



# YRIS

## THE YALE REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

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# IDENTITY

EDITOR-in-CHIEF  
Ramon Gonzalez

MANAGING EDITOR  
Harrison Monsky

PUBLISHER  
Yanni Legmpelos

## EDITORS

Grayson Clary  
Tantum Collins  
Phillip Kaplan  
Harry Larson  
Allison Lazarus  
Margaret Lee  
Yanni Legmpelos  
Adrian Lo  
Talya Lockman-Fine  
Sam Obletz  
Cameron Rotblat  
Sigrid von Wendel

## PRODUCTION

LAYOUT DESIGN	Yanni Legmpelos
COVER DESIGN	Sam Obletz
WEBSITE DESIGN	Sam Obletz Tantum Collins Yanni Legmpelos

# EDITOR'S LETTER

Dear readers,

Welcome to the Winter 2011 issue of the Yale Review of International Studies. Started by a group of undergraduates in the fall of 2010, we are excited for our second year of publication and grateful for your interest in our magazine, which is really an interest in what we have tried to present of the best and most wide-ranging thinking by Yale students on contemporary international questions.

One of the central developments of international politics is the massive expansion in the number of people interested in those questions—daring to ask them, talking about them with others, and having the courage to make new answers real. After a year where protests and political change rolled through the world, Ramon Gonzalez tries to grapple with the potential and limits of the technological and political culture of these new, social international movements. But traditional national relationships still matter tremendously, and Abhimanyu Chandra comments on the US-India relationship and suggests how it might be deepened.

Part of the challenge nations face is not only dealing with other nations but with their own populations that have old and new international ties and commitments. Anne van Bruggen examines the rise of Dutch neo-nationalism in response to perceived threats to Dutch national identity from immigration, and Gulay Tukmen-Dervisoglu looks at and criticizes Lebanon's principle of confessionalism to accommodate different religious communities. Sometimes nations react to internal threats in violent ways, and Paulo Coelho Filho questions Brazil's avoidance of a truth commissions for abuses under its military dictatorship, and he looks at how neighboring countries have confronted their own tortured pasts. In the economic realm John Ettinger revisits how Japan concluded its monetary policy interventions for guidance as to how Western countries should exit their own. Sarah Krinsky traces the multi-national and multi-religious history of Jerusalem. In Mexico, Jesse Hassinger examines the effect of borders and geography and applies models of internal conflict to investigate the drug-fueled violence in the interior and border regions of Mexico. Nations, too, can fight, and Daniel Pitcairn argues for a new way of evaluating the coherence of democratic peace theory which contends that democratic nations largely don't.

I hope you enjoy reading the pieces and find them interesting, and YRIS now has a revamped website [yris.yira.org](http://yris.yira.org) where you can view all the content, post comments, and read our blog for regular international commentary. Enjoy!

RAMON  
GONZALEZ

Editor-in-Chief

# COMMENTS

ABHIMANYU CHANDRA FUTURE PEACE IN AFGHANISTAN  
India as a US partner

As America prepares to leave Afghanistan, it should help India find a greater and more measured role in the country. The US-India relationship, today, is arguably stronger than ever before. The two countries' collaboration has deepened over the past decade, in traditional areas such as trade, but also in more sensitive areas such as counter-terrorism and defense. With such a favorable bilateral climate, the US could work with India to shape a clear and prudent Afghanistan strategy. The two countries have a shared vision for Afghanistan's future: a stable, developing and self-sustaining country contributing to the region's progress. More significantly, India has stronger ties with the Afghan government and people than perhaps any other country.

With the ongoing drawdown, ending in December 2014, of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) troops in Afghanistan, the United States' direct leverage over events in the country is reducing. The US can hardly hope to retain leverage through influence over Afghanistan's direct neighbors. Iran, to Afghanistan's west, shares a difficult relationship with the US over the issue of its nuclear program. To Afghanistan's east and south is Pakistan. Pakistan and the US have had an increasingly bitter relationship following the Osama Bin Laden raid on May 2, 2011 in

Pakistani territory. To Afghanistan's north are various Central Asian countries. These, while rich in resources, have little influence over the region's geopolitics compared to other regional powers. Washington fears a power vacuum in Afghanistan following the complete withdrawal of NATO and ISAF troops, given the country's weak government and fragile civil society. Such a vacuum might return Afghanistan to its role during the 1990s as a site for proxy wars among its neighbors.

India offers Afghanistan the prospect of a strong economy. At the November 2, 2011 Istanbul Conference, India was among the countries that embraced the New Silk Road strategy—a vision for a dynamic Afghanistan at the heart of South and Central Asian trade. For the strategy to succeed, India will have to play a crucial role. Afghanistan is rich in resources and India has the largest and most diverse market in South and Central Asia. Afghan President Hamid Karzai, who attended college in India, recognizes the country's rising regional influence. On October 4, 2011, he initiated and signed with New Delhi a strategic agreement, the first such pact Afghanistan has extended to any country. The India-Afghanistan strategic partnership more closely ties the two countries' economies and intelligence-gathering, in addition to other areas.

Even though India may be crucial to Afghanistan's success, In-

dian assistance to Afghanistan has raised a stubborn suspicion within Pakistan. The Pakistani military-intelligence establishment supports the Taliban primarily to resist a potential Indian threat emanating from Afghanistan. It fears encirclement by India on two sides, and seeks an Afghanistan sympathetic to Pakistan. In such a scenario, India must play its cards cautiously. It should play the role in Afghanistan as envisioned in the India-Afghanistan strategic partnership, while at the same time allaying Pakistan's suspicion. It is in the US' interest to assist India with this delicate task.

The US could encourage India to assist Afghanistan primarily in areas such as education, technology, and infrastructural development. These aspects of Indian engagement, as opposed to, say, military cooperation, would seem less invidious and threatening to Pakistan. The Indian-built Zaranj-Delaram road link, for instance, is an example of an important and relatively uncontroversial Indian contribution to Afghanistan. The link connects Afghanistan to Central Asia.

Furthermore, to allay Pakistan's concerns, the US could encourage India to engage with Afghanistan in partnership with other regional powers. At a time when governments in India and the Middle East are facing opposition at home, these countries can be brought together by a shared desire to work towards a more stable neighborhood. Such common interest can drive cooperation between, say, Iran and India,

as well as Turkey and India, with all countries recognizing the benefit that a stable Afghanistan can provide to all. Despite a problematic relationship with Iran, the US recognizes the positive role Iran has played in Afghanistan. Wary of drug-trafficking and a refugee-influx from its neighbor, Iran also seeks a stable and prosperous Afghanistan. Projects such as the Indian-made nine hundred kilometer rail link between the Chabahar port in Iran and the iron-ore reserves in the Hajigak region of Afghanistan benefit Tehran, New Delhi, Washington, and, especially, Kabul. Turkey, similarly, can play a critical role in partnership with India for assisting Afghanistan. As an influential regional power and as host to the most recent conference on Afghanistan, it has expressed its interest in working towards a stable Afghanistan. It has offered to collaborate with the Afghanistan Ministry of Mines and has extended assistance to Kabul Medical University. If Indian assistance comes alongside that of other regional powers, Pakistan may come to recognize Afghanistan as not simply a battlefield for Indo-Pakistan conflict, but a vital nation that the entire region has invested in. Given the US' shaky ties with Middle Eastern countries, India by itself would have to reach out to countries such as Turkey and Iran to frame collaborative projects in Afghanistan. Even so, the US could help shape India's strategic thinking in this direction.

In addition to the withdrawal

ABHIMANYU CHANDRA is a junior in Branford College, studying Political Science and US-India relations at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. He will be interning with the Department of State's Office of the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan in Spring 2012.

of NATO and ISAF forces, another event in 2014 will likely reduce the US' leverage in Afghanistan: Afghan elections. President Karzai has declared that he will not be seeking a third term as President. The US, as a result, faces uncertainty regarding who and how amenable the leader of Afghanistan's civilian government will be two years from now. In such a scenario, an India involved in a positive and measured capacity in Afghanistan would be in the US'

interest. With the flurry of conferences coming up over Afghanistan following the Bonn Conference this past December, a clear role for India would allay Pakistan's suspicion. An India actively and cautiously assisting Afghanistan would offer the US the hope that the dollars spent and lives lost in Afghanistan will, after all, bring about a stable and self-sustaining Afghanistan after American troops return home.

## RAMON GONZALEZ 2011: THE YEAR THE WORLD SAID NO

In 2011 global protest movements, socially organized and electronically connected, ushered in massive political and economic changes. The "Arab Spring" raged in major cities across the Middle East, the "Occupy" movement consumed riot police from Wall Street to Oakland, and "For Fair Elections" protests shook Moscow to produce ripples as far as Krasnoyarsk. People around the world were united in these movements by the power to say "No"—*no* to dictatorship, *no* to indefinite security states, *no* to human rights abuses, *no* to gross economic inequality.

