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— ON GLOBAL ISSUES —

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PERSPECTIVES
— ON GLOBAL ISSUES —

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Back Cover Photograph of School kids greeting foreigners with with song and dance near Musanze, Rwanda, January 7th, 2016 © Karin Attia

Letter From the Editor

Truly solving complex, global problems often involves breaking out of outdated, static paradigms and misconceptions. It means going deeper than what appears on the surface in order to discover the underlying motives and identities of individuals and groups.

In his now seminal 1992 article "Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," Alexander Wendt presents us with a lens through which to view the world that holds identity as a key driver of global events and systems. It is constructed over time through culture, self-perception, perception of others, and interactions. While often quite rigid, identities occasionally can shift through a "breakdown of consensus" about roles and commitments and a "critical examination of old ideas about self and other," which can lead to transformation or resolution of old conflicts.

Shifting dynamics of individual, group, and national identities is a theme at the heart of many of the articles of this edition. In Karin Attia's piece "Rwandan Identity Construction Post-Genocide and the Reconciliation Challenges it Poses," Attia walks the reader through the ways in which the identities of two groups, Hutus and Tutsis, shifted over time. Through the eras of Rwanda's recent history, from colonization to independence and from genocide to reconciliation, attempts to impose inter-group identities from the top rather than seek to understand them from the ground-up have proved highly problematic.

In Sophie Giscard d'Estaing's article "A Gender Analysis of the 2015 South Sudan Peace Agreement," we are shown how steps towards incorporating gender into conflict resolution and peace processes in South Sudan still have much further to go. Gestures towards inclusion of women often seem to play a largely symbolic role, yet women and girls are so often the ones most disproportionately impacted by conflict. As long as peace processes continue to fail to include full diversity that is representative of all those who are affected by conflict, true reconciliation and transcendence of past transgressions cannot occur.

Yuval Bacal's "The Danger of Underestimating Hacktivism," takes a deeper look at a different type of group that we are still struggling to classify and often misapprehend as a result. As activism has moved into the online sphere, it has morphed into the phenomenon of "hacktivism." While sometimes this movement has shared traits with traditional activism—for example by combatting perceived injustice for the "greater social good"—it has also at times taken the form of more dubious activity that appears motivated more by personal gain that public good.

Whether attempting to facilitate reconciliation, engaging in a peace process after decades of conflict, or attempting to understand an insurgent group that could pose a danger to international security, we must always take care to consider the identity of the actors involved. Only then can we come to a deeper understanding of global problems and their possible solutions.

With Utmost Regard,
Tom H. Cyrs
Editor in Chief

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Gender & Identity

The 'Comfort Women' Never Left

Kirstyn Petras

Governments in Japan and South Korea are repeating past mistakes, and women surrounding U.S. military bases are suffering the consequences.

It's the same story repeated time and time again, in pop culture, war stories, and newsreels. A young, new soldier of upstanding character, fresh off the boat on their first deployment, is greeted by hordes of scantily clad women. For only a few dollars, the night could be quite entertaining. What's a young boy to do?

We never seem to examine the women in these stories, how they reached this path, why they are in search of foreign currency, and what their lives are like beyond the few hours wrapped in a soldier's arms. We seem to root against them and the vices they present. We see them represented in campaign ads like those during World War II telling men to protect themselves against the STDs and other consequences that these women present.

It was not until recently that stories of these women began to filter into U.S. media:

Source: NYdailynews

stories of former prostitutes suing the South Korean government, being forced to have sex with men on military bases in exchange for their foreign money, being treated as indentured servants at 'juicey bars', and of having their bodies sold to the U.S. military in exchange for positive relations.

But these stories come in excerpts. Indeed, it was not until an exposé by Politico was released in November of 2015 that we seemed to get a glimpse into this world. What is happening to the women in 'camp towns' around these military bases, what is the government's involvement, and what is the responsibility of the U.S. military?

Prostitution in wartime is nothing new. During the 1940s, Japan made 'comfort women' commonplace. Women, many of them from South Korea, suffered under slavery-like conditions to please military men. While the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs released an apology in 1991 to South Korea, the issue still rubs a raw nerve. However, the South Korean government developed a similar economy around military bases. "Camptowns" that have developed around the bases depend entirely on the U.S. military

economy as according to Na Young Lee at Feminist Studies, they center on selling sex to soldiers.

While there were attempts to control these practices in Japan, most local ordinances cracked down on the prostitutes themselves, rather than the soldiers. In 1946, according to Sarah Kovner in The Journal of Asian Studies, General MacArthur directed the Japanese government to "abrogate all laws that permitted licensed prostitution… But MacArthur's decree did not close the market in sexual services, nor did it free women from all forms of debt bondage. It merely deregulated the market." With Japan's economy suffering and an influx of foreign currency to be gained from continuing to engage in prostitution, quitting the practice was not entirely appealing. In South Korea, we see the same desire for foreign currency. As outlined by Choe San-Hun at The New York Times, even though the country has argued with Japan over the responsibility it bears for "one of the ugliest chapters in its wartime history," there are now former South Korean prostitutes accusing their former government leaders of encouraging them or forcing them to have sex with American soldiers who protected the country against North Korea. While the South Korean government is quick to criticize Japan for its use of slav-

proval for establishing UN comfort stations in return for the Allied Forces' toil…The authorities are asking citizens to give much cooperation in coming days." According to Vine, by 1958, there were 300,000 sex workers in the country. By 1965, 85% of GIs surveyed reported they had 'been with' or 'been out with' a prostitute. One woman, Kim Ae-ran, said in a recent interview to The New York Times, "Our government was one big pimp for the U.S. military."

In November of last year, Stephen Evans reported for the BBC that the women talked of a system of official and compulsory check-ups on their sexual health. "It was complicit, and facilitated a system which now leaves them in poverty."

While the women claim they were not made to work as sexual slaves, their situations may reveal otherwise. One woman claimed, "I accepted a job, and went to an establishment. As soon as I arrived I ran away. I ended up getting caught by the club owner and my club owner sold me off to another establishment and it was there that I took my first customer."

As Evans claims, the South Korean government can say that by setting up clinics it was not complicit

Our government was one big pimp for the U.S. military.

ery in "camptowns" and comfort stations, their own system offered women extremely little choice. According to David Vine of Politico, the arrangements between the U.S. government and South Korea's were fully formalized after WWII. The U.S. began to use comfort stations originally used by the Japanese, and the idea was pushed even further during the Korean War. He quotes the Pusan Daily, "The municipal authorities have already issued the ap-

in facilitating prostitution, but was trying to protect the women involved. However the fact that women who tried to run were caught and sold tells a different story. Dr. Kathy Moon of the Brookings Institute, says that unlike the 'comfort women' of WWII who were forced to become sex slaves by the Japanese military, many of these women made a decision to work as prostitutes, but quickly became trapped. Moon explained, "Once these women were there,

they couldn't get out easily. They were raped continuously – raped by the manager."

And it is hard to deny the government's culpability. As mentioned in Choe Sang-Hun's article, "…Parliamentary hearings also suggest that at least some South Korean leaders viewed prostitution as something of a necessity. In one exchange in 1960, two lawmakers urged the government to train a supply of prostitutes to meet what one called the 'natural needs' of allied soldiers and prevent them from spending their dollars in Japan instead of South Korea."

In an effort to meet these 'natural needs,' South Korea has issued a special type of visa to attract women into the country. According to Vine, since the mid-1990s the economic growth in South Korea allowed some of the women to escape the "camptown" bars and clubs, and the government sought a replacement. The creation of the E-6 'entertainment' visa has allowed 'promoters' to import women, mainly from the Philippines and the former Soviet Union. The visa requires an HIV test, and subsequent venereal disease tests every three months. But the women who apply for the visas, according to Vine and Clarie Lee at The Korea Herald, do not believe they are coming to work in the sex industry. While the women do sign a contract in their home country, as Vine argues, "They often end up in different clubs and working for a lower salary than promised…In [clubs] indebtedness and psychological coercion force the women into sex… Leaving… would subject them to immediate arrest, fines, imprisonment or deportation by the South Korean state and potentially violent retribution from those to whom they are indebted."

The GIs are not blind to this system. In 2002, as discussed by Vine, a Cleveland television station had reported on how the military police officers were protecting the bars. One solider said, "You know something is wrong when the girls are asking you to buy them bread. They can't leave the clubs. They barely feed them."

In the wake of research and reports on the conditions of these clubs and bars, the South Korea government did begin a crackdown, of sorts. In 2004, the South Korean government outlawed prostitution. According to Jeff Schogol in Stars and Stripes, by 2006 the punishment for patronizing a prostitute included repercussions including up to a year in prison, forfeiture of pay and dishonorable discharge. Sara Mendelson, author of a report on human trafficking and peacekeeping in the Balkans, stated that the military needed to spread the word in order for the policy to be effective. "The issue is not whether activists or experts in Washington D.C. know about it, it's whether the soldier in the field understands; it's whether the command in the field understands that this is a change from the previous regulation in the Manual for Courts-Martial."

However, as military personnel have stated, blacklists of places of where not to go, tend to just give troops ideas of the best places to go.

And the bars are simply getting more creative. As Jon Rabiroff and Hwang Hae-rym reported in Stars and Stripes, 'juicey bars' have become more or less the norm in camptowns. One girl, Jenny, said, "If you don't sell a lot of drinks, [the bar owners] are going to push you to go out with a customer to make money…I was shocked the first night I worked there."

Because many of the girls who come on E-6 visas aren't exactly informed of what their job will entail. One woman named Lori said that she "thought that we really have to sing because we sign a contract as a singer. I talked with some girls and said 'I really can't take it anymore. I don't want to go, I don't want to go with any guy.'"

The South Korean government officially licenses many of these 'juicey bars'. According to Stars and Stripes, "About 200 'entertainment establishments' get tax breaks through the Tourism Promotion Act on the condition they cater primarily to foreigners." There are advocacy groups that attempt to help the girls, a prominent one being My Sister's Place. Yu Young-nim, the director, said, "Three governments are to be blamed for their irresponsibility. The Philippine government for not working hard to create job opportunities for its poor people, the Korean government for not managing and controlling jobs [given to immigrants] and the U.S. government for neglecting its responsibility to supervise its soldiers and for not helping these victims."

But until any action on behalf of the government is taken, the girls are seemingly stuck. If they leave the club, they could be subject to arrest and deportation. According to Vine, the promoters and club owners often hold on to the women's passports. Those who marry GIs don't often fare much better.

ignore the attempts of commanders such as General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, as mentioned by The Washington Post's Dan Lamothe, who has worked to institute the policy of banning patronizing prostitutes with his troops, but has also attempted to stop fraternization at 'juicey bars', acknowledging that the economies of the establishments are linked to prostitution and human trafficking.

It would also be wrong to regard the U.S. military as blameless. There is a linked history with the Japanese and Korean governments to set up 'comfort stations,' as well proliferating cultural views of the women. As reported by The Washington Post's Mary Jordan, in 1995, after the rape of a 12 year old Okinawan girl, three U.S. servicemen were arrested. Instead of expressing remorse over the actions of his men, however, the admiral who commanded American forces in the Pacific said that the men were 'stupid' because, according to Jordan, "they could have hired a prostitute for what they paid for the rental car used to abduct the girl."

> The current problem is one that lies within the national governments. Military personnel are told that they are not allowed to buy sex, but then planted in an environment filled with clubs and bars and a government eager for their money and telling them to participate.

Out of those who have attempted to go and live with a GI boyfriend, approximately 90% have been abandoned. It is estimated that out of those who are married, 80% end in divorce. "In fact, researchers and law enforcement officers suggest that most Korean women working in massage parlors were once married to GIs."

It would be wrong to place the blame squarely on the shoulders of the military. After all, this would

Yet, only blaming the US military also ignores the actions of other governments. In 2013, the mayor of Osaka, Toru Hashimoto, suggested that U.S. service members should consider soliciting prostitutes. Hashimoto, during a press conference, stated, "There are places where people can legally release their sexual energy in Japan. Unless they make use of these facilities, it will be difficult to control the sexual energies of the wild Marines."

According to International Business Times, 4% of South Korea's annual GDP comes from sex trade and prostitution. That's the size of the fishing and agriculture industries combined. According to the Korean Feminist Association, 1 out of every 25 women in the country is selling her body for sex.

The current problem is one that lies within the national governments. Military personnel are told that they are not allowed to buy sex, but then planted in an environment filled with clubs and bars and a government eager for their money and telling them to participate. Are military personnel completely lacking in self-control? No. They are set up to perpetuate the issue.

The South Korean government, in particular, can have success in preventing prostitution when it wants to. According to International Business Times, in 2006, the Ministry for Gender Equality offered cash incentives to companies whose male employees did not buy sex at office parties or business trips. The government can act when it wants to. But the desire for foreign currency from the camptowns and close relationships with the US military is seemingly overwhelming their desire to take care of the women in the camptowns.

So What Should be Done?

To start, the policy on E-6 visas needs to be changed. If they can not leave for fear of deportation, even if mistreated or abused, they are essentially indentured servants to the clubs. The girls need more control upon entering the country. Some women, including Tessa Aquino, interviewed for The Korea Herald, were arrested on sex trade charges and then held for deportation when they tried running away from the club. While she was eventually allowed to stay, her case is not unique. Park Mi-hyung, head of the International Organization for Migration's Seoul office, argues that there should be a debate about the continued existence of the E-6 visa in the face of the frequently reported cases related to human sex trafficking. "What we need is a system where all foreign workers can arrive and work in Korea with adequate legal protection, where they can earn their wages without being exploited during their stay here."

In addition, we need to consider the decriminalization of prostitution. Currently, military police protect the 'juicey bars' without paying heed to the girls that work there. Under a system of decriminalization, the act of buying sex would still be illegal, while the act of selling it would not. Therefore, the girls could be protected while those who abuse the system would be punished. Such a system has done well in countries such as Thailand. According to Wiwat Rojanapithayakorn in the Journal of Health Management, such a system punishes the sex business owners, pimps, costumers and/or parents of sex workers, but not the sex workers themselves. It gives the sex workers agency, by making them identifiable victims to the government instead of pushing them to the shadows of an illegal marketplace.

In order for decriminalization to be truly effective, some sort of cultural shift must take place within the governments of South Korea and Japan. For many, many years these countries have looked down upon prostitutes, but at the same time have praised those who worked well with GIs. As Kim Ae-Ran said, "They urged us to sell as much as possible to the GIs, praising us as 'dollar-earning patriots.'"

These governments cannot have it both ways. They cannot both aid the sex industry and condemn it at the same time. They cannot have visas that allow trafficking and then deport the women that try to save themselves from the industry. We must take action to ensure these women are treated with decency and humanity.

A Gender Analysis of the 2015 South Sudan Peace Agreement

Sophie Giscard d'Estaing

Under pressure from the international community, South Sudanese President Salva Kiir signed a Peace Agreement with the opposing warring factions to put end to the civil conflict in the Republic of South Sudan in Juba on 26 August 2015, after almost twenty months of armed conflict marked by atrocities. The agreement was endorsed by Riek Machar, leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement In Opposition (SPLM/IO), as well as by Mr. Pagan Amum, on behalf of the Former Political Detainees, and other South Sudanese stakeholders.

Good practices from other conflict contexts suggest that women's inclusion in the peace negotiation processes and participation in the institutions and structures defined through the agreement text is essential to the peace agreement's success. This paper exposes the gains and gaps in both the substantive aspects of addressing women's rights and needs, and their participation in decision-making processes to resolve conflict and set in place a recovery process.

At a first glance, the South Sudan Peace Agreement reveals positive - although insufficient - provisions for the participation of women in conflict resolution and post-conflict governance reforms. It acknowledges some specific needs of women arising from the impact of the conflict. For instance, the section on transitional justice is reasonably exten-sive in addressing women's needs and participation. However, in areas such as humanitarian aid, economic and financial management, the distribution of natural resources and extractives industries, security sector reform (SSR) and disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation (DDR), gender-sensitive language in the peace agreement text falls significantly short of ensuring effective and substantial engagement by women in crucial aspects of peacebuilding.

The limitations, gaps and recommendations illustrated in this analysis are a first attempt at analyzing the text from a gender perspective, indicating a worrying incompleteness and fragility in the arrangements for conflict resolution and prevention in South Sudan.

Peace Agreements and International frameworks

Definitions, Challenges, and Opportunities

A peace agreement is a document "produced after discussion with some or all of a conflict's protagonists with a view to ending violent military conflict" (Bell, 1). Peace processes and agreements not only aim to establish a ceasefire and end the conflict, but also define "the new structures and constitution of the country, including its political and

legal institutions" (Ibid). It can have a transformative role in redefining and rebuilding institutions and the community's social fabric toward greater social, economic and gender equality. It is therefore an opportunity for women to have their concerns heard and to play a role in influencing the reconstruction of their country. Bell distinguishes three stages in the peace processes, which all present challenges and opportunities for women: (i) pre-negotiation processes, (ii) the agreement, (iii) implementation/re-negotiation (Bell, 2).

Understanding the role of women and/or gender advisers in supporting the draft of the text would benefit this analysis of the gender content and gaps. Unfortunately, there is little information on the extent to which women participated directly in the negotiations and the drafting of the text, nor information on the role and composition of the Women's Bloc, a signatory of the peace agreement. For the purpose

women participate in both the design and implementation of the text is important if the objective is to advance women's rights and leadership, and to see their livelihoods, social, economic, justice and other needs addressed.

CEDAW and UNSC 1325

Several international frameworks, such as Recommendation 30 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and UN Resolution 1325 and its subsequent women, peace and security resolutions call for women's participation and inclusion in decision-making processes, including peace processes. From the negotiation of the agreement to the implementation of its provisions, women should be equally included and their voices taken into account. Yet, these provisions and frameworks remain

> In practice, gender equality and women's participation in decision-making in South Sudan remains limited due to a lack of adequate funding, gender discrimination, and high levels of female illiteracy.

of this short paper and due to the limited available information on women's direct participation in the drafting of the text, we shall focus on the content of the signed agreement text.

In most peace agreements, "references to women and gender (…) are often once-off mentions, worded in very general terms and are often included in the preamble or annexes of agreements rather than in their main text" (Bell, 3). Yet the content of the text influences the design of legal and political institutions. For this reason, ensuring that

insufficiently implemented in peace agreements, in particular when the negotiations are not inclusive.

Although South Sudan has initiated a National Action Program (NAP) to implement these resolutions, of which one of the four NAP pillars promotes "women and girls' perspectives in all decisions related to prevention, management and resolution of conflicts through consulting women organizations to inform local peacebuilding initiatives" (Sudd, 5). In practice, gender equality and women's participation in decision-making in South Sudan remains

limited due to a lack of adequate funding, gender discrimination, and high levels of female illiteracy (Ibid). Since 2013, a Sudan-South Sudan Women Taskforce, supported by Inclusive Security, has advocated for women's needs and participation in the peace negotiations. While the agreement's drafting process limited the participation of civil society, the taskforce is currently active in engaging with the authorities to ensure the implementation of the peace agreement will be more inclusive and more meaningful (Case, 2015). The South Sudan peace agreement and implementation are an opportunity to address structural challenges to women's participation in decision-making. The following part shall examine the text's language and implications.

An Analysis of the South Sudan Peace Agreement

This section shall critically analyze the provisions of each chapter of the agreement through a gender-sensitive lens, looking at both procedural and substantive issues.

On Inclusivity (Preamble)

The need for inclusion is not an exercise in political correctness; it is vital to the agreement's success». (Case, 2015)

On paper, the Agreement recognizes the need to promote inclusivity and popular ownership. Women are recognized as stakeholders in its Preamble, and represented by the Women's Bloc of South Sudan, one of the four signatories of the text.

