internal problems for the Jews as they tried to cope with their holocaust. Because the details surrounding the Israel/Palestine case are even foggier and contentious, the internal dilemmas for Jews as a global community and as smaller diaspora communities become increasingly complex. Transnationalism has also worked to stigmatize immigrants no matter how far they are removed from the conflict in the Middle East, especially in periods in which nationalism reached great heights in Latin America. This process, along with general suspicion, perpetuates exclusion from state networks of politics in the new countries. Societal integration is thus limited to economic assimilation in many cases; economic success has also made Jews and Arabs easy targets for discrimination and suspicion.

Transnationalism and nationalism are sometimes at odds with one another – Jewish and Arab immigrants face new challenges within each generation. Jewish communities which are socially integrated within society are frequently charged with dual loyalty. Arab communities which are tight-knit and isolated from society are subject to blatant racism and equal suspicion, though its source differs. The immigrant communities’ varying levels of integration within the larger Latin American communities reflects the varying diaspora mentalities of these groups, which further illuminates the fact that transnational ties are a double-edged sword in terms of how these immigrant communities relate to one another and how their home countries perceive them. Dynamics of suspicion, discrimination, acceptance, and economic desirability form a complex matrix of opinions surrounding the current Israel/Palestine land conflict, which places additional pressure on the immigrant communities that have become inseparable from the issue of transnationalism.

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II. Jewish Migration to the Americas

Throughout history, Jews have been characterized by recurring states of diaspora perpetuated by political and economic forces as well as anti-Semitic attitudes that motivated various exiles. In every case of migration, the new Jewish communities had to work to balance their traditions and a sense of transnationalism while also adjusting to societal life of their new areas of residence. Individuals of Jewish ancestry first arrived in Latin America during colonial times, but their presence was initially ignored, as these
immigrants often relegated their customs to the private domain and kept community activities to a minimum. Over time, Jews in Latin America began to experience “creolization,” which involved a shift away from Yiddish, Ladino, or Jewish-Arab dialects so that the languages of the larger societies (Spanish or Portuguese) became the primary vernacular. The recent creolization corresponds to a loss of clear-cut markers of ethnicity. This trend attests to the characterization of the Jewish-Latin American diaspora as one dependent on integration with the new societies in which the Jews lived so as to ensure the survival of their people and thus the survival of their Jewish traditions, though these were largely kept out of the public eye until the early twentieth century.

The late nineteenth to early twentieth century was defined by immense waves of immigration to Latin America totaling about eleven million individuals; Jews constituted a minority (about 3 percent) of the immigrant population that arrived between 1854 and 1924. One of the primary methods by which the Latin American Jews preserved their cultural traditions was through intermarriage that became a continuous trend starting from their first arrival in Latin America, particularly in Argentina. Despite this factor, social integration within Latin American society occurred in hopes of gaining economic stability. The practical needs for careers in the new countries allowed the Jewish immigrants to contribute to the economic exchanges of society at large, which in turn “encouraged integration as a path to legitimization.”

Also, their concentration in urban areas gave the Jewish immigrants a high degree of social visibility which enabled them to attain a middle-class status in most cases. Participation as middle-class citizens of the Latin American economies ensured a certain level of social integration, as the immigrant populations and the nations developed concurrently and complimentarily.

Anti-Semitic attitudes and timeframes of development varied among the Latin American nations, though all grassroots anti-Semitic attitudes were a product of allegations that “Jews’ loyalty to their countries of residence was compromised by an attachment of Israel.” In these cases, transnational ties migrants had to their countries of origin were sometimes perceived to be in challenge to the ideals of the growing nationalism that was becoming evident in many Latin American countries leading up to the widespread repressions of the late twentieth century. For example, during the Argentinean military rule of 1976 to 1983, Jewish prisoners and suspects were particularly subject to violence at the hands of security forces, since transnational ties supposedly undermined national loyalty. 8,300 Jews became desaparecidos in Argentina, while 350-400 fled to Israel during the repression.

Jewish immigrants not only had to face the onslaught of suspicion and criticism from other Latin American citizens and leaders — new waves of immigration and the diffusion of various orthodox movements caused a series of internal problems for the Jewish communities. In the late 1920s, immigration restrictions on behalf of the United States and Argentina caused an increase in Jewish immigration to Brazil. Prior to 1936, the Brazilian Jewish community was relatively homogeneous, as a religiously traditional and middle-class group that was free of internal conflict. Later on, the Jews in Brazil became more urbanized and of professional/managerial class and even matters of religious practice constituted points of difference. In 1938, the German Jews who had migrated to Brazil in the nineteenth century formed the Congregação Israelita Paulista (CIP), which became the focal point of German Jewish life in São Paulo. The CIP was a “religiously liberal einheitgemeinde, which acted to encourage social integration through the teaching of Portuguese.” Internal tension between this organization and others, such as the Brazilian Jewish Center, imposed a variety of challenges to the formation of a distinctive Jewish identity in Brazil. Furthermore these internal issues diverted Jewish attention away from the critical issue of relief and aid to Jewish refugees of World War II.

The tragedy of the targeting of Jews and other groups during the Holocaust obviously put enormous pressure on Jews both inside and outside Europe. Amidst such horrific atrocities, strains within
the global Jewish community emerged. Since Jewish identity was targeted from all sides, old debates were rehashed while many Jews struggled with the logistic strife of accepting war refugees (or having refugee status themselves). Apart from the distraction of internal issues among organizations like the CIP and the Brazilian Jewish Center, Jews in Brazil were less capable of reaching out to refugees due to the utilization of anti-foreigner laws originally aimed at Germans, Italian, and Japanese immigrants against refugee Jews in this context. Even when German and Italian-speaking Jews were able to enter the country during the World War II years, they often faced public derision from the CIP, claiming that they were non-Zionists whom had become too secularized over the years. This led to an internal confrontational atmosphere in which language actually became a dichotomizing force within the São Paulo Jewish community. Thus old conflicts between Jews were recreated within the Brazilian setting as World War II heightened the strains within the Jewish community at large.

Such visceral tension in a time when Jews were victims of violence in the tumultuous setting of the European Holocaust opens the question as to whether or not fragmentation of similar type would occur (or is occurring) in other instances of war or conflict of the global Jewish community with an external force. This is particularly plausible when a conflict of that nature involves the Jewish homeland of Israel; the territory which is seen to link all diaspora Jews. However, the current Israel/Palestine land conflict is quite dissimilar from the case of the Jewish Holocaust because there is much contention over which side is victim and which is victimizer. Allegations of cruelty at the hands of Israeli leaders and military are complex to deconstruct, due to the conflicting assertions about Palestinian and Israeli claims to the land. Conflicts over land thus becomes a matter of mutually exclusive religious absolutes, since many in Israel "consider the focused assault of Arabs and Muslims on Jewish identity and its sources and symbols as no less than a declaration of war on the entire Jewish people." Consequently, an issue which at first glance could be confined to what is in reality a very small geographic area, has come to incorporate the entire community of Jewish and Arab migrants in global debate.

Prolonged occupation and expansion of the Israeli State in Palestine coincided with a gradual process of de-legitimization in the eyes of a slew of the world’s actors. This made it difficult for diaspora Jews to centralize their identity within the homeland of Israel when many other Latin American citizens generated an atmosphere of public suspicion about their dual loyalty. The Six-Day War of 1967 caused Israel to gain a new centrality and renewed pride on the part of the Jewish community to the Israeli State, but this attitude clashed with identity de-legitimization that resulted from internal debates in diaspora communities. Thus a return to religion, even in secular Latin American countries, served as a method of reformulating Jewish identity despite the conglomerate suspicions Latin American citizens had about their Jewish counterparts.

Outsiders’ perceptions of Jewish identity is inextricably linked with both narratives of past Jewish history and contemporary issues such as the Israeli land conflict. In recent years, many Israelis and diaspora Jews believed that “a comprehensive Middle Eastern peace would alter fundamentally both Israel’s Jewish character and relations between the sovereign Jewish State and Jewish existence in the West.” Because the Jews are a people whose identity cannot be separated from the implications of diaspora, it is important to recognize that the general diaspora mentality of Jewish people specifically involves imagining themselves as a nation outside of a homeland. This links directly with the notions and processes surrounding transnationalism, in which the work of the state as the “guardian of national borders, the arbiter of citizenship, and the entity responsible for foreign policy” transforms transnationalism into an intentional cultural and political project. Unlike globalization, which is a process of global development and its repercussions, transnationalism becomes a force of legitimizing identity for members of diaspora communities. Whenever Jews face discrimination in their new areas of
residence, particularly in connection with the atrocities of the late twentieth century in Latin America, there grows a sense of exclusion from state networks of politics.

Many Jewish citizens of Latin American nations have had to come to terms with their new countries of residence breaking diplomatic ties with Israel because the Israel/Palestine conflict has produced so much global debate. State actions work to de-legitimize Israel and Jewish transnational ties, which makes it increasingly difficult for Jews to “feel confident in engaging in alliance-building as equals.” For example, during the Gulf War many nations, Latin American and others, dubbed Israel a “spearhead of Western imperialism;” accusing Israel replicating vis-à-vis the Palestinians what the Nazis did to the Jews during the World War II genocide. While the Venezuelan case is the most blatant, not all Latin American nations have espoused formal opinions about the Israel/Palestine issue, which might be a testament to the fact that some of the Latin American nations themselves are developing out of tumultuous histories of recent human rights abuses. Nonetheless, the Latin American Jewish communities’ innate ties to Israel caused the de-legitimization of Jewish identity within the new nations of residence, since the Jews there had to face the demonization and marginalization of their people through the opinions of other members of society about Israel in general. In this case, transnationalism stigmatized Jewish immigrants regardless of how far removed they were generationally, linguistically, or politically from the conflict in the Middle East.

III. Arab Migration to the Americas

Palestinian migration to Central America began at the end of the nineteenth century, when the Ottoman Empire was experiencing general economic decline and a period of ongoing war. One consequence of war was a conscription law of 1908, which supplied Palestinians with another motive for emigration – many Palestinian Christians wanted to avoid mandatory military service. Also, population shifts and political/religious persecution made life for Palestinians under waning Ottoman rule difficult. Before 1896, the Ottoman Empire officially opposed emigration from its territories, which resulted in large waves of migration thereafter.

In addition to immigrants from Palestine, Arabs began migrating from Lebanon beginning in 1871 and from Syria in 1880 to Argentina. Their movement was based on motives very similar to those of their Palestinian counterparts: overpopulation, oppression from Muslim Turks, conscription, and a famine in 1915. While many prepared for the migration to be a temporary method of restoring their personal wealth, the migrants’ economic success generally prompted them to stay in their new Latin American countries of residence. Among those who did return, their tales of newly discovered wealth in the Americas propelled others in similarly dismal economic situations at home to emigrate. Because they carried Ottoman (Turkish) passports, the Palestinians were designated as “Turks,” which makes it difficult to determine an accurate number of total immigrants during these early years.

The majority of the early Palestinian immigrants were Christian, especially those from the Bethlehem-Jerusalem area. It is important to note, however, that the “minority” Muslim population actually constituted forty-five percent of immigrants. Because Latin America had only recently broken free of the fetters of colonialism, missionary schools established by European powers were still in full use and provided yet another reason for the new immigrants to stay. These missionary schools served as vehicles for the furthering of the Palestinian immigrants’ interests, since they were able to gain economic access without secularizing their education. Many of the Latin American nations at the time promoted foreign immigration as a means to social, cultural, and economic development.

Despite the fallacious belief that the Palestinian immigrants were uneducated, poor peasants, most were from urban families and their main economic activity was based on commerce. The Palestinian immigrants as a merchant class imported into Latin American society
holistically facilitated the development of the nation. In Honduras, expansion under liberal capitalism required a competent merchant class to meet the demands of the new economy, but the "elite culture that devalued engagement with commerce left a void in the economic system."

The Palestinian immigrants facilely filled this void, allowing them to acquire and maintain an important position within their new socioeconomic systems.

In order to achieve economic success in their new countries, many of the Arab immigrants settled along railroad routes in search of customers. Typically, Arab immigrants would take up jobs as peddlers upon arrival, and later open family stores depending on their success. If the markets were favorable, some of them would be able to later start factories or industries.

In addition to facilitating commerce, many immigrants sold small religious items from the Holy Land, which were enormously popular among Central American Catholics. This also reveals the initial integration of the Palestinian Christians into Latin American society; religion frequently served as a reference point for Catholics to connect with their new Christian neighbors.