Revolutions are not new political phenomenon, and neither is the power of some revolutions to inspire others. But what has changed is the speed with which protestors can organize with others and how

quickly the outside world can learn of their efforts. Today's protesting public is enabled by new technologies: the proliferation of cell phones with text, picture, video, and email features; the mass membership in Facebook, Twitter, and other social media networks; the expansion of freelance news reporting and the decentralization of the traditional media; and the reach and reception of global satellite and cable news networks. Taken together, these changes facilitate the flow of news, pass on arguments, and turn friends, contacts, readers, and viewers into activists and protestors.

Vindicated by the dramatic regime changes in the Middle East and the simmering promise of more to come (and elsewhere), the events of the past year suggest that we may be entering (or mark that we have



already entered) a new era of global politics shaped by a more informed, empowered, and involved mass public. The technologies that enabled the social upheavals of 2011 have proven themselves effective at articulating and spreading discontent, and at disintegrating oppressive regimes. However, it remains unclear whether these technologies and the political practices they engender can now help build and reinforce benevolent, stable states and social orders. The uncertainty hinges not on whether these nascent states can rein in the various social technologies that undid their predecessors, but whether the new social technologies can facilitate or at least make room for the type of political activity necessary to rebuild civil societies and functioning states.

It is common to note that today's technological advances—unlike yesterday's telegram, railroad, or filing cabinet—have done little to expand the reach of the state (though they have made possible a more personalized politics for its top office). Social and new media technologies overwhelm the state's ability to regulate communication among citizens, do not materially improve the state's ability to coordinate its own activities and expand their reach, and allow the discontented to easily and broadly appeal to non-state actors and international communities for solidarity and support.

But in the same way that these technologies do not significantly expand the power of the state, they do not empower the entire public and all types of political activity. Instead, they make possible and easier only a specific kind of political person and activity. Fundamentally, this new collection of social and information technologies lets people discover, share, and coordi-

nate (on the other hand, the state formulates, plans, and administers). These activities allow technologically literate people to organize and fight entrenched elites and previously accepted or unknown practices. While sometimes these media house discussion that changes minds, their main forms of persuasion are the persuasion of discovery ("The government did that to them?!") or the persuasion of example giving others the confidence or desire to voice previously unspoken truths. All this results in a certain political behavior: a roving, reactive, and expansive political consciousness ready to engage with particular issues, express outrage, and fight against injustice. It is the ethos of the protestor, the politics of conscience.

Missing is the politics of construction: creating new institutions, building up their capacity and competency, generating widespread trust in the process and outcomes of politics, and developing public accountability and shared cultural norms. Alongside this is the gradualism of positive progress: repeated and diverse discussions among people of different political views, interests, and involvement, a willingness to compromise and a faith in negotiation, a rooted engagement with institutions, and an acceptance and work toward marginal improvements. With regards to the politics of conscience or the politics of construction, various techno-historical periods have prioritized or supported these types of politics differently, and some of their features are in tension with others. The differences are significant in so far as they shape what particular kinds of politics can do.

The answer to what post-revolutionary politics can do is often far too little (good) or far too much

(evil). On one hand, even when power is overthrown, its accessories—elites, government officials, the educated, and the well-to-do—and their networks often remain, and on the other hand, the way revolutionaries seize power requires skills and favors talents that are often the opposite of what is required to exercise power well or to be able to agree who should. However, I think the struggle to develop a post-revolutionary politics is uniquely difficult now. The technological advances and political behavior that helped the protest movements mobilize and overthrow old leaders have replaced other forms of political practice, and the successes in 2011 might accelerate that displacement. However, these new technological advances and political behaviors are poorly suited to building up local institutions, enhancing state capacity, and negotiating compromises—the business of instantiating and stabilizing progress.

The difficulties of replacing leaders may push disillusioned protestors into more thoroughgoing critiques and post-institutional aspirations, and I anticipate that the hopeful headlines of 2011 may in retrospect be seen as only a brief reprieve in a period of growing global disenchantment with the existing order. New technology—above all technology that helps us to socialize—may be building a more morally conscious public. But it will also lead to a more unstable politics and world. The hope is that the former

effort overcomes the disappointment and harm of the latter effect.

But beyond the ability of the public to rally in opposition or build together, there is another technological-political future to imagine: a time when advances in big data will supplant the connectivity of social media, and in which the state will once again take the lead over its citizens, protestors or not. It is unclear if we will welcome that future or what we will be able to do to stop it.

RAMON GONZALEZ is a senior Ethics, Politics & Economics in Branford College. He is the editor of YRIS.

# ESSAYS

## Building a Better Endgame

### INTRODUCTION

In the world of monetary policy, one crisis can beget another. Much political and economic attention is tuned to the art and science of using interest rates to mop up messes in a post-bubble world. Far less attention is paid to exit strategies from these policies. However, the consequences of these central banking decisions are no less important.

In theory, an interest rate regime should follow a simple Keynesian narrative as an economy traverses the business cycle. When crisis hits, the central bank is tasked with lowering the interest rate to promote lending and investment. Once conditions improve, the traditional monetary authority re-raises rates, tightening credit conditions and leaning against an inflating economy. These high rates are sustained until crisis returns, at which point the looser recessionary policy takes hold once again.

This narrative, however, is too simple to accurately describe the nuanced history of monetary policy in the developed world. This paper considers two historical case studies: Japan in the mid-1990s and the United States in the mid-2000s.

#### JAPAN AND THE “LOST DECADE”

The seeds of Japan’s “lost decade” were sown in the 1980s. Strong GDP growth and low interest

rates stimulated substantial investment, turning economic optimism into bullish euphoria. As the output gap fell below zero, investors began pouring yen into the stock and real estate markets.<sup>1</sup> The Nikkei 225 shot up over 400% between 1986 and 1989,<sup>2</sup> while a nationwide urban land price index grew 50% before peaking in 1990.<sup>3</sup> These asset markets quickly overheated, raising concerns about a bubble economy. In response, the BOJ raised the overnight rate in an effort to lean against the bubbles, but it was too little too late (see Figure 1).

The bursting of the bubble brought an end to an era of prosperity in Japan. The Nikkei lost nearly 50% of its value between 1989 and 1991. GDP growth, which had peaked at 7% in 1990 and fallen to 2.5% by the end of 1991, continued its decline, hitting zero growth by the middle of 1992. Inflation, which had peaked at 4% in 1990, dropped steadily, hitting zero in 1994 and bringing destructive bouts of deflation after 1995.<sup>4</sup>

Economists disagree over the source of Japan’s prolonged slump. Hayashi and Prescott (2002) call upon the neoclassical growth model and show that the decade of near-zero growth can be accounted for entirely by low total factor produc-

1 Ahearne, Alan, Joseph Gagnon, Jane Haltmaier, Steven Kamin, and others. 2002. “Preventing Deflation: Lessons from Japan’s Experience in the 1990s,” International Finance Discussion Paper: 1-64.

2 [www.istockanalyst.com](http://www.istockanalyst.com)

3 Ahearne et al.

4 Ahearne et al.

tivity growth and by a reduction in the average workweek.<sup>5</sup> Krugman (1998), meanwhile, argues that the stagnation results from a liquidity trap—a zero interest rate policy left the monetary authority with insufficient tools to revive the economy.<sup>6</sup> Koo (2009) disagrees with Krugman, arguing that Japan suffered a “balance sheet recession”: in essence, the collapse in asset prices turned firms’ focus away from profit maximization and instead toward debt minimization. Firms were so busy cleaning their balance sheets that they were not interested in taking out new loans. As a result, the BOJ’s interest rate regime failed to gain traction.<sup>7</sup> Bayoumi (2000) points to the banks, suggesting that undercapitalization and falling asset prices led banks to curtail lending in an effort to maintain capital adequacy standards. This credit crunch, the author holds, had huge consequences on the real economy.<sup>8</sup> Throughout this episode, the BOJ was hard at work pumping liquidity into the economy in an effort to alleviate economic stress.

BOJ monetary policy took a number of interesting turns during the lost decade. At the end of the 1980s, the central bank began tightening in an effort to lean against the ballooning asset bubble. The overnight call money rate jumped from 3% in 1988 to 6% by 1989. Despite the crash of the stock market in early 1990, land prices

5 Hayashi, Fumio and Edward Prescott. 2002. “The 1990s in Japan: A Lost Decade.” *Review of Economic Dynamics*, 5 (1): 206-235.

6 Krugman, Paul. 1998. “It’s Baaack! Japan’s Slump and the Return of the Liquidity Trap.” *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, 2: 137-205.