Beyond the Peace Agreement, women in South Sudan have initiated several peacebuilding activities in the past, and the women of South Sudan Task Force published demands for the peace processes (Sudd, Inclusive Security). These demands, such as women comprising 50 per cent of participants at all levels and bodies all peace processes have not been met, and women's priorities have not been mainstreamed throughout the process.

In addition to the reasons exposed in the first section of this paper, several studies demonstrated that peace agreements processes including civil society are 64 per cent less likely to fail, and when women were able to exercise influence, deals were reached and implementation was stronger (Nilsson, Graduate Institute of Geneva). Moreover, as several studies note, "peace processes that include women as witnesses, signatories, mediators, and/or negotiators demonstrated a 20 per cent increase in the probability of a peace agreement lasting at least two years. This increases over time, with a 35 per cent increase in the probability of a peace agreement lasting 15 years" (O'Reilly, O Suilleabhain, Paffenholz). Research proves that the more inclusive the drafting of the agreement, the more inclusive the composition of the commissions set up in the agreement, the more effective these commission have been in practice, as well as women bringing consensus to the negotiating table on the need to implement agreements (Global Study 1325, 41- 42). Indeed, involving women in peace agreement processes is crucial to rebuilding countries, and this can be expected to be particularly so in South Sudan. Women in South Sudan "have played instrumental roles in resolving conflicts" in the past, and as conflict affects men and women differently, their needs in post-conflict settings should mirror these differences (Sudd, 3). Whether women and gender advisers were included throughout the negotiation process and design of the agreement is unclear. The process lacks transparency with no information on the composition of the Women's Bloc in South Sudan and its role in the peace agreement process, nor information on whether consultations

with women organizations and representatives have taken place. This may put at risk the implementation and sustainability of the Peace Agreement.

On Governance and Political Participation (Chapter 1)

Participation of women in South Sudan's government is a constitutional right, defined in Article 16(4a), which calls the government to "promote women participation in public life and their representation in the legislative and executive organs by at least twenty-five per cent as an affirmative action to redress imbalances created by history, customs and traditions" (Sudd, 4). Women's participation in the Transitional Government is guaranteed with reference to the Convention of 2011 establishing quotas (25 per cent), and no fewer than 4 women nominated by the Government of the Republic of South Sudan (GRSS) and no fewer than 3 women from the SPLM/IO to the Council of Ministers (Peace Agreement, 10.5.2). However, the peace agreement limits the 25% provision to the executive branch (a minimum of 2 out of 8 of the Deputy Ministers shall be women), failing to involve quotas for women in the legislative and judicial branches (Peace Agreement, 10.5.4; Sudd, 6). Moreover, the power sharing of ministries has been mostly divided between the two main belligerents, with 53 per cent of the Ministries in the hands of the GRSS (16 Ministries) and 33 per cent under control by the South Sudan Armed Opposition (10 Ministries), and the remaining four Ministries divided between former detainees and "other political parties". There will be a Ministry for Gender, Child and Social Welfare (Peace Agreement, 10.2.3), but if not adequately funded or empowered, it may only be symbolic.

The mandate of the Transitional Government described in the Agreement does not make any specific mention of gender or women. Yet, by including a specific provision on gender equality and women's participation, the Agreement would improve women's chances of having their needs met. For instance, the provisions on relief and protection and reconciliation mechanisms would have been strengthened by special mentions of women's specific needs and experiences, including gender based sexual violence (Peace Agreement, 2.1.2-3). Rape camps, abduction of women and girls by armed forces, and numerous of cases of sexual violence were reported, depicting a major feature of conflict (McNeish, 2015). Sexual violence remains an unaddressed aspect of the conflict in South Sudan (Human Rights Watch). It requires specific attention as it impacts negatively governance and peacebuilding in several ways (Goetz, 8). It undermines the rule of law and trust in governance institutions when there is impunity, it "fractures families and dissolves community bonds, making it harder for reconciliation and easier for relapse into conflict", while perpetuating "an atmosphere of insecurity" which affects in particular women and girls' lives and rights (Ibid).

The Agreement does not explicitly guarantee women's representation in the National Constitution Amendment Committee (NCAC), it refers instead to "two representatives of IGAD and one of "other political parties" (out of 8 members) (Peace Agreement, 13.2). Although women may be represented through the Women's Bloc, it does not reach the 25 per cent women representation mandate. This should be at least compensated for with effective consultations with women and women's organizations, to include their perspectives in the constitution, in a transparent, inclusive, and gender-sensitive manner (Sudd, 6).

Regarding elections, the Agreement could have provided specific language on women in identifying measures for participation, facilitating access to

polls and providing identification documentation to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and women. Structural challenges, displacement and illiteracy are challenges that affect women's rights in South Sudan. Women should be included in the design of such measures. Yet the description of the National Election Commission (NEC) does not guarantee the inclusion of women as members. Female-led households – as well as internal displacement in South Sudan - as a consequence of conflict can impact severely the participation of women as voters or candidates. Specific measures to remove barriers to women's participation, such as providing adequate identification documentation, supporting women candidates, and ensuring women are registered and free to vote are measures that should be part of agenda, if not the priorities, of the NEC[1]. South Sudan's 2012 electoral law, expected to be implemented in 2015, states that twenty-five per cent of women members shall be elected on the basis of proportional representation with closed party lists (Quota Project). In 2011, women elected represented twenty-seven per cent in the single/lower house (reserved seats quota system), but only ten per cent of members appointed in the Council of State were women (reserved seats quota system). Although these numbers are close to the recommended thirty per cent minimum quota for effective to show benefits to the society as a whole, quotas alone are not sufficient to address cultural and legal barriers for women's participation and vote, which are exacerbated by the conflict (Global Study, 175). It is not only about the number of women present, but also about their expertise, independence and the actual integration of their concerns and demands into policies and funding.

1 Electoral participation measures and gender quota systems should be further examined in the South Sudan context. Similarily, an analysis of main barriers to women's participation should be provided to develop recommendations.

Finally, women's participation should not be limited to the national level governance. Decentralization post-conflict may harm or limit women's rights if local community governance is primarily male-dominated (Global Study, 176). Women's concerns may not be heard and addressed if patriarchal local government systems are in place. Yet their demands would benefit the community as a whole, addressing issues such as education, health care and access to water.

On Ceasefire and Security Reform (Chapter 2)

The second chapter covers the ceasefire and issues of security reform. An important gender dimension of a ceasefire is the inclusion of gender based sexual violence as a violation of the ceasefire (UN DPA, 21). The South Sudan agreement recognizes that "acts and forms of sexual and gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation and harassment" constitute a violation of the ceasefire (Peace Agreement, 1.7.2). Whether ceasefire-monitoring teams are equipped to monitor sexual violence is unclear. At the procedural level, women's participation in security reform is limited to monitoring mechanisms with only one representative of the Women's Bloc out of twelve South Sudanese members in the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanisms (CTSAMM) and one out of sixteen members in the Strategic Defense and Security Review (SDSR) (Peace Agreement, 4.3.4 ; 6.1.9). This is far from the 25 per cent of women defined in the constitution. There should be a minimum of three women representatives in the CTSAMM, with for instance the inclusion of a woman from each warring party in additional to the Women's Bloc representative (Sudd, 6). Moreover, the CTSAMM workshop does not mention if women

will be convened or even consulted. This is a crucial gap, because, though often seen as victims, women are essential partners in stopping sexual violence through greater inclusion in the security sector, including in the police and military forces[2]. The SDSR Board will provide the roadmap for the Security Sector Transformation, which defines the details for the unification of armed forces, the DDR and SSR processes. Security reform affects all citizens, yet security issues affect men and women differently. Gender substantive issues, such as women's specific needs and experiences, are not guaranteed to be taken into account based on the language in the text as they remain overall under-represented and sit only at the review stage of the roadmap. For example, for DDR cantonment sites there is no mention of specific attention to women and girls' needs and measures of protection gender based violence; nor does the text mention gender specific measures for resettlement, disarmament or reintegration (social and economic) and women dependent on armed forces revenues (Goetz, 7, 22). This Chapter should have ensured a deeper inclusion of women as participants in the design and implementation of the ceasefire, SSR and SSR processes, and a mainstreaming of gender specific issues, at all levels.

On Humanitarian Assistance and Reconstruction (Chapter 3)

While other pillars guarantee (limited) women's participation, this pillar does not ensure any women in decision-making positions, including on the Board of the Special Reconstruction Fund (Sudd, 7; Peace Agreement, 2.2). The resulting measures taken will be most likely imbalanced and may result to further marginalization of women. In the Agreed Principles for Humanitarian Assistance and Reconstruction state, special consideration should be given to the needs of conflict-affected people, including women. Overall there is a critical gap in language on women's needs and gender-sensitive humanitarian response. For instance, provisions should ensure medical and psychosocial services for sexual violence survivors, as well as shelter, basic necessities and legal support. Re-settlement and support for displaced female-headed households who face particular and severe difficulties in rebuilding their lives is also crucial to rebuilding the country (Goetz, 5). Female-headed household may be discriminated against by aid distributed to male-headed households. As conflict exacerbates gender inequalities, the Transitional Government should carry out a

> By including more women on the frontlines of service delivery, as well as in the design and implementation of humanitarian services, these programs will improve in their access, use and effectiveness for women, men, girls and boys.

needs assessment based on sex-disaggregated data to guide its response, and women should be considered equitably, and their specific health needs addressed, in welfare programs (Goetz, 21).

Displacement makes women and girls more vul-

2 Training of security forces on gender based violence should also be part of SSR.

nerable to gender based violence. In South Sudan, "witnesses described women being dragged out of their dwellings and gang-raped in front of their children, or burned alive inside their houses after being raped" (Global Study, 68; UN Mission in South Sudan, 7). The trauma and social marginalization, resulting from sexual gender based violence, are barriers to building a peaceful society. Other types of violence, in particular affecting women and girls violations should be addressed (Global Study, 68). For example, access to education and health services may be impossible in an unsafe security area, where women may feel vulnerable and at risk of gender based violence. If women stay behind closed doors, their participation in peacebuilding will be very limited, and the potential of the transformative gender agenda inexistent. By including more women on the frontlines of service delivery, as well as in the design and implementation of humanitarian services, these programs will improve in their access, use and effectiveness for women, men, girls and boys (Global Study, 87). The gender gap in the language of the Peace Agreement will impact negatively the society, and its reconstruction, as a whole.

On Resources, Economic and Financial Management (Chapter 4)

> "Women do not eat peace. Women want programs that integrate peacebuilding initiatives with economic empowerment." (Global Study, 170)

At the substantive level, the Agreement reveals a gain[3] for women's economic empowerment with the establishment, by the Transitional Government,

of "a Women Enterprise Development Fund for provision of subsidized credit for women-based enterprise development; capacity-building of women entrepreneurs" (Peace Agreement, 7.1.5). Adding a reference to women's specific needs in post-conflict situations in the provision "subsidized credit and capacity building for vulnerable members of the society" would participate to a transformative agenda towards gender equality (Peace Agreement, 7.1.9). Women in South Sudan are among the poorest (in the nation or world), and with a majority working in agriculture they would benefit greatly from economic empowerment (Sudd, 7). Beyond the fund for women-based enterprise, funding should cover education for women and girls, skills-training and capacity-building for women, as well as greater access to credit (Goetz, 13). This funding could come from Development Funds financed through oil revenues for example[4]. Evidence shows that "conflict-affected communities that experienced the most rapid economic recovery and poverty reduction were those that had more women reporting higher levels of empowerment" (Global Study, 171). Indeed, women tend to spend their income for their family's health and education, contributing thus to post-conflict reconstruction (Ibid).

The Global Study on the implementation of Resolution 1325 states that "economic recovery for women too often translates only into micro-credit or micro-enterprises, while the large scale projects continue to be dominated by men" (Global Study, 174). This is the case in the South Sudan Peace Agreement. In terms of participation, a representative of the Women's Bloc will be on the Board members of the Economic and Financial Manage-

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3 Women in Sudan have articulated this demand in the Oslo Donors Conference for Sudan in 2005, as well as to hold a role in the management and disbursement of funds. This second demand was not heard. See Women's participation in peace negotiations (UN Women sourcebook) p.13

4 This was a recommendation by women from South Sudan in the Donor Conference in Washington in 2011. See « Increasing women's participation and engagement in planning for Peace : the 2011 Gender Symposium and International Engagement Conference for South Sudan » (UN Women Sourcebook).

ment Authority, amongst the President and Vice President, Ministers and representatives of political parties (Peace Agreement, 8.2). However, resources, economic and financial management remains highly male-dominated. Women are not represented in commissions on resources, economic and financial management[5], meaning resultant gender-related budgeting may be extremely low. With no adequate funding and no participation by women's groups, the likelihood that women's needs, both identified and omitted in the Agreement, will be addressed is very obscure and uncertain. Issues such as land rights should be addressed in the post-conflict context, as female-headed households may loose their proprieties. Moreover, women's participation and oversight on the management of public resources would reduce corruption (Powely, 10).

On Transitional Justice, Accountability, Reconciliation, and Healing (Chapter 5)

This chapter has probably the most references to women's needs and participation. The Ministry of Justice of the Transitional Government shall conduct public consultations to "ensure that the experiences of women, men, girls and boys are sufficiently documented and the findings of such consultations incorporated in the resultant legislation" (Peace Agreement, 2.1.3). The Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing (CTRH) will "record the experiences of victims, including but not limited to women and girls", and issue "quarterly reports (…) and activities to inform the public, in particular with youth and women, about the Commission's work" (Peace Agreement, 2.2.2.6 ; 2.2.3). The CTRH also includes measures to protect women as victims and

5 Anti-Corruption Commission, Fiscal Financial Allocation and Monitoring Commission, National Petroleum and Gas Commission, Land Commission.

witnesses. The Hybrid Court's jurisdiction mandate shall address gender-based crimes and sexual violence (Peace Agreement, 3.2.1.4). Whether this is the most adequate and sensitive way of prosecuting sexual violence in conflict, when all parties have committed it, should be discussed in a separate paper, informed by more details on the composition and functioning of the Hybrid Court. Support to survivors of sexual and gender based violence should benefit from adequate protection, socio-economic and psychological support, to ensure access to justice and accompaniment throughout judicial procedures. In terms of participation, the CTRH shall be composed of 7 commissioners, 4 of whom will be South Sudan nationals, including 2 women, and the remaining 3 will be from other African countries, including 1 woman, meeting the 25 per cent mandate (Peace Agreement, 2.3.2). The Compensation and Reparation Authority includes representatives of the Women's Bloc (Peace Agreement, pp.4.2.b.ii). However, women representation is not sufficient. Women should be empowered to participate actively in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of transitional justice mechanisms to ensure their experiences of the conflict are mirrored, and their needs met (Global Study, 124). There are no specific mentions in the compensation and reparation section regarding women's specific needs and losses, or gender-specific barriers to reparation and compensation that need to be overcome. Yet, reparations programs can have a transformative impact on gender dynamics. Including language on gender-specific crimes, socioeconomic, civil and political violations would have provided more leverage for women to claim rights over land, houses or jobs, and to benefit from tailored financial support. Ensuring the proposed reparations mechanisms are women friendly in terms of access and outcomes could have also been part of the CTRH mandate.

Moving forward, providing gender-sensitive

training for all justice sector actors, increasing the participation of women at all levels in service delivery through quotas or scholarships, should be on the agenda of justice sector reform.

On the Permanent Constitution and the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC) (Chapter 6-7)

The Parameters of the Permanent Constitution will be based on several principles, including gender equity (1.2). The National Constitution Review Commission will include the participation of different representatives, including the Women's Bloc amongst political parties and other civil society representatives and academics. The constitution-making process is said to be "led and owned by the people of South Sudan" (Peace Agreement, Chapter 6).

The JMEC shall oversee the implementation of the agreement and the mandate of the Transitional Government. Out of the 13 members from South Sudan, one will be a representative of the Women's Bloc. However, the JMEC shall be divided into several commissions. In which commission shall the representative of the Women's Bloc sit? What will be the implications? Nineteen additional members will represent regional and international states. Providing gender expertise and training to international and regional representatives is one way of ensuring gender-sensitive monitoring, in addition to women's participation, which remains low.

Conclusion

The mandates, provisions and outcomes, exposed in the text should reflect the needs and expe-riences of the community in its diversity, including the specific needs of women and girls. Yet, across the institutions and oversight mechanisms defined in the South Sudan Peace Agreement, women remain under-represented (25 per cent or less). Moreover, the number of women present does not always imply women will be able to effectively influence the peace process and reconstruction of their country. Half-hearted gestures towards inclusion, which in some parts of the agreement are altogether absent, may put at risk future efforts for sustainable peace in South Sudan and limit the socially transformative potential of the Agreement. This is because the Agreement may simply reproduce power-sharing between the two belligerent parties, failing to trigger significant reconciliation and social change efforts by addressing the drivers of conflict and ensuring women's full participation as agents - and not only subjects - of the post-agreement institutions and programs. More than a gender quota is needed to enable women to be effective in public decision-making areas that are already male-dominated.

Rwandan Identity Construction Post-Genocide & the Reconciliation Challenges It Poses

Karin Attia

Introduction

After the 1994 Rwanda genocide[1], which took place over the course of 100 days, leaving 800,000 (Gordts) to over a million people dead (Meeting with Jean- Damascène Gasanabo), the government of Rwanda has engaged in a complete rebranding campaign. It's a campaign that has included adopting new national symbols—such as the flag, emblem and anthem in 2001—and the re-naming of villages and provinces in 2006 (Thomson 333). No longer divided across ethnic identity lines, the Rwandan government has adopted a "we are all Rwandans" collective identity (Eramian 96) and has prioritized reconciliation efforts ("Interview Paul Kagame"). This pan-Rwandan identity and emphasis on unity and reconciliation is the product of current President Paul Kagame. He is regarded as "the philosopher, the architect, the engineer and the voice of modern Rwanda" (Habumuremyi). However, while there may be intention to unify and reconcile collective Rwandan identity, there are numerous challenges and obstacles with this top-down, state issued mandate.

This paper seeks to explore identity construction post genocide and the state managed reconciliation efforts currently underway. The paper is divided into three main parts. Part 1A will discuss the history of ethnic labels and identity in Rwanda pre-geno-cide. Part 1B will discuss the subsequent abolition of ethnic labels, the new collective Rwandan identity post genocide and the challenges it poses. Part 2A will discuss reconciliation efforts post genocide, specifically the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) and Ingando (re-education camps). Part 2B of this paper will discuss challenges and shortcomings of these state mandated reconciliation efforts. Finally, part 3 will offer conclusions.

Brief History of Ethnicity and Identity in Rwanda

Until the 1933 introduction of national identity cards by the Belgian colonial powers, ethnic identity in Rwanda was fluid (Clark 142). Ethnicity in Rwanda was centered on three main groups: Hutu, Tutsi and Twa. While Twa consistently referred to the indigenous Pygmys that consisted of 1% of the population, (Hintjens 14) the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic labels were more fluid. An individual's ethnic label was based upon their socio-economic status (Clark 142). If you had ten or more cows, you would be considered a Tutsi; if you had less than ten cows you were considered a Hutu (Kigali Genocide Memorial). Far from being static, these ethnic labels were capable of changing depending on the number of

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1 In Rwanda, it is referred to as the genocide against the Tutsi.

cows one possessed. If an individual held 20 cows one day, they would be regarded as Tutsi and if they had 5 cows the next day, they would be regarded as a Hutu. However, once the Belgian colonial authorities began issuing national identity cards, this socio-economic status-based identity transformed into a race-based one (Clark 142). Upon the creation of the ID cards, "approximately 84% declared themselves Hutu, 15% Tutsi and the remaining 1% Twa" ("HRW Report - Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda"). Rather than remain something fluid, identity and ethnicity became codified and followed a patrilineal model. "Colonialism changed their meaning (from status and economic activity to race), institutionalized and stabilized categories that had been more fluid (though identity cards and race measurements) and intensified the connection between race and power" (Straus 22).