Because many members of the first generation of Arab immigrants were Christian, the issue of their Latin American citizenship became all the more abstruse and troublesome. Latin Americans often did not know how to address the entry of large numbers of people (who could not be defined as either white or black) into their countries. This became a provocative issue for many Latin American elites, especially "those endowed with a myth of racial democracy and lacking a pluralist ethnic perspective." Historically, most Latin American nations had employed systems in which all persons must be defined as a particular class according to their race, no matter how ethnically mixed they were. Latin American citizens’ inability to facilely categorize the new immigrants caused a proliferation of social tension which arguably has yet to ease. Additionally, Arab intermarriage with the existing indigenous population resulted in a slight dissolution of immigrant culture, as well as entry into the lowest level of civil society.

The first wave of Palestinian immigrants were highly effective in welcoming their friends and family members to Latin America. The Palestinians who had already put down roots in the new countries helped the new arrivals by offering jobs, housing, and low-interest loans to start their own businesses. Such outreach created a large community of successful merchants rather than a very small group with a large concentration of capital, which allowed the immigrants to find their niche within the existing economic frameworks of the Central American countries. Welcoming of new arrivals was extremely important in light of Argentina’s official discrimination against certain Arab immigrants, which denied them access even to the meager services of the “Immigrants’ Hotel” located in Buenos Aires. Outreach on behalf of the established immigrant community allowed for the new waves of immigrants to have a chance at economic success.

However, it was inevitable that the growing economic power of the Palestinian communities would eventually fuel resentment on the part of Central American elites. In Honduras, the mid-twentieth century saw the emergence of the slur “Turcos,” as the Palestinian community was barred entry into certain clubs. Their tight-knit community nature corresponded to a lack of integration with society at large, which in combination with their economic success made them a very easy target of such discrimination. This period saw the establishment of
many segregationist and discriminatory laws, such as El Salvador’s approval of Decree No. 49 in 1936, which forbade persons of Middle Eastern/Eastern origin from opening businesses.30 A consequence of this and other related legislation was the rapid assimilation of the Palestinian community in the host countries thereafter, which caused a relative loss of culture among the Palestinian immigrants.

The next large wave of Palestinian refugees within Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and other Latin American nations came after fighting broke out between the Haganah (the underground Jewish army) and Palestinian irregulars, which was followed by battles between the Haganah, the Arab Legion (Transjordan), and the armies of Egypt, Syria, and Iraq after May 14, 1948. Many of the exiles originally fled to neighboring nations such as Syria and Lebanon, but became impoverished there and moved on to Latin American nations, which were among the wealthiest of the diaspora.31 Like that of the Jews, Palestinian displacement is historically immediate and ongoing. This is especially true in the context of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, since the majority of the Palestinian community still resides there.32 In her analysis of the Palestinian diaspora, Julie Peteet claims that the core issue of diaspora is not the “conditions of departure...but the denial of internationally recognized right of return.”33 This denial causes the debate over Jewish/Arab homeland to become even more nebulous.

In addition to the attack on immigrant Palestinian culture as characterized for the most part by a Christian outlook, Israel’s 1967 occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip propelled the movement of a new wave of refugees whom were mostly Muslim. The new immigrants to Latin America built mosques and emphasized the maintenance of their culture, which perhaps stalled some of the gradual integration that had been occurring for the thirty years prior. Solidarity with people still living in Palestine became the common political ground among immigrant communities, which were “otherwise deeply divided on political issues.”34 A comparison can be drawn to the Jewish immigrant communities in Latin America, whose internal debate is inseparable from the supposition that diaspora communities will remain loyal to the Israeli cause. However, social integration of Jewish immigrant communities made them more subject to criticism about “dual loyalty” to Israel and their Latin American countries of residence. Presumptions of nationalism projected suspicion onto the Jewish community in Latin America, whereas racism toward the so-called “Turcos” supplemented a comparable but distinct level of suspicion onto the Arab immigrants.

Religion was not the only force driving suspicion and contempt from the Arabs’ Latin American counterparts — varying levels and types of economic success also brought about opposition. For example, the majority of Syrian and Lebanese immigrants lived in the northwest of Argentina, where they worked in the agricultural sector. Living in the countryside made these immigrants easy targets of robbery, violence, and sometimes murder. Unlike some of their Palestinian counterparts, the Lebanese and Syrian immigrants recognized that working in commerce would improve their economic status, while their perceived image might be best improved through agricultural work. Upwardly mobile Lebanese and Syrian immigrants “responded to ethnic degradation as ‘Turcos’ by trying to avoid the stigmas through espousing the virtue of ‘agricultural labor’ for their co-nationals.”35 Social mobility was essential for community vitality, so many Syrian and Lebanese immigrants remained in the agricultural sector merely to avoid derision that could come through proximity with other Latin Americans, as would be typical of working in trade.

Twentieth century waves of Muslim migration to the Americas altered some of the earlier societal expectations about immigrant Arab communities. The Catholic Church in Argentina specifically used xenophobic responses of the general public “as a means to recapture its dominant position within Argentine society,” since its values seemingly excluded Arabs.36 This reflects political maneuvering more than any sort of religious or social reality. This illuminates
the strictures of Argentina’s nationalist discourse, which often provided an all-or-nothing, homogenous picture of society. While such discourse certainly allowed the Catholic Church to gain power as a result of suspicion and racist responses to Arab immigration, it did not change the reality that Argentinean society had always been constituted by a multiplicity of cultural forces. Its heterogeneous nature could be ignored, but attempts to homogenize civil society would be futilely beyond the scope of outright repression.

The mass immigration of Muslim Arabs did bring with it the construction of many mosques as gathering places. This trend, in tandem with the “explicit sensibility that cultural and political causes in the Arab world would remain prevalent in daily life,” made the new Muslim community extremely visible to the public.37 Solidarity with people still living in Palestine was largely related to the fact that many of the later immigrants frequently visited the Middle East, thus they constantly strengthened their diasporic bonds. In addition, there are multiple cultural centers and organizations in Latin America which emphasize the study of the Arab language in order to distinguish the Arab Latin American community from that of the rest of Latin America, especially in Brazil. This not only designates the Muslim immigrants as a distinct cultural entity, but it works to fortify transnational ties to other diaspora communities around the globe. Although Islam, like all the other major religions, includes a wide variety of structures of belief and custom within its ranks, the diaspora community in Latin America was noted particularly for its unique and persistent affinity for affirming transnational ties. In spite of their differences in the practice and interpretation of cult, “both Shi’ite and Sunni communities share their identification as bearers of Muslim and ethnic Arab identities” and choose to present themselves as a united community before the general societies of Latin America in which they live.38

This presentation attests to the ways in which immigrant community members sometimes strive to find sources of commonality with one another in settings where they encounter larger differences in native communities.

The more socially mobile Arab immigrants have become, the easier it is for international organizations to build transnational ties within diaspora communities. However, Michael Humphrey claims that while international Lebanese and Syrian organizations still “connect them with diaspora communities and their ‘imaginary homelands,’ this is for most very superficial.”39 The author bases this argument on the fact that language increasingly becomes a barrier as immigrants are separated further and further from their “real” or “imaginary” homelands (this is an entirely separate matter of debate) throughout the generations. The competing desires of maintenance of a distinct culture and social mobility through assimilation and acceptance make the formulation of ethnic pride a complicated matter for Latin American Arabs. One of the few signs of progress was the 1976 Resolution 5675, “A Tribute to Arab Immigration.”40 This document acknowledges Arab contributions to national development, thus affirming Argentine Arab ethnic pride in an official manner on behalf of the state. While it remains unclear how much this state action has impacted public opinion, it was a significant step for the Arab diaspora community in Latin America.

Reactions to the state of diaspora for Muslim and Christian Arab immigrant communities alike differ across Latin American borders. For example, in contemporary Argentina, “the phenomena of transnationalism, double nationality, and diaspora all integrate into citizenship and ethnicity,” whereas the Islamic communities in Brazil began to express transnationalism and diaspora in “religious terms within the public sphere beginning in the 1980s.”41 This shift to an understanding of the diaspora mentality in the context of religion, and not just ethnicity, indicates both a reaction to perpetual isolation from much of the external Latin American community, as well as a redefinition of transnationalism in the minds of Muslim immigrants. In relation to the Israel/Palestine land conflict, which is not merely a conflict over land but also a conflict over what are perceived to be mutually exclusive elements of religion, this new identification could greatly affect the views of Muslim and non-Muslim Latin
Americans alike regarding the current conflict in the Middle East.

IV. Recent Latin American Opinion of Diaspora

Jewish diaspora identity reflects the dynamics of transnationalism, in the contexts of the causes of earlier migrations (persecution in Europe during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries) as well as the character of the more recent conflict in Israel/Palestine. According to Leonardo Senkman, before the 1980s, neither survivors of the Holocaust nor other Jewish immigrants with “acute feelings of dislocation” played any role in the constitution of collective identities in Argentina.42 In other words, Senkman believes that sentiments of victimhood did not actively shape collective Jewish identity in Argentina until many Jewish citizens became victims again in their new home country. On the other hand, some of the victims’ fellow Jewish Argentines joined the human rights struggle against impunity and gained some space and legitimacy in the public sphere in Argentina after their counterparts fell victims in huge numbers to the repression of 1976-1983.43 Those who adhered to the cause to end the systematic repression helped legitimize the identity of Jewish Argentineans in an integrative sense – legitimacy of this identity thus corresponds to the idea of these people as Argentineans and not necessarily as Jews. This is a particularly important distinction with regard to the notions of Jewish diaspora and of integration in their new home countries.

Transnationalism addresses the interconnectivity between individuals, groups and nations, as well as the effects by which it triggers (and in turn conditions) “social processes, political movements, and cultural ideas and networks extending beyond national boundaries and state borders.”44 Consequently, transnationalism is implicit in the character of diaspora, particularly that of the Jews. In an age of exponentially increasing globalization, transnational networks can project a community’s plight widely. The way in which mainstream media reports on issues such as the Israel/Palestine land conflict determines much about the multi-foliate debate, especially since the dichotomy of Israel and Palestine includes an inherent religious argument within its realm.

Despite the more recent de-legitimization of Jewish identity in Latin America due to Israel’s prolonged occupation of Palestine, social integration from the very beginning of the Jewish immigrants’ arrival in Latin American countries served as a path to legitimization. The period of democratization following the repression of the Southern Cone also provided greater social integration due to the opening up of economic opportunities for Jews.45 A shift to Western political and economic models based on democracy and liberal capitalism may have actually strengthened Jewish immigrant identity with the state of Israel, since it has very strong ties with the U.S. and other Western nations, at least in terms of formal foreign policy.

In spite of relative integration with Latin American communities, Jewish attachments to another homeland (Israel) has served as a point of suspicion for non-Jews in Latin America. The general rise of Jewish immigrants into managerial positions in their new economies, while contributing greatly to internal development, worked to fuel resentment on the part of Latin Americans who could not attain such positions due to lack of administrative experience. One result of this resentment is the categorization of Jews as part of the “white” segment of society, especially since Jewish communities in Latin America are widely perceived to be “homogeneous and uniquely middle or upper class.”46 This perception is in blatant conflict with the actual makeup of the Jewish population in Latin America. The mass influx of Jewish immigrants who historically came from different ethno-cultural regions rather than from one territorial center or homeland.

The reality that Jews did not arrive in Latin America as former citizens of Israel specifically is something that could help legitimize them as citizens in the eyes of their Latin American counterparts. Alternatively, media attention to the Israel/Palestine issue at present can serve as a distraction from the truth, which is that not all Latin American Jews are from Israel. This is very easily overshadowed, however, by loyalty to
Israel’s cause on the part of these same Latin American Jews. It could be this very reality – that some Jews in Latin America share in fidelity with Israel despite never having lived there – that generates insurmountable suspicion about the immigrant community. Nonetheless, this is one of many factors contributing to the xenophobia and racism directed at Latin American Jews. Israel as an ancestral homeland is a widespread symbol of transnationalism for diaspora Jews, but it is not entirely clear how much this symbolism impacts the opinion of Latin Americans regarding the Israel/Palestine conflict.

While the Argentinean Jewish community did make strides in legitimization during the repression of the late seventies and eighties, the twentieth century can still largely be characterized as a time in which the Jewish people internalized their ethnic and collective identity as well as “transnational self-reliance and solidarity.” This calls into question some of the earlier arguments that the Jewish community became integrated with Latin American society consistently over time, especially when juxtaposed to the integration (or lack thereof) of Arab immigrant segments of society. Differentiation of the Jewish immigrants from other Latin American citizens, however, is compromised by a paradoxical assumption of full citizenship as a result of Jewish Latin Americans “reconnecting themselves with the national narrative of victimhood [during the repressions] that was imprinted both in Jewish history and in the recent history of human rights violations of the last dictatorship." If the narrative of victimhood is an indicator of public opinion about Latin American Jews, differing perspectives on which side is victim and which is victimizer in the Israel/Palestine conflict could also be a hugely important aspect shaping public opinion overall.