7 Koo, Richard. 2009. *The Holy Grail of Macroeconomics: Lessons from Japan’s Great Recession*. New York: Wiley.

8 Bayoumi, Tamim. 2000. “The Morning After: Explaining the Slowdown in Japanese Growth in the 1990s.” *Journal of International Economics*, 53 (2): 241-259.

continued to rise (see Figure 2). As a result, the monetary authority continued to raise interest rates until August of 1990, months after GDP started to contract sharply. Soon, however, policy caught up with the slowdown. The BOJ’s interest rate dropped from its peak of 8.2% in March 1991 to just 2% in March 1995. The rate dropped even further to .5% by October 1995, just as the economy was beginning to hit its stride once more. However, with the onset of Asian financial crisis in 1997, the interest rate hit its lower bound and the BOJ found itself out of bullets.<sup>9</sup>

This interest rate regime from 1990-1996 holds up well against a Taylor Rule estimation of the optimal policy rate. Ahearne et al. (2002) compare the BOJ’s realized call money rate to two different Taylor Rule paths: one using forecast data available in the 1990s and one using actual realized output and inflation figures. In Figure 3, the authors show that from 1990 to 1995, the BOJ’s call money rate was remarkably similar to the Taylor Rule using forecast data but consistently *above* the Taylor Rule recommendations using realized data.<sup>10</sup> Bernanke and Gertler (1999) agree with Ahearne. Constructing a Taylor Rule using realized economic data, they find (Figure 4) that the years 1992-1996 suffered from excessively high interest rates, suggesting that the optimal rate from 1993-1995 would actually have been negative.<sup>11</sup>

In order to draw exit strategy lessons from the unique experience of the BOJ, one must examine the impact of the monetary regime from 1990-1996. Overall, simple

9 Ahearne et al.

10 Ahearne et al.

11 Bernanke, Ben and Gertler, Mark. 1999. “Monetary Policy and Asset Volatility.” *Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, Economic Review*, 84(4): 17-52.

FIGURE 1: The overnight call money rate in Japan from 1985-2001

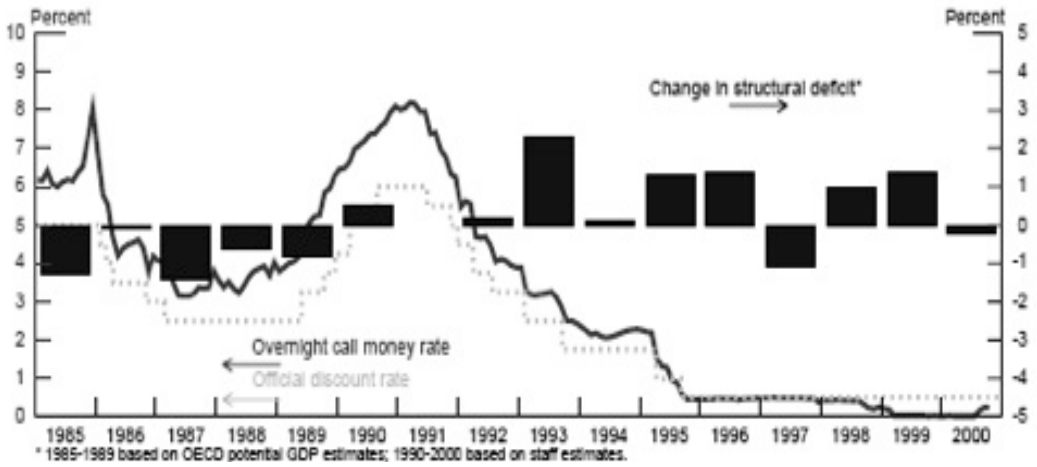
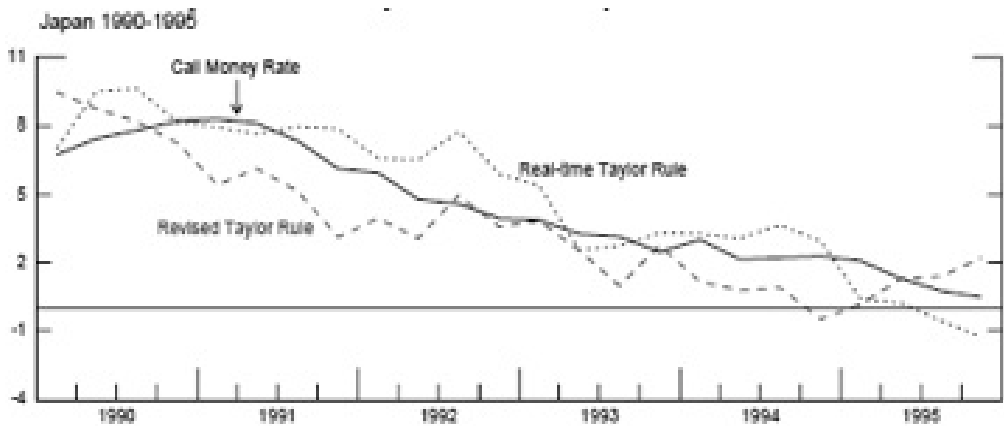


FIGURE 2: Japan Nationwide urban land price index from 1985-2001



FIGURE 3: BOJ money rate vs. Taylor Rule from 1990-1995



time series correlations suggest that the continued slashing of interest rates had a positive effect on GDP growth. Rates were slashed at the end of 1990 and real GDP growth began modest recovery in early 1992. Rates continued to fall as GDP rose slowly from 1992-1995. In 1995, the BOJ cut rates almost instantly from 2.5% to .5%, reflected in a GDP growth jump from 2% in 1992 to 4% in 1995. Bayoumi (2000) would disagree with this correlational evidence, pointing to a credit crunch as evidence that banks were unwilling to extend loans despite the low rates.<sup>12</sup> Koo (2009) would disagree on different grounds, asserting that the balance sheet crisis led firms to avoid borrowing despite low rates.<sup>13</sup>

As both Ahearne et al. (2002) and Bernanke and Gertler (1999) point out, unexpected adverse shocks to output and inflation led to an overly tight policy rate when held up against realized economic data. This deflation crippled the Japanese economy. First, deflation led to a transfer of wealth from debtors to creditors, then it stimulated an increase in unemployment, as wage rigidities prevented the labor market from accurately responding to the change in the nominal wage rate.

Finally, the post-crisis monetary regime brought Japan into a prolonged liquidity trap. As nominal interest rates approached zero in 1995, the BOJ ran out of room to lower rates. This led to sub-optimal interest rates from 1995-1997. Ahearne et al. (2002) and Bernanke and Gertler (1999) agree that the Taylor Rule recommendation for the optimal rate dipped below zero during this period (see Figures 3 and 4). However, because the nominal interest rate is bound above

zero, these optimal rates could not be achieved using the conventional toolkit. Thus, policy was too tight from 1995-1997, leading to slow GDP growth and deflation.<sup>14</sup>

Central banks facing liquidity traps do possess a host of alternative means by which to stimulate the economy. For example, in the early 2000s, in an effort to reduce long-term interest rates, the BOJ targeted expectations of future short-term rates by making a commitment to continue their zero interest rate policy for an extended period of time.<sup>15</sup> Alternatively, as demonstrated first by Japan in the late 1990s and then by the US in the late 2000s, central banks can promise to purchase long-term securities at a price consistent with low long-term interest rates. However, Japan did not take any of these unconventional steps when the economy first experienced a liquidity trap in 1995.

## THE US BETWEEN RECESSIONS

The US case begins with the “dot-com” bubble that fueled GDP growth and speculative asset price increases from 1995-2000. From January 1998 to January 2000, the Dow Jones Industrial Average ballooned from 7,700 to 11,700 points, driven by extreme growth in the technology sector.<sup>16</sup> As the bubble inflated, Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan raised the federal funds rate six times between 1999 and 2000 in an effort to lean against the bubble. The economy gradually slowed until the bubble finally burst in early 2000, and the shock of this was

<sup>14</sup> Ahearne et al.; Bernanke and Gertler.  
<sup>15</sup> Shirakawa, Masaaki. 2010. From “High-Level Policy Panel on Financial Stability Issues: Unconventional Monetary Policy - How Central Banks Can Face the Challenges and Learn the Lessons.”  
<sup>16</sup> [www.google.com/finance](http://www.google.com/finance).

<sup>12</sup> Bayoumi.  
<sup>13</sup> Koo.