Pan-Rwandan Identity & the Challenges it Holds

One of the reasons the genocide was able to achieve such a staggering body count was because of the organizational efficiency and methodological processing of who was a Tutsi vs. a Hutu. The national identification cards offered genocidaires a tool to quickly identify who was who in the genocide, making the job of systematically targeting Tutsis much easier. Ergo, it should come as little surprise that ethnic identity labels were removed from the national identification cards after the genocide (Eramian 96), and were officially removed in 1997 (Fussell). Currently, national identification cards make no mention of ethnicity and instead they focus on: name, date of birth, sex, place of issue and signature. Although national ID cards no longer list ethnic labels, the U.S. government approximates that the current ethnic breakdown is "84 percent Hutu, 15 percent Tutsi and 1 percent Twa in a densely packed population of about 12 million" (Ryan). Interestingly enough, this is essentially the same percentage that existed prior to the genocide, with the population size being the notable difference.

Talking about ethnicity or bringing up ethnic labels in conversation risks accusations of perpetuating ethnic schisms or 'divisionism,' a crime according to Rwanda's penal code (Eramian 96). Following the 1994 genocide, the Rwandan government launched a 'deethnicization' campaign to outlaw Twa, Tutsi and Hutu labels and replaced them with a pan-Rwandan national identity. In fact, ethnic labels on national identity cards are banned. This effort in outlawing ethnic labels both on national identity cards and in public discourse is one of the steps in the creation of a pan-Rwandan identity.

In preparation for this pan-Rwandan identity, the current government created new laws that penalize any possible threat to this newfound unity and inclusive identity. In 2003, under the Organic Law, a new series of thought and speech crimes were introduced, such as 'genocide mentality', 'divisionism' and 'ethnic ideology.' Within these laws, "ethnicity has been delegitimized (and is illegal) as a means of public political expression or identification" (Hintjens 10). These laws are a step on the path towards a newly constructed identity and ultimately, the state mandated goal of reconciliation and unity. It can and should be understood as the next step in the state initiated process of identity construction and reconciliation. These laws are used as a punitive measure for those who dissent, for those who question the desired and targeted goals of the new pan-Rwandan identity.

No longer subjected to ethnic labels or even discussion of them for fear of inciting divisionism, Rwandans now go by the state mandated, "we are all Rwandan" narrative. This narrative is based on

the idea that prior to colonization, Rwanda was a unified country and that ethnic driven hatred was a product of colonialism. According to the official narrative, colonial policies of divide and rule were essentially responsible for creating division among Rwandan people, and by extent, the genocide. The 1994 genocide is regarded as a "mere aberration in Rwanda's peaceful and united history and the violence was caused by external forces" (Williamson 93). By eliminating these labels both from public discourse and national identity cards, the government of Rwanda attempts to unify Rwanda under one overarching umbrella—an inclusive pan-Rwandan one, however this is not without its flaws and challenges.

One of the flaws surrounding this pan-Rwandan identity is that it is imposed from the top and is a thus a continuation of the Rwandan state exercising tight control over public expression of political iden-

approach is not very inclusive. It continues to emphasize a binary of Hutu vs. Tutsi (even though that is now considered illegal). In order to fully embody this new collective identity, there needs to be a happy medium between top-down and bottom-up approaches, and the state will need to loosen its monopoly on oversight of the issue and encourage dialogue at the local level.

Although ethnic labeling and identity is officially illegal and divisionism is considered a grave crime, ethnicity is still very much alive in Rwanda (Hintjens 13). Ethnicity is intricately connected to memorialization. One example can be seen by the terminology surrounding the genocide. Rather than being called the 1994 genocide, it is referred to as the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.[2] This deliberate choice of terminology is mandated by the 2003 constitution (Waldorf 49). While it is absolutely true that the majority of the victims were Tutsi, and it

> # The national identification cards offered genocidaires a tool to quickly identify who was who in the genocide, making the job of systematically targeting Tutsis much easier.

tities. Open political discussions are still challenging. Upon facing criticism, the government accuses its critics of divisionism and genocide mentality (Hintjens 5). To this day, Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF)—the rebel armed group that fought against the genocidal regime, ultimately liberating Rwanda, and currently the leading party in Rwanda under President Kagame—crimes are still not sufficiently covered or addressed (Clark 145). This is further proof that discussing the genocide is interwoven with the state's tight control and its top-down approach to what can and cannot be discussed. Furthermore, by creating a pan-Rwandan identity but only focusing on prosecuting Hutus, this top-down

was a campaign to systematically cleanse Rwanda of its Tutsi population, labeling it and referring to it as such reinforces a binary of Hutu vs. Tutsi. By doing so, the government risks replacing old ethnic labels with new, yet equally divisive ones, such as 'genocidaire' and 'victim (Waldorf 49). It creates a problematic impression that Tutsis are survivors and Hutus are perpetrators of the genocide and seemingly diminishes any space for stories and narratives about Hutu survivors and Hutu protectors of Tutsis

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2 Every genocide memorial visited (Kigali, Nyamata and Ntarama) and every meeting throughout the global field intensive made special note to call it the genocide against the Tutsi.

during the genocide; "By preserving genocide as the defining moment of Rwandan history, the RPF regime has elevated Tutsi into victims, even those not directly targeted in the genocide. And Hutu, even those who refused to kill, become suspected accomplices at best, and genocidal killers at worst" (Hintjens 32). The Kigali Memorial Center showcased minimal mention of Hutu victims or of Hutu protectors throughout its extensive exhibit chronicling the genocide and its aftermath. Banning ethnic labels but focusing so heavily on ethnicity in memorialization leads to problematic reconciliation efforts.

> "There has always been inherent tension between the government's forward looking reconciliation narrative, which seeks to erase ethnicity, and its backward-looking genocide narrative, which inevitably emphasizes ethnicity." (Waldorf 49)

Reconciliation Efforts Post-Genocide

Reconciliation efforts post genocide have been of the utmost priority for the current government of Rwanda, led by President Kagame. In a 2014 interview with Foreign Affairs Magazine, President Kagame stated:

Reconciliation means something beyond, you know, someone did this to the other one and now they are talking to each other. It really means [thinking about] why would we even have done what we did? We are trying to bring back a nation that has been torn apart, so we're talking about [rebuilding] a nation, one that embodies Hutus, Tutsis, and Twas. ("Rebooting Rwanda")

The fact that the leader of Rwanda is so focused on reconciliation, unity and rebuilding the nation for all is inspiring. The progress Rwanda has made in the nearly twenty-two years after the genocide is undoubtedly remarkable. Rwanda has the world's highest share of women in parliament, 63.8%—or 51 out of 80 (Women in National Parliaments), it has Umuganda, a national monthly community service day (Mourby), and it created an entire government agency dedicated to unity and reconciliation efforts, the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) in 1999.

This paper does not argue against the intentions of the state organized efforts of progress and reconciliation, but rather intends to shed light on some of the flaws of these policies in their current form. While there are numerous state run programs pertaining to reconciliation efforts, such as Gacaca (a community justice system of courts) and Abunzi (community mediators who help resolve problems instead of going directly to court), this paper will focus on two: the NURC and one of their programs, ingando (re-education camps).

The NURC was created in March 1999 by the parliamentary law N° 03/99 of 12/03/99 to promote unity and reconciliation among Rwandans ("Background of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission"). According to the NURC,

Unity and Reconciliation of Rwandans is defined as a consensus practice of citizens who have common nationality, who share the same culture and have equal rights; citizens characterized by trust, tolerance, mutual respect, equality, complementary roles/interdependence, truth, and healing of one another's wounds inflicted by our history, with the objectives of laying a foundation for sustainable development. ("*The National Policy on Unity and Reconciliation*")

This commission is tasked with putting together the national program for the promotion of unity and reconciliation, to sensitize Rwandans again and

mobilize them around this idea (Meeting with Richard Kananga). The NURC works with the redefined Rwandan identity, with the 'we are all Rwandans' mentality, focusing on coming together as Rwandans and facing the challenges together—as one collective unit. The NURC employs a didactic approach with a heavy focus on education. This is exemplified in its use of ingando. Launched in 1996, ingando was created for the purpose of facilitating the reintegration of Tutsi returnees and rebuilding community co-existence. In 1999, the NURC took over the management of these camps (Clark 139). This next section will focus on what exactly takes place in Ingando.

First and foremost it is essential to draw a distinction between the two types of ingando camps. There are solidarity camps, which are for civil society and church leaders, gacaca judges, incoming university students and politicians. There are also reeducation camps, which are for ex-soldiers and ex-combatants, released prisoners, street children and prostitutes (Thomson 333). This paper will focus on the latter.

Ingando is a twelve-week reeducation process initiated by the state. Throughout this process, the government, through the NURC, reeducates its participants. It is important to note that the participants in this type of Ingando are forcibly enrolled in these camps as a necessary step before being reintroduced to their home communities (Thomson 333). These camps focus on history lessons and lessons in truth and reconciliation. There are specific expectations the government has for Ingando graduates. According to an Ingando official speaking to a group of participants, "you will not be able to return to your communities without understanding the real causes of the genocide. We will test you on history to make sure you understand. Remember…you are a former Hutu. We are all Rwandans now and this is

the basis of our history lessons" (Thomson 334-335). The history lessons focus on the premise that prior to colonization, Rwanda existed in ethnic unity and harmony—the state approved narrative (Thomson 333). In conjunction with these history lessons, Hutu ingando participants were constantly encouraged to "tell the truth" (Thomson 337). This emphasis on truth telling for Hutu participants showcases the fact that ethnicity still plays a role in these camps. The aforementioned state mandated reconciliation efforts have the potential to be effective tools of unity and reconciliation, but due to their emphasis on collective memorialization and the continued obsession with ethnicity, they ultimately fall short of their stated goals.

Challenges and Shortcomings of Reconciliation

As previously mentioned, while substantial progress has been made in Rwanda in the almost twenty-two years post-genocide, it is important to balance intention with execution. This paper maintains that the reconciliation efforts focus too much on a top-down approach to reconciliation, rather than bottom-up. The NURC has much potential to be a contribution to the reconciliation process, but instead it is "the manifestation of a fundamentally flawed approach that must be addressed. The creation of unity, epitomised by a 'Rwandan' national identity, must embrace and acknowledge difference rather than deny it… it must work with existing reality rather than try to manufacture a new reality" (Clark 147). The greatest missed opportunity of the NURC is its focus on manufacturing a new identity rather than addressing the different narratives and different truths; it pushes them aside and instead focuses on constructing a pan-Rwandan identity. To be sure, the creation of collective identity post genocide is noteworthy, however it fundamentally

misses the mark when it is imposed from above rather than occurring as a collective acceptance. According to, Chi Adanna Mgbako, a leading human rights scholar, "Ethnicity is a powerful idea; it cannot simply be talked out of existence" (Mgbako 220). By attempting to talk it out of existence, the current government of Rwanda and the NURC succeeds in creating a homogenous identity but ultimately fails in creating a meaningful and truly reconciled one.

For the NURC, one of their critical challenges is that reconciliation is extremely difficult to measure. Reconciliation is recognized as, "a painful process that requires the knitting of the torn social fabric" (Meeting with Richard Kananga). It requires a delicate balance of both the demands of justice and peace (Meeting with Richard Kananga). When discussing reconciliation and measuring its success, Richard Kananga, the Regional Coordinator of NURC, highlights that there is no one way of going about reconciliation and that trust is a useful indicator of whether a population is reconciled (Meeting with Richard Kananga). In fact, trust is used as an indicator on the Rwanda Reconciliation Barometer (RRB). The RRB is a NURC tool intended to be used as a structured quantitative research instrument. It is a national public opinion survey to track the reconciliation progress in Rwanda. Throughout the RRB, specifically the 2010 quantitative study, trust

cide has risen. They have risen to the point where "more than 92% of adult Rwandans believe that relations have improved between groups that found themselves in opposing camps during the genocide" ("Rwanda Reconciliation Barometer" at 74). For a 2010 report, a mere sixteen years after the genocide, to indicate that 92% of Rwandans feel more trustful and view relations as improved is a remarkable feat. However, there is a nuance. As promising and useful trust may be as an indicator for the RRB, it proves problematic in other efforts.

Trust proves to be a problematic indicator when it comes to accepting other narratives of the genocide. The ingando camps exemplify this. Since one of the objectives of the ingando camps is for its participants to tell the truth, there should be a space where these truths can be discussed and explored. By forbidding talk about ethnicity, the state and by extension its reconciliation mechanisms like ingando, is creating a space where only one truth about the genocide can exist. According to Susan Thomson, a Canadian who was sent to an ingando camp for a week in 2006 during her dissertation fieldwork for a 're-education', the camps do not teach reconciliation and instead focus on teaching genocidaires to "shut up and to stay on the sidelines of public life" (Thomson 337). Through interviews, she discovered that many

> The creation of collective identity post genocide is noteworthy, however it fundamentally misses the mark when it is imposed from above rather than occurring as a collective acceptance.

is measured. Figure 22 and Table 134 in this report highlight that the levels of trust between those on different sides of the Rwandan conflict and geno-

ingando graduates believe there is no reason to tell their actual truths and that there is no real space for that within the camps, even though that is a stated

purpose of them. An interviewee, who graduated in 2004, told her, "even if I am innocent, I am a former Hutu. In the new Rwanda this means I must be guilty of killing" (Thomson 337). This is problematic because it has the potential to leave many people disconnected from their narratives, as though there is no space for their stories to be heard and shared. It leaves people feeling 'other-ed' and in turn creates opposing narratives: those representing the modern Rwandan state and state accepted narratives and those representing other accounts that do not currently fit into the state accepted mold. By neglecting to create a space where these truths can be shared, mistrust is formed. Rather than feeling reconciled after graduating, graduates feel that it is merely another tool to suppress them, "I am a former Hutu. This means I am a source of shame for this government. Prison, gacaca, ingando are just ways for them to make sure that we don't think for ourselves. The message is that we are not full citizens" (Thomson 335). Despite the emphasis on telling the truth, there appears to be little space for that. Additionally despite the 'we are all Rwandans' narrative, graduates acknowledge that there is a collective guilt attached to them as they mention their former Hutu-ness. In short, while the intention behind ingando is reconciliation, its execution is flawed.

Conclusion

Identity construction and reconciliation efforts have been the top priority post genocide, especially under current President Kagame. The investment in this pan-Rwandan identity is apparent through penalizing divisionism as a crime and removing ethnic labels from the identity cards. Every meeting that took place over the course of the GFI trip focused on this 'we are all Rwandans' identity. Hearing ethnic labels was all but limited to memorials, where ethnic labels were consistently used to me-

morialize. Reconciliation is constantly regarded as a process. However, it continuously fails to be treated like an organic one and instead is mandated as a state process, through a top-down approach. While the intent for progress, unity and reconciliation exist in Rwanda, they are stifled by the state intervention and handling of them. Until ethnicity, differing narratives, and truths can at least be discussed, the creation of a pan-Rwandan identity and reconciliation fall short of their true potential. It is within reason to assume that given Kagame's all but guaranteed third term extension ("Rwanda's Paul Kagame to Run for Third Presidential Term"), this would continue to be the case. With the extension of his presidency, it is imperative for Kagame and his administration to focus on making this pan-Rwandan identity more inclusive and accepted.

Figure 22: Trust between those on different sides of the Rwandan conflict and genocide (%
agreement)
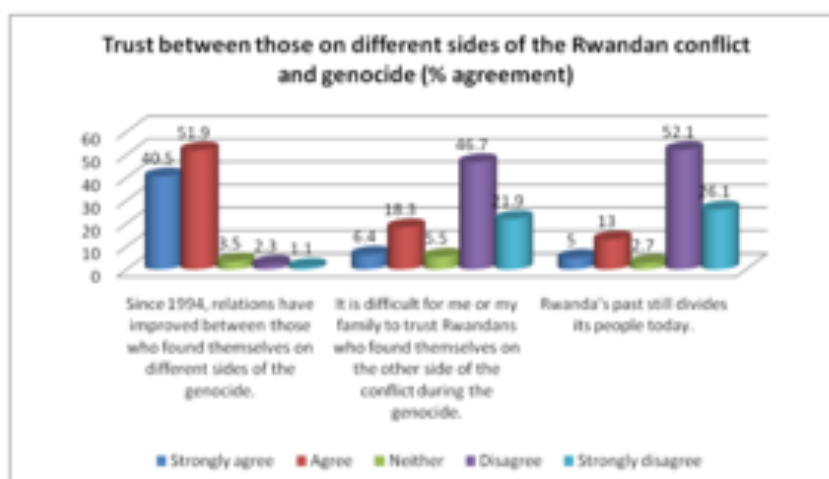
Source: Republic of Rwanda. National Unity and Reconciliation
Commission. Rwanda Reconciliation Barometer. NURC, Oct. 2010.
1-117, at 74.

AGREEMENT	Genocide Survivor	Relative of Perpetrator	Tigiste	Old Case Refugee	New case refugee	Historically marginalized people	Refused	Other
Table 134: Trust between those on different sides of the Rwandan conflict and genocide by social category [%]								
Since 1994, relations have improved between those who found themselves on different sides of the genocide	89.3%	92.3%	97.1%	92.6%	94.2%	87.1%	92.6%	3.0%
It is difficult for me or my family to trust Rwandans who found themselves on the other side of the conflict during the genocide	37.7%	19.0%	21.2%	34.0%	25.1%	35.5%	24.6%	20.7%
Rwanda's past still divides its people today	20.8%	14.9%	18.2%	23.4%	15.7%	16.1%	5.7%	22.2%
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	486	757	34	94	585	31	122	845
*While responses to certain social categories have been included, small numbers of self-identified respondents within those categories prevent meaningful statistical analysis								

Source: Republic of Rwanda. National Unity and Reconciliation
Commission. Rwanda Reconciliation Barometer. NURC, Oct. 2010. 1-117,
at 75.

Women at War
Debunking Gendered Arguments Against Combat Inclusions

Andrea E. Ackerman

Introduction

The United States has opened all combat roles in the military to women through a ground-breaking decision made by Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter in December 2015. The historical move by the Pentagon has garnered controversial reactions among men and women speculating if women are capable or "good enough" to serve on the frontlines in the toughest combat positions (Thompson 54). The decision to transition towards a more gender-neutral military was made after lengthy research by all levels in the Army, Navy, Air Force and US Special Operations Command (Lamothe). Those in support of the inclusion of women, such as Defense Secretary Ash Carter and President Barack Obama, have emphasized that as long as women meet the required standards of service positions, they will be fully integrated in to all aspects of the Armed Forces (Lamothe). However, a variety of issues remain surrounding the gendered-masculine standards to which women will be measured against, and further, how equipped a male-dominated military is to actually meet the needs of soldiers who happen to be women.