Lastly, liberation theology both affects Latin American Jews directly and alters certain Christians’ opinions about the Jewish population. Historically, “both Christian and non-Christian immigrant communities were entitled by the state to enjoy citizenship as individuals, but not as collective groups that would separate them from nation-state goals.” Senkman makes clear that suspicions about the Latin American Jewish community, whatever its source, has vastly limited their collective rights. Freedom of religion, usually considered a collective right from which individual rights proceed, becomes hazy due to the presence of liberation ideology in Latin America and its own discourse surrounding victimhood. The victim narrative is such a fundamental part of the understanding Latin American Jews have of themselves and the understanding other citizens have of them; a complication to the narrative arose when mid-twentieth century “followers of liberation ideology [accused] the Jewish community of being agents of Wall Street and American imperialism.” It is difficult to discern the primary source of these accusations; liberation theology encompasses very particular economic ideas in the context of Christian paradigms.

Also, accusations of being “agents of Wall Street and American imperialism” are coupled with more general suspicions of the Israeli State as an extension of the very same thing. Therefore, followers of liberation ideology simultaneously make Latin American Jews subjects of suspicion in both international and domestic contexts, condemning their overall economic success in their new home countries as well as apparent loyalty to Israel, which they sometimes dub an appendage of American imperialism. Leon Klenicki claims that none of liberation theology’s theologians have recognized the “contribution of Jewish workers in the formation of Latin American trade unions and social justice.” This chiefly suggests lingering anti-Semitism and a relative lack of pluralism that persists in certain Latin American communities.

V. Recent Latin American Opinion of Arab Presence

Retention of certain aspects of pre-migratory culture can be perceived to be at odds with social integration with the population at large. This is especially true in the case of Arab immigrants to Latin America because they encompass Christian and Muslim religions with all of their respective sects, as well as other factors of culture
and demography in addition to religion. The retention of culture on the part of the Arab immigrants certainly equates with a diaspora mentality, and it also isolates them in the eyes of their Latin American counterparts. According to Ignacio Klich and Jeffrey Lesser, “the lack of a multi-ethnic outlook throughout much of the region has transformed Latin Americans of Arab descent into permanent foreigners.”52 The concept of being a “permanent foreigner” has a very literal relationship to the definition of diaspora, and while it is certainly relevant in that context, the perceptions of Latin Americans about their fellow Arab citizens contrasts in many ways to that of their opinion about Latin American Jews who have dealt with and are dealing with the implications of their own diaspora.

A 1992 public opinion survey revealed that 31 percent of 1,900 interviewees in Buenos Aires and several Argentinean provinces considered the Arab ethnic group among the least integrated, while 40 percent of the interviewees viewed its members as a separate people, “different from the Argentine.” Even more enlightening results of this survey indicate that 45 percent of interviewees would not support a Muslim presidential candidate, and 17 percent responded that Arab immigrants should not enjoy the same rights as other Argentinean citizens.53 It is true that many Arab immigrant communities in Latin America have a strong emphasis on the retention of culture, but they are not entirely isolated from Latin American society – economic integration is a requisite of survival. The growth of industrial and/or agro-industrial economies in Latin America over the past few decades created a new wealth in that part of the world, but also a market for merchant activities. Maghribi Jewish, Arab, and Armenian immigrants flourished in these roles.”54 Economic desirability and social undesirability of Arab peddlers to fill this void in the Latin American economies created an atmosphere of tension and debate that still endures today, as made evident by the widespread view that the Latin Americans of Arab descent are in fact a separate people.

While the 1992 survey arguably attests to a certain degree of racism in Argentina toward the Arab immigrant community, this prejudice has rarely been officially acknowledged. Because national categories used to classify immigrants were constantly changing, it was often easier to ignore distinctions such as religion and economic class among immigrants and to instead form generalizations which proved to be harmful weapons of racism in Latin American society. Arab assimilation required camouflaging identity in order to penetrate the economy, but this posed problems for those who also hoped to maintain strong transnational ties or a distinct cultural identity. This relates to Latin America’s history of hierarchy and classism, in which prejudice lingered at all levels of society despite ethnic intermarriage and occasional abandonment of afro-indigenous cultural practices. Argentina’s nationalist discourse typically rejects notions of a heterogeneous society, and this became increasingly evident during the repression of the seventies and eighties in which leftists, Jews, Arabs, and other ethnic groups were targeted. Thus religion became a very important marker of identity for diaspora communities, especially in the twentieth century.

In Brazil, a new religious awakening of Islam has invoked a degree of acceptance of religious-cultural pluralism in Brazil, which in turn since the 1970 migrations has eliminated much of the possible demand for assimilation in this country. It was converted Islamic Brazilian citizens and not the native people of Arab descent who led the new return to Islam movement.55 As a result, Arabs in Brazil have recently built their identity on religion rather than on ethnicity, which is crucial with regard to notions of transnationalism. Especially in the context of the Israel/Palestine conflict, in which religion is an equal if not a greater factor than those of the economic or ethnic arguments, transnational ties on the basis of primarily religion can be a dichotomizing force for the Arabs living within Latin American society. Emphasis on learning Arab language and Islamic sacred textual tradition can work to further alienate this immigrant community from the population at large. Alienation is an unfortunate byproduct of views held by Argentinean elites for over a century – views that the 1992 public opinion survey reflects.
1999 Annual Report of Argentina, Director of Migration Juan Alsina released the following statement:

"[The Syrians] have definite qualities ... We have all seen them walk down our streets, dirty and ragged dragging their wretched merchandise, which they offer from door to door. Some move to towns in the provinces, while others risk going to the countryside for the same purpose. Most of these merchants are only agents of companies of the same nationality, which do business with a relatively large capital. The Syrian immigrant does not represent an efficient socio-economic factor, a conclusion that can be reached after the preceding brief considerations. His role as a consumer is minimal and the part he plays as a producer is non-existent. The ambulatory trade he devotes himself to fills no need of exchange. In this sense his work – far from being beneficial – results in excessive competition, causing established small businessmen, who deserve certain considerations, many economic problems..."56

While of course there were some exceptions, this and similar opinions about the Arab immigrants on the part of Latin American elites only helped to poison general opinion and spur climates of racism which would ultimately endure for generations to come.

Attacks by extremists can obviously wreak enormous havoc on the overall image of members of a religious community, and this was certainly no different in the case of the terrorist attacks against the Israeli Embassy and the AMIA building in Buenos Aires in 1992 and 1994. Especially after September 11, 2001, anti-Arab Islamophobia surfaced in Brazil as well as many other Latin American nations with Arab citizens within their borders. Stereotypes about Arabs as being Islamic extremists perforated transnational understandings of this community. This probably also applies to the discourse in which terrorist groups like Hamas are depicted as representations of all Palestinians. According to some press reports, many believe the [Tri-Border Area’s] Arab and Muslim community contains hardcore sympathizers with direct ties to Hezbollah...Hamas...and even al Qaeda."57 Religious identification can seem to polarize the interests of Arabs and non-Arabs in Latin American society, especially when “transnational relationships with the Umma as a global realm of faithful belonging transcend the logic of nation-state citizenship."58

VI. Effect of Latin America's Own History on this Debate

European colonialism in Latin America, particularly in the Southern Cone, left in place structures of racial hierarchy and related systems of land rights and power that lingered for centuries after independence. Forced labor systems such as the encomienda, corregimiento, and mita ensured the subordination of peoples of indigenous or African origin. “Pigmentocracy” provided the basis of the hierarchal structure of power, with peninsulares and creoles at the top of the power chain (people who were European by citizenship or by blood), with mestizos, mulatos, zambos, and other mixed races below them. This historical precedent of power structures based on unalterable characteristics of birth supplies some explanation of the origin of resentment toward Arab and Jewish immigrants in Latin America.

Jews’ transnational ties threatened the growing nationalism of Latin America which led to the conflicts of the 1970s and 1980s. “During the most nationalist epoch of Argentine xenophobia, Jews had to hide their ethno-national collective identity” to ensure their own safety.59 It is possible that this trend could replicate itself today, in the sense that anti-Semitic sentiments among Latin Americans could project itself onto the Israel/Palestine issue, thereby generating greater animosity toward notions of Jewish collectivity in Latin America. In contrast, demanding justice and accountability for human rights violations done to Jews during the military regime
repression in Argentina has provided the opportunity for Argentinean Jews to change their societal image. The human rights discourse has provided avenues by which Jewish people could emphasize the joint social and political struggle of all Argentineans against authoritarianism and impunity, but in the specific context of terrorism and anti-Semitism. It also broadened the scope of their claims to justice and social participation. During the period of Argentinean democratization, politics of difference and identity politics were resurrected in the public sphere; this has shaped and continued to shape the collective identity of Argentinean Jews.

VII. Latin American Reactions to the Israel/Palestine Conflict

While there is no universal reaction to the Israel/Palestine Conflict, Latin America has been noted for having various summits and other international conventions which sometimes resulted in support for a two-state solution or for more rights for Palestinians in general. The spring 2011 United Nations Latin American and Caribbean Meeting in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace in Montevideo, Uruguay resulted in Latin American recognition of the Palestinian state as well as a desire to resolve permanent status issues. According to the final document issued at the closing session, the organizers supported the “firm stance by the international community not to recognize any changes to the pre-1967 borders, including with regard to occupied East Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties.” In addition, the delegates firmly condemned killing of Palestinian civilians in Gaza as well as rocket fire on civilians in Israel, asserting that such actions prompted extremism on both sides. The wide-ranging document published after the closing session also stated that “the solution to the conflict must be anchored in international law, as force and unilateral steps would not bring peace.”

Mr. Whitbeck, a Paris-based international lawyer, highlighted the distinction between the existence of a State and the diplomatic recognition of a State by other States. Palestine, then recognized by 112 other States, qualified as a State under the criteria set forth in the 1933 Montevideo Convention. Mr. Whitbeck stated that Israel, however, “did not qualify as a State under the Convention’s criteria since it had consciously chosen never to define its territory and borders, knowing that doing so would necessarily place limits on them.” While Palestine had formerly defined itself according to “self-autonomy” instead of statehood, Mr. Whitbeck claimed that as of the 2011 convention the state of Palestine already existed without the need for Israeli or American consent. Seven out of the nine Latin American countries which recognized this existence did so according to pre-1967 borders.

The 2011 Montevideo convention’s strong support of Palestine’s right to self-determination is a political statement that is somewhat inconsistent with general social discrimination toward diaspora Palestinians, both Christian and Muslim, living in Latin America. However, online media publications about the convention point to the work of several progressive NGOs which work directly with the diaspora community in Latin America and make claims on their behalf. For example, Ms. Rabi, President of the Buenos Aires-based Federación de Entidades Argentino-Palestinas, discussed the fate of the Palestinian Diaspora in Argentina. In her words, “Israel was turning the Palestinians into martyrs and people fighting a holy war they had not asked for.” She described the Israeli/Palestine issue as one of equal importance to members of the Palestinian Diaspora in addition to citizens of the occupied territory. According to the convention’s media output, in February 1990, “a United Nations Meeting on the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people had been held for the first time in Argentina. Her organization had worked with the Federation of Jewish Entities in Argentina to recognize and promote the establishment of Palestinian Liberation Organization representation in 1983.” Ms. Rabi stated that Argentina’s Jewish business and political community had “aggressively boycotted” the efforts of her organization, and she noted that “Zionists in Argentina sided more with Israel than
with the values of their own democracy."

In light of Argentina’s relatively recent transition to democracy, it is somewhat difficult to discern exactly what Ms. Rabi meant by this statement – whether her view of Palestinian displacement as a humanitarian cause was thus similarly linked in her mind to the ideals of democracy.

Many delegates to the Montevideo convention expressed the view that silence on behalf of the international community was “equivalent to complicity and it must stop,” though statements by members of the conventions revealed varying degrees of solidarity with the Palestinian cause. While the Argentine government opposed the bombing of the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires in 1992 and subsequent attacks, Argentina alongside most other Latin American countries has taken the stance of “peace and security,” which in this case consists of support for Palestine. According to the Montevideo convention and others, Latin American delegates called into question the ideals of Latin American nations themselves and recognized the plight of Arabs in Palestine/Israel, which as a result prompted support for a two-state solution. At the 2011 convention, the general consensus was that such a solution could only be reached if the Palestinian State (as just that – a state) was given more support from the international community with amended international laws in full effect.