FIGURE 4: Japan - The actual (solid) and Taylor Rule (dashed) call money rate using realized economic data

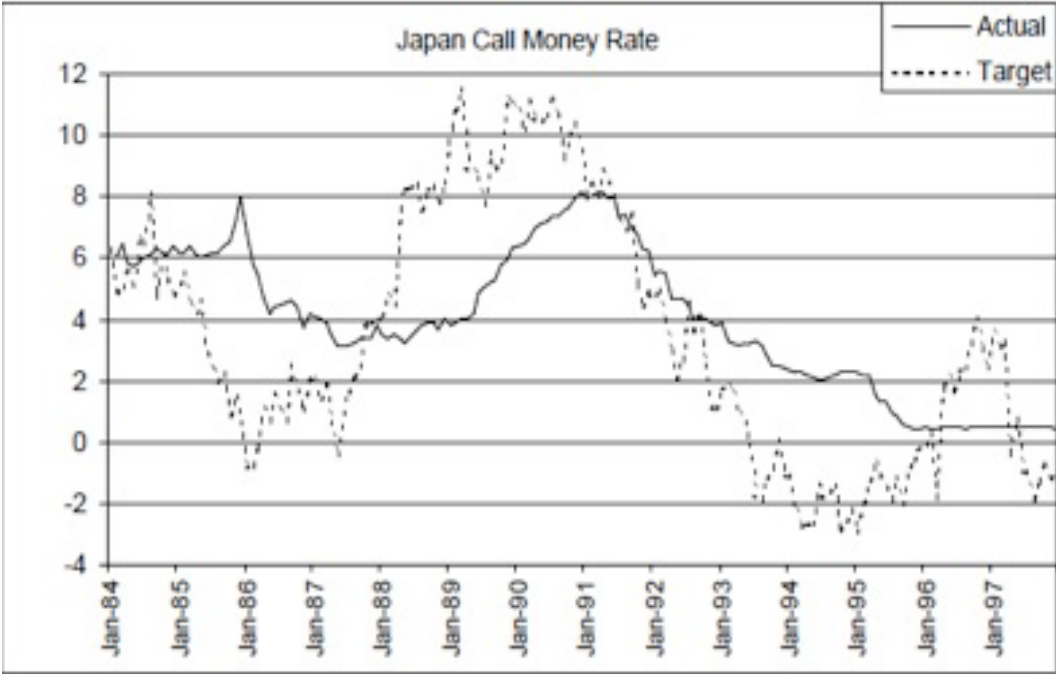


FIGURE 5: Dow Jones Industrial Average from 1998-2010





compounded by both a series of corporate scandals and the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

What began as a slowdown snowballed into a recession. The Dow slipped from its peak of 11,700, falling below 10,000 in February of 2000 and continuing downward until bottoming out at 7,500 in October of 2000.<sup>17</sup> (see figure 5) GDP growth would also tumble, falling from a peak of 5% in 1999 to 1% in 2001. However, recovery followed quickly. Aggressive fiscal and policy measures, in the form of tax cuts and interest rate cuts, stabilized the economy. GDP growth bounced back up to 3.5% in 2004 and remained above 2% until 2007. (see Figure 6) Prices remained stable, falling from 3.5% inflation in 2000 to 1% inflation in 2003 and rising back up to 4% by late 2006. (see figure 7) Asset prices, however, rose precipitously.<sup>18</sup> The Dow Jones exploded from its low of 7,500 in October of 2000 to a high of over 14,000 in 2007—nearly doubling in value. Even more troubling was the growth in housing prices (as reported by the Case-Shiller Home Price Index). (see Figure 8) These had remained relatively stable from 1990-1996 before embarking on a remarkable upward trend. From 1998-2000, annual growth had increased from 10% to 15% before falling back to 10% in 2001. With recovery came a wild increase in house prices, as annual growth rose from 10% in 2001 to an astounding 20% in 2004.<sup>19</sup>

In 2007, this blazing growth came to a rapid halt. The slowdown began with a decline in housing prices, as annual growth fell from 20% in 2004 to 15% in 2006 and then all the way to -20% by 2009. The stock market experienced a similar

slide, with the Dow dropping from its 14,000 peak in 2007 to 12,000 in early 2008 and then freefalling all the way to 6,500 in early 2009.<sup>20</sup> The years from 2002-2006 provide a perfect case study for monetary policy and exit strategies to hold up against the more unconventional experience of Japan during the lost decade. Greenspan raised the federal funds rate six times between 1999 and 2000 in order to lean against the growing dot-com bubble, leaving the rate at 6.5% through the start of 2001. With the onset of the recession, the Fed immediately began to loosen its policy. The federal funds rate tumbled to 1.75% by 2002 before dropping to 1.25% in 2003 and then 1% in 2004. As the economy recovered through 2004, the interest rate remained at the extreme 1% mark. Not until 2005 did the Fed exit from its post-crisis regime, tightening gradually until the federal funds rate reached 5.25% in late 2006, where it remained until the onset of the financial crisis in 2007.<sup>21</sup> (see figure 9)

Unlike the BOJ's policy, the Fed's interest rate regime performs poorly when compared to a Taylor Rule estimation of the optimal policy. An estimate from Taylor (2007) shows that Greenspan waited far too long to exit from its post-crisis monetary regime, sustaining extremely low rates when output and inflation figures called instead for relative tightening. Figure 9 shows that the Fed should have begun re-raising interest rates as early as 2002, gradually increasing to 5% by early 2005. In comparison, the monetary authority actually decreased rates from 2002 to 2004, leaving them a full 3% below the Taylor Rule recommendation. Not until 2006 did the federal funds rate come back in

17 [www.google.com/finance](http://www.google.com/finance).

18 Federal Reserve Economic Data.

19 S&P Indices Press Release. 2011. "Home Prices Edge Closer to 2009 Lows."

20 [www.google.com/finance](http://www.google.com/finance).

21 Federal Reserve Economic Data.

FIGURE 6: Real GDP growth rate in the US from 1998-2010

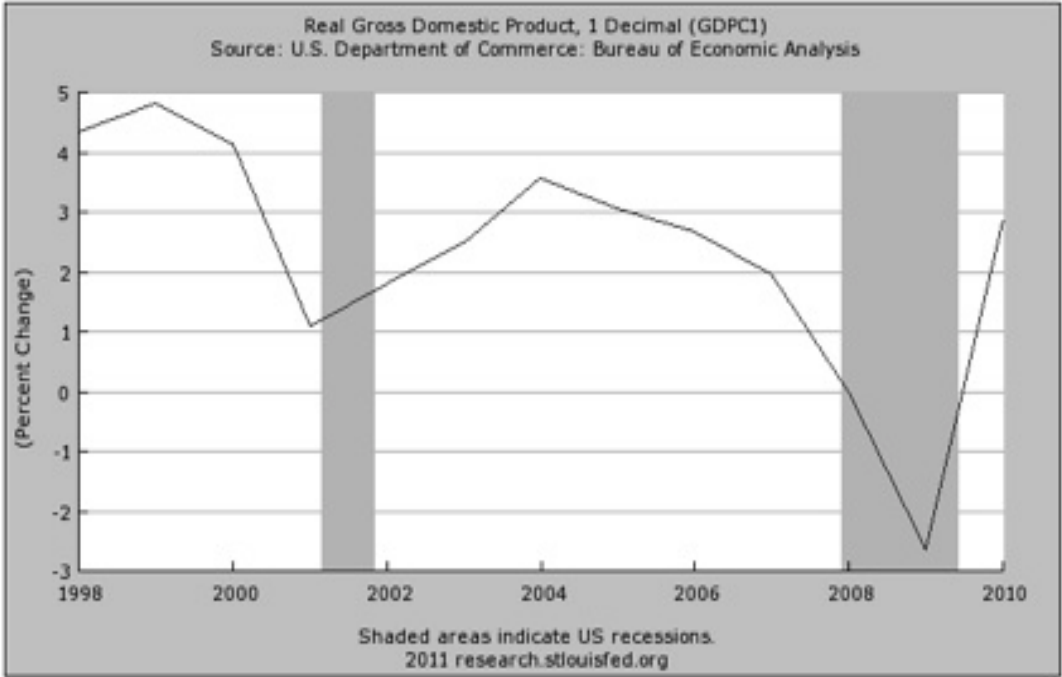
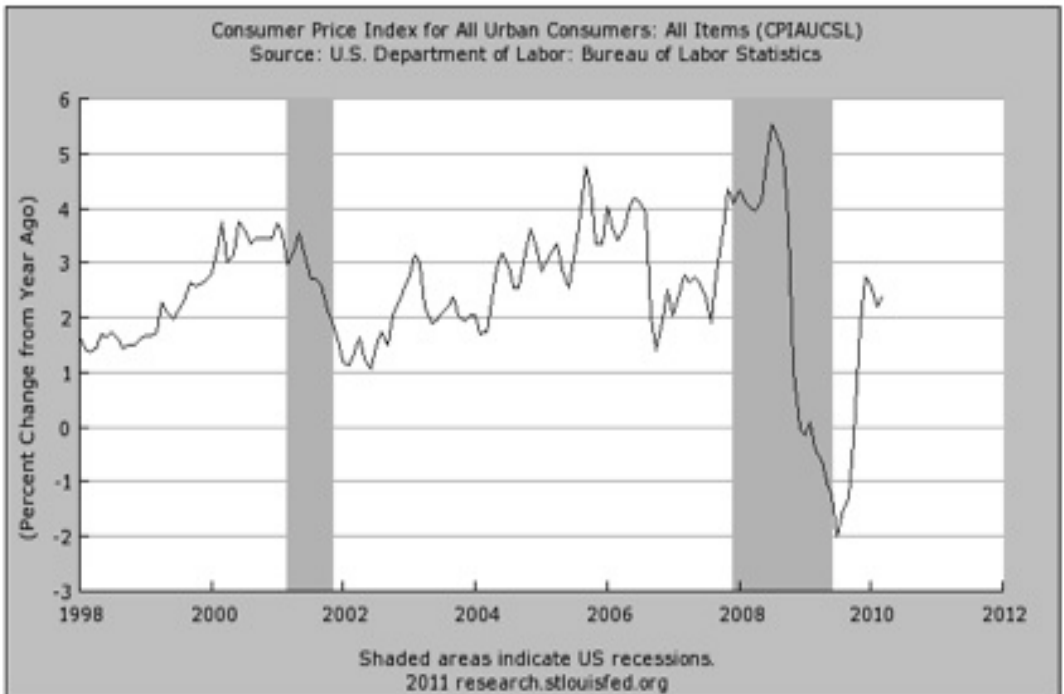


FIGURE 7: Inflation rate as measured by CPI in the US from 1998 to 2010



line with the Taylor Rule's recommendation.<sup>22</sup> Monetary policy was also far too loose to be optimal. Greenspan kept the federal funds rate at recessionary levels even as the economy appeared to make a full recovery. In fact, rates remained low even as asset prices began to balloon in 2005.