Women have historically played important off-the-field roles in the US Armed Forces and according to Retired General Gordon R. Sullivan, Chief of Staff of the Army, 1991-1995: "They have contrib-uted their talents, skills and courage to this endeavor for more than two centuries with an astounding record of achievement that stretches from Lexington and Concord to the Persian Gulf and beyond" ("Women in the United States Army"). Including women at all levels means a larger recruitment base and a wider range of talent and skills for frontline positions. Women make up 19% of the Air Force, 18% of the Navy, 14% of the Army, and 8% of the Marine Corps (Thompson 54). The decision to lift the combat exclusion ban may be costly and challenging for all branches of the military because it will require operational and structural changes in order to fully embrace female service members at all levels. Strong opposition to this decision stems from gendered assumptions that women lack the physical strength to perform in combat roles and the assertion that men in combat will react differently with an increased presence of women in terms of unit cohesion. Sexual assault and rape of women in combat roles raise serious concerns, both within military and amongst the general public. The securitization and militarization of women violate the deeply entrenched gender roles that have been prescribed to them. Therefore, true integration of women into the Armed Forces will require an overall shift in societal norms. The woman soldier is seen as a symbol of modernity in militaries as well as a way for women to fully grasp their rights as citizens. However, navigating through the mail-dominated culture of the

military may result in a backlash against women who wish to fill traditionally male positions (Enloe, as cited by Silva 940). Furthermore, legal issues arise surrounding the possibility of drafting women. Overall, if the military is to strengthen its candidate pool and attract the best troops conceivable, it must open its top positions to the entire population. However, at what cost will gender mainstreaming in the US military occur?

This paper will examine the arguments against women's recruitment in combat roles, will attempt to expose how they are gendered and it will debunk existing assumptions. Finally, it will address the need for structural change among the US Armed Forces by examining the role of women within the military and the implications of fully incorporating women at the frontlines.

Arguments Against Recruitment of Women

Mainstreaming women into combat units has sparked debates surrounding the realities men and women face in hostile conditions, how their interactions can affect life or death situations, and the overall success of the US military in its missions. The subject tends to invoke compelling and often emotional arguments on all sides; combat exclusion devalues and marginalizes women by denying them the chance to equally and meaningfully participate in the Armed Forces if they so choose. At the same time, putting women on the frontlines certainly endangers them and there is a wide belief that the lives of male soldiers will be threatened if a woman does not possess the physical strength or mental capacity for serving in long-term combat missions. While the assumptions based on strength and unit cohesion are important, and will be discussed in more detail, they also serve as a façade for greater underlying fears surrounding gender-based and sexual violence in combat positions and a demasculinization of male forces.

There are indeed some physical advantages that men have over women, often in terms of height, weight, and endurance, all of which are prioritized by the military. This is apparent in the desire for taller, stronger soldiers, thus exemplifying how the physical traits emphasized by the military are persistently gendered-masculine. As a result of resonating gender binaries, women are considered physically and mentally weaker individuals while men are considered rational, superior fighters (Prividera and Howard 116). New physical fitness standards have been drafted for all military positions and will disqualify more women than men from serving on the frontlines (Thompson 54). Regarding size, female veteran Jude Eden, who served as a US Marine fighting in Iraq, has argued against combat inclusion and stated that even in the case of the most capable woman, "most of the men she'd be fireman-carrying off the battlefield will be at least 100 lbs. heavier than her with their gear on" (Eden). Furthermore, Mark Thompson stated:

"On average, men are more aggressive, which can be beneficial in combat. But that trait also contributes to more accidents and injuries, as well as suicides. Women are smaller— their stride is shorter, requiring them to march faster to cover the same terrain. And they may be more susceptible to injury: from 2001 to 2012, female troops were medically evacuated from Afghanistan at a rate 22% higher than men, even though they were formally barred from ground combat. In 2014, female troops were hospitalized 40% more often than men, even after eliminating pregnancy from the calculation" (Thompson 54).

The argument based on the physical capabilities

of women soldiers tends to minimize the advantages of a physically smaller person in combat and is based on average distributions of strength and size (Prividera and Howard 116).

Professor of Defense Analysis at the Naval Postgraduate School, Anna Simons, outlines several other issues with women in combat units that include: The possibility that intimate relationships will form as a result of mixing "healthy young men and women together in small groups for extended periods of time," much like the workplace, and the reality that combat often consists of lengthy periods

surrounding female recruitment in combat roles. Simons defends her claims by arguing that there is no comparison between gender mainstreaming in the military and the lifting of Don't Ask, Don't Tell because of natural "attraction between the sexes" (Simons).

Rape and sexual assault are still overwhelmingly prevalent in the US military, are extremely underreported and have escalated to the likes of an epidemic (Cernak 209). The US military has undergone major reforms over the last decade to address abuses, and yet, it is still considered unequipped to

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of inaction where "bored and frustrated" soldiers may be prone to act upon "all sorts of temptations" (Simons). This argument is commonly used to perpetuate the belief that the cohesiveness of units on the ground will suffer if women are present; there is a positive correlation between high levels of unit cohesion and unit performance and if a woman is treated differently within the unit, it can impact the success of a mission ("Unit Cohesion and the Military Mission"). The argument based on "male protection" argues that men will automatically lose self-control around women, may feel a stronger need to protect them and become more emotional when women are injured (Prividera and Howard 118). Self-control and rationality are considered masculine qualities while women are deemed irrational and emotional, especially in high-pressure situations. These essentialist assumptions are socially constructed yet remain pervasive in the discourse

deal with sexual misconduct from within. Furthermore, the military justice system is inadequate in fairly disciplining those who commit these heinous crimes (Cernak 211). "The presence of women in the military has been linked to a greater prevalence of gender discrimination in the armed forces and intra-military sexual assault" (Cernak 216). While there are certainly male victims as well, women soldiers are disproportionately impacted and less likely to report abuse, as they often must conform to the pervasive masculine environment and aggressive military culture. Women who become pregnant while serving rarely have access to abortions if they are stationed abroad (Cernak 216). The US Department of Defense is prohibited to use its facilities and funds for abortion unless a woman's life is at risk or if a pregnancy is the result of rape or incest (US Code § 1093 and Grindlay, et al 259-264). Women soldiers often seek abortions outside of military

facilities due to stigmatization; they can receive only privately funded abortions at military facilities (Grindlay, et al 259-264). Abortions overseas where troops are often stationed can be unsafe or illegal and privately funded abortions less likely to be preformed at a military facility due to a fear of being disciplined or discharged. Rape and sexual violence are used as tactics of war and women who are put on the frontlines as a result of lifting the combat exclusion ban may be raped and/or become pregnant by her fellow soldier or enemy combatants. There is little public acknowledgment among US officials of the fear that female combatants could be raped by enemy fighters. However, this is now a possibility if women are present at the frontlines.

Debunking the Assumptions

The physical differences between men and women are clearly important, as soldiering is an extremely physical activity and training is intensive. However, this argument quickly loosens when one considers the realities of frontline operations today. Dehumanization of frontline combat on the rise and the ability of women to control war machines, drones and other combat technologies often have nothing to do with the size or physical strength. In aviation positions and in military vehicles such as tanks and submarines, smaller frames and lighter weights are actually preferred (Prividera and Howard 118). While endurance does remain important, physical fitness is often measured based on the size averages with little focus on maximums or minimums. Smaller-framed people often have the ability to move quickly and take up less space. Measuring a woman's ability to fulfill a combat role can no longer rely on traditional testing methods. This argument is based on gender biases rather than realities, as other methods exist for measuring strength, fitness, and endurance. Women have been held to

the same physical standards of men, but as previously mentioned, those standards have now been revised on a position-by-position basis and will rule out both men and women for certain positions (Thompson 54). Combat roles in the US have been traditionally closed to women, making it difficult to successfully measure women's physical performances in combat units, as they have not yet had the chance to demonstrate their abilities. However, when examining women's roles in military police units that are also physically demanding, there is no evidence that demonstrates women are incapable of performing the same functions as their male counterparts (Haring 31).

In discussing unit cohesion, one must acknowledge that there are two dimensions to cohesion: Social cohesion and task cohesion ("Unit Cohesion and the Military Mission"). While social cohesion involves creating emotional bonds, task cohesion refers to the overall ability of a group to achieve a joint goal or mission. As cited from the UC Davis psychology website on arguments in favor of Don't Ask, Don't Tell:

> "Task cohesion may be more important than social cohesion in enhancing group performance. After reviewing military and civilian studies of cohesion and performance, Professor Robert MacCoun concluded that it is task cohesion — not social cohesion or group pride — that drives group performance" (MacCoun as cited in "Unit Cohesions and the Military Missions").

The repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell in 2011 raised a number of the same concerns surrounding unit cohesion, however, after five-years the argument has become null (Lamothe).

The idea that including more women into ground forces would reduce the effectiveness of a unit in battle only focuses on the social aspect of unit cohesion. If the most capable service members hold

these positions, their ability to perform their missions should theoretically not be influenced by gender. A Marine Corps study of a gender-integrated task force, cited by Thomas Gibbons-Neff in The Washington Post, reported a slight breakdown in unit cohesion, which occurred due to perceived unequal treatment (Gibbons). However, The Marine Corps Times reported on the same experiment, stating that male participants in the study had years of experience in their positions while the female participants came from non-combat units or were straight out of boot camp, proving the results unsound (Seck).

Male units are often accustomed to all-male environments, meaning it will likely take a transitional period in order to successfully integrate women. Primary studies, however, do not accurately measure how long integration will take. When comparing other countries' militaries, such as the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), which has unified women and men in combat roles for the last decade, the result is that 88% of combat roles are open to women; in examining integrated Norwegian and Canadian forces, it is revealed that there is no factual evidence proving that operational unit cohesion is affected by the inclusion of women. Further, the IDF reported that women showed exemplary skills in areas of combat (Haring 23). To be sure, cohesion is not inherently linked to commonalities such as race and gender, but it is based on shared objectives (Haring 27).

Lifting the combat exclusion ban will not undermine military performance, but the possibility of rape and sexual violence will remain prevalent for women, especially at the frontlines. This issue will need to be addressed by all branches of the US military. Intra-military rape and sexual assault cases may require examination by civilian courts instead of military tribunals. The focus, however, must be on integrating assault prevention mechanisms and gender sensitivity into all US military training, rather than emphasizing reactionary procedures. While a cultural shift within the male-dominated security realm will remain a difficult task, the landscape of the military is slowly changing for women.

Need for Structural Change

At its institutional core, the military is profoundly gendered and the inclusion of women in all roles will challenge traditional socially constructed gender identities. Women soldiers must navigate through a hyper-masculine environment and perform in traditionally non-feminine roles. While soldiering can be empowering for women, Cynthia Enloe argues that the military uses the language of empowerment to recruit women while continuing to emphasize differences between men and women, thus perpetuating traditional gender assumptions in civilian and military roles (Enloe, as cited by Silva 940). Noya Rimalt similarly argues that women who cross gender lines by serving in the military tend to assimilate to their hyper-masculine surroundings, therefore women's participation only enhances patriarchal conceptualizations of citizenship (Rimalt 1098-9). She states:

> "…women's androcentric attitudes toward other women, or toward practices associated with women and femininity, are not unusual among women soldiers serving in non-traditional roles. These women seem to distance themselves from traditional femininity by adopting the masculine perspective and the masculine norm" (Rimalt 1098).

When women begin to fill hyper-masculine roles young men may begin to feel as if their manhood is challenged, yet it also appears that a woman's femininity is questioned and may become suppressed.

Research by the IDF suggests that Enloe's assumption is correct in that women who cross gender norms to fit into hyper-masculine environments do not necessarily advance gender equality

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(Rimalt 1117). The masculinized military culture permits conditions where sexual assault and rape occur at high rates. Assuming that women will get combat roles in 2016, fundamental changes will need to occur within the US Armed Forces in order to accommodate women soldiers. Women's health must be made a priority and the treatment of pregnancy and abortion cannot go unnoticed. These issues go beyond the US military and must be addressed culturally and politically in American society as a whole. The military is merely a reflection of the current political leadership, which severely lacks in women's representation at high levels.

Discussion

A strong argument can be made that greater integration of women in roles traditionally reserved for men has the potential to transform male-dominated military culture, but there is a long way to go. The complexities of women's participation in the military will become apparent when combat roles open for them. Israel has gradually included women in combat roles since the late 1990s, yet the military is still largely segregated along gender lines (Rimalt 1113). Combat positions are interlinked with physical fitness and tend to highlight differences between men and women, and powerful biases against women can devalue combat positions that are gender-integrated (Rimalt 1118). However, the valuable roles that women play in group settings may outweigh persisting arguments against inclusion.

In a study cited by Colonel Ellen Haring in her piece Women in Battle: What Women Bring to The Fight, Carnegie Mellon and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology conducted research that concluded that a group's "collective intelligence tends to increase as the percentage of women in the group increases," and further, this is interlinked with the ability to read the emotions of others, a category in which women scored higher (Haring 28). This can significantly impact the performance of infantry units, whereas mixed-gender units may indeed be more intelligent than a unit dominated by one gender. Haring argues that gender integration will strengthen collective intelligence and would complement physical strength rather than hinder it (Haring 28).

Conclusion

A consensus has been reached in favor of gender equality by lifting the combat exclusion ban in the US. Women are expected to integrate into frontline positions in all branches of the U.S Armed Forces in 2016. Many of the gendered arguments against the inclusion of women on the frontlines exploit physical differences in men and women; however, the deeper issue that remains is a fear of women who violate the normative gender roles that society assigns them. A cause for greater concern is how women currently serving in the US Armed Forces must navigate and adapt to the male-dominated culture of the military. While the IDF has integrated women into the armed forces, the data from Noya Rimalt's study

suggests that it remains gender segregated. More research surrounding integration must be compiled in order to adequately respond to gendered arguments against women service members.

The social construction of what it means to be a soldier is inherently gendered-masculine and it values essentialist notions of manhood. The securitization of women comes at a cost: women in combat will face higher risks than men due to disproportionate levels of violence, sexual assault and rape against women. All branches of the US military and government need to fully address sexual violence, whether by internal actors in the US military or externally by civilians. Women are entitled to their full citizenship rights and serving in combat is often interlinked with this concept. When women do get combat roles, military structures must adapt. The costs they will incur to do this, such as creating women-specific health facilities and different measurements of physical strength, are necessary. Women already play significant roles in the US Armed Forces; by opening all combat positions to them, the talent pool for recruits will drastically expand, benefitting the entire military and country.

Global Risks, Crisis, & Resolutions

French Ship, the *Dupuy de Lome* © Kirsiah McNamara

The French Intervention in Syria

Alassane Dembele

Ever since WWII, France insisted on maintaining a leading position in world politics, which it has been able to do with relative success. It has a key position on the United Nations Security Council, one of the strongest economies in the world, and one of the most powerful army in Europe. However, the current era is critical for France and its people. Two traumatic terrorist events in a single year in a city like Paris have shocked many around the world. Even though foreign non-state actors orchestrated these attacks, a clear understanding of France's foreign policy is essential to providing solutions to seemingly failing government policies. Indeed, the attacks of November 13th, 2015 were clearly linked to the tragic situation unfolding in Syria where France is now playing a major role. Syria, a former French colony, is today a failed state propitious to the ISIS nebula greatly threatening the economic interest in the region. This paper intends to showcase how France found itself in this situation and why the government is taking a certain approach to international relations in accordance with its colonial history. Finally, I will review the shortcomings of the current French constitution that affect the efficiency of the country's foreign policy.

Background

Beginning in 2010, a series of revolutions in the Middle East triggered a cascade of events, the effects of which would linger on for decades to come. Arab Spring was one of the most crucial moments defining the current century. It all started in Tunisia when Muhammad Bouazizi, a street vendor, died on January 4, 2011 after committing suicide by immolation a few days earlier. His tragic death sparked a nationwide revolution that effectively ended President's Ali rule merely a week later (Mckay 2011). With President Ali gone, other citizens of neighboring countries saw themselves toppling their own dictators. Millions in Egypt and Libya also took their anger to the streets to openly demand the deposition of their autocratic regimes which they ultimately obtained over the course of the year 2011. By that time, the revolution had already spread to Syria, a former French colony, where the protests took a more violent turn.

To this day, the sitting president Bashar-al Assad, is determined to retain power by driving his nation into a civil war. Out of all nation affected by the Arab Spring, Syria is also the only country where France has deeply invested itself through its military intervention. Unlike in Libya, France is not interested in helping rebel forces toppling the long time ruler (Trofimov 2015). The presence of ISIS changed its approach to the conflict as the groups poses a direct threat to its national security. Aside from security, France cannot afford to be ran by a terrorist organization that ambitions territorial expan-

sion and threatens French economic interest in the region. French military operation in Mali and Central African Republic has indicated France willingness to prevent its colonies to descend into chaos. Even though Syria has already gone into the abyss, France's intervention there follows a trend of military expedition intended to fight terrorism. The next section explores the evolution of France's relationship with Syria in recent history to better understand what motivated France to intervene.

Postcolonial Lens

Unlike the UK, France still retains a strong influence over its former African colonies, especially when it comes to defense policies and economic interests. Syria, which was formerly part of the French Mandate of Syria and Lebanon (1923–1946), is no exception to this rule, given the recent events. In fact, their relations had been quite favorable since the presidency of Jacques Chirac (1995-2012), who was very close to president Hafez al-Assad, the late father of current leader Bashar al-Assad. President Chirac was the only Western leader to attend Hafez's funeral, and one of the few to strengthen economic relations (Guler 2014). France remained close to Syria when the new Bashar administration came to power on July 7th, 2000 in a contested referendum. At one point, France was Syria's second biggest economic partner with a relationship centered heavily on weapons system contracts and gas deals (Guler 2014). However, Chirac became less supportive of Syria when rumors surfaced in 2006 of Syria's involvement in the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Harriri, a dear friend of Chirac. This event deteriorated the diplomatic relations of the two countries up until the election of Nicolas Sarkozy.

Elected in 2007, Sarkozy sought to improve France's relationship with the Syrian government. At the time, he knew that Assad's regime could play an important role in addressing the Lebanese political crisis, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and concerns over Iran's nuclear activities (Herscho 2008). Again, despite Bashar not being a big proponent of human rights, France had to maintain this relationship to increase its influence in the region. In realism, concessions with unusual partners are essential to securing

View from The Bund in Shanghai of the Pearl Tower lit up with the colors of the French flag in solidarity after the Paris bombings in November 2015. © Kirsiah McNamara

national interests. Sarkozy was determined to maintain a strong relationship with France's former colony of Lebanon by opposing Syrian involvement in Lebanese politics. However, when the Syrian Civil War erupted in 2011, he took a much different stance in comparison to the policies he undertook with regards Libya (Guler 2014). Sarkozy was very reluctant to intervene in Syria given that he was running for reelection in 2012, which he ultimately lost to socialist, Francois Hollande.

Sworn in as president in the midst of the Syrian Civil War in May of 2012, president Hollande has had a completely different policy regarding Syria. Within six months of taking office, he recognized "the Syrian National Coalition as the only legitimate representative of the Syrian people" (Guler 2014). In August 2013, when reports of gas attacks perpetrated by the Syrian regime were confirmed, Hollande was the first to call for harsh punitive action against the Syrian government even though the UN also blamed the rebels for using chemical weapons (McElroy 2013). Ultimately, he was not able to go forward once it became clear that the U.S. and the United Kingdom would no longer bomb Assad forces. France could have potentially distanced itself

French Intervention

On 19 September 2014, France conducted its first airstrikes against ISIS positions in Iraq. This operation, named Operation Chammal, followed France's military involvement in the Sahel and Afghanistan. This latest clash was a continuation of France's determination to eradicate extreme religious groups that threatened the security of their allies and its interests (ICRC 2015). France has always proclaimed the security of its homeland as the number one factor in its fight against extremism, and in some cases rightly so. France's inability to fully integrate its population of Muslims or Africans into their own led many French nationals to turn into foreign fighters for ISIS". This situation has created a credible concern over potential homegrown terrorist activities as close to 1500 French citizens have either traveled to, or still remain inside Syria or Iraq (Belkin 2015). Given ISIS' vast amount of financial and military resources, these foreign nationals traveling to Syria and Iraq have been afforded the opportunity to receive military training amongst other things. Therefore, by combatting ISIS, France is attempting to stop the appeal the terrorist group has on many of its citizens, while attempting to address issues of

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from the conflict altogether but it felt the need to have a say in issues concerning its former colony just like it regularly does in Africa. However, taking such risky decisions can have irreversible consequences for the nation when terrorist organizations like ISIS decide to retaliate.

terrorist activities on their own soil (Archick 2015).