VIII. Analysis of the Standing of Latin American Jews and Arabs

The social standing of Latin American Jews and Arabs alike has clearly involved a process of much evolution over the past century, though there is a relative lack of consensus regarding overall Latin American opinion about the presence of these diaspora communities. Argentinean Jews were disproportionately targeted during the repression of the late nineteenth century. A level of lingering suspicion toward their diaspora community often results in violent acts during times of crisis. Similarly, racism directed at the Latin American Arab community as a whole after acts of terror by extremists reveals similarly high levels of discrimination and an inability to distinguish differences in race, religion, and political creed after tragic acts are committed by a small segment of the Arab population. The 1992 public opinion survey regarding Arabs which was administered in Argentina reflects this in unarguable statistics. While this opinion poll is now more than twenty years old, it is not irrelevant in the discernment of more recent public opinion. In the First National Conference of Racial Promotion that took place in Brazil in 2005, both Jews and Arabs were mentioned several times as “victims of racism or as ethnic groups that endeavor to live together in peace within Brazilian society.”

The desire to coexist peacefully in Brazil illuminates a factor that is very important in understanding diaspora communities: despite the tension in Israel/Palestine, Jews and Arabs in Brazil wish for peaceful cohabitation since both communities have experienced the effects of subliminal racism as well as outright discrimination in their new home countries. Forced positioning as victims of discrimination might actually contribute to a sense of linked fate. In this way, transnationalism becomes secondary to the aim of evading discrimination in individuals’ current place of residence. This does not imply that Jews and Arabs in Brazil do not care about the Israel/Palestine issue, but rather attests to the variety of external forces which have the ability to alter diaspora communities’ priorities. In this way, lived experience can take precedence over “otherization” that is generated from a land conflict thousands of miles away.

In both North and South America, several non-governmental organizations and grassroots movements have become prominent in shaping public opinion about Jewish and Arab presence as well as providing support for these communities. For example, the Latin American Dawah Organization, a nonprofit organization founded in 1997, has the mission of promoting Islam among Latinos and providing support for Latino Muslims. Similarly, the website HispanicMuslims.com seeks to educate the public, especially the United States and Mexican public, on the lives of Latino Muslims. These and
"Like most minority groups, Arabs and Jews in Latin America are in need of additional support simply to achieve what are considered “normal” standards of religious freedom, economic stability, and social acceptance."

other organizations enable Arabs in Latin America to confront the stereotype of the “corrupt merchant who profits at the expense of ‘real’” Mexicans, Brazilians, Argentines, etc. Of course, the very presence of these NGOs indicates to the public that there exists a need to support these communities – the observation that racism is prevalent and, like most minority groups, Arabs and Jews in Latin America are in need of additional support simply to achieve what are considered “normal” standards of religious freedom, economic stability, and social acceptance.

Another example of outside organizations working on behalf of the Arab community in Latin America is the Al-Damir newspaper in Chile. Al-Damir in Arabic means “conscience,” which in the view of Heba El Attar suggests that “the Palestinian-Chilean’s utmost goal is to persuade the wider Chilean public that Palestinians are Chilean too, a task endorsed by the degree of professionalism that the newspaper achieves through the type and quality of its coverage.” According to the author, this newspaper has been effective in creating intercultural dialogue as well as attracting attention to the issues of Arab identity in Chile as well as to the global discourse about the Israel/Palestine issue. The Al-Damir newspaper, through its polls and articles in general, “indicates an orientation among the Palestinian diaspora communities in Chile toward organized work in favor of the Palestinian territories, this time independent from the political Palestinian center.” Consequently, the formulation of Arab identity as Chilean citizens is inseparable from and part of the progressive work of this diaspora community toward supporting the state of Palestine. This is significant because it most likely affirms for the rest of the Chilean public that their Arab neighbors are truly bound by transnational ties to Palestine. The effects of such an observation vary, and the effect of alliance with this cause versus the alternate effect of discrimination has already been discussed at length in this paper.

IX. Conclusion

Implicit in the definition of diaspora are transnational ties to a religious or ethnic homeland, regardless of the degree of integration immigrants experience in their new countries of residence. However, this can generate suspicion about the immigrant communities as interests of transnationalism and nationalism clash. With Jewish diaspora, the fact that Israel’s role in the current conflict in the West Bank is criticized makes those linked to the Israeli homeland (diaspora Jews) all the more dependent on integration as a path to legitimization. Additionally, human rights issues in Latin American countries have provided avenues by which Jewish immigrants can affirm their loyalty to these countries by speaking out against impunity. Victimhood thus has helped to structure the discourse of human rights and the role of Jewish immigrants as victims, or as constituents of victimizers in the view of those who deem Israel to be in violation of certain human rights laws.

Attacks by extremists around the globe are damaging to the universal image of Muslims, and even of non-Muslim Arabs. As a result, transnationalism can de-legitimize the identity of Arabs as Latin American citizens. Religion (or perceived religion), and not ethnicity per se, can serve as a divisive force in the shaping of Latin American Arab identity. General resentment as a result of the contrasting recognitions of social...
isolation and economic integration make it more difficult for Arab immigrants to formulate a distinctly Latin American Arab identity which would enable them to be apart from derision that results from issues in the global Arab community. This entire matrix of the many pressures and conflicting perceptions of Arab and Jewish immigrants alike complicates the implications of Latin Americans’ views about the Israel/Palestine issue, and how Arab and Jewish immigrants are actually tied to the issue.

The web of diaspora community identity woven by transnational and nationalist discourse continues to serve as a foundation for all arguments regarding current international issues, namely the Israel/Palestine land conflict. Without Latin America’s own tumultuous history of human rights abuses, including and excluding consideration of Jewish and Arab participation/victimization, it is difficult to discern the contextual basis of present-day Latin American stances on issues abroad. The collective history of Jewish and Arab migration to the Americas, dating back to the nineteenth century, sheds light on the proliferation of current dialogue and disagreement. As frequent subjects of racism and suspicion in their new home countries, Jewish and Arab immigrants alike have experienced the delicate balance of loyalty to transnational ties and loyalty to Latin American nationalist aims. This balance is essential to the understanding of these immigrants’ reactions to the Israel/Palestine conflict, since issues of homelands and globalization are at work. As Latin American nations continue to establish formal foreign policy regarding their stances on the issue in the Middle East, it is more important than ever to view all claims with a critical lens in light of the Latin American countries’ own histories and the social status of Jewish and Arab diaspora citizens who live within their borders.

Arabs and Jews have been targets of racism, discrimination, and violence for over a century in Latin America – therefore, it is completely possible that the violence and debate surrounding the Israel/Palestine land conflict will again result in their victimization. Discriminatory immigration laws, disproportionate targeting of Jews during the Southern Cone repressions based on nothing other than “suspicion,” and racism directed toward Arabs after acts of terror committed by extremists all reveal the backlash of transnational ties in general. It is not a great leap in logic to specify this case to make the same claim about transnational ties to either Israel or Palestine. While Latin American countries have elected several Jewish and Arab political leaders over the years, corruption and scandals surrounding these figures only enhanced negative attitudes toward the Jewish/Arab populations as a whole. As both diaspora communities have gained more social visibility in Latin America, there has been greater fluctuation with regard to transnational ties and social integration. The Israel/Palestine land conflict is proving to be an increasingly inflammatory issue, and diaspora Jews and Arabs are likely to be the first innocent people to suffer outside of the Middle East as a result.

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capitalism has introduced a global system that incentivizes nation-states to strive for continuous growth and expansion within a competitive world market. A nation is able to experience economic growth and remain competitive only when its economy is productive enough to allow for the accumulation of capital. In order to compete for a position of power within the present world market, capital accumulation is necessary to, “purchase the means (materials and labor) to produce commodities that are then exchanged for more capital... to make possible the endless circulation and accumulation of capital.”i The accumulation of capital generates wealth within a society and creates room for social and economic development.

As such, nations that have undergone rapid industrialization have engaged in capitalist modes of production to exchange commodities within a global market for profit. Ultimately, the shift from an agrarian economy to a globalized industrial economy has been fueled by innovative technologies that allow for mass production and mass consumption. Although industrialization has spurred widespread economic and social development, the market externalities that have resulted have compromised the environment and overall ecosystem health in order to meet the scale of demand seen within a global capitalist market.

The natural resource reserves of the Earth have been significantly exploited in order to fuel the technologies that are required to sustain productivity within an industrialized economy. As such, the commodification of natural resources within the global market has meant that industrialized nations with the greatest amount of capital are able to extend economic power across the globe to create a monopoly over foreign natural resource reserves. Even though high-income economies only account for 18 percent of the world’s population, “high-income economies use about half the world’s energy production each year—more than 4 times more energy per person than middle-income economies and almost 14 times more than low-income economies.”ii The monopoly that high-income economies have over natural resources has facilitated unequal energy consumption, serving only to further bolster the economic, political, and social power of those able to gain access to such wealth in the first place. Overall, “economic growth and greater energy use are positively correlated—access to electricity and the use of energy are essential in raising people’s standard of living. Economic development has improved the quality of life for many people... But the gains have been uneven, and economic growth has often had negative environmental consequences, with a drastic impact on poor people.”iii As such, middle-income and low-income economies are unable to gain equal access to the limited natural resource reserves that have fostered the widespread social and economic development seen in high-income countries.

To exacerbate the unequal growth and development between high-income and low-income countries even further, the forces of globalization have made

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it more convenient for “transnational corporations and capital to flee to areas with the least environmental regulations, best tax incentives, cheapest labor, and highest profit.” This leads to particular “strains on the eco-systems in many poor communities and poor nations.” Ultimately, the environmental burdens that have resulted from the heightening consumption of natural resources within high-income economies are being displaced onto low-income economies. Meanwhile, high-income nations continue to reap the benefits of further economic and social development that result from capitalist modes of production.

As the commodification of natural resources continues, the environments of many societies will never reap the benefits of this model of capitalist development and are instead persistently exploited, perpetuating a system that is intrinsically inequitable. Innovative technologies have widened the scale of natural resource extraction through forces of globalization, allowing “the world economy to become a zero-sum game in which benefits to the wealthy come directly at the cost of social and ecological injustices to the poor.”

Environmental justice movements have emerged in various regions of the globe as a response to the power relationships that have formed in relation to the environment. The movement sheds light on the social injustices that arise when environmental equity and environmental goods are only provisioned to those in positions of power and privilege.

"Ultimately, the environmental burdens that have resulted from the heightening consumption of natural resources within high-income economies are being displaced onto low-income economies."

Taking this into consideration, it is important to understand the extent to which the goals of the environmental justice movement have globalized and spread across the highly politicized border that separates the United States and Mexico. With a careful review of the literature on the origins of the environmental justice movement, it is clear that the environmental justice movement began in the United States as a response to the unequal distribution of environmental burdens among minority populations within the United States. These inherent environmental injustices surfaced as a result of the rampant, but domestic, institutionalized racism that the U.S. environmental justice movement sought to deconstruct. I will argue that the framework of the environmental justice movement was able to spread across the border between the United States and Mexico due to the transboundary environmental externalities incurred by the workings of a global capitalist market.

My research will help to explain how economic integration has allowed for the diffusion of the environmental justice framework across the border between the United States and Mexico. Through this research one can conclude that the goals of the Mexican environmental justice movement are not centered on deconstructing domestic institutionalized racism, as seen in the United States. Instead, the Mexican environmental justice movement has been adapted in order to address the transnational environmental inequalities that have resulted from a global market system, especially through the efforts of an increasingly aware domestic civil society and a supportive network of transnational activists. The movement sheds light on the social injustices that arise when environmental equity and environmental goods are only provisioned to those in positions of power and privilege.

**Literature Review**

Most of the literature that discusses the rise of the environmental justice movement has placed the origins of the social movement within the United States, attributing its mobilization directly to the goals of racial equity proposed...
by the Civil Rights Movement. Many protestors, especially in the Southern portion of the United States, raised awareness to the systematic dumping of toxic wastes in underprivileged and minority neighborhoods, blaming the issue of environmental injustice on racial underpinnings.

The exclusion of Robert Bullard would render any literature review of the environmental justice framework incomplete, especially since he has been noted as the father of environmental justice and has been recognized as a prominent activist within the contemporary environmental justice movement of the United States. As such, one of the first texts to intricately discuss the connection between race and the systematic placement of hazardous waste facilities was Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class, and Environmental Quality. This text is especially important because it was published in 1990 and was instrumental in motivating Executive Order 12898 to be signed into law in 1994. This Executive Order required “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations.” This text presents a set of case studies involving historical communities of color that have been marginalized by the systematic placement of hazardous waste facilities, as well as the mechanisms employed by these minority communities to combat environmental injustices. Prior to the publication of these case studies, the connection between the systematic placements of hazardous waste facilities in communities of color was not broadly publicized and was an issue that remained widely unaddressed.