Correlational data suggests that this loose monetary policy, together with substantial tax cuts, fueled speedy recovery following the dot-com crisis. As the federal funds rate sat below 2% between 2002 and 2005, GDP growth took off, rising from 1.5% in 2002 to 3.5% by 2004.

Many have accused the Fed's loose interest rate regime with inflating the housing bubble and thus facilitating the global financial meltdown in 2007. Greenspan's exit from the recessionary policies begun in 2001 was too late and too slow. As a result, low interest rates persisted in a healthy economy and generated an overflow of liquidity. Among those criticizing the Fed is Taylor (2008), who claims that the Fed's deviation from 20 years of more prudent monetary policy directly accelerated the housing bubble. To prove this, he estimates housing starts through a counterfactual model in which the Fed's interest rate follows the Taylor Rule prescription, and compares these results to realized housing starts. As shown in Figure 10, strict Taylor Rule monetary policy would have allowed the US to avoid the crisis almost completely.<sup>23</sup>

The reluctance to tighten mon-

etary policy at the speed implied by the Taylor Rule suggests that Greenspan may have hesitated under political pressure. As Greenspan himself describes, "During my eighteen-and-a-half-year tenure, I cannot remember many calls from presidents or Capitol Hill for the Fed to *raise* interest rates. In fact, I believe there was none..."

## LESSONS FROM HISTORY

The first and most obvious lesson drawn from this picture is that exit strategies can have incredibly important consequences. In the Japanese case, the liquidity trap and deflation that resulted from post-crisis monetary policy represent serious economic challenges that still haunt Japan's economy. In the US case, the housing market crash fed by loose interest rates brought the nation's most powerful recession since the Great Depression. While this economic turmoil would likely have persisted even without the contributions of central banks, monetary policy exit strategies certainly fanned the flames of catastrophe.

The second lesson of the case studies is that interest rate risks are a two-sided phenomenon. In the case of Japan, monetary policy was too tight considering realized data, and this brought about crippling and persistent deflation. In the case of the Fed, policy was too loose, feeding asset price inflation and bubble behavior. Thus, there is no simple prescription for evaluating interest rate risk asymmetrically; price level danger lurks both above and below.

This leads to a third lesson—that optimal monetary exit strategy is ultimately a path-dependent problem. The Japanese and US cases

22 Taylor, John. 2007. "Housing and Monetary Policy." Remarks presented at the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City Symposium "Housing, Housing Finance, and Monetary Policy," Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

23 Taylor, John. 2008. "The Financial Crisis and the Policy Response: An Empirical Analysis of What Went Wrong." NBER Working Paper.

FIGURE 8: Case-Shiller home price index, US from 1988-2010

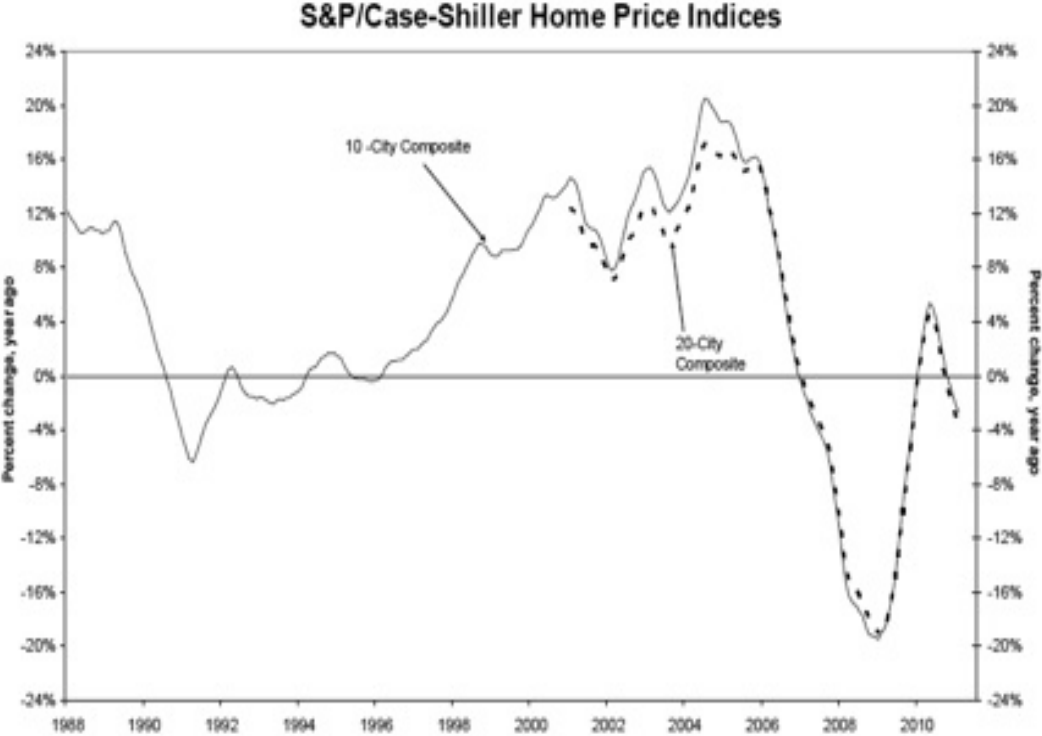
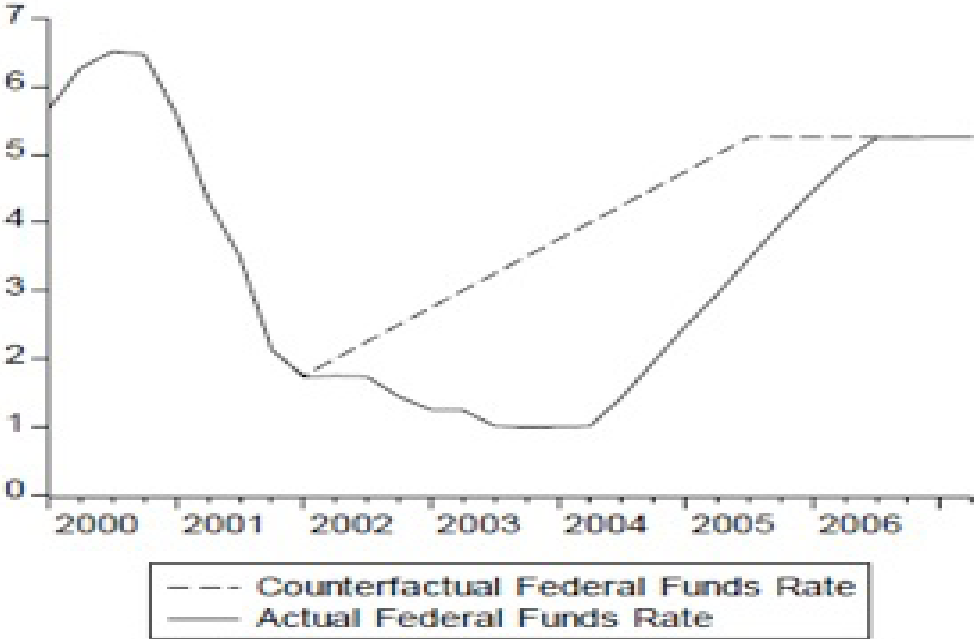


FIGURE 9: The actual federal funds rate (solid) compared against the Taylor Rule recommendation (dashed)



demonstrate that the risks associated with monetary exits—whether inflationary or deflationary—depend on the conditions leading up to the exit. When assessing risks, policymakers clearly must weigh the severity of the initial bubble (Japan’s bubble was bigger, sparking deflation), the structural resilience of the economy (Japan faced structural issues, also feeding deflation), general price stability (the US enjoys greater price stability and thus avoided deflation), current trends in asset prices (the US housing market was already inflated, triggering the negative impacts of the loose monetary policy) and the feedback between asset prices and real economic variables (the US has deep ties between these, enhancing the effects of the housing bubble crash). Further, the Japanese case demonstrates that adverse economic shocks can throw another wrench into the problem (price and GDP shocks led Japanese policy to be too tight in hindsight).