On November 13, 2015 and January 7, 2016, the world witnessed how a handful of French nationals turned ISIS fighters posed an undeniable threat to France's internal stability once they are able to return home. France had actually suffered from

a similar event in March 2012 when Mohamed Merah, a French citizen, murdered 7 people in the Toulouse area. He too had traveled to Syria, Irak and Afghanistan to get military training and came back to France to complete his mission (Pontaut, Pelletier 2012). Therefore, when ISIS rose to power in 2014 the French army was quick to join the U.S.-led coalition against ISIS in Iraq hoping to prevent the flow of its citizens to the region. This demonstrated the government's dedication to place itself on the forefront of the conflict given the presence of domestic terrorist cells with more than 3000 individuals showing signs of radicalization (Belkin 2015). Additionally, as a growing number of French nationals were traveling to Syria, Operation Chammal was extended to the war-torn nation with French forces hitting a command center on September 27th, 2015 just a few weeks before the Paris attacks (Hamud 2015). It is in its national interest to cease ISIS' influence and the attacks of November support this point of view.

National interest is a key aspect of realist international relations theory, which is precisely what France is pursuing when it chooses to intervene outside its borders. It could very well have adopted a policy of non-intervention and inaction like most of its European counterparts have chosen to take (Belkin 2015). Following in the footsteps of his predecessors, President Hollande and his government authorized foreign military actions. However, the current president clearly has a more offensive realist approach to foreign policy. Mr. Hollande has been adopting key features of the offensive realist theory, which is centered on power and security maximization (Mearsheimer 2001). John Mearsheimer, a pioneer of offensive theory, explains in his book, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics, how states must seek various opportunities to gain more power which will guarantee their survival (Mearsheimer 2001). That is precisely what the current French ad-

ministration has been doing since taking office in 2012.

As Jason Davidson points out, "realism stresses that states want others to believe they are powerful because this can serve as a means to survive and achieve other objectives" (Davidson p3 2013). Alongside its power driven motivations, France is also hoping that a friendly regime will govern the country, and more importantly, serve France's national interest. According to offensive realism theorists, potential economic gains are also crucial to the power maximization process. Internal economic prosperity increases the wellbeing of its individuals and largely provides the means for military expansion. John Mearsheimer notes that "wealthy states can afford powerful military forces, which enhance a state's prospects for survival" (p25 2001). Keeping in line with harnessing its potential economic gains, France has had economic ties with Syria up until recently and would certainly seek to reestablish that lost partnership while simultaneously looking to increase its power. Other Middle Eastern nations already have strong links with the French totaling over $60 billion in trade deals. Approximately 42% of France's energy consumption is coming from oil and 40% of its oil imports are coming from the Middle East and North Africa region (Mikhail 2014). Therefore, it makes perfect sense that France chose to remain a player in the region in order to preserve the stability on the ground and protect its interests. A widespread destabilization of the region would have catastrophic repercussions for the French economy given that the MENA region represents close to 50% of its defense and military equipment industry revenues. This is certainly a clientele it cannot afford to lose at the expense of a stronger ISIS (Mikhail 2014). Consequently, the vast amounts of resources dedicated by the French to their operation against ISIS are a testament to France's firm commitment towards a more balanced Middle East.

In the operation in Syria and Iraq, France mobilized considerable equipment and personnel as the French Ministry of defense points out on one of its statement:

> Launched September 19, 2014, the Chammal operation is mobilizing 3500 soldiers. Alongside the coalition, it combats the terrorist group Daech in Iraq and Syria. The Chammal strength ensures the training of Iraqi forces fighting in Iraq Daech; it strikes the terrorist organization with its air power in Iraq and Syria. The force is composed of twelve fighters of the Air Force (six Rafale, Mirage 2000D three and three Mirage 2000N), a maritime patrol aircraft Atlantique 2 and since November 23, 2015, the Battle Group (GAN) - PA Charles de Gaulle, FDA Chevalier Paul, MDTF La Motte Piquet PR Marne, Belgian frigate Leopold I - whose carrier air group consists of 18 Rafale, Super 8 standard modernized 2 Hawkeye, and helicopters. On 26 November 2015, the furtive light frigate (FLF) Courbet joined the Chammal device in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Despite the fact that France is going through serious economic difficulties, it has dedicated the resources necessary to conduct a respectable military operation. Certainly, it is in no way close to what the U.S. is allocating to its own campaign with close to $3 billion spent since the beginning of the campaign compared to $240 million by France (PC, Jones 2015). It is nevertheless very high for an EU member (Weinstein 2015). Moreover, states with realist ambitions, like France, will take all the essential measures to reach their goals on the world stage. In its effort to eradicate ISIS, France is attempting to preserve the harmony of its society. Again, France has the largest population of Muslims in Europe, who are at the same time vulnerable to terror incitement. The French government would obviously have to implement efficient policies to fully integrate the Muslim community into its society (Belkin). In the meantime, it also has to stop the flow of its citizens going into Syria and suppress any radical cells present on its soil. Although, only a few thousands have had some sort of a connection to ISIS or other radical groups, it is imperative to build France's counterterrorism efforts. If France were to witness frequent terrorist attacks, it could potentially create a situation of chaos where the Muslim population would be marginalized, which could lead to an increase in the recruitment of radical individuals. The survival of France, including the EU, is at stake if the government does not act to stop the expansion of radical Islam groups within its territory.

Finally, the fact that ISIS is not a state raises some concerns regarding the efficiency of French foreign policy when dealing with a non-state actor. International relations theorists do not include these nontraditional actors because they simply cannot present the characteristics of recognized states under international law. A new paradigm is certainly needed to address the emergence of non-state actors. At the same time, it would be wrong to assume that France is a pure realist because it does value international cooperation to achieve its goa given that it would be counterproductive to pursue expansionist behavior in the age globalization. There are no clues pointing out to overt hegemonic ambitions in French foreign policies. On the contrary, some of France's actions exude liberalist tendencies like Francois Hollande's diplomatic tour aimed at finding a solution to the ISIS problem.

Reform of the French Republic

Ever since the establishment of the Fifth French Republic, the President has been granted full authority in the field of national security and foreign policy. Charles De Gaulle, the main architect of the current Republic, purposely crafted the Constitution in a way that expanded presidential powers. Born out of the collapse of the Fourth republic, which could not manage the Algerian crisis of 1958, De

Gaulle blamed the weak position of the President as the main factor of internal turmoil (Kerrouche 2007). However, in the current Syrian context, several voices raised concerns over the efficacy of the President's actions. Under Article 15 of the current constitution, the president can take military action without consulting the legislative body, l'Assemblee Nationale and senate: "The President of the Republic shall be Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. He shall preside over the higher national defence councils and committee". However, the government still has to notify the Parliament (Assemblée Nationale and Senate) 3 days after the intervention, as stipulated in Article 35 of the constitution:

A Declaration of War Shall be Authorized by Parliament.

The Government shall inform Parliament of its decision to have the armed forces intervene abroad, at the latest three days after the beginning of said intervention. It shall detail the objectives of the said intervention. This information may give rise to a debate, which shall not be followed by a vote.

Where the said intervention shall exceed four months, the Government shall submit the extension to Parliament for authorization. It may ask the National Assembly to make the final decision.

If Parliament is not sitting at the end of the four-month period, it shall express its decision at the opening of the following session.

Still, the fact that the president does not need legislative permission to engage the nation outside its borders is quite alarming. De Gaulle succeeded in having a strong president, but many are concerned that the leader might be too powerful especially given the ambiguity surrounding the Con-

stitution. In Article 5 of the Constitution, the President is indeed given the role of an arbitrator: "The President of the Republic shall ensure due respect for the Constitution. He shall ensure, by his arbitration, the proper functioning of the public authorities and the continuity of the State." Does that mean that he is above the judicial system or even the political process altogether? (Elgie 1976). Francois Hollande has certainly been criticized for his adventures in Iraq and now Syria. ISIS made it clear that France is a primary target given its undisguised interventionism (Muro 2015). Could the attacks of January and November have been avoided had the president consulted with the members of the parliament at the onset of the crisis? Discussions regarding a potential constitutional reform that will strengthen the other political bodies is without a doubt a legitimate debate. Ultimately, the Constitutional Council needs to reform the Constitution in a manner that would prevent future presidents from taking any hazardous military actions. The president should be required to consult the French parliament prior to ordering any military intervention. Yet, a constitutional reform is not sufficient to prevent the president from taking uncertain actions, especially when his political party takes control of the parliament. In that case, the president is more likely to get the majority of votes required to pass a motion authorizing military force. The French government must also consider augmenting its dialogue with experienced scholars able to provide a critical input to France's foreign policy.

Conclusion

While the French people take pride in their history, the administrations that have led the nation certainly incorporate this notion of self-satisfaction into their foreign policies. However, this could be viewed as risky behavior as the events in January

and last November of 2015 have shown. France increased its exposure to stay at the forefront of world politics and to remain a powerful nation despite having limited resources. That is why we recognized a continuity among successive governments when it comes to policy making in their former colonies. France is also applying some of its policies to other nations to accentuate its power in other regions, especially in the Middle East. Today, ISIS has become a threat to its influence in the region that could potentially cause internal stability, harm its economic interest, and its own citizens. The President of France has declared war on a terrorist group that is not a state vowing to destroy it. France's fight against ISIS in Syria is not the first military actions Hollande has taken, which can be seen as irresponsible behavior given the various internal difficulties of France. Since, the current Constitution allows the President to take such actions, further discussions must occur to address the unchecked power of the President. In the meantime, France will continue to pursue its ambitions on the international arena and advance its interests to maintain its leading role as a strong European nation.

Social Media & Disaster Relief
Responding to Crises in the 21st Century

Niki Huntsman

As the world becomes more connected, it seems as though disasters and crises hit closer to home. Most people remember a time when the only way to see what was occurring on the other side of the globe was to turn on the television or read the newspaper. Getting online to see what was going on in a place whose name was hard to pronounce was far off. However, it only took one major crisis to set the ball in motion for using social data and communication tools to improve our response time when disaster strikes: the 2010 Haitian earthquake. This horrific event was the catalyst for evolving social media and disaster relief to what it is today: it spawned many of the tools and strategies used by major relief organizations to ensure affected populations received the most beneficial and effective help they can in the shortest amount of time.

This essay seeks to explore the birth of this new response method, its development over the past five years, and the newest advancements in social media in disaster management. Through an analysis of tools, the limitations and failures to social media in disaster management and what should be done in order to make relief efforts more effective will be discussed. The combination of these sources leads to the main argument this paper strives to make, which is that social media has helped revolutionize disaster response and relief. By following the trajectory of social media since the Haitian earth-quake, this paper will provide a five-year glimpse at the skyrocketing achievements and innovations social media has made in the effort to improve the response time of disaster relief.

The Birth & Development of Social Media in Disaster Relief

On 12 January 2010, an earthquake registering 7.0 on the Richter scale struck 16 miles west of the Haitian capital, Port au Prince. With 3 million people within a 50 mile radius, the earthquake caused catastrophic damage to infrastructure, interrupted commercial and government services, and resulted in the death of approximately 92,000 people. In the hours and days after the quake, thousands of Haitian residents (and foreign visitors) made phone calls, sent text messages, and created social media posts for assistance. The response changed humanitarian aid forever.

One American, Patrick Meier, back home in Massachusetts feared for the wellbeing of his wife needed to find a way to help and created a "digital 'crisis map'… [similar] to Google Maps… but one that pinpoints areas hardest hit by a disaster and where people who are most affected need help" (Meier, Digital Humanitarians 2). At first, Meier and his team focused on mapping the most pressing messages, ensuring humanitarian efforts would reach them the

fastest. They also utilized Creole-speaking Haitians in the Boston diaspora to help translate SMS messages. As the process continued and word spread, a U.S. search and rescue team and FEMA's Task Force 3 contacted Meier, telling him "take shifts… and [have] counseling support… whatever anyone tells you, don't stop mapping" (Digital Humanitarians 8).

Only nine months after Haiti, Meier and his team created the Standby Volunteer Task Force (SBTF), a group of "humanitarian professionals and experts in geographic information systems (GIS)" (Digital Humanitarians 54). They partnered with the UN on disaster response simulations in Colombia, which led to the creation of rough standard operating procedures, a code of conduct, and a list of "activation criteria"—guidelines for the necessary activation of SBTF (Digital Humanitarian, 54). Their preparation through this partnership progressed at a similar rate to the social networking sites used to gather disaster-related messages. One major realization regarding data collected from disaster affected peoples was that interacting with disaster affected peoples was not their responsibility; the responsibility was on humanitarian organizations themselves (Digital Humanitarians 55). This series of events laid the foundation for crowdsourcing humanitarian groups.

One of the first SBTF assignments was the escalating opposition and violence in Libya in 2011. After being contacted by UN-OCHA to assist organizations on the ground, SBTF launched a crowdsourced crisis map using information provided by Twitter, YouTube, traditional media sources and official humanitarian reports (Meier, "New Information Technologies" 1250). This was the first time the SBTF ran their operations "within the context of a hostile conflict environment" and risked collecting biased information because of sources with specific agendas (Meier, "New Information Technologies" 1254). However, even with these variables, the ac-

tivation length in Libya and other situations proved it was made for short bursts. Acknowledging this and discussions with the UN led to the creation of the Digital Humanitarian Network (DHN) (Meier, Digital Humanitarians 63). While SBTF focused on partnership with the UN and other humanitarian organizations, DHN's role was to act as the "official interface" between "established" humanitarian organizations and "numerous digital volunteer networks"—directly providing organizations like the UN with the personnel and technological capacity needed to respond to a disaster (Meier, Digital Humanitarians 63). This shift directly affected the response time and efforts to natural and manmade disasters since its inception.

A final development in digital humanitarianism came in November of 2013 as Typhoon Haiyan (also referred to as Yolanda) made landfall over the Philippines. After a solely reactive response to Typhoon Bopha/Pablo in 2012, DHN was activated shortly before Typhoon Haiyan made landfall in 2013; in this newest installment of humanitarian technology, DHN focused on grouping multiple sources together into usable data through microtasking apps, called MicroMappers (Meier, Digital Humanitarians 67-8). These apps allowed digital humanitarians to tag specific information onto the crisis map and forward this onto the relief organizations. As Meier explained, "MicroMappers represents an important shift in the digital humanitarian space. We've now made it as easy as a single click of the mouse to accelerate humanitarian aid" (Digital Humanitarians 71).

New Advancements in Social Media for Disaster Relief

Like any prior technology, social media is continuously adapting to its environment. Since the end

of 2013, advances have drastically improved how we respond to disasters and how the world is informed on the safety and well-being of their loved ones. In tangible terms, over 1 billion people use Facebook, Twitter has "well over" 200 million active users, and roughly 50 billion messages pass through WhatsApp's servers per day (Meier, Digital Humanitarians 27).[1] This broad reach enables users to produce an unimaginable amount of original data that people around the world can see. Meier explains the increasing numbers of social media users signals "disaster affected communities are increasingly becoming 'digital communities'… not only do more people turn to social media to communicate during disasters, they also use these… to self-organize in response to crises—often faster and more efficiently than traditional humanitarian organizations" (Digital Humanitarians 27).

Although Hurricane Sandy occurred in 2012, prior to many recent advancements in social media to interact with disaster affected peoples, a benefit given the restrictions described above. The combination of traditional humanitarian organizations and modern social media usage proved incredibly beneficial in the digital struggle to reach and assist people in crises.

Most recently depicted during the ISIS attacks in Paris, Facebook has deployed its own "safety check" to check on its users and inform loved ones of their safety. Launched 16 October 2014, Facebook's safety check has a basic, three-step process: 1) asks users about their safety if data shows them as living near a disaster, 2) gives them the opportunity to share their safety status, and 3) lets their friends know they are safe and creates a list of other friends who have listed themselves as safe (Gleit, Zeng, and Cottle 1). The program originally focused on natural disasters, but as engineers have improved the technology, it is planned the software will continue to be used for other types as well. It has been activated

> # MicroMappers represents an important shift in the digital humanitarian space. We've now made it as easy as a single click of the mouse to accelerate humanitarian aid.

and disaster relief, it provided humanitarian organizations a unique environment to understand how these tools work in a domestic context—close to digital humanitarian hubs. Similar to prior disasters, digital workers were prepared before the hurricane made landfall. Gloria Huang of the American Red Cross explained in Haiti, nothing could be done with the information, but with Sandy, "we managed to… put a little bit of structure around it… it was our first foray… and we got a lot of feedback" (Collins, 1). They trained their staff and volunteers how

1 WhatsApp is a messaging app that allows users to send SMS without incurring SMS charges.

eight times between October 2014 and November 2015, with Paris being the first time it was used for a non-natural disaster (Gleit, Zeng, and Cottle 1). Developments such as these not only inform individuals of their family's safety, they can inform law enforcement and potentially humanitarians to assist future micromapping applications.

Social media has proved it can assist humanitarians in ways traditional media never could. It connects individuals in countries that in the past would have waited hours for an operator and a horrible connection allowing for little to no interaction. As

the International Federation of the Red Cross noted, "access to information is equally important as access to food, water, and shelter. But information is the most perishable of these commodities" (Meier, Digital Humanitarians 31). By its nature, social media is constantly updating, and there is no way to tell if the information you are reading today is breaking news or if it is weeks, months, or even years old. For this reason and more, there are limitations to social media: the people who use it, the accuracy of the information they provide, and the access are only a few examples of some of the obstacles digital humanitarians face in their effort to save as many lives as possible in a disaster zone.

Limitations and failures to social media in disaster relief

While the progress of social media within and beyond the realm of disaster relief is impressive, we must acknowledge the limitations of its technology. As a global community, we often place impartial, complete trust in online tools to help explain the goings-on in a disaster zone and how we can best address, evaluate, and solve a particular crisis. Unforeseen circumstances can lead to incomplete or skewed data—which puts disaster affected peoples at a higher risk and leaves relief organizations at a loss for what services, tools, and goods are needed. Situations such as these force aid workers and digital humanitarians to reevaluate these online tools.

One of the largest oversights in digital humanitarianism is the limitations to the information provided by social media data sets. For example, in the Philippines, only 36 percent of the population has access to the internet, and during the typhoon, Filipinos experienced "ongoing power outages" and an "18.7 percent drop in relevant tweets two days after the typhoon hit" (Crawford and Finn 492).

Although data provided by the 230,000 tweets collected—55,000 of which were "relevant or unique"—was imperative to the response, it showed an inaccurate image of which areas were hardest hit and needed the quickest attention (Crawford and Finn 492). An additional aspect of this is digital inequality. As discussed above, data does not account for the hardest hit areas most. Data is skewed to those who make the most "noise" and the "digital divide," or people who understand the technology well enough to use them and can afford access (Madianou 3). By limiting the scope to those knowledge and access to these social tools, organizations could be missing large groups of people truly in need.