Dumping in Dixie, along with Luke W. Cole and Sheila R. Foster’s From the Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement, has served as a foundation for my claim that the origins of the environmental justice and its incorporation into laws, regulations, and policies within the United States can be attributed to the rise of social movements. These texts have been responsible for crediting civil society as the central player responsible for propelling “environmental racism into national consciousness and forcing action at the highest levels of governance… (and) continuing to shape environmental policy while creating increased opportunities for marginalized communities to speak out about their own disenfranchisement and the social and economic policies that subject them to daily environmental hazards”vi Furthermore, these texts have provided case studies that find the origins of the environmental justice movement within the equity concerns espoused by the Civil Rights Movement.

Prominent authors within the environmental justice field have acknowledged social movements as the primary driver for the establishment of an environmental justice framework on a federal level within the United States. The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements was compiled by David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi to show the importance of social movements and their impact on domestic environmental governance. This compilation has served to establish a definition of a social movement as, “a collectivities acting with some degree of organization and continuity outside of institutional or organizational channels for the purpose of challenging or defending extant authority, whether it is institutionally or cultural based, in the group, organization, society, culture, or world order of which they are part.”vii This definition of social movements will help to explain environmental justice movements and their diffusion across the United States – Mexico border. Within this compilation, Christopher Rootes has analyzed the emergence of the environment as a center of political and social concern framed by local contexts. Yet, he has acknowledged that the “fragmentation of the movement into specialized groups with problematic relationships to one another, and the incorporation of movement intellectuals and concerns, make it questionable whether it is any longer a social movement.”viii This assertion can be contested, however, by the claim that the mobilization of civil society in response to a perceived collective environmental injustice has been the basis for the incorporation of grassroots environmental justice goals within the framework of laws, regulations, and policies. Jo Marie Rios’ article entitled, “Environmental Justice Groups: Grass-
"The environmental justice movements that have diffused across the border into Mexico are responding to the inherent environmental injustices resulting from the exploitative reality of the core-periphery model."

roots Movement or NGO Networks? Some Policy Implications" acknowledges that grassroots environmental justice movements may not necessarily be the driving force that has led to the incorporation of environmental justice goals within environmental governance. Yet, she importantly identifies social movements as the foundation for emerging NGO networks that have successfully pushed for the incorporation of environmental justice goals within policy-making processes.

The environmental justice framework that has developed to acknowledge the intersection of negative environmental concerns and social injustice has broadened the discussion of environmental justice in a global setting, as described in David Naguib Pellow’s Resisting Global Toxics: Transnational Movements for Environmental Justice. Pellow provides the theoretical framework for transnational environmental inequalities that argues, “the practice of waste dumping across national borders is a form of transnational environmental inequality and is reflective of unequal, and deeply radicalized, relations between the global North and South communities.”ix

Unlike Pellow, I argue that the mobilization of environmental justice movements within Mexico has not been caused by concerns over institutionalized racism. Instead, the Mexican environmental justice movement has focused less on environmental racism, and more on challenging the modern world-system proposed by Immanuel Wallerstein in his article entitled “The Modern World-System as a Capitalist World Economy.” Wallerstein asserts that within the modern world system, there is “a large geographic zone within which there is a division of labor and hence significant internal exchange of basic or essential goods as well as flows of capital and labor.”x Furthermore, “in the core of the system, the dominant classes were supported by states as they exploited labor, resources, and trade opportunities, most notably in peripheral areas” leading to the transnational environmental inequalities such as Mexico.xi The environmental justice movements that have diffused across the border into Mexico are responding to the inherent environmental injustices resulting from the exploitative reality of the core-periphery model. In this way, local leaders within Latin America have been able to appeal to a network of domestic non-governmental organizations, as well as emerging transnational non-governmental organizations that will frame these environmental justice discourses in a way that will incite Mexican environmental governance processes to include Mexican environmental justice concerns in laws, regulations, and policies.

Empirical Data
Origins of the Environmental Justice Movement in America

The earliest discourses that evoked an environmentalist sentiment within the population of the United States framed the environment as an area that was separate from the cities and towns in which the human population resided. The environment served as a cultural symbol for the privileged, as a place that “we need preserved – as much of it as is still left, and as many kinds” especially since “the reminder and the reassurance that it is still there is good for our spiritual health.”xii There was little room for minority populations to participate and identify with this particular form of environmentalism, especially since this discourse separated urban communities from the privileged conception of the environment as wilderness. As such,
the “American environmental justice movement arose as a response to conditions prevailing in low-income and minority communities as well as a critique of traditional, mainstream environmentalism.”

Taking this into consideration, it is unsurprising that the mobilization of the environmental justice movement in the United States can be traced into the past as a subset of the Civil Rights Movement. The Civil Rights Movement, mobilized primarily during the 1950s and 1960s, was a large-scale response of the African American population to the institutionalized racism that had perpetuated systematic inequality between African Americans and the white population of the United States. Through grassroots protests and widespread demonstrations, the Civil Rights movement set a legacy for the United States in which “models for political participation and actions” were reflected through “movements that pushed open the doors to the streets wider than ever before as a major venue for aggrieved citizens to press their claims and collective views.” The perfect storm had occurred within the social and political context of the United States for the initial emergence of the environmental justice movement.

Minority communities within the United States had found a forum to impose a political voice and call for the correction of systematic inequalities that had been based on racial discrimination. Once the grassroots Civil Rights Movement had created an awareness that systematic racism could be found at the core of all U.S institutions, the government of the United States enacted the Civil Rights Act of 1964. More specifically, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 asserted that “no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Justice.” Through this act, the United States established a commitment to race awareness and racial justice, working closely to deconstruct institutionalized racism. As a positive symptom of this social and political climate, the environmental justice movement was able to take hold because “civil rights activists and social scientists had begun the codification of a paradigm based on race awareness and a commitment to racial justice.”

This was known as the critical race theory whose “roots are generally associated with the Civil Rights Movement of the mid-1950s and race-related legislation of the 1960s.” Minority communities within the United States recognized the effectiveness of social mobilization and collective action in the face of rampant racial inequality. As a result, critical race theory was employed to change a system of inherent inequality and to ensure that all forms of institutionalized racism, including the less perceptible, were deconstructed.

Since the enactment of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, civil society has mobilized countless times to contest systematic racial injustices within the United States. With a heavy awareness that institutions had unequally distributed benefits and resources to minority communities, “traditional frames of environmental groups in the USA that focused on wilderness and conservation concerns” evolved to include “those who are marginalized economically and politically as well as environmentally.” The environmental justice movement departed from the environmental concerns that plagued privileged, white communities to reflect on the unequal distribution of environmental benefits and resources to minority communities. Robert Bullard has reflected in his report prepared for the Twentieth Anniversary of the Environmental Justice Executive Order 12898 that the first mobilization of an environmental justice movement within the United States can be noted in the Memphis Sanitation Strike of 1968. Four years after the enactment of Title VI of the Civil Rights Movement of 1964, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led a group of minority sanitation workers to strike against the work conditions, characterized by low wages and environmental health risks, within the Sanitation Department of Memphis. This strike was the first large-scale social mobilization that perceived a direct connection between the variables of race and placement of environmental
Bullard notes that minority communities did not begin to “launch a frontal assault” on the “disparate enforcement of environmental policies and regulations that had contributed to neighborhood decline” until the systematic dumping of highly toxic PCBs within Warren County was discovered and widely publicized. Warren County was a predominantly black community located within North Carolina that was selected as a burial site for soil that had accidentally been contaminated with PCB, rendering this soil hazardous to human health and unsuitable for redistribution or sale. Residents of Warren County mobilized to protest and assert that race and “differential access to power and decision-making found among black and white communities” had been the motivating factor for placement of this PCB burial site within their community. The mobilization of civil society in the form of protests and demonstrations set the stage for large-scale scientific inquiry into the systematic placement of toxic waste facilities in minority communities.

Construction of the Environmental Justice Framework in the United States

Civil society mobilized to the point that non-governmental organizations began to form and take note of the inequitable distribution of environmental risks across the population of the United States. Minority communities collectively asserted the principles denoted by the “NIMBY, or the not in my backyard defense”, which called for the prevention of systematic “siting and permitting decisions that had adverse and environmental health consequences,” solely on the basis of race. In response to the mounting suspicion that facilities producing widespread environmental health risks were disproportionately sited on minority communities, the United States Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice analyzed census data and the geographic placement of unsafe toxic waste facilities. This research culminated with a report that was the first to publish empirical data finding “race to be the most potent variable in predicting where commercial hazardous waste facilities were located in the U.S.” and that this variable was “more powerful than household income, the value of homes, and the estimated amount of hazardous waste generated by industry.”

The reality that race was the strongest indicator for placement of hazardous waste facilities could no longer be contested, and the United States government was forced to respond. Accordingly, President Bill Clinton signed an executive order in 1994 in order to institutionalize the goals of the environmental justice movement within the laws, regulations, and policies set forth by the United States government. Recognizing the inherent environmental burdens that were systematically placed on minority communities of color, the Executive Order 12898 mandated:

To the greatest extent practicable and permissible by law... each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations in the United States and its territories.

The requirements set forth by the Executive Order 12898 called for the installation of a working group administered and led by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), responsible for ensuring the widespread incorporation of environmental justice goals within all domestic federal agencies of the United States.

Since the EPA has taken on the administrative role within the Federal Working Group on Environmental Justice, it has defined environmental justice as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies.” The definition of environmental justice provided by the EPA serves as a framework for incorporating the environmental justice goals that were initially expounded by a civil society that mobilized to address institutionalized racism, and its effects on the unequal distribution of environmental burdens on the minority population of the United States. It is especially relevant
to understand that the goals of the environmental justice framework “did not come from within regulatory agencies”. Instead, “the impetus for change came from grassroots mobilization that viewed environmental protection as a basic right, not a privilege reserved for a few who can “vote with their feet” and escape from or fend off locally undesirable land uses.”

In order to understand the diffusion of the environmental justice movement across the United States – Mexico border, it is paramount to understand that the origins of the environmental justice regime were established by an active civil society. Due to the effective mobilization of minority communities that were able to form a collective voice around the NIMBY defense and express concern over the unequal distribution of environmental burdens, “sets of principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors’ expectations converge,” were established to incorporate the goals of environmental justice into laws, regulations, and policies administered by the federal agencies of the United States.

Free Trade Policy and the Diffusion of the Environmental Justice Framework Across the Border

Within a modern world system, the competition for natural resources has expanded from state actors to include international and transnational actors that are not regulated by governments. This system is characterized by a multiplicity of sovereign nation states inherently connected through a global capitalist economy. Many of the market interactions that have occurred within the global capitalist economy are facilitated by transnational corporations (TNCs) that “organize the production of commodities and the services necessary to manufacture and sell them.”

TNCs are encouraged by a transnational capitalist class (TCC) of non-state actors whose primary goal is “the keeping of global capitalism on a course” despite “the constant tension with the selfish and destabilizing actions of those who cannot resist system-threatening opportunities to get rich quick or to cut their losses.”

With this framework, I will assert that transnational corporations have facilitated many of the market interactions that have occurred across state borders, leading to the globalization of environmental injustices across the United States – Mexico border. The emergence of a transnational capitalist class has been strengthened “in terms of the relative weakness of the transnational labour force” and has worked to achieve global power by “exerting their rule by establishing connections with globalizing bureaucrats and politicians in pro-capitalist political parties or social democratic parties that choose not to fundamentally challenge the global capitalist project.” In this way, the TCC have illustrated their desire for global power over core processes and modes of production in their collective push for free markets. In the case of Mexico, TNCs and TCC based in the United States have recognized that, “regulations which impose a burden on producers may be relatively easy to absorb by large producers but crippling to smaller producers, an asymmetry which results in the elimination of the smaller producers from the market.”

The Washington Consensus was a set of policy reforms proposed by a large majority of economists based within the United States that would serve to quicken the economic development of Latin America. Although Mexico “acceded to the mandates of international creditors and financial institutions, implementing strict restructuring policies to stabilize currencies, reduce inflation, shrink the role of the state in the economy, introduce competitiveness, create a favorable climate for corporate investment, and eliminate barriers to trade,” its population has suffered the environmental consequences that resulted from the entrance of its market into the global economy. When Mexican markets eliminated all barriers to trade with the United States through the installation of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994, government regulation of
market forces dwindled. Since “reducing government regulation of transnational flows of goods and capital removes economic and political power from local and national communities and places it into the hands of transnational bodies such as transnational corporations,” it is clear why the TCC recommended the elimination of barriers within its policy prescriptions for the economic development of Mexico. xxxiii These free-trade agreements have allowed TNCs and TCCs to establish further dominance within the modern world-system.