Fourth, there are clear dangers associated with both rule-based and decision-based monetary policy in a post-crisis economy. The Japanese case demonstrates that rule-based policy is vulnerable to adverse shocks. BOJ policy that appeared to be optimal according to a strict Taylor Rule prescription turned out to be too tight due to shocks to GDP and inflation. On the flip side, the US case demonstrates that true “classic” banking, ignoring the Taylor Rule recommendations, is prone to the dangers of politicization. Greenspan’s revealing statement indicates that a holistic approach to banking can leave rates subject to political pressure to maintain loose policy. The result was a delayed exit that fed a dangerous asset bubble. Thus, there is no single dominant strategy.

Finally, there are special economic risks associated with a zero interest rate policy. Among other things, entering into a liquidity trap leaves a central bank with no interest rate weapons to combat further economic shock.

In short, all of these consequences are two-sided as both tight and loose monetary policy come with large risks and the balance between these risks is path-dependent.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper recommends a rule-based exit strategy. This framework would *not* represent a specific pre-commitment to maintenance of a single variable, as in an inflation-targeting scheme. However, it would represent a pre-commitment to a set of policy rules. Specifically, the central bank would be required to lay out and communicate a multi-year baseline forecast for the economy (under recovery), using advanced models to predict levels of output growth, unemployment, inflation and asset prices. The bank would then lay out and communicate an optimal interest rate policy path consistent with the forecast. This rules-based system would be holistic, incorporating all relevant economic data into a model-based optimization.

The fate of the economy should not be left to the whims of an individual, and a rule-based system naturally induces objectivity. Equally important, this rule-based system would remove the temptation of politicization. The US case above highlighted the risks of leaving policy open to political influence, as the short election cycle rewards overly-loose monetary policy that has potential to inflate asset bub-

bles.

This strategy would also allow for increased transparency. Published forecasts and planned policy paths would keep the public in tune with the central bank's activities. This, in turn, would increase the credibility of the bank. Deviations from the optimal policy path would result from forecast misses due to economic shocks and would thus be easy to communicate to the public. This would reduce the credibility cost of surprising policy. Heightened transparency represents a non-trivial benefit, particularly in the midst of monetary exit, when confidence in the central bank will likely be low.

One of the most important advantages of a rule-based system lies in its impact on expectations. By publishing target rates and projections, the central bank would provide an explicit "reference point" for expectations of future interest rates (as well as other economic variables).<sup>24</sup> These expectations are important for inducing economic changes through monetary policy. Gurkaynak, Sack and Swanson (2004) confirm this by demonstrating that three-fourths of the explainable variation in the movements of five- and ten-year Treasury yields around FOMC meetings is accounted for by the statements released by the FOMC, rather than by changes in the actual federal funds rate.<sup>25</sup> Rudebusch and Williams (2008) use a theoretical analysis to show that central bank communication of interest rate projections better aligns the public's and central bank's expectation. This alignment,

they demonstrate, leads to improved macroeconomic outcomes.<sup>26</sup>

Of course, there are considerable costs associated with a rule-based framework. Among these is the increased cost of a forecast "miss." As Rudebusch and Williams point out, the heightened sensitivity of future interest rate expectations can increase the costs of economic shocks. In their paper, they emphasize the need for a communications strategy that highlights the conditionality and uncertainty surrounding the central bank projections.

The second central feature of this exit strategy recommendation attempts to mitigate the costs of these deviations. As suggested by Ahearne et al. (2010) in reference to deflation, this policy rule should be weighted asymmetrically to guard against various economic risks, thus insuring that a forecast miss does not result in catastrophe. In the case of Japan during the lost decade, this would have meant overweighing the risk of deflation and thus generating a looser policy rule. In the case of the US after the dot-com bubble, this would have meant overweighing the risk of an asset bubble and thus generating a tighter policy rule.

The challenge, of course, is knowing how to weigh various economic risks. This is where the path-dependency of optimal exit strategies can be beneficial. The Japanese and US cases demonstrate that the economic circumstances leading up to a monetary exit provide substantial clues as to the special risks faced and thus the optimal interest rate regime. The size of a bubble and subsequent recession can influ-

<sup>24</sup> Padoa-Schioppa, Refet, Brian Sack, and Eric Swanson. 2005. "Do Actions Speak Louder than Words? The Response of Asset Prices to Monetary Policy Actions and Statements." *International Journal of Central Banking*, 1: 55-93.

<sup>26</sup> Rudebusch, Glenn, and John Williams. 2008. "Revealing the Secrets of the Temple: The Value of Publishing Central Bank Interest Rate Projections." In *Monetary Policy and Asset Prices*, ed. John Campbell. Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 247-284.

FIGURE 10: Housing starts. Solid line shows actual housing starts. Short-dashed line shows housing starts under model simulation using actual interest rate. Long-dashed line shows housing starts under model simulation using Taylor Rule interest rate

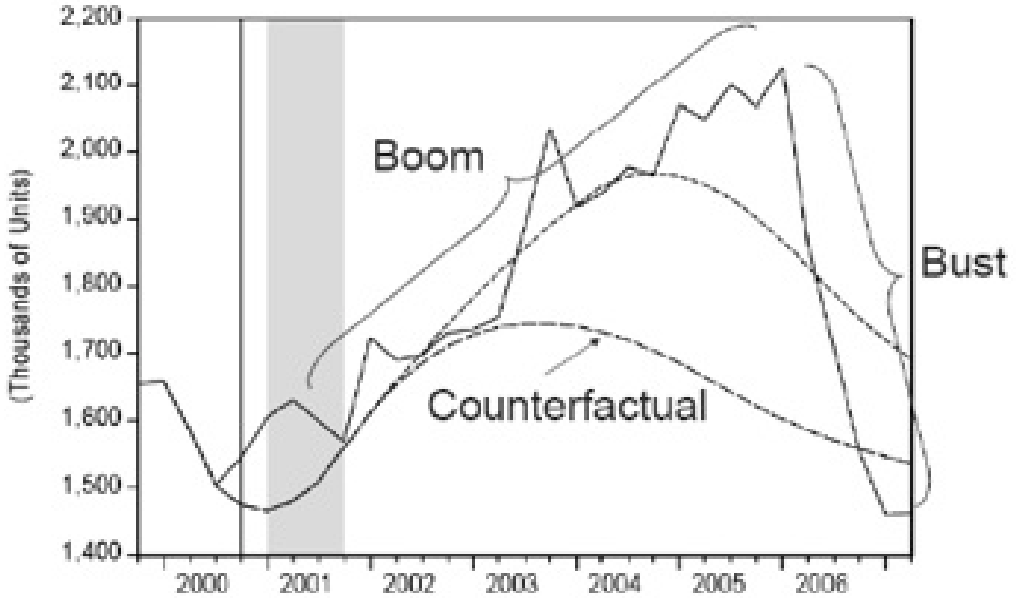
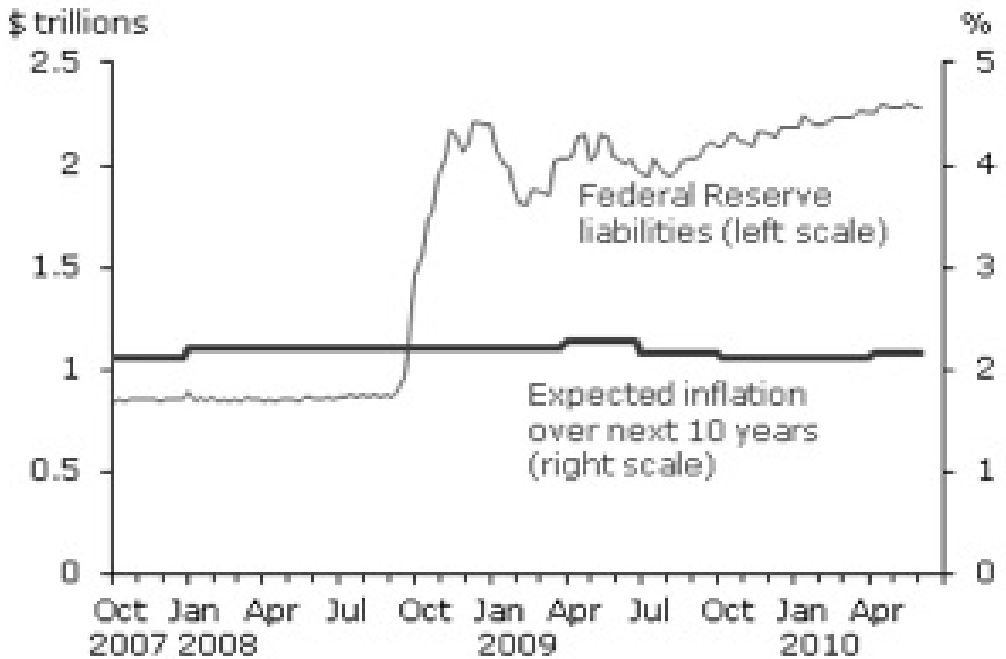