Another limitation to digital humanitarianism is the disaster itself. As discussed by Crawford and Finn, the most prominent definition of a disaster is "an event, concentrated in time and space, in which a society… undergoes severe danger and incurs such losses to its members and physical appurtenances that the social structure is disrupted and the fulfillment of… the essential functions of the society is prevented" (493). This definition exemplifies the fragility of disasters and in turn, the efforts to relieve those affected by them. Because of this already limited timeframe, social media becomes more fragile due to the "specific time-period" they represent through heightened traffic and the use of "particular hashtags", which limits coverage in a similar way to breaking news and its perceived relevance (493). Finally, this focused lens does not contribute to a longer, more thorough discussion that allows for further research of the spikes in social media activity surrounding disasters (493). It is imperative that the lens be broadened to absorb the entire situation and to assess best practices moving forward.

A third limitation is the demographics of social media users. Similar to the skewed data sets described above, the demographics of websites like

Facebook and Twitter have a direct effect on the type and volume of updates collected when disaster strikes. Regardless of the nation where a disaster occurs, Twitter audiences typically represent a "younger, more urban demographic group" which leaves out "older, less affluent and more vulnerable communities"—often the exact people who need the assistance (Crawford and Finn 496). Madianou discusses this issue in terms of the digital divide, where these vulnerable communities may be "less well equipped to navigate the web [and] are less likely to benefit from any opportunities" (4). By not taking demographics in the affected area or country into account and looking into the social media usage of that population, there are significant chances any data collected, although helpful, could potentially miss dangerous and catastrophic environments that could otherwise have been avoided if these discrepancies in demographics had been accounted for.

One final limitation is whether the collection and production of data is ethical. In countries like the U.S., social media privacy is a controversial debate. However, scholars have avoided the issue of ethics in disaster relief data collection. The debate centers around the idea that social media platforms are public, and platforms allow users to "manage their own settings and engage in informed privacy self-management" and they can truly control their own online security, especially in regards to location information broadcast during disasters (Crawford and Finn 498). Both sides of the issue have valid arguments, but most of the research points to self-management and a general understanding that anything published in an online forum is considered public domain. In a disaster situation, the importance of privacy is often lessened in order to focus on helping and locating those affected (498). These ethical conversations must continue in order to decide on a concrete answer or best practice, but in the current debate and advancements, people's safety and well-being is still prized more than their privacy.

Conclusion

Fortunately, the limitations discussed in the previous section are relatively simple in nature, although complicated in practice. Because of the evolving nature of social media, many of these issues will work themselves out as technology improves and digital humanitarians fine-tune their skills and data collection practices. However, digital humanitarians must acknowledge these issues and participate in research to improve tools to help address these issues and ensure disaster relief operations are as effective and reliable as possible.

One way the digital landscape will change is the access people around the globe have to technology and social media practices. Although the majority of the world possess mobile technology, ownership does not necessarily mean membership on social media. When organizations work with communities with limited internet access, they must find ways to improve access indefinitely or ensure access when disaster strikes. These fixes can provide people in these poorer, often rural areas reach out to the people who can provide them the assistance they need to survive the disaster and rebuild. Additionally, digital humanitarians can provide courses or connections to individuals on the less equipped side of the digital divide to ensure equal access. However, these organizations cannot display favoritism solely because of a lack of access to certain types of technology. This access to technology may be one of the more challenging limitations of social media and disaster relief.

In regards to the physical disasters themselves, there is little social media in disaster relief can do to prevent their occurrence. However, it is imper-

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ative that as technology helps the world predict, react, and respond to disasters, relief efforts keep pace and transform to meet the new, pressing needs of the people affected. The limited scope of disaster coverage through traditional and online media must involve the entire conversation and recognize limited access could prevent some inhabitants from responding to a crisis right away. By broadening collection efforts and utilizing a specific sorting technique, digital humanitarians can ensure the most relevant tweets—not just the ones making the most noise—are used to curate relief efforts.

The most challenging of the limitations presented by social media in disaster relief is the demographics of social media users. Digital humanitarians have no stake in who uses Facebook, Twitter, and other social media, whether personally or as a tool to receive humanitarian aid. Organizations can encourage people with technological access to use these apps and enroll them in courses to help them understand the intricacies of using social media to assist when disaster strikes, but instructing and suggesting is all organizations can do. Many solutions to the demographics issue are similar to access; however, digital humanitarians can use social media demographics to their advantage. By encouraging younger, more active users to help their communities by posting about their own safety and those around them who may struggle to use social media services, humanitarians can better reach those who truly need their help. This can empower the local population to take control of a situation that has stripped them of their basic needs, while rebuilding from whatever crisis

has occurred.

The final limitation is in regard to the collection of social data. As the debate over online privacy and self-management continues, it is imperative that social media sites and digital humanitarians create a code of ethics to help users understand where they stand in relation to what can be done with the information they publish and share. This code of ethics would help guide the actions of the volunteers who activate during natural and manmade disasters. As for privacy standards, it is up to social media sites to determine their own, which given its intricacies could be discussed in its own paper. However, for digital humanitarians, the idea of self-management and understanding that any messages linking to the disaster or crisis at hand may be read by strangers thousands of miles away is a challenge that must be overcome in order to maintain the trust of the communities they serve. Ultimately, this level of trust is what traditional, modern, and digital humanitarians should aim for: mutual trust and respect between those assisting and those in need of assistance is the key to quality, beneficial aid reaching the people who need it in a safe, efficient manner.

Social media will continue to evolve as a communication tool in the general workings of society, but advancements in mobile, media, and information technologies have the potential to assist disaster relief in new and unique ways. To traditional humanitarians' chagrin, the digital humanitarian network and the thousands of volunteers it comprises are not going anywhere. Their skills and contribu-

tions to the field of international development and humanitarian aid are too many to tell them to stop what they are doing and walk away from the fight.

This unique combination of humans and technology has the capacity to change the world as we know it. Through improving the technology we use, the ways it can be accessed, and the ease with which we use it, there is no telling what the next improvements to digital humanitarianism will be. But as Meier so eloquently explains, "anyone can be a digital humanitarian, absolutely no experience necessary; all you need is a big heart and access to the internet" (Digital Humanitarians 1).

Into the Grey
The Danger of Underestimating Hacktivism

Yuval Bacal

In November 2014, the hacktivist group Anonymous initiated an online campaign against the Ku Klux Klan, "unhooding" members and revealing their personal information, as well as hacking into Klan's twitter account. The attack came as a response to a Klan announcement warning people against rioting in response to an upcoming grand jury decision concerning Darren Wilson, the police officer who shot and killed Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager, in Ferguson, Missouri. Public response on social media expressed wide support for the campaign (Altus). At first glance, this event might seem like an embodiment of civil activity, confronting an issue for the benefit of the public. However, further review raises the question: does the end really justify the means?

This article discusses the underestimated threat of hacktivism, defined as "the intentional access to a computer system and/or website, without authorization or exceeding authorized access, in pursuit of a political goal" (Maras 158). It is a unique type of cybercrime which relies on obscurity and ambiguity, first through the measures it uses, but perhaps more significantly through the issue of its legitimacy. Using various examples, the following analysis delves into the main two reasons hacktivism poses a great threat: its potential harm is vastly underrated, and there is a continuing campaign to legitimize it. Based on this discussion, the concluding portion of this article will include recommendations to further mitigate the phenomena.

Means and Ends

There are several features characteristic of cybercrimes which pose unique obstacles to governments and law enforcement agencies trying to stop them. A few of the more pernicious ones are as follows: the global interconnectedness of the internet, leading to issues of jurisdiction; the relative ease of anonymity for perpetrators; and technological advances enabling a single offender to engage in multiple offences simultaneously, reaching thousands of victims in an instant (Moitra 107-108; Cammaerts 427; Caldwell 12). The special case of hacktivism, however, adds another layer to further complicate its mitigation – its self-justification by advocating political goals "for the greater good," as opposed to personal gains that are the objective of most other cybercrimes. By attracting public support, promoting their actions as acts of civil disobedience and protest, and not seeking any obvious personal gain, hacktivists help many forget that actual crimes have been committed.

Having evolved primarily from the "hacker" community of recent decades, hacktivism – a combination of the words "Hacking" and "Activism" – is frequently associated with a political agenda that

comprises freedom of information, government and corporate transparency, and the exposure of corruption. This association has also been reinforced by the activity of the most prominent hacktivist groups in recent years, Anonymous and its offshoots LulzSec and AnonSec, who promote these principles (Kelly 1665-1666). Nevertheless, as shall be further addressed, hacktivists can act on behalf of more diverse, alternative political agendas as well – a fact that many people tend to overlook.

In his article Hacktivism: A New Breed of Protest in a Networked World, Noah Hampson (517-521) identified five main methods by which hacktivists pursue their agenda: Denial of Service (DoS), website defacements, website redirects, virtual sit-ins, and information theft. While some can be performed—or at least argued to be—under certain circumstances in a legal manner, all five include illegitimate elements and have all been illegally executed in recent years.

DoS attacks apply several means in order to block access to websites on the internet, mainly through overloading them with information requests. They are commonly applied in the form of a Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS), where the initiator of the attack controls a network of computers, called a botnet, to do his or her bidding. In most DDoS cases, the networks' "bots" are "recruited" through the use of malicious software without the knowledge, let alone consent, of their owners (Caldwell 17; Goode 77). Anonymous' 2010 attack following the WikiLeaks' funding cut offs is a good example. In early December, after WikiLeaks published thousands of the US government's diplomatic cables, Amazon, whose Web Services servers were used to run the website, decided to remove it. Similarly, companies such as PayPal, Visa and MasterCard have frozen their WikiLeaks accounts. Within days, Anonymous had retaliated and coordi-nated DDoS attacks against their websites, and also the websites of PostFinance, EveryDNS and Money-Bookers. Aside from Amazon, all targeted websites were forced down for a several days. Ostensibly, all DDoS "bot" computers have joined the attacking voluntarily – using a software called Low Orbit Ion Cannon (LOIC). As it turns out, many of the attacking network's bots were obtained illicitly (Cammaerts 431-432; Cadwallader).

Website defacement "involve[s] obtaining unauthorized access to a web server and either replacing or altering a web page with new content that conveys a particular message" (Hampson 519). Hacktivist targets include, among other websites, those set up by governments, law enforcement agencies, public universities, private companies and other nongovernmental organizations (Mansfield-Devine 6; Hampson 517; Maras 30). Most countries with existing cybersecurity legislation have rendered such activity illegal. For instance, the United States Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1984 (CFAA) prohibits "intentionally access[ing] a protected computer without authorization, and as a result of such conduct, caus[ing] damage and loss" (18 U.S.C §1030(a)(5)(C)). In the United Kingdom, the Computer Misuse Act 1990 (CMA) describes "[u]nauthorized acts with intent to impair, or with recklessness as to impairing, operation of computer" as offenses which can be prosecuted in court. The European Convention on Cybercrime, "The only international treaty to standardize cybercrime investigation, defense, and coordination tactics amongst its members" (Kelly 1686) defines in Articles 2 and 5 the actions of "Illegal Access" and "System Interference" as illegal offenses (Hampson 522).

The third and fourth common forms of hacktivism, site referrals and virtual sit-ins, are closest in essence to legal activities of protest, yet still engage in conduct that violates the rights of website owners.

In referrals, the perpetrators gain "unauthorized access to a web service and adjust the address settings", making the viewer "reach an alternative website" – usually a mock version. In virtual sit-ins, the perpetrators repeatedly reload an accessed website, either manually or by code, in order to exhaust its internet traffic resources. In this instance the question of whether the website is considered a private or a public space becomes relevant, as will be further discussed in the next section (Hampson 520).

The fifth common method of hacktivism, information theft, is probably the most harmful and widespread in practice. Unlike other cybercriminals, the information obtained by hacktivists is not kept for personal usage but is instead published for the world to see. As noted, the purpose of such action is to sway public opinion or promote a political cause, yet little consideration is given to broader implications of such activity or collateral damage which can result from the mass release of sensitive information (Kelly 1686). For example, in December 2011 LulzSec raided the servers of Stratfor Global Intelligence Service (Stratfor) and released "e-mail correspondence, financial and personal data – including 60,000 credit card numbers – belonging to 860,000 clients" (Smith). The perpetrators were concerned with exposing illegitimate public-private activities, and encouraged the use the credit cards' information for donations to charity ("Hacktivism Endures" 18). Little concern was given to the clients—often casual readers of Stratfor's reports and articles—who had been put at risk of fraud and identity-theft. Similarly, in an opposition campaign against a proposed state-bill dealing with immigrant-profiling, 700 confidential documents from Arizona's Department of Public Safety were leaked, including home addresses and social-security numbers of law enforcement officers (Mansfield-Devine 6). As a final example, in 2011 Anonymous attacked Sony's PlayStation network and released the user-

names and passwords of over a million users. Consequently, Sony had to shut the network down for over a month, with losses estimated at $170 million (Cadwallader; Kelly 1665-1666).

An Underrated Threat

While the methods listed above might be described by some as relatively mild in comparison to other forms of cybercrime; it is important to remember that they represent only what has commonly been employed by hacktivists, not what the definition of hacktivism allows perpetrators to do. In fact, other forms of attack can – and according to some scholars will – be used by hacktivists leading to harsher results (Al-Rawi). In 2012, Verizon published a report claiming hacktivists have surpassed cybercriminals in the total amount of damage caused by their cyberattacks (Kelly 1707). Anonymous' attack following the WikiLeaks cutoff also included Sarah Palin's PAC and the website conservatives4palin. com (Cammaerts 432). Imagine what the consequences would have been if these attacks were to occur on Election Day. In fact, hacktivism hides a far greater potential to harm the most basic democratic process of public voting: from denying voter registries to even changing the vote tally!

In addition, some instances of information theft, once publicly released, could put individuals in grave danger. Private details of law enforcement officers could put them and their families at risk of retribution. So does the publication of snitch lists, as Anonymous did in 2011 (Kelly 1673). To take an example involving actual armed international conflict, the Syrian Electronic Army (SEA), a self-proclaimed hacktivist group who supports Assad's regime in the ongoing civil war in Syria, released private information on members of Syria's opposition groups. Anonymous, in return, published the names and details

of SEA's leading members (Al-Rawi 422-423). Both acts' victims have thus been put at greater risk for physical harm in an ongoing violent struggle that, according to some estimates, has taken the lives of over 250,000 men, women and children (Kaplan).

> **Popular perception of hacktivism is based more on the general familiarity with past occurrences than with the true meaning and potential it holds. As a result, hacktivism is vastly underestimated as a threat by society.**

Some people would describe hacktivism as an adolescent form of more dangerous embodiments of political cybercrimes: cyberespionage, cyberwarfare and cyberterrorism. But again this perception is biased by the methods hacktivists like Anonymous have only engaged in, not by the full capacities at their disposal. When it comes to sabotaging infrastructure, for instance, there is a blurry line between hacktivism and cyberterrorism with respect to the magnitude of damage or the type of target attacked. In other words, hacktivists can damage or suspend the operations of national infrastructures in ways that do not fall under the definitions of cyberterrorism (Al-Rawi 422). Groups involved in cyberwarfare also try to hide their government affiliation and describe themselves as hacktivists. The SEA, for example, is broadly perceived to operate on behalf of Assad's government (Al-Rawi). Russia's 2008 skirmish in Georgia was accompanied by DDoS attacks on the websites of Georgia's media, banks and government. These attacks are suspected to be forms of cyberwarfare; but without Russia confirming its involvement, they can only be labeled as acts of hacktivism (Maras 153-154).

As these examples show, actors do not always engage in hacktivism in pursuit of the agenda associated with the traditional hacker community. Subject-specific groups could also attempt to steal and publish information relevant to their concerns. For example, "antipoverty activists […] could seek to publish the details of a new medicine under development by a US pharmaceutical company, with the goal of ending the firm's 'monopoly' profits and making the product more widely available." Alternatively, "antiwar groups could disclose information about a new weapons system in the hope of dissuading the United States from deploying it" (US ONCIX 11). Arab members of Anonymous repeatedly engaged in cyberattacks against Israeli websites (Al-Rawi 422-423). Even the advocates of internet freedom have been known to change their political perspectives. While Anonymous consciously did not attack media organizations – "a principle designed to avert hypocritical attacks on free expression" – its offshoot LulzSec transgressed this convention. In 2011 it targeted both PBS in the United States and the Sun in the United Kingdom. The former was attacked following the airing of a documentary "biased against WikiLeaks and [its founder] Julian Assange" (Goode 76). The latter was attacked after the exposure of News International's phone-hacking scandal (Cadwallader).

Popular perception of hacktivism is based more on the general familiarity with past occurrences than with the true meaning and potential it holds. As a result, hacktivism is vastly underestimated as a threat by society. Even the fact that other forms

of political cybercrime try to guise themselves as "merely hacktivism" does not seem to change this common perception. The next section discusses another element which enhances hacktivism's danger – the outspoken attempts to legitimize it.

The Guise of Civil Disobedience

Political demonstration is a right protected by the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, along with the First Amendment's protection of freedom of speech. Some scholars argue that hacktivism executes the "cyber version" of the same rights, and petition for governments to recognize hacktivism as such. DDoS, they claim, is the online equivalent of sit-ins like the Occupy movement, and website defacement is parallel to spraying graffiti on a wall, which under certain circumstances is recognized as an acceptable form of civil disobedience. (Knapp; Hampson).

Usually advocates for legitimacy of hacktivism use softer definitions of what hacktivism is. Hampson (514) defines hacktivism as "the nonviolent use for political ends of 'illegal or legally ambiguous digital tools' [emphasis added]." Knapp (264-265) distinguishes hacktivism from cyberterrorism according to their respective goals: "mak[ing] a statement or draw[ing] attention to a concept" as opposed to causing serious damage. Based on such taxonomy, both argue for leniency in the prosecution of hacktivists, and the amendment of the cyber-laws to distinguish them from other cybercriminals.

In fact, on January 7 2013 Anonymous submitted a petition to the Whitehouse to officially recognize DDoS as a legal form of protest and subsequently absolve everyone indicted for this activity. The petitioners have categorized their application under issues of "Civil Rights and Liberties" and "Human Rights." It gained 6,048 signatures, meaning it didn't achieve the required amount of 25,000 signatories ("Make, Distributed,").

Nevertheless, freedom of speech and the right to protest are qualified rights (meaning, that they are not unconditional like absolute rights) and need to hold to certain restrictions. For that reason, the fact that there are differences between physical and online activity – however minute some might be – creates substantial differences in determining the specific restrictions and circumstances under which they become qualified and hence protected. In other words, greater scrutiny is required when it comes to the perception of hacktivism as merely civic disobedience.

First, protest and freedom of speech manifest in the public sphere. They are protected rights when they take place in public fora or, in some instances, on private property that is open to the public. "Occupying" someone's apartment, in contrast, is illegal, as would be the case for most privately owned properties (Hampson 527-528, 532). This becomes a key point when the discussion shifts to the internet: although the internet is accessible to almost everyone and "knows no boundaries" – with the exception of ".gov" and maybe a few other variations – websites and servers are privately owned. Thus, comparing a DDoS attack to a sit-in at the public passageway to a business is erroneous. The passageway to a website is not public either.

Second, the role of the state in monitoring and, should it become necessary, interfering in a protest is also very much different on the internet. In the physical world, a public protest is immediately noticeable, law enforcement can be called to the scene quickly and, in turn, interact directly with the perpetrators – for either mediation or sanctioning purposes. This is not the case online. A website crashing does not include a banner indicating there's an ongoing DDoS attack; it takes time to determine the

source of the problem. More importantly, what can law enforcement agencies do? If they invest their resources, they might trace after-the-fact the origins of the attack. Real-time involvement, designed to protect the victim from excessive abuse, is not possible without direct interaction with the "protesters". As examples in the previous section have demonstrated, hacktivists do at times abuse their victims beyond their political purposes. This is especially evident in the theft of private information, which in many cases does not harm the government/business attacked but their individual employees instead.