By introducing Mexico, a nation-state characterized by peripheral production processes, to a global market without any form of regulation, the TCC has enforced "prolonged ideological campaigns aimed at legitimating the dismantling of welfare and developmental states and at disseminating a global capitalist ideology of consumerism and individualism."xxxiv With a renewed stronghold over core-like capitalist models of production, the United States is able to use NAFTA to offset its environmental burdens, creating burdens on a Mexican population that has been undermined by the policy prescriptions advanced by the TCC at the Washington Consensus.

Ultimately, the environmental externalities that have resulted from a global capitalist market have been inequitably imposed on the Mexican population, especially since "free-trade regimes reward the producers who most effectively push the negative externalities of production onto nature, the poor, and future generations."xxxv This leads to the concentrations of “poor neighborhoods in the global south paying disproportionate human and environmental costs in the form of low-wage labor and environmental exploitation.”xxxvi Through the enactment of free-trade policies imposed by TCCs and TNCs, Mexico has become a virtual dump for the core-like capitalist production processes in the North. Recognizing the inherent injustices behind the transnational displacement of environmental burdens across the border of the United States into Mexico, the Mexican environmental justice movement emerged. Yet, the goals of the environmental justice movement within Mexico have developed to respond to a unique Mexican experience of environmental injustice.

Establishment of the Environmental Justice Movement Carries Different Implications for Mexico

Since “social movements are one of the principle social forms through which collectivities give voice to their grievances and concerns about the rights, welfare, and well-being of themselves and others,” environmental justice movements have been an expected response to the transboundary displacement of environmental burdens across the border of the United States into Mexico.xxxvii These environmental externalities, initially created through the core-like production processes of the United States and its transnational capitalist class, have led to the establishment of an environmental justice movement in Mexico.

These injustices can be better explained by examining the construction of maquiladoras that have been built on the Mexican side of the U.S. – Mexico border in order to demonstrate that environmental justice movements have emerged within Mexico as a response to free trade policies that have contributed to transboundary environmental inequalities.
Maquiladoras, “northern Mexico’s export assembly plants,” have been established along the U.S. – Mexico border “to recover refined lead and copper from automobiles and other sources” that have been transported across the United States – Mexico border. The systematic placement of maquiladoras is not directly related to the variable of race. Rather, these maquiladoras illustrate the manner in which the state of Mexico has become a toxic dump for the United States. Mexican environmental justice movements emerged and mobilized in response to maquiladoras to guarantee closure of overall hazardous waste facilities that were imposing harmful environmental risks on Mexican populations living along the border. This collective action was able to ensure that “most of the above-ground hazardous waste had been removed from the site (nearly 2,000 tons).” The success of the Mexican environmental justice movement was based around similar NIMBY discourses that were exercised within the United States environmental justice movement to effectuate policy changes that would close these hazardous toxic waste facilities. It is important to note that these discourses lacked the causal relationship between forms of environmental racism and placement of hazardous waste facilities. The environmental injustices were occurring amidst every individual within the Mexican population, regardless of race.

Identifying the rise of a collective grievance within these mobilizations against transnational environmental injustices, the Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources, the primary Mexican agency that deals with issues concerning the environment, issued a set of consultative suggestions for the sustainable development of Mexico. The environmental justice framework from the United States can be seen in these guidelines, as it urges Mexico to:

Meet the international commitment to search for a development model that takes into consideration human welfare, as it relates to the environment... Attainable by strengthening the role of social groups that stand for the rights of women, children, indigenous groups, [and other such minority groups]... As well as the creation and consolidation of spaces that permit participation within environmental governance, each time more ample, responsible, informative, and representative of the interests of the [Mexican] people.

In translating this document, the environmental justice framework utilized within the United States framing of environmental justice can be noted throughout the laws, regulations, and policies set forth by Mexico’s environment ministry in its consultative suggestions. These guidelines advise that all minority voices should be heard within processes of environmental governance in Mexico. The goals of the Mexican environmental justice movement were aimed at deconstructing a hegemonic world system theory of unjust core-periphery relations, rather than racial injustice. This can be seen as the document urges for sustainable development within the Mexican region rather than directly translating the policies set forth by the United States Environmental Protection Agency into the goals of the Mexican environmental justice movement.

Conclusion

Although the framework of environmental justice has spread from the United States to Mexico, the goals of the environmental justice movement have adapted to the Mexican experience of transboundary environmental injustice. The framework of environmental justice in Mexico still demands environmental equity, in the same way that environmental justice movements in the United States have mobilized to attain equitable access to environmental health and a stake within environmental governance. The Mexican attainment of environmental equity has not been compromised due to institutionalized racism, as seen within the context of the environmental justice movement in the United States. Therefore, the goals of the movement have been inherently different and have instead responded to power relationships that have defined environmental history within the region of Latin America, particularly the social, political, and economic contexts of Mexico.

As Wakild notes in her article entitled, “Environmental Justice,
Environmentalism, and Environmental History in Twentieth-Century Latin America,” “an examination of the symbiotic relationship between social pressures and ecological constraints” must be taken into consideration in order to “construct a path towards justice.”xii The literature that discusses the globalization of the environmental justice movement often applies the goals of the environmental justice movement, a framework that has been formed in the United States and later appropriated to the region of Latin America, creating “a clear case of the application of a term derived in the US to Latin America.”xiii Instead, I have recognized that core-like production processes that occur within a global capitalist system have spread environmental burdens across state borders to impact minority communities abroad. These transboundary environmental injustices are hard to trace because the environmental risks associated with “greenhouse gas emissions and climate change are measured globally, but their effects are experienced locally, shaping people’s lives and livelihoods” in the face of negative environmental market externalities. xiii

As such, there is no global consensus on how to define the goals of environmental justice within a global capitalist market. Even the United Nations Environment Programme notes that, “aggregating different regional and sub regional priorities into a single list that could form the basis for a set of priority issues to be addressed through the Latin American Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) is complicated by at least two factors... the language used to describe a particular issue varies from one mechanism to another, often reflecting different perspectives about the nature of the issue concerned or the way it should be addressed.”xiv This holds clear implications for the rest of Latin America and the rest of the world in developing a set of global environmental justice goals that can hold TCCs and TNCs accountable for the systematic and inequitable distribution of environmental burdens abroad.

Endnotes


iii.Ibid., 43.


Nevermind NIMBY, more like "Not In My Entire Country": An Analysis of the Diffusion of the Environmental Justice Movement Across the United States-Mexico Border/Alexandria Sousa


xxviii.Bullard, Robert D., Paul Mohai, Robin Saha, and Beverly Wright, 6.


xxxi.Ibid., 63.

xxxii.Wallerstein, 53.

xxxiii.Wallerstein, 53.


xxvii.Carruthers, 564.

xxviii.Ibid.


 Outsourcing Repression
The Impact of Foreign Fighters on the Arab Spring
by Francis Wilson

From the first protests in Tunisia in 2010, the various regimes of the Middle East have had their security apparatuses tested by a series of mass uprisings collectively referred to as the “Arab Spring.” This paper will call attention to the practice of recruiting foreigners into the security forces of certain states and will explain the potential impact of their use. This paper will both examine existing literature on civil-military relations in the Middle East and examine how foreigners have been used to suppress protest movements, with serious domestic and potentially regional repercussions.

When protesters took to the streets in countries across the Middle East, regimes reacted by fielding a combination of police, soldiers, hired thugs, and paramilitary units against them. Notably, many protesters found themselves facing not only their own countrymen, but also foreigners who often did not even speak the same language. Against the backdrop of the Arab Spring, regime reactions to mass protests across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) have revealed a trend of hiring foreigners for both internal security and to supplement desertion-prone national armies. The most visible examples of this trend can be found in two states that have experienced significant political upheaval—the Kingdom of Bahrain and Muammar Qadaffi’s Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. While the uprisings in Bahrain and Libya played out very differently, numerous similarities can be found between the two uprisings with regard to the conduct of foreign security units and the reaction of the general populace to their use. The events of these two uprisings demonstrate that the reliance on foreigners for internal security represents a dangerous practice that should concern both regional governments and indeed any state that has interests in the region.

The use of these individuals by authoritarian regimes represents more than just a continuation of previous coup-proofing practices (i.e. attempts to create security forces detached from politics and society in order to effectively protect a regime). By analyzing how foreign riot police and soldiers have been used to support authoritarian regimes, I will illustrate that their presence significantly exacerbates ethnic tensions and increases the occurrence of human rights violations during periods of internal political strife. In multi-ethnic states where a precarious balance exists among citizens, expatriate workers, and ruling regimes, the added element of foreign security forces can disrupt an already fragile status quo. Moreover, the recruitment of foreigners directly undermines the legitimacy of the regimes that rely on them and constitutes a threat to regional stability in the future.

Frame of Reference
A proper terminology must be established before the use of foreigners by regimes throughout the Arab world can be properly analyzed. Throughout the Arab uprisings, Western media sources, opposition groups such as the Bahraini Center for Human Rights, and even the United Nations Security Council have used the loaded term “mercenary” to describe the presence of foreigners among regime forces.1 However, the frequent and ambiguous use of this term has been politicized to the point that it often detracts from informed discussion of the issue.2 A 1999 Parameters article aptly summarizes the motivations that often accompany

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the use of the word, arguing that: “The inexact term ‘mercenary’ is often used as a term of opprobrium, applied to any police, military, or paramilitary which the user dislikes.”3 In Bahrain and Libya, “mercenary” has been used in order to portray foreigners as negatively as possible in the arenas of public opinion and international law. According to the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, a mercenary is any person who:

(a) is specially recruited locally or abroad in order to fight in an armed conflict;
(b) does, in fact, take a direct part in the hostilities;
(c) is motivated to take part in the hostilities essentially by the desire for private gain and, in fact, is promised, by or on behalf of a Party to the conflict, material compensation substantially in excess of that promised or paid to combatants of similar ranks and functions in the armed forces of that Party;
(d) is neither a national of a Party to the conflict nor a resident of territory controlled by a Party to the conflict;
(e) is not a member of the armed forces of a Party to the conflict; and
(f) has not been sent by a State which is not a Party to the conflict on official duty as a member of its armed forces.4

Under this protocol, a mercenary has no right to be either a combatant or a prisoner of war.5 Additionally, numerous UN resolutions ranging from 1973 to 2011 condemn the use of mercenaries by states and criminalize the profession itself.6 While the fighters who were brought into Bahrain and Libya during the uprisings undoubtedly fulfill many of the above legal definitions, describing other foreigners who had been serving for decades before the uprisings with the same term detracts from the complexity of the situation. In both countries, the recruitment of foreign fighters during the protests was not a spontaneous decision; rather, it was part of a longstanding practice of recruiting non-nationals into the security services. Tuareg fighters in Libya and Baluchi paramilitary units in Bahrain represent a category distinctly separate from both the mercenaries of the past and the private military contractors (PMCs) of the present. The long-term incorporation of these foreigners into the security apparatuses of their host states implies a permanence that is absent from the legal definition of a mercenary—someone who is hired for a specific conflict in a market with several potential employers. Therefore, because of the ambiguity surrounding the word “mercenary,” this paper will avoid the term. Instead, this paper will refer to any individual hired from a foreign country and incorporated into both the security apparatus and citizenry of a host state as a “foreign fighter,” or as a member of a “foreign security unit.” While the phrase “foreign fighter” is usually associated with foreigners who oppose governments, its use is equally relevant in the case of those who fight for incumbent regimes.

Historical Precedent

To understand the motivations that induce certain states to hire foreigners, one must first study the unique security dynamic that has made the Middle East conducive to the recruitment of foreigners. One of the defining traits of the security sector in contemporary authoritarian regimes is what has been described as the “hybrid nature and purposes of the coercive apparatuses of many Middle Eastern states.”7 As Figure 1 illustrates, several Arab states have invested heavily in parallel forces, especially Bahrain and Libya.

In many states, a national army is carefully monitored and counterbalanced by much larger internal security services whose training and institutional culture are almost indistinguishable from the military’s. With no fewer than fifty-five coups in the region since 1949, Arab leaders have tended to distrust national armies and rely more on forces closely connected to the regime for internal security.9 While there are numerous differences among the militaries of the region, coup-proofing regimes in order to shield them from military power grabs is a common practice.