FIGURE 11: Federal Reserve liabilities (light) and expected inflation (dark), as measured by the survey of professional forecasters





ence in the relative risks of inflation versus deflation. A bigger bubble, as in the case of Japan in 1990, can induce deflationary risks post-recovery. A smaller bubble, as in the case of the US in 2000, can result in over-correction and asset price inflation during policy exit. Finally, central banks should carefully consider the path of asset prices in calculating the risk of loose policy inflating an asset bubble. This is no simple task, but considering the enormous costs of the housing bubble burst, it is a crucial one moving forward. As Greenspan quipped, “There is little dispute that the prices of stocks, bonds, homes, real estate, and exchange rates affect GDP. But most central banks have chosen, at least to date, not to view asset prices as targets of policy... asset prices will remain high on the research agenda of central banks for years to come.”<sup>27</sup>

The third feature of this recommended framework concerns exit from unconventional monetary regimes. In times of deep, prolonged crisis, some central bankers find that driving the short-term interest rate to the zero nominal bound falls short of stimulating desired levels of investment. Both Japan in the mid-2000s and the US today have experimented with quantity controls, purchasing longer-term securities at prices consistent with lower long-term interest rates. While this technique was *not* employed by Japan during the lost decade or the US after the dot-com bubble, it represents a popular new solution to the liquidity trap.

This policy recommendation calls for a particularly slow, careful exit from quantity controls. Should

a central bank find its balance sheet immersed in long-term securities, the banker should exercise patience in unloading those commitments. The monetary authority should factor the effect of these purchases into the policy forecast, but begin monetary exit by starting to unwind interest rate controls before unloading balance sheet controls.

The primary motivation for this conservative strategy is uncertainty. There is little precedent to help predict the effects of a massive security sell-off on the economy, financial markets, and the prices of the securities themselves. Under such uncertainty, a slower sell-off plays a crucial role in avoiding unanticipated complications. In 2010, the FOMC arrived at the same conclusion, noting that “Most participants favored deferring asset sales for some time. A majority preferred beginning asset sales some time after the first increase in the Federal Open Market Committee’s (FOMC) target for short-term interest rates.”<sup>28</sup>

Some have expressed concern that a slow exit from recessionary quantity controls could trigger increases in inflation expectations and thus inflation. However, Rudebusch (2010) refutes these claims, showing in Figure 11 that the massive increase in Fed liabilities from less than one trillion dollars in October of 2008 to over two trillion dollars in December of 2008 had no discernable impact on long-run inflation expectations, as measured by the Survey of Professional Forecasters.<sup>29</sup>

27 Greenspan, Alan. 2004. “Risk and Uncertainty in Monetary Policy.” Remarks at the Meetings of the American Economic Association, San Diego, California.

28 Minutes of the Federal Open Market Committee, April 27-28, 2010.

29 Rudebusch, 2010.



## CONCLUSIONS

To summarize, this paper recommends a three-pronged policy framework for monetary exit regimes. The first feature is a rule-based strategy in which the central bank is required to lay out an economic forecast and an estimate of the optimal interest rate policy path. This would remove subjectivity in rate-setting, reduce the temptations of politicization, inspire more confidence and accountability in the central bank and strengthen the link between monetary policy and expectations. To minimize the considerable costs associated with forecast “misses” under a rule-based regime, the second tenet would have the bank asymmetrically weigh the costs of various economic risks. Specifically, central bankers should use the history of path-dependence in optimal exit strategies to determine which risks realistically merit active prevention. These asymmetric risks should include the threat of asset price inflation. Finally, this policy recommends a slow unwinding from quantity controls. Because of the uncertainty, imprecision and sheer magnitude associated with the purchase and sale of long-term securities, central banks should unwind with extreme caution only after beginning price control exit.

These lessons are highly relevant to the current policy debate in the US. Bernanke’s extreme interest rate and balance sheet policies have left the Fed in need of a well-designed exit strategy. As the Japanese and US cases have shown,

even small failures during the endgame can produce disastrous consequences down the road. While Bernanke holds that it is too early to begin unwinding, the Fed must use history as its guide in a post-crisis policy world. Will Bernanke learn from the lessons of Japan to avoid a protracted deflationary slump? Will he draw on his predecessor’s errors to prevent rampant asset price inflation? The answers to these questions will shape the path of the global economy for years to come.

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JOHN ETTINGER is a senior Economics major in Saybrook College. John is interested in East Asian economics and its linkages to and lessons for US macro policy and hopes to work writing economic policy.

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[18] [www.google.com/finance](http://www.google.com/finance).

[19] [www.istockanalyst.com](http://www.istockanalyst.com). Figure 1. The overnight call money rate (in red) in Japan from 1985-2001.

## The political significance of a holy site

*“Ten measures of beauty gave God to the world: nine to Jerusalem and one to the remainder. Ten measures of sorrow gave God to the world: nine to Jerusalem and one to the remainder.”*

-TALMUD

### INTRODUCTION

As the above quotation from the Talmud (a collection of interpretations of the Jewish Torah) succinctly notes, throughout history the city of Jerusalem has been the source of both immeasurable beauty and tragic sorrow, peaceful coexistence and violent bloodshed, holy prayer and brutal destruction. A sacred place for the world’s three largest Abrahamic religions, a crucial city in the histories of numerous empires, and a capital claimed by two separate peoples, Jerusalem is unique, both for its profoundly significant role in human history and its continued modern day importance. Jerusalem is at the center of the ongoing peace process between Israel and Palestine, and it has served not only as a beacon of hope for people around the globe, but also as political and spiritual sticking point that has led to the collapse of multiple talks and summits.

This paper does not attempt to recount the entire history or unravel the complex legal status of this city upon a hill; such an effort would be too ambitious for this space, and similar efforts have been undertaken by a number of scholars in the past. Rather, it seeks first to provide enough background information to position Jerusalem

as a case study for a plethora of issues plaguing today’s international scene, and then to offer a potential solution to this quandary based upon Jerusalem’s historical, religious and political significance.

### RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE

*“Jews, Christians and Muslims have been drawn to Jerusalem precisely because they believe it to be a sacred center—the ‘touching point between the divine and the earthly, the place where heaven and earth meet.”<sup>1</sup>*

Jerusalem is a holy site for each of the world’s three primary Abrahamic faiths: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Though the details of its sanctity differ from faith to faith, there exists a common thread among these three religions in their spiritual attachment to Jerusalem, and their intense desire to protect and defend their holy places.

### JERUSALEM IN JUDAISM

1 Janin Hunt. *Four Paths to Jerusalem: Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Secular Pilgrimages, 1000 BCE to 2001 CE.* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2002) 16.

Judaism is the world's oldest monotheistic religion, and its exclusive geographic focus is Jerusalem. In fact, Jerusalem is so important to the Jewish tradition that the city is given 70 names in the Mishnah (the Jewish oral corpus) ranging from "Peace" to "Faithful City" to "City of Righteousness" to "Doorway to the World's Peoples."<sup>2</sup> According to sacred Jewish texts, Jerusalem first gained its political importance when King David established it as the united capital of the twelve tribes of Israel in 1000 BCE. Yet its religious significance was sealed centuries earlier, when Abraham ascended Mount Moriah in Jerusalem in the famous story of the Binding of Isaac, as recounted in Genesis 22. For hundreds of years, the focal point of Jewish religious life was the Temple in Jerusalem, which was located on the rock upon which the city was originally founded. The First Temple was constructed under King Solomon in 957 BCE, and stood until it was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BCE. The Second Temple was constructed a few decades later, was renovated following years of plundering and looting under King Herod in the first century CE, and was ultimately destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE.<sup>3</sup> Before its destruction, the Temple had an elaborate layout centered on the "holy of holies," where the Ark of the Covenant, containing the Ten Commandments and the *shekhina* (God's Divine Presence), was located. Only the Western Wall, which still stands in Jerusalem today, survived the final Roman destruction.