Third, claims to the legitimacy of hacktivism are often biased by the populist perception of the phenomena as influenced by the values of the original hackers' community. Their efforts to expose corruption and act in pursuit of the "greater good" are easy to identify with, leading to sympathy. Thus, the fact that the methods employed are often harmful and lead to collateral damage consequently becomes ignored. Can the above-mentioned example of Anonymous and SEA be similarly justified as civil disobedience?

Fourth, sometimes hacktivists carry an additional personal agenda for carrying out an attack on top of the political justification publicly declared. Retribution in particular is a recurring theme. LulzSec's first major attack was the publication of 40,000 emails of a man who claimed to have penetrated Anonymous' network and identified several key players (Cadwallader). The SEA hacked into the database of a Dutch website affiliated with Anonymous in response to the latter's attack on the Syrian Customs website (Al-Rawi 422). Accompanying the December 2010 attacks following the shutdown of WikiLeaks was an attack on the networks of the Swedish Prosecution Authority and a Swedish law firm in retribution for their involvement in the prosecution of sexual molestation charges filed against WikiLeaks' founder,

Julian Assange (Cammaerts 432). Anonymous' "'Operation Payback' targeted the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) and the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) in retaliation for [their] attempts to take down [the copyright infringing] file-sharing site […] Pirate Bay" (Goode, 76). Along with retribution, other personal gains include fame within the hacker community through a display of technical skills (Hampson 520), or simply fun and excitement (Cadwallader).

Finally, hacktivism gets mixed with other forms of legitimate activism conducted on the internet. Mock websites, ridicule, certain forms of trolling, and the dissemination of personal information based on open-source research (Workman, Phelps and Hare 188; Kelly 1677; Knapp 266) do not breach the privacy of cyber systems and data. Dorothy Denning described these methods as normative hacktivism, as opposed to non-normative hacktivism containing the methods discussed in this article (Workman et al 188). However, the insistence on hacktivism taxonomy helps those who try to keep the lines blurred. Calling legitimate methods as cyberactivism, as opposed to normative hacktivism, would better help differentiate between the legal and illegal.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The hacking community has classically been divided into two distinct groups: white hat hackers, who point out vulnerabilities in systems and networks to their owners; and black hat hackers, who use these vulnerabilities for their personal gain (Goode 77; Young, Zhang and Prybutok 285). Hacktivism created a third type of group – grey hat hackers – as their motivations do not comply with either side of the original division (Goode 77). In fact, advocates of hacktivism tend to label them as white hat hatters, while their opponents associate

them with the opposing section (Knapp 264, 282).

Nevertheless, and despite efforts by some at legitimacy, lest we forget that most hacktivist actions are illegal (Mansfield-Devine 7). Governments and international agencies need to continue their efforts at mitigating these activities, deter "thrill seekers" from pursuing them, and remind the public of who the real victims are as a result of such illegitimate measures. "Wait until the next LulzSec," some specialists warn, "sooner or later […] they're going to cross a line" and engage in even more destructive measures than previously used for promoting a political cause (Mansfield-Devine 12).

Greater efforts should concentrate on distinguishing legitimate forms of cyberactivism from hacktivism. As has been previously noted, there are certain forms of civil disobedience that can be carried out online. Even Anonymous has sometimes chosen to employ them instead of engaging in hacktivism, as happened in Operation UnManifest. Following the 2011 Norway attacks, its members flooded the internet with fake, ridiculing versions of the murderer's manifesto – making it difficult to find the original ver-

litically-driven trolling and doxing should be labeled as cyberactivism and distinguished from the measures of hacktivists. A sharper taxonomy would help lift the obscurity over the legitimacy of hacktivist's actions.

The distinction between cyberactivism and hacktivism would also diminish the appeal of other forms of political cybercrime that guise themselves as hacktivism. If hacktivism becomes unequivocally illegitimate, there will be no use for perpetrators in pretending to be hacktivists. This would further assist law enforcement agencies in profiling and identifying the individuals engaged in such activities (Kelly 1710).

The multitude of examples used in this article not only show the prevalence of hacktivism, but also emphasize the variety of issues that accompany it – many due to the fact that this phenomena takes advantage of "uncharted territories." Cadwallader sums up the core of the problem: "You can't arrest an idea." However, vigilantism is not part of a secure democratic society. Hacktivism tends to target issues that are socially agreeable and that probably

> Sometimes hacktivists carry an additional personal agenda for carrying out an attack on top of the political justification publicly declared. Retribution in particular is a recurring theme.

sion online (Mansfield-Devine 5). Anonymous' assistance to the protesters in Tunisia and Egypt in the "Arab Spring", as well as the 2009 demonstrations in Iran, was also legitimate: assisting demonstrators to communicate and disseminate information, as well as turning the international community's attention to the problem (Caldwell 12; Cadwallader). Thus, loud online presence, mock websites, and even po-

shouldn't have risen in the first place. Internet Service Providers (ISPs) should have removed offensive content and closed abusive accounts before they grew attention to become targets. Still, as the idiom goes, the end doesn't justify all means – a fact that hacktivism's populist agendas sometimes make us forget.

International Development, Growth, & Shifting Dynamics

Mountain valley near the town of Mestia, Georgia, in the northern border region Svaneti © Thomas Cyrs

A Region on the Rise
An Examination of the PRC's Domestic Policy Towards the Xinjiang Region

Jacob Rusoff

Introduction

The People's Republic of China (PRC)[1] is a vast country stretching from the China Sea in the Pacific Ocean to the Tian Shan mountain range, within the heart of Central Asia. The country has a lustrous and longstanding history of wealth, culture, and domestic unity, and it is said that at the height of the empire, "the Chinese cultural sphere stretched over a continental area much larger than

region symbiotically flourished for centuries (Melvin 62 & 88).

Today, the geopolitical and economic identities of both China and the Central Asian countries have greatly evolved, and as a result, we are now beginning to witness unprecedented dynamics occurring within the region. The Central Asian countries have begun to liberalize their economies and welcome foreign investment from any and all suitors (Paswan

China FDI Outflows (Millions of USD)
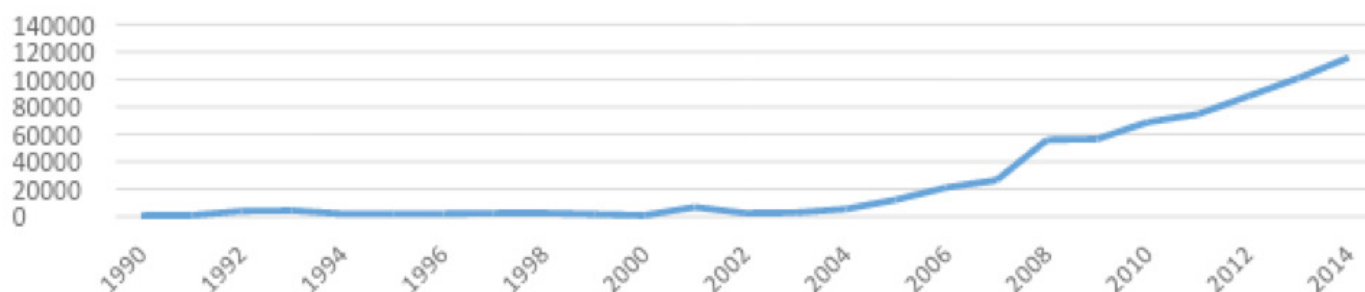
any European state, indeed about the size of Continental Europe." (Kissinger 7). Yet this longstanding influence certainly could not have been achieved without the advent of the Silk Road. The Silk Road made long-distance trade from Xi'an to the Mediterranean possible, as it passed through Central Asia (China Internet Information Center 2015). As a result, the Chinese Empire and the Central Asian

1). China has increasingly expanded its sphere of influence; it has done so through increased soft and hard power, through foreign infrastructure investments (Pitlo III 2015) (Appendix 1) and through direct military involvement (Glaser 2012) (Baloch 2015). Today Central Asia and China find themselves closer than ever before, and at the epicenter of this relationship stands Xinjiang.

The Xinjiang region is located in north-west China. The region shares a border with Afghanistan,

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1 While it is important to distinguish The PRC from The ROC, from here on out, for convince sake, I will refer to The PRC as simply China.

Russia, Mongolia, India and Pakistan, along with three of the Central Asian countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. The domestic geopolitical significance of the region has rapidly increased with the economic growth of China. This paper will briefly discuss the history of the Xinjiang region, and then go on to critically analyze the strategic use of identifying the region as an autonomous region. Thereafter, ethnic-based civil unrest and demographic changes will be examined. Lastly, the economic importance of Xinjiang to China's shifting domestic policies will be discussed and explained.

History

Xinjiang has always been an ethnically diverse region, dating back thousands of years (Information Office of the State Council of The PRC 2003). Xinjiang did not begin to truly flourish until the development of the Han Dynasty. In 121 BCE, the Han formally spread their control over Xinjiang by creating prefectures into what is now modern day Xinjiang, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan (IOSC PRC 2003) (Appendix 2). To this day, the Chinese records take particular caution describing this as a unification of

graphical importance of the region, trade routes through the Xinjiang and into Europe were developed forming what would become the Silk Road. The Silk Road fostered economic prosperity and as a result, ethnic groups were attracted to the region. A significant shift in the ethnic makeup of the region took place in 840 CE with the influx of Uyghurs, a predominantly Turkic-Muslim ethnic group, into Xinjiang (IOSC PRC 2003).

The Chinese Dynasties' power fluctuated for centuries as they fought with neighboring empires; however, they continually emphasized their sovereignty over Xinjiang and continually grappled to maintain it (China Education Center Ltd. 2015). The Sui Dynasty (581-618 C.E.) appointed public officials, divided the region into prefectures for administrative purposes, and even invested in basic infrastructure, such as building city walls (IOSC PRC 2003). The Tang Dynasty (618-906 C.E.) instituted the "equal field system", which installed land ownership, taxation, and labor laws (IOSC PRC 2003). The Qing Dynasty (1644-1912 C.E.) suppressed multiple incursions and briefly fought with the Russian Empire to uphold their claim over territory (IOSC PRC 2003) and formally established the territory as

> Chinese Dynasties' power fluctuated for centuries as they fought with neighboring empires; however, they continually emphasized their sovereignty over Xinjiang and continually grappled to maintain it.

China rather than a territorial conquest, an attempt to greater legitimize their sovereign claim over Xinjiang (The Australian Centre on China in the World, 2012). With greater security in Xinjiang as a result of the Chinese army's presence, and given the geo-

a province of China, officially naming it Xinjiang, meaning "new boundary." (Bovingdon 24). All of the Dynasties were very pragmatic in exercising administrative control over the region. There approaches were form-fitted to agree with local circumstances,

a strategy which ultimately assisted in quelling anti-Chinese insurrections from within Xinjiang.

Autonomous Region

In 1955, six years after the foundation of the People's Republic of China, Xinjiang was converted from a province to an autonomous region (Bhattacharji 2012). Autonomous regions are one of the three types of administrative divisions directly under control of the control of the central government[2]. Each autonomous region in China, of which there are five[3], are created for the purpose of a designated minority (The Constitution of The People's Republic of China, Chapter I, Article 4). Autonomous regions grant territories that have large non-Han ethnic populations certain constitutional rights which are not afforded to provinces, in an attempt to promote social harmony and national unity (Wu 2014). Autonomous regions are also headed by a chairman who must be of the nationality exercising regional autonomy; the chairman of Xinjiang is, and must be, a Uyghur (The Constitution of The People's Republic of China, Chapter III, Section VI, Article 114) (Jia 2014). Furthermore, the autonomous regions have the power of financial autonomy and are not obligated to forfeit their tax revenue to the central government (The Constitution of The People's Republic of China, Chapter III, Section VI, Article 117).

From the surface it may appear as though these regions are 'autonomous' while in actuality this is hardly the case. These regions are in fact still under the tight grip of the Chinese Communist Party (CPC) and the Chinese central government. For example, nearly all of the powers granted to the local gov-


Suzhou Water Town, China © Kirsiah McNamara

ernments of autonomous regions are followed by caveats, such as "with the approval of the State," or "for approval [by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress] before they go into effect." (The Constitution of The People's Republic of China, Chapter III, Section VI, Article 120 & 115). This sentiment was further illustrated in a 2009 white paper published by the Chinese Government, stating "every ethnic autonomous area is an inseparable part of the country. Organs of self-government in ethnic autonomous areas must follow the leadership of the central government." (Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China 2009). Ultimately, the chairmen tend to act more as figure heads and rather than examples of political diversity. True power over the autonomous regions are largely vested in the provincial party secretaries who, while not constitutionally avowed, are and have always been of Han descent (Concepcion 19). Therefore, it appears as though the designation of 'autonomous regions' was not an altruistic attempt to promote social harmony and national unity, as mentioned above, but rather a strategic and tactically motivated attempt to offer a façade of self-determination to ethnic minorities, such as the Uyghurs, whose rights are continually violated by the central government in order to ensure China's territorial sovereignty over politically contentious areas.

2 The others being, provinces and municipalities (The Constitution of the People's Republic of China, Chapter I, Article 30, 2004)

3 Guangxi, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, Xinjiang, Xizang (CIA, 2015)

Ethnic-Based Civil Unrest

The dynasties managed administrative control over Xinjiang, promoting economic development, increasing quality of life, and ensuring security. In return, the Uyghurs, amongst other non-Han ethnic groups, provided legitimacy to the sovereign through their explicit support (IOSC PRC 2003). While some ethnic tension occurred over time[4], this relationship

rights of the Uyghurs while committing gross human rights violations against them (Concepcion 20-21). In 1995, the Chinese government banned Meshreps (a traditional Uyghur social gathering), fearing that they could serve as a forum for separatist rhetoric, and suppressed them violently (Concepcion 20-21). In 2015, the Chinese government passed a law banning the practice of religion in public venue, as well as banning religiously-motivated internet posts

GDP Growth (2010-2014)
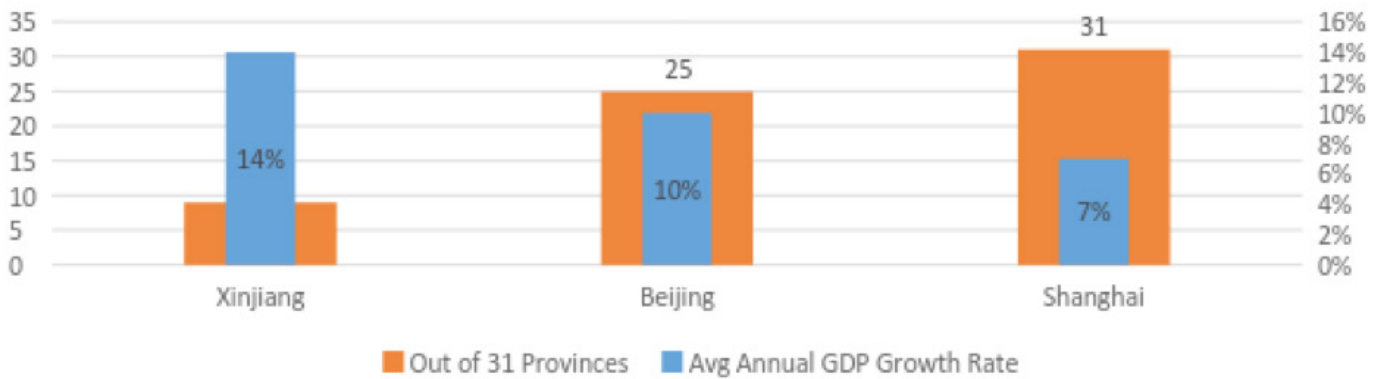
remained fairly stable up until the 20th century.

In the early 20th century, nationalist movements swept the globe; the Uyghurs twice attempted to form an independent state of their own and failed on both occasions (Concepcion 19). In 1949, following the communist revolution and the creation of the PRC, domestic stability was reestablished and the consolidation of power in Xinjiang was made a priority. The new communist government introduced programs to increase Han immigration to Xinjiang (Concepcion 19), otherwise coined as Hanification (The Economist 2004). However, the threat of Uyghur secession only increased following the fall of the Soviet Union, as the Central Asian countries subsequently obtained their independence. As a result, the Chinese government, from the 1980's to the present, has diminished the political and religious

which could serve to, "undermine national unity." (Schachtel 2014). The Chinese government has also curtailed the Uyghurs' judicial guarantees (The Constitution of The People's Republic of China, Chapter II, Article 36 & 37). Uyghurs are frequently imprisoned without due process, "sentenced to lengthy prison terms for essentially non-violent activities," and tortured to extract confessions (Concepcion 20). The Chinese government has received vast criticism from the international community as a result of these human rights violations; as a result, the Chinese government remains committed to labeling the Uyghurs as terrorists in an attempt to legitimize their actions (The Australian Centre on China in the World 2012) (Human Rights Watch 2015).

The heavy-handed crackdown by the central government has only exacerbated the situation in Xinjiang and is likely the main reason for the increase in 'terrorism' there. In 2014 alone there were

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4 Intermarriage between ethnicities was very rare and often lead to both individuals being ostracized by their families. (Bellér-Hann, 2008)

> From 2010-2014, Xinjiang's GDP grew at an average annualized rate of 14% - the 9th highest rate out of the 31 provinces measured, higher than both Beijing and Shanghai.

multiple 'terrorist' attacks in Xinjiang[5.] Many blame the increase in violent conflict on both the direct human rights violations conducted by the Chinese government and also on the increased Hanification of the region (Wong 2014) (Human Rights Watch 2015).

It is widely believed that the incentivized Hanification of Xinjiang by the Chinese government has been conducted in an attempt to dilute the Uyghur population and culture. In 1945, Han and Uyghurs made up 6.2% and 82.7% of the Xinjiang population, respectively. In 2008, this demographic had shifted to 39.2% Han and 46.1% Uyghur[6] (Howell & Fan 123). Many Han have been incentivized to move to Xinjiang for economic benefits. The Xinjiang Production and Construction Corp. (XPCC) is a state-owned enterprise charged with the construction and operation of agricultural communities which has greatly contributed to the Hanification of Xinjiang (Bhattacharji 2012). The areas controlled by the XPCC have a combined population of 2.6 Million, of which 86% are ethnically Han. As a result, the XPCC communities are culturally homogenous, which has subsequently led to an increase in ethnic

wealth disparity[7] (Bhattacharji 2012). The Chinese government has also incentivized intermarriage. In Qiemo County, Xinjiang, a new policy went into effect in 2014 whereby the government offers $1,600 a year for five years, priority housing, government jobs, health care benefits, and subsidized education to multi-ethnic families (Wong 2014). The government has stated that incentives are in place to promote a, "harmonious integration"; however, international scholars have rebuked the initiative, seeing it instead as a governmental attempt at assimilating the Uyghurs by white-washing their culture and ethnicity (Wong 2014).

## Economic and Geopolitical Importance of Xinjiang

China has forcefully maintained the region, regardless of the ramifications, for three primary reasons: 1) it has always been part of China's political strategy to maintain their historic territory, 2) Xinjiang has vital natural resources, which are necessary to meet china's growing demand, and 3) China has massive economic and geopolitical plans for Xin-

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7 The XPCC contributes to approximately 17% of the total GDP of Xinjiang. (The Economist 2013)

Xinjiang GDP By Sector (1955)

- Agriculture 54.4
- Industry 26.1
- Service 19.5

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5 In March, over 30 people were killed as Uyghurs attacked a crowd at a train station; in May, over 40 people were killed by a car bombing at a busy market in Ürümqi; in August, over 100 people died when a group of assailants attacked police stations and other governmental offices (Human Rights Watch 2015) (BBC News 2014).