With so much emphasis placed on regime loyalty, many leaders have factored ethnic considerations into their political calculations, especially in cases where a single tribe or ethnic group has maintained tenuous control over the
state. This is especially true for praetorian regiments and paramilitary forces linked to the regime through ethnic, familial, or tribal ties. Syria’s Alawite Republican Guards, Saudi Arabia’s Najdi National Guard, and Baathist Iraq’s predominantly Sunni Republican Guard are notable examples of this trend. Units such as these remain bound to their patron regimes and thus identify their own success closely with that of the current system, ensuring loyalty in the event of internal strife. In states like Saddam Hussein’s Iraq and Bashar Al-Assad’s Syria, military service has been closely associated with the regime and has traditionally maintained enough prestige to attract recruits. However in states such as Bahrain and Libya where the military has experienced a loss in either prestige or funding, members of dominant sects and tribes have abandoned military service in favor of more lucrative government and private sector jobs, depriving regimes of politically reliable sources of recruitment. Rather than stake regime security on domestic forces levied from potentially rebellious elements of society, these states have chosen to look outside their borders for security.

However, any government seeking to supplement its armed forces with foreigners should note that historically, the replacement of domestic forces with foreigners has inevitably led to internal revolts and mutinies. Unlike privately hired soldiers whose service is constrained by a temporary contract, permanent foreign units have historically accrued considerable political influence and power in their host states over time.

While hardly a practice exclusive to the Middle East, the reliance on foreigners or peripheral groups for coup-proofing has a long tradition in the region. Early manuals for Islamic rulers recommended an army comprised of various ethnic groups in order to play them against each other and prevent the army from launching a coup. Historically, foreign fighters have been recruited from the fringes of large, multi-ethnic empires. In part due to the forces of globalization, foreigners are once again being recruited in Bahrain and Libya, countries with small populations located at hubs of international migration. In both these states, foreigners were actively recruited with promises of citizenship and high salaries and deployed against protesters during the uprisings.

**Libya**

In Colonel Muammar Qadafi’s Libya, the use of foreigners for security had its origins in Qadafi’s attempt to symbolically establish Libya’s identity as an African country. With his Arab nationalist overtures rejected by the leaders of other Arab states during the late 1970s, Qadafi began to pursue an intensive campaign of pan-African policies, shifting Libya’s focus south. In 1978, the Libyan army invaded Chad supported by an “Islamic Legion” whose members hailed from countries throughout the region. Many of these legionnaires were ethnic Tuareg, a pastoralist Berber minority located throughout the Sahel and Sahara regions that has been fighting for independence from Mali since 1963. Although the Chadian campaign ended in defeat for
Libya, the war served to enhance ties between Qadaffi and the Tuareg. At around the same time that the war ended in 1987, Qadaffi opened Libya to immigration from sub-Saharan African nations, leading to an influx of legal and illegal immigrants. A 2011 study estimated that 13-33% of the Libyan population was immigrants.12 Lured by promises of Libyan citizenship (a promise that failed to materialize for most), many Tuareg stayed with the Libyan security apparatus, eventually forming the Tuareg only Maghawir brigade.13 When the Libyan uprising threatened the stability of Qadaffi’s regime in 2011, the Maghawir brigade was among the last forces to stay loyal to Qadaffi. However, the actual number of Tuareg who fought for Qadaffi remains unknown (estimates range from 1,500 - 10,000) since the difference between those who were recruited during the war and those who were already in Libya remains ambiguous.14 It is claimed that the Tuareg were promised as much as $1,000 a day during the war, with a more conservative report describing a permanent salary of $1,300 a month, a relatively large sum considering that over half of the populations in the fighters’ original countries of Mali and Chad live below the international poverty line of $1.25 per day.15

During the uprising, the separation of the Tuareg from Libyan society contributed to a willingness to engage in human rights violations not replicated by the Libyan regular army. An estimated 80 percent of Qadaffi’s regular forces deserted or defected during the war, with key officers citing an unwillingness to engage in violence against unarmed fellow citizens as the primary motive.16 On the other hand, the Tuareg exhibited no such hesitation, even resisting calls from Malian Tuareg leaders to defect to the rebels in the final weeks of the war.17 As a result, they were swiftly labeled as “foreign mercenaries” alongside other African fighters (some of whom were migrant workers forced to fight for Qadaffi), even though many of them had been living in Libya for years.18 When Qadaffi’s regime collapsed, the prominent role that sub-Saharan Africans had played in supporting him was the catalyst for a surge in discrimination by Libyan Arabs.

Both Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have published detailed reports documenting attacks on any Africans suspected of being Qadaffi loyalists by post-war revolutionary militia (thuwwar), as well as the arbitrary arrest of thousands of men, women, and children.19 According to Amnesty International, “Racist and xenophobic attacks, already frequent before the unrest, increased as a result of the breakdown of law and order and an escalation of xenophobic rhetoric by both sides of the conflict.”20 Due to the use of African fighters by the regime, the pejorative connotations of the word “mercenary” have been used to give legitimacy to anti-African sentiment. The New York Times reported that “Many Tripoli residents — including some local rebel leaders — now often use the Arabic word for ‘mercenaries’ or ‘foreign fighters’ as a catchall term to refer to any member of the city’s large underclass of African migrant workers.”21 The increase in racially motivated violence forced an estimated 212,000 Africans to flee the country by the end of 2011, with larger estimates reaching around one million.22 As of June 2014, between 1,000 and 6,000 Africans remained detained in substandard conditions at any one time by Libya’s Interior Ministry or thuwwar.23

While the upsurge in violence against sub-Saharan Africans in Libya is directly related to Qadaffi’s use of foreign fighters,
an undercurrent of anti-African sentiment existed long before the regime’s fall. Although Qadaffi’s immigration reforms were meant to enhance Libya’s African identity, they instead perpetuated Libyan resentment towards African migrants who were associated with crime, disease, and drugs in the public eye well before the war. According to a 2004 report by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, migrant African workers in Libya faced a climate of “anti-Black sentiment and racially motivated acts against foreign workers” even before the uprising.24 While it is difficult to ascertain the true number of Africans who have been killed or detained thus far, the sheer volume that have chosen to flee the post-war violence reinforces the fact that the current situation is unprecedented.

Bahrain

Although the situation in Bahrain is made even more complex than the Libyan uprising by the sectarian divide in the country and the fact that protests continue to the present day, the presence of foreign fighters in the kingdom is in many ways similar. Bahrain is a country of approximately 1.2 million people, where the Sunni minority Al-Khalifa monarchy rules over a Shiite majority that comprises between 60 and 70 percent of Bahrain’s citizens.25 As a result, the Al-Khalifa family has deliberately denied Shiites access to the army and police and has relied heavily on the paramilitary Special Security Forces (SSF) for internal security, a group under the oversight of the National Security Agency (NSA). For many Bahrainis, the NSA and the SSF exemplify the fact that the regime has entrusted foreigners with the internal security of the state. According to the opposition, 90 percent of the SSF’s estimated 20,000 members are believed to be non-Bahraini, and among the NSA, the proportion of foreigners is estimated at 64 percent.26 Both organizations contain a significant number of Sunni Pakistanis, many of whom are ethnic Baloch from Pakistan’s troubled Baluchistan province. This practice of recruiting Pakistanis into the kingdom’s forces goes back at least twenty years, and has been carried out through Pakistani veterans’ foundations and newspaper advertisements as part of a tradition of security cooperation between Pakistan and the Gulf.27 According to Pakistani news sources, approximately 10,000 Pakistanis currently serve in the kingdom’s security services, a number that may not include those who were recruited during the uprising.28 In addition to their compensation, these men are provided with housing separate from the Bahraini population and are eventually naturalized - obtaining coveted Bahraini citizenship. By naturalizing Sunni foreigners, the Bahraini state has not only created a foreign force dependent on the regime, but is also gradually altering the composition of the kingdom in favor of the Sunni minority. This “demographic engineering” is a highly contentious issue for Bahrain’s Shiites, and one marked by a lack of transparency on the part of the regime. In August of 2014, the Shiite Al-Wefaq opposition party accused the ruling family of underreporting Health Ministry population statistics in order to conceal the true number of imported foreigners, an accusation that seriously calls into question the current estimates of the true proportion of Sunnis and Shiites in the country.29

While the preference for Sunni foreigners in the Bahraini security apparatus has been a point of contention for the Shiite opposition since at least 2006, it was during the height of the protests from February to May 2011 that their key role in supporting the state became evident.30 When tens of thousands of Bahrainis occupied Pearl Roundabout, a public square in the capital of Manama, Pakistani riot police spearheaded the March crackdown and subsequently detained many of the protesters. The Pakistani Express Tribune detailed the role played by one former Pakistani Special Forces officer, stating that “He [the officer] has recruited at least 2,000 Pakistanis to serve in Bahrain’s security forces, and they were the ones who shot at protestors in Manama’s Pearl Square.”31 The Bahraini Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) also implicates the NSA in the crackdown, stating that the agency “followed a systematic practice of physical and psychological mistreatment, which in many cases amounted to torture, with respect to a large number of detainees in
their custody.”32 Actions such as these provoked anti-foreigner slogans such as “Oh naturalized, Oh mercenary, Oh killer, your departure time has come,” “Shia plus Sunnis minus naturalized equals a loving country” and prompted some protesters to chant “The police are crazy” in Urdu.33 Slogans like these highlight how halting the recruitment and naturalization of foreign soldiers has come to be at the forefront of the opposition’s demands.

Anger towards the institutionalized preference for foreigners in the security forces has also aggravated an already “high degree of mistrust of immigrants by the Shia community.”34 In Bahrain, the use of foreign security forces to crack down on protests led to a backlash, once again against a significant migrant population. Almost half of Bahrain’s population consists of South Asian migrants, a demographic that comprises a disproportional 98 percent of low paying jobs and is divided among around 300,000 Indians, 100,000 Bangladeshis, and 60,000 Pakistanis.35 According to one expert on Bahrain’s expatriate community, before the uprising South Asian migrants in Bahrain faced “a system of dominance that is oftentimes violent—in both a structural sense and in the outright forms of violence that structure of dominance enables.”36 A combination of the kafala patronage system that gives Bahraini employers immense power over migrant workers and stiff competition between Bahrainis and migrants for jobs has created a situation where foreign workers are both marginalized and viewed as an economic threat in Bahraini society. These sentiments have manifested in the abuse and exploitation of migrant workers by their employers as well as by mainstream elements of Bahraini society. However, the Bahraini uprising caused incidents of racially motivated violence to increase as Bahrainis directed their anger towards migrant workers that they associated with the regime.

According to a Human Rights Watch Report, attacks on South Asian migrants “escalated drastically” during the protests in February and March of 2011.37 The BICI reported that 87 Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi migrants had been injured, while 5 expatriate workers and two riot police of Pakistani origin were killed during the height of the protests.38 Many of these casualties occurred during racially motivated attacks on South Asians who were “verbally and physically abused and called mercenaries by some of the protesters.”39 Although Pakistanis believed to be a part of the security forces were the main targets of such attacks, racial conflation on the part of Bahrainis led to Bangladeshis and Indians being attacked as well.40 In addition, the alleged coercion of Bangladeshi workers into protesting on behalf of the regime undoubtedly increased tensions between expatriate workers and anti-regime protesters.41

Parallels and Implications

A close study of the events of the uprisings in Libya and Bahrain reveals striking similarities with regard to the impact of foreign security units. However, a distinction must be maintained between the different circumstances that dictated events in both countries. In Libya, foreign brigades were used to supplement the conventional army during a civil war, while in Bahrain the regime relied almost exclusively on foreigners to put down riots and political demonstrations. Nevertheless, the events of the Libyan civil war and the current obstacles facing reconstruction provide lessons not only relevant to Bahrain, but also to any nation considering hiring foreigners for internal security.

In both cases, foreigners were at the forefront of crackdowns against the uprisings. The overwhelmingly foreign
SSF was a part of government reprisals against protesters in March of 2011, while Qadaffi’s African fighters aided in the suppression of protests in Tripoli and fought against rebels in Misrata and Zintan. In both cases, these groups have been implicated in serious human rights violations and the use of deadly force against unarmed protesters. As foreigners dependent on the regime for their salaries and citizen status, hired soldiers have greater incentive to fire on peaceful protesters than domestic security forces. Recent studies that analyzed the dynamics of loyalty among militaries during the Arab Spring, posit that soldiers and police were more hesitant to fire on protesters in situations where they were able to relate to protesters either ethnically or religiously.