Even in the current era, many Jewish practices are still focused around the Temple and, consequently, Jerusalem. The Western Wall is

the holiest site in Judaism, and pious Jews pray there on a daily basis. Around the world, Jews face toward Jerusalem while praying, and much of the liturgy contains passages of mourning for the Temple's destruction as well as songs of hope for its rebuilding. Jerusalem moreover plays an essential eschatological function in the Jewish religion: it is believed that when the "end of days" arrives, the Temple will be rebuilt and Jerusalem will be the final destination for all of mankind. As a result, many Jews today "see control of the Temple Mount or Har HaBayit as central to the Messianic Age."<sup>4</sup>

## JERUSALEM IN CHRISTIANITY

Jerusalem is a crucial component of the Christian narrative as well, serving as an important center of Christian pilgrimage due in part to its revered role in the account of Jesus' death and eventual resurrection. It is believed that in the year 29 CE, Jesus went to Jerusalem for one of the traditional Jewish pilgrimages (in this case, the *Pesakh* journey), and was in the city at the time of his death; he was then crucified on a hillock called Golgotha just outside the city's first century walls. Moreover, the Holy Sepulcher—the tomb in which Jesus was buried—is located in Jerusalem, and is the site for the "most important single sanctuary in Christian culture". As it does in Judaism, Jerusalem also plays a role in Christianity eschatology as the setting of the Day of Last Judgment. In Paul's time, Christians believed that, at the end of days, Jerusalem would become heaven itself, in that

<sup>2</sup> Hunt 24

<sup>3</sup> Kamil Jamil Asali. *Jerusalem in History*. (Buckhurst Hill: Scorpion, 1989).

<sup>4</sup> Marshall J. Breger and Thomas A. Idinopulos. *Jerusalem's Holy Places & The Peace Process*. (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1998) 53.

“a heavenly Jerusalem would physically descend from the clouds and God would establish a divine kingdom on earth there.”<sup>5</sup>

Today, as Breger writes, “members of the Christian community in Jerusalem have at least two concerns regarding the holy places in Jerusalem. First, they are concerned to have their ‘rights’ in the holy places and the city in some way confirmed (or reconfirmed) in international law. And second, they are concerned with ensuring rights of access, freedom of religious activity, and freedom of pilgrimage to the holy places and the Holy City.” These worries are undoubtedly rooted in the demographic trends within Jerusalem’s Christian community—its population has dropped from 30,000 in 1948 to a mere 10,000 today.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the “Christian community” is in no way monolithic, and there exist strong tensions between the many Christian factions in the city. Furthermore, the majority of lay Christians living in Jerusalem today are Palestinians, who are hesitant to distance themselves too much from broader Palestinian concerns.

### JERUSALEM IN ISLAM

Jerusalem is also remarkably significant in Islam, the most populous faith tradition in the Middle East today. When Muhammad took his Night Journey to heaven in the year 620, it is told that he went through Jerusalem—as Zwi Werblowsky succinctly articulated, “there are no direct flights from Mecca to heaven; you have to make a stopover in Jerusalem.”<sup>7</sup> It is told that during this Night Journey, Muhammad stopped at the al-Aqsa

<sup>5</sup> Hunt 25  
<sup>6</sup> Breger 27-29  
<sup>7</sup> Hunt 29

mosque on the Temple Mount, which remains a holy place in Islam today. Jerusalem contains a second particularly sacred site for Muslims: the famous Dome of the Rock. The Muslim tradition holds that this was the very place from which Muhammad ascended to heaven with the angel Gabriel, and that the Dome of the Rock is where the Day of Judgment will occur. Originally, Jerusalem was deemed the location to face during Muslim prayer services; while this decision was ultimately reversed, it nevertheless underscores the importance of Jerusalem—and the Temple Mount in particular—in the Muslim faith.

### THE TEMPLE MOUNT

On the eastern edge of the Old City lies the Temple Mount, the location of the Western Wall, the al-Aqsa Mosque, and the Dome of the Rock. As the previous section elucidated, these sites are among the holiest in the world for Judaism and Islam, making the Temple Mount important in the various peace talks that have occurred (the Holy Sepulcher—the most important Christian holy site—lies 400 yards to the West of the Temple Mount). The Temple Mount has a complicated history, which will be more fully recounted in subsequent sections. In brief, despite changes in sovereignty, the Temple Mount has been ruled continuously by an Islamic *waqf*, or council, since 1187. Even when Israel regained control of Eastern Jerusalem in 1967, Israeli officials declared that “the Temple Mount area was off limits for Jewish worship and that Muslim religious officials were free to organize and administer worship at the mosques as before.” This declaration was partly political, yet had religious

undertones—*halakha* (Jewish law) prohibits Jews from walking on the Temple Mount so that they do not accidentally tread upon and therefore desecrate the holy ground upon which the Holy of Holies originally stood, and where it is believed God's Divine Presence still resides. Nonetheless, the laws concerning the Temple Mount remain complicated and confusing: "Israel claims sovereignty over the Temple Mount, but has chosen *de facto* to allow the waqf to control day-to-day activity on the Mount absent any breakdown of public order."<sup>8</sup> Moreover, should Jerusalem be divided as a capital for two different states, both groups have expressed their desire to maintain control over the Temple Mount and their holy sites.

## HISTORY OF JERUSALEM

*Jerusalem has had one of the most complicated histories of any city in world history. It has changed hands more than twenty times, and "it is possible that more blood has been shed for Jerusalem than for any other city on the face of the earth."*<sup>9</sup>

### KING DAVID THROUGH ISLAMIC RULE: 993 BCE - 1517 CE

Jerusalem was first established as the political center of the Jewish people under King David in the 10th Century BCE. From 993 BCE to 933 BCE, the city was ruled by King David and his successor King Solomon, whose descendants continued to maintain control for the next several centuries. Even when the kingdom split into the Kingdom of Israel in the North and the Kingdom

of Judah in the South, Jerusalem remained the capital of Judah under the House of David and Solomon. The city survived the Assyrian siege in 701 BCE that decimated the Northern Kingdom, but was unable to withstand the Babylonian siege in 597 BCE.

Once Nebuchdnezzar and the Babylonians took over, they burnt the first temple and destroyed the walls of the city. The majority of the Jewish inhabitants were forced into exile until Cyrus II of Persia conquered the city decades later and allowed the original settlers to return. The Persian rule proved beneficial for the Jews, who were allowed under Darius the Great in 516 BCE to finish the construction of the second temple. Alexander the Great defeated the Persians, however, and Jerusalem fell under Greek control. Many Jews assimilated and were Hellenized, yet a valiant few—under the Maccabees—mobilized and organized a revolt which, in 168 BCE, succeeded. For almost 200 years, Jerusalem was ruled by Jews as the capital of the independent Hasmonean Kingdom.

Throughout the Hasmonean rule, however, the Jews slowly ceded more and more control over to the Romans, who viewed Jerusalem first as an autonomous province, then ultimately as a participant in their vast empire. In 19 BCE, the Romans installed Herod as a Jewish client king, upon whose death Judea and Jerusalem truly came under direct Roman control. The Jewish population attempted numerous rebellions under the Roman empire, including the "Great Revolt" in 66 CE that eventually led to the destruction of the Second Temple by Roman legions in 70 CE, and the Bar Kokhba revolt of 132 CE which was briefly successful yet ultimately concluded

8 Breger 42-44  
9 Hunt 41

with Roman suppression and a ban on Jews entering Jerusalem that lasted into the 4th century. Roman rule and its eastern Byzantine counterpart remained intact until the seventh century, with a brief punctuation of Persian domination from 614 to 629 before the return to Byzantine control.

The next major shift in the history of Jerusalem and its surrounding areas occurred in 638 CE, when the Islamic caliphate gained control of the city. Islamic rule was very inclusive, and Jews were allowed back into the city. Various Islamic dynasties ruled for the next four hundred years, beginning with the Umayyads, continuing with the Abbasids and Fatimids, and concluding with a brief rule by the Seljuqs. In 1099, however, crusaders gained control of the city and established the Kingdom of Jerusalem. The crusaders were ruthless warriors who massacred Jews and Muslims before expelling any non-Christians who remained in the city. Yet in 1187, Saladin recaptured Palestine, and established a policy of religious tolerance that enabled Jews and Muslims to reenter and populate the city. From 1197 to 1244, the Ayyubids remained in power, but 1244 saw a conquest by the Tartars, who decimated Christian populations and drove out the Jews. The Ayyubids succeeded in driving out the Tartars in 1247, but were sufficiently weakened by the episode that they fell to the Mamluks in 1250, who continued to rule until 1517.

### JERUSALEM UNDER THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE: 1517-1917

From 1517 to 1917, Jerusalem was a key part of the vast Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans were

an Islamic power, and thus “had no need to legislate concerning Islamic holy places because those places were administered by a waqf (religious foundation) recognized in shari’a [Islamic law].”<sup>10</sup> Under the Ottomans, Jews and Christians had a secure but decidedly secondary status. They were considered dhimmis, or “people of the book” and therefore were not excessively persecuted, but they were subject to extraordinarily excessive taxes and bouts of maltreatment. Particularly in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, “Jerusalem’s Jews, powerless and poor, experienced indignities directed at them by Muslims as Jews conducted their worship at the Wall—indignities such as stoning, herding animals in the narrow alley before the Wall, and befouling