6 It is likely that the percentage of Han in Xinjiang is even higher then this number, taken from the census; as it does not include military troops stationed there or undocumented migrant workers. (BBC News, 2014)
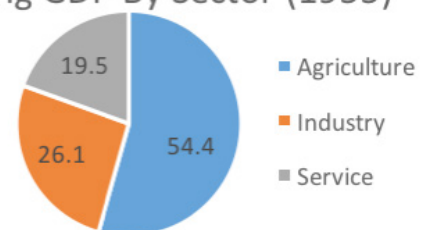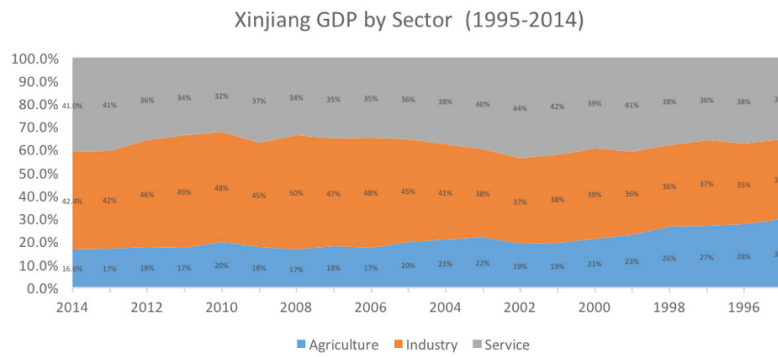
jiang and the Central Asian region.

The Chinese government readily defends a long-standing claim over Xinjiang. In a white paper published by the Chinese

Xinjiang GDP by Sector (1995-2014)

Agriculture ■ Industry ■ Service

did domestic consumer and industrial demand[9]. With the increase in demand, China has continually looked to secure industrial and energy resources wherever

government on the topic of Xinjiang, the foreword immediately stated that, since ancient times, Xinjiang has been an inseparable part of the unitary multi-ethnic Chinese nation (Information Office of the State Council of The PRC 2009). This concept of preserving the historic Chinese territory is heavily rooted within Chinese culture. There is a common Chinese myth in which China was originally founded by the so-called, "Yellow Emperor" (Kissinger 6). What is interesting, however, is that the Yellow Emperor is not said to have created a new empire but rather reestablished one which had fallen into chaos (Kissinger 6). In this myth, the Chinese nation predates history itself without pinpointing a historic singularity. While China's territory fluctuated over time, with power struggles leading to civil wars and chaos, whenever the dust settled China was always reunified by claims of this ancient history and their heavenly mandate. We have seen China uphold these territorial claims in Tibet (BBC News 2014), and more recently in the South China Sea (Glaser 2012). As a result of this cultural ideology, China has, and will continue to, uphold its sovereignty over Xinjiang regardless of the consequences.

Xinjiang is also seen as a vital and inseparable part of China due to the presence of vital resources there. In just the past decade alone, as population and average wages within China increased[8], so

possible. Xinjiang has massive mineral and ore reserves. Xinjiang's proven iron reserves total 750 million tons (China Internet Information Center 2015), surpassing the total amount of South Africa's total proven reserves (United States Geological Survey 85). Xinjiang also has vast fossil fuel resources such as petroleum, natural gas, and coal. Petroleum and natural gas reserves in Xinjiang account for roughly 25% of the domestic total; coal reserves in Xinjiang's are equal to approximately 38% of the domestic total (China Internet Information Center 2015).

Lastly, Xinjiang has seen an incredible increase in economic output which is poised to grow exponentially as China implements its new massive regional investment plan, the One Road-One Belt initiative (OBOR). From 2010-2014, Xinjiang's GDP grew at an average annualized rate of 14% - the 9th highest rate out of the 31 provinces measured, higher than both Beijing and Shanghai (Appendix 3). Xinjiang has also witnessed a promising diversification of their economy. In 1955, agriculture, industry and services equated to 54.4%, 26.1%, and 19.5% of the region's total economic output, respectively (Appendix 4). In 2014, agriculture, industry and

8 Population has increased 19% from 1991-2014, GDP per Capita has increased 2,191% from 1991-2014 (The World Bank, 2015)

9 Chinese Imports on Goods and Services has increased 3,211% from 1991-2014 (annual avg. growth of 133.8%) and Energy Imports, a percentage of total energy usage, has increased 376% from 1991-2012 (The World Bank, 2015) (OECD, 2008) Chinese Imports on Goods and Services has increased 3,211% from 1991-2014 (annual avg. growth of 133.8%) and Energy Imports, a percentage of total energy usage, has increased 376% from 1991-2012 (The World Bank, 2015) (OECD, 2008)

services equated to 16.6%, 42.4%, and 41.0%, respectively (Appendix 5)[10.] Growth and economic diversification are only projected to increase with the implementation of OBOR.

OBOR is a Chinese economic initiative to create a "Silk Road Economic Belt" which would connect South East Asia, India, Pakistan, China, and Central Asia to Europe, primarily through infrastructure development (Kennedy & Parker 2015) (Appendix 6). In the first half of 2015, 1,401 FDI contracts were signed by Chinese companies for OBOR projects totaling 37.6 billion USD, which is equal to 43.3% of China's total FDI output (Zimmerman 7). Approximately 20 billion USD are being allocated for domestic infrastructure projects alone, the majority of which will be invested in Xinjiang (Tiezzi 2014). China has maintained that the investment in OBOR is to help build the regional economy while increasing logistical efficiently from China to Europe[11.] However, it is largely believed that China also has geopolitical goals which are not being expressly stated (Stratfor 2013). The OBOR will certainly increase China's soft power throughout Asia, particularly within Central Asia. The OBOR will also provide alternative routes for trade and military mobilization if a full-scale conflict were to ever occur on the eastern coast, which is a possible scenario given the history of cross-strait relations and the increase in conflict within the South China Sea (Stratfor 2013). Regardless of the true motivations of the OBOR to China, it remains clear that China is committed to preserving and developing Xinjiang. As the economic value of Xinjiang increases, China will become continually less benevolent in dealing with nationalist or separatist Uyghur movements.

Conclusion

China and the Central Asian region have always had close ties, largely due to China's ancient presence in Xinjiang. Throughout history, China has always maintained sovereignty over their claimed territories as if by some "immutable law of nature," (Kissinger 6) and Xinjiang is no exception. Xinjiang and Central Asia have gone through massive economic development over the past decades, which has ultimately only made the region more important to China as they seek to find new markets in which to sell their industrial surplus. With investment forecasted to spike within the region due to the OBOR initiative, Xinjiang will only have an even greater importance over the next few decades. While China's regional geopolitical objectives remain shrouded in a cloudy veil, one thing is certain: China will continue to aggressively suppress potential uprisings in Xinjiang, as they have done on many occasions throughout the past century[12]. The upcoming decades will serve to be a formative era for a new Chinese political strategy; there is no doubting that violence and uprisings will continue in Xinjiang and the method with which China handles said conflicts could in part determine their ability to gain power within Central Asia and the world at large.

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10 From 1995-2014, the value added of agriculture to the economy decreased 44%. The industrial sector, value added, has increased 22% over the same time period (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2014)

11 It takes 21 days to reach Europe from China by railroad, compared to 5 weeks by sea; however, railroads cost 25% more (Stratfor 2013). Furthermore, there is a growing security threat regarding the distribution of sea lanes given the growth of the China Seas conflicts. (Stratfor, 2013)

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12 Xinjiang separatist movements (China Internet Information Center), Tiananmen Square Massacre, 12-3 incident in Macau, Hong Kong Riots of 1960's and 1970's, Tibetan unrest.

A National Problem
Combating Mongolia's Drinking Epidemic

Robert Kuwada

Mongolia faces an epidemiological challenge in addressing the burden of alcohol use and related problems. Males, rural populations and those aged 25-34 years old exhibited the highest levels of risky drinking practices, while urban populations exhibit higher levels of general alcohol consumption (Demaio, et. al., 1).

Mongolia holds the record for having the highest alcoholic population in the world (Gorence, 2). Mongolia's Ministry of Health, with the United Nation's World Health Organization (WHO), conducted a survey that found Mongolians were dependent on alcohol at a rate three times higher than Europe-- 22% for Mongolian men and 5% for women (Lim, 2). On a weekly basis, nearly one in five Mongolian men binge-drink (Lim, 3), which has been defined by the National Institute of Health's National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism as consuming five or more drinks in two hours resulting in a blood alcohol content of 0.08 g/dl or more (niaaa. hih.gov., 1). Morning drinking by rural men with lower-levels of employment and education suggests that problematic drinking is widespread (Demaio, et. al., 1).

The WHO recognized alcohol as one of the four major drivers of non-communicable diseases, which are the leading cause of mortality in Mongolia (Demaio, et. al., 1). The proportion of those who drank more than 40 grams of alcohol per day experienced:

42.4%	Anxiety or stress
42.1%	Rapid heartbeat or tachycardia
36.1%	High blood pressure or hypertension
32.2%	Depression or low mood
23.1%	Head injury
10.5%	Cirrhosis of the liver
10.4%	Heart attack (Tsetsegdary, 35)

According to Jaraglsaikhan Dambadarjaa (Jargal), Economist and President of the non-governmental organization (NGO) "Mongolians for Fair Taxes, Wise Spending", alcoholism is a major factor behind children increasingly being born with genetic disorders. He shared this anecdote:

> A friend of mine, who traveled to the famous Sharaljuut resort and spa, saw hundreds of wheel-chaired children with spinal anomalies seeking treatment. This year, the spa received three times as many children (Dambadarjaa, 1).

Other alcohol-related problems are drunk driving and the worsening of crime. More than 70% of car owners live in urban settings, and 15% of drinkers who own a car, have reported driving while intoxicated. This figure is close to four times the driving-while-intoxicated level of the U.S. The fourth-leading cause of death is now road-traffic accidents (Demaio, et. al., 4). Surveys indicate that

72% of violent crime (murder, violent robbery and attacks) is fueled by alcohol (Lim, 3). Women and children are especially prone to experiencing daily vodka-fueled domestic violence.

The Blame Game

Heavy drinking by men in Mongolia is not new. In both urban and rural settings, it takes place during celebrations along with families or friends. Drinking is a core part of Mongolian culture; Genghis Khan was reputed to have celebrated the conquering of his enemies with the consumption of huge quantities of alcohol. In rural areas, families have been brewing yoghurt spirits and fermented mare's milk for many generations, a tradition that continues to this day. This drink, associated with celebration, strength and virility, is predominantly consumed by men and it is common to drink it throughout the day (Demaio, et. al., 2).

An alcoholism researcher in Mongolia, Sean Armstrong, says alcohol has been a very important colonization tool—first used by the Chinese, and later by the Russians. In the 1870s, the Manchus used it as a key tool in the colonization of the country and economic exploitation. A common Mongolian saying is, "the Russians were quite smart—first they brought vodka, then they brought communism, and after vodka, anything would seem like a good idea" (Lim, 5).

Jargal, Economist and President of "Mongolians for Fair Taxes, Wise Spending" argues that Mongoloid ethnic groups or "yellow-skinned races" have little to no ability to process alcohol. That's why we get easily drunk and get poisoned more" (Dambadarjaa 1). Similar to Russia's northern indigenous yellow-skinned races, Koryak, Chukchi, Nenet minorities as well as Native Americans, Mongolians are genetically more vulnerable to alcohol dependency and abuse (Dambadarjaa, 1).

The article, Polymorphisms of Alcohol Metabolizing Enzyme and Cytochrome P4502E1 Genes in Mongolian Population, published by The Genetics Society of Korea, scientifically corroborates this. Simply put, Korean, Japanese and Chinese people are less susceptible to alcoholism while Mongoloid people have a higher occurrence of "ineffective enzymes" for metabolizing alcohol, which predisposes them more to alcohol dependency and abuse (Kim, et al., 1).

Supply

One reason for Mongolia's high level of alcoholism is the widespread access to alcohol. There is on average one liquor store for every 270 people, the highest number worldwide (Lim, 3). Most grocers have dedicated liquor aisles, some with more than 25 types of vodka alone, costing just USD $2.00 for a half-pint (Lim, 3). Imported beer and wine with lower alcohol content are much more expensive per unit.

In Mongolia, there are more than 120 alcoholic beverage companies and local firms control over 90% of the market, the result of lobbying which created a favorable sales environment. Many politicians

> There is on average one liquor store for every 270 people, the highest number worldwide.

have direct ties to or interest in the alcohol industry and alcohol licenses and taxes are large revenue streams for the government. Said Armstrong, alcoholism researcher in Mongolia, "Alcohol is one of the single most important sources of income for the Mongolian government…Currently 20 to 23% of government income comes from taxes directly related to alcohol use and sales" (Lim, 5). Recently, even the health minister had his own profitable brand of vodka. Many brands also appeal to nationalism, using heroes like Genghis Khan, or Mongolian regions, associating brands with patriotism, pride, and leadership.

Despite the ban on advertising, the industry has excellent branding and has successfully influenced public opinion on issues relating to alcohol. Urban drinking is associated with celebrations and social events. The alcohol industry has capitalized Western–style marketing to depict alcohol consumption therein, leading to higher levels of drinking in these settings (Demaio, et. al., 5).

In addition, the industry has created the belief that alcohol, like a vitamin, is a vital nutrient needed by the body. This is helped by the fact that alcohol consumption in Mongolian culture is traditionally viewed as medicinal, curing a whole host of conditions. The industry has even co-opted the WHO's "standard drink" concept. Normally a measure of abuse, the industry has turned this concept into a standard of healthy consumption. Through aggressive social media campaigning, the industry promotes alcohol as vital to maintaining "standard alcohol consumption" (Armstrong and Tsogtbaatar, 213S). The WHO has defined "standard drink" as "notional" most often containing "10g of ethanol" along with other components (Armstrong and Tsogtbaatar, 213S).

Demand

One of Ulan Bator police station's top ranking policemen, Davkharbayar, said that since Mongolia became independent of the Soviet Union in 1990, the level of alcohol abuse worsened drastically. Social upheaval resulted from the economic liberalization in the post-Soviet era.

> Unemployment and poverty are the main issues why people get drunk. In the early 1990s, the manufacturing plants closed down and workers became very poor. With the market economy, the unemployment rate became critical and drinking really started (Lim, 2-3).

Tumendemberel, a former college teacher and recovered alcoholic said, "Many Mongolians don't want to face these problems, so they drink to escape them. But far from escaping their problems, alcohol has made them much worse" (Wingfield-Hayes, 2.)

High alcohol intake also is linked to "social and epidemiological" transition processes, such as urbanization. The despair of unemployed and poor rural herders who have moved with their traditional circular tents, or gers, to the capital city is large. Of the urban population, up to 80% of Mongolian men had consumed alcohol in the prior year (Demaio, et. al., 5). Urban respondents to a survey stated that they were nearly three times more likely as their rural counterparts to list alcohol as a way to deal with stress (Demaio, et. al., 5). Consumption will rise as Mongolians become more urbanized, and have more access to alcohol.

Decreasing Alcohol Abuse in Mongolia

Government

In 2003, the National Program on the Control and

Prevention of Alcoholism was passed. Since then, however, the $400 USD budget for the program remains unchanged (Armstrong and Tsogtbaatar, 211S). Why such a low budget? As mentioned previously, for several prominent parliamentary members, their primary source of income comes from alcohol production and sale and nearly 25% of the government's budget comes from alcohol taxes. As a result, no legislative policies have been passed to enforce more stringent blood alcohol concentration laws nor to maintain more sobriety checkpoints for drivers. Access to alcohol needs to be restricted by adjusting the pricing structure—for vodka in particular—and alcohol marketing needs more strict regulation by government (Demaio, et. al., 5).

None of alcohol's tax and other government revenues were allocated to Mongolia's alcoholism epidemic. The 2007 research budget for narcology, the sole psychiatric modification method used by alcohol-related health care providers nationwide, was less than $4,000 compared to the estimated $250,000 minimum spent on market research by the alcohol industry (Armstrong and Tsogtbaatar, 211S).

The government has one hospital in the capital where alcoholics are admitted for up to two years. However, once they are released, few opportunities for work exist and alcohol once again becomes a means of escape. The hospital has the capacity for only about 1,800 patients per year (Lim, 5). Patients commonly stay for 10 days, of which they only receive medication for the first five and then attend lectures about solving life problems through safe and healthy methods. While some patients receive after treatment checkups, others do not.

Rural Mongolian men who are descendants of a centuries'-long tradition of home-brewed alcohol, are less aware about heavy drinking hazards and risks (Demaio, et. al., 5). Culturally sensitive treatment for the reduction of rural alcohol addiction as well as campaigns against alcoholism are lacking. In particular, primary health care providers in these settings have insufficient training to recognize alcohol abuse and to give effective advice in order to help curb heavy drinking (Tsesegdary, 41).

The WHO and NGOs

The international public health community is complicit in failing to address Mongolia's alcohol abuse. The WHO could lead a response, with the cooperation of and/or financial aid from multilateral organizations such as the United Nations Development Program in Mongolia and Asian Development Bank, which have respectively identified alcoholism to be "amongst the top 15 barriers to development" and "a stronger contributor to poverty than any other variable" (Armstrong and Tsogtbaatar, 212S).

Overall, the WHO has not nationally communicated the risks of alcoholism. The success of the alcohol industry in co-opting the WHO's "standard drink" concept is a prime example. The WHO works exclusively with medical providers and narcologists for the development of behavioral change communication. It has yet to create a social marketing campaign that is national in scope. Its initiatives continue to focus on updating treatment standards and lobbying to increase prevention program funding. It has not involved the public health sector, which would be critical to managing funds.

NGOs often report that the Mongolian government has failed to address this fundamental challenge to national development. NGOs are necessary to help implement and monitor policies and programs yet the problem's scope continues to limit their efficacy. There is no collective public health approach to the problem. In 2008, only one of 32 projects approached alcohol abuse from a population-based perspective (Armstrong and Tsogtbaatar,

212S-213S). More than 75% of these outpatient programs are private support groups and housing (Armstrong and Tsogtbaatar, 212S-213S). A common theme of these programs (with the exception of two) was that they were mainly urban and faith-based— predominantly Christian groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). As a coordinator of one faith-

Local municipalities and jurisdictions should be funded to develop their own plans and programs, ensuring full public involvement, including local action committees along with both national and local health care providers and other relevant personnel.

> Dealing with alcoholism in Mongolia focuses on the alcoholic, but does not go far enough to provide codependency counseling, support and direction to women and children.

based NGO stated: "the converts … from alcohol abuse programs are Christianity's most outspoken supporters" (Armstrong and Tsogtbaatar, 213S). Published reports on AA's impact throughout the country are yet to be seen (Armstrong, 3).

Dealing with alcoholism in Mongolia focuses on the alcoholic, but does not go far enough to provide codependency counseling, support and direction to women and children. Children exposed to alcoholism face a higher risk of becoming addicted and physically abusive. Raising children under circumstances that enable alcohol abuse at home guarantees that the problem will continue on to the next generation.

A Sector-Wide Approach

With the help of the WHO, civil society, public health professionals, marketing experts, the media and wider community, government could launch a comprehensive health education campaign, informing citizens of its national alcohol problem and the urgency to do something about it. Early interventions are more effective and should include school-based and harm-reduction programs (Demaio, et. al., 6).

The Blue Mosque, Istanbul, Turkey © Kirsiah McNamara

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