More obviously, practical considerations also contribute to regime loyalty. In articles exploring civil-military relations, national armies have been described as extremely reluctant to use deadly force, especially in states like Egypt and Yemen where the military has been intimately connected to both politics and the economy. The foreign fighters of our case studies lack the same social and political reasons for reluctance. As outsiders housed separately from the rest of the population, they are unable to connect ethnically and sometimes even linguistically with the demands of protesters, and any stake that they hold in society, such as citizenship or political status, is contingent on the survival of the regime. Unlike contract-based PMCs, foreign security personnel are intended to be permanent residents of their host states, and often bring their families with them, further raising the consequences should their patron regime collapse. All of these factors dissuade desertion or defection and give these soldiers much more incentive to commit human rights violations in support of the regime.

In Libya and Bahrain, the ethnic “otherness” of foreign security personnel exacerbated already existing xenophobia caused by competition from migrant labor. In a remarkably foresighted 1980 book about the use of “martial races,” Cynthia H. Enloe outlines the implications of the use of ethnically separate soldiers with regard to domestic race relations, stating: “For they are brought into armies in part because they are culturally – and politically – distant from the rest of the population. Thus they will stand by the central regime which has bestowed jobs and prestige on them, even should the rest of the army become disaffected or begin to empathize with civilian dissidents. On the other hand, if security policy makers use such units too heavy-handedly and exclusively as instruments for suppressing domestic disorder, the units and the ethnic groups tied to them run the risk of being labeled pariahs or alien mercenaries.”

When security forces associated with migrant worker populations engaged peaceful demonstrations, foreigners in general became equated with the regime’s failed labor and immigration policies as well as its repressiveness towards its citizens. This is unsurprising,
considering that the recruitment of international security personnel closely has paralleled an increase in the number of migrant workers working in both countries. According to a 2011 report on the state of employment in the Gulf, “job creation in the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) private sector largely benefited expatriates more than locals.”46 As Figure 2 illustrates, unemployment in Libya and Bahrain was the highest in their respective regions, alongside relatively high outflows from migrant workers. This combination of high unemployment for locals and the increased presence of migrants in the labor force meant that economic tensions existed between migrants and locals well before foreign security units and protestors clashed in the streets of Manama and Tripoli.

When the climate of xenophobia created by the use of foreign fighters prompted migrants of all nationalities to flee Libya, unemployed Africans were forced back into countries already plagued by high unemployment.48 As a result, outgoing remittances from Libya plummeted 59.6 percent in 2011 during the civil war, representing a loss of almost $1 billion in payments. Comparatively, Libya’s total GDP contracted by 46 percent in the same period, indicating that the migrant sector suffered disproportionately compared to the rest of Libya as a result of the surge in discrimination against migrants.49 If a commensurate drop in remittance payments had occurred in Bahrain, it would have created a loss of about $1.2 billion in annual outflows (5 percent of Bahrain’s GDP).50

Given that migrant workers comprise an overwhelming proportion of low wage jobs in Libya and Bahrain, the labor void left by their absence in critical industries such as construction and oil production would be hard to fill. The International Organization for Migration sees this as a potential obstacle for rebuilding in Libya, stating that “Libya may encounter serious economic and social problems if it cannot attract both skilled and low-skilled migrants to return to help rebuild the country and address anti-migrant sentiment.”52

However, the anti-immigrant climate in Libya shows no signs of abating, as revolutionary militias and the Ministry of the Interior have arrested and detained African migrants much more aggressively than Qaddafi’s regime ever did.53 While African migrants were encouraged to work in Libya under Qaddafi’s pan-African policies, the backlash created by the use of sub-Saharan fighters has no doubt contributed to the more belligerent stance against African immigration by the post-Qaddafi government.

On the other hand, the mass withdrawal of Tuareg fighters has destabilized Libya and the entire Sahel region. In Northern Mali, the return of between 2,000-4,000 heavily armed Tuareg provided an already present Tuareg rebellion with both fighters and weapons, eventually plunging the country into civil war.54 In Libya itself, Tuareg fighters have returned to the country’s south since fleeing in 2011, and “have
become a force unto themselves," with the Maghawir Brigade (now known as the Tendé Brigade) emerging as a significant faction in the area.55With former regime fighters gaining power in the new Libya, attempts to revoke their citizenship (such as a controversial December 2013 law that invalidates the citizenship of “anyone who was granted citizenship for military purposes or political reasons”) will no doubt add to the woes of an already besieged Libyan government. This has already started to occur to some extent, when the cancellation of government IDs issued to Tuareg and other Africans in Libya’s Fezzan region prompted threats of secession from Tuareg leaders.56 With conflict between East and West already threatening to split Libya, the interests of formerly Qadaffi-aligned Tuareg in the south may further contribute to Libya’s fragmentation.

Although the points listed above represent some of the potential consequences of using foreign fighters should a regime collapse due to internal strife, equally significant are the implications of a “stable” state reliant on foreign security forces. In the context of Weberian and Westphalian definitions of the state, the recruitment of foreign security personnel significantly undermines a recruiting state’s legitimacy and sovereignty. By these definitions, a state is characterized by three main conditions: historically demarcated boundaries, a monopoly on the use of force within those boundaries, and a shared national identity. In Libya and Bahrain, the concept of a unified national identity is compromised by the presence of a large non-citizen population and sectarian or tribal cleavages. While Bahrain has naturally possessed historically demarcated boundaries because of its island status and small size, Libya has not due to its relatively recent unification and historical East-West divide. For both of these states, considerable challenges to statehood and national identity already exist. By outsourcing the monopoly on violence to foreigners, governments deny participation in a key state function to large segments of their citizens. In addition, the historical tendency of permanent foreign units to accrue power and become a destabilizing influence on their host states casts uncertainty on the future sovereignty of governments that choose to hire them. This is a classic example of a “security dilemma,” a situation where a government’s pursuit of policies aimed at ensuring stability instead end up further undermining national security. Regardless of whether dependence on a patron regime is artificially created through either a complex system of military slavery or through promises of citizenship, the interests of foreign units will inevitably diverge from those of their host state in the long term.

A great deal of the resentment created by the presence of foreign security units can be attributed to the fact that their naturalization is seen as an attempt to alter a country’s national identity at the expense of local citizens. Qadaffi’s recruitment of Tuareg and Africans into the armed forces and his open immigration policies were meant to cement Libya’s place as an African state, but they were also deeply unpopular amongst native Libyans. On the other hand, the naturalization of Sunni foreigners in Bahrain has been paralleled by the revocation of the citizenship of Shiite political dissidents, leading many in the Shiite community to fear political marginalization in the future.57 In both cases, governments were perceived as irresponsible, using public funds to provide employment to foreigners in both the public and private sectors. This provoked xenophobic backlash from anti-regime forces when these governments came under pressure.
However, for states with strong militaries and political institutions, the recruitment of foreigners into a state’s military is not necessarily a destabilizing influence per se. The United States’ granting of citizenship to immigrants who serve in its military and the Israeli practice of recruiting foreign Jewish “lone soldiers” have not resulted in a significant loss in either legitimacy or sovereignty. However, in the Arab world, where states with marginalized national armies have found themselves facing mass civil unrest, a reliance on foreigners to keep the peace has indicated a state’s insecurity with regard to its own stability. For outside observers, the use of foreign fighters should indicate that the hiring state is wracked with deep internal divisions, regardless of present appearances of stability. In these states, the internal threats that leaders perceive are so great that they exceed the state’s domestic security resources.

These implications are especially relevant to Bahrain, where the American military presence in the form of the Fifth Fleet has guaranteed the Bahraini regime protection from any external military threat.58 This has allowed Bahrain’s Sunni rulers to keep the military small, sparing them from the need to recruit from the Shiite majority and allowing them to focus on internal security. The fact that the SSF employs at least as many personnel as the Bahraini Army, Navy, and Air Force combined is a testament to the Al-Khalifa’s security priorities.59 If the Bahraini regime is to make a serious attempt to address the concerns of protesters through reform and dialogue, the presence of large numbers of naturalized foreigners in the SSF will be a serious obstacle to a political solution and may dissuade the Al-Khalifa regime from negotiating at all. The fact that post-uprising promises from the Ministry of the Interior to open 20,000 jobs (such as “community police” positions) to native Sunnis and Shiites have largely failed to materialize illustrates the Bahraini government’s unwillingness to enact any serious change in its internal security strategy.60 Moreover, the difficulties encountered by the Libyan government in dislodging foreign fighters and revoking their citizenship does not bode well for the demands of the Bahraini opposition, even if they are able to force a policy or regime change. However, if the regime continues to rely on imported Sunnis for security, the Shiite opposition will either resort to increasingly drastic tactics to forestall being reduced to a minority, or foreign security personnel in the country will gain influence to the point where they themselves constitute a political threat. In any case, the prospects for the stability of the Al-Khalifa regime are not hopeful if it retains current policies, a fact that should be acutely concerning to the United States and its strategic interests in Bahrain.

Looking Forward

Qaddafi under Libya and Al-Khalifa Bahrain represent an unsustainable, pre-modern method of divide and rule where the raison d’etre of the state’s coercive apparatus is the preservation of the regime—and not the protection of the state. The questions of legitimacy and stability posed by these case studies will become even more significant if other countries follow Bahrain and Libya’s example. Unlike parallel coup-proofing forces that rely on local sources of recruitment, foreign units can have negative consequences not only for their patron state, but also for their region of origin. Nowhere is this clearer than in the case of Libya, where the arming of foreign fighters for the Libyan conflict contributed directly to the acceleration of Mali’s own civil war. In Bahrain, the role that Pakistanis have played in repressing Shiite protestors has already had diplomatic consequences for the Pakistani government. The apparent complicity of Pakistan’s military leadership in the movement of fighters to the Gulf has provoked a sharp response from Shiite Iran, causing some in Pakistan to worry that the presence of Sunni Baloch fighters in Bahrain may embroil Pakistan in the Gulf’s Sunni-Shiite rivalry, further endangering the safety of Pakistani expatriates.61 However, the flow of experienced military and police personnel from Pakistan to Bahrain is unlikely to be severed, due to the close security relationship between Pakistan and the GCC. As a result, the expatriate communities of Pakistan and even other
South Asian countries such as India and Bangladesh may face further targeting if instability persists in Bahrain. Even as recently as August 2014, thousands of Bahraini Shiites marched to specifically decry the state’s naturalization of foreigners, showing that anger towards pro-foreigner policies, rather than abating, has become more intense and focused since 2011.

While it is not the primary focus of this paper, the uprisings in Libya and Bahrain have drawn attention to the significant impact of Arab mass protest movements on the safety of migrant worker communities. With millions of expatriates entering the MENA region and billions of dollars in remittances flowing out every year, further research on the interplay between Arab protest movements and expatriate communities will be necessary to fully understand the implications that accompany the use of foreign fighters.

One fact remains clear however. The political conditions that have prompted governments throughout history to rely on outsiders still exist in the Arab states that hire them today. Many authors writing on the global use of foreign security personnel before the uprisings believed that they would gradually disappear or become idiosyncratic as modern states strengthened their institutions and security apparatuses became more representative of their citizens.62 However, lack of trust in the military and civil unrest continue to make foreign security personnel an attractive option for some Arab states. Nevertheless, no matter how effective the enlistment of foreign fighters may seem as a strategy for regime stability, the long term consequences far outweigh any temporary security provided. If these soldiers become the rule rather than the exception in the face of increased civil unrest, then the legitimacy of governments across the region will be seriously called into question both domestically and on the world stage, with severe implications for stability in the future.

Endnotes


5. Ibid.


8. Due to a lack of reliable statistics regarding quantities foreign fighters in accepted military reference sources, I have used the estimates of 10,000 African fighters and 9,000 Interior Ministry personnel for Libya and Bahrain, respectively. However, the Bahraini opposition estimates the number of SSF personnel to be twenty thousand, which would make Bahrain’s internal security ratio much closer to that of Iraq.


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30.In 2006, Dr. Salah Al Bandar, a chancellor at the Cabinet Affairs Ministry, leaked documents that revealed widespread demographic engineering through the naturalizing of Sunni foreigners on the part of the Al-Khalifa regime, an event referred to as the “Bandar-gate” scandal.


31.Imtiaz, "Ex-servicemen 'Export' Mercenaries to the Middle," 298.

32.Bassiouni et. al.: 373.


34.Bassiouni et. al.: 373.


40. Bassiouni et. al.: 197, 371.
42. Lacher, Libya’s Fractious South and Regional, 3.
47. "Qatar and the UAE do not report remittance outflows, hence the absence of data for these two countries.
50. It should be noted that the World Bank does not have any data on remittance outflows from Libya to Sub-Saharan African countries. Therefore, the estimated economic losses suffered by the migrant sector during the war are probably greater than projected.
51. Ibid.
52. Aghazarm, Quesada, and Tishler, Migrants Caught in Crisis, 18.
55. Lacher, Libya’s Fractious South and Regional, 8.
56. Ibid.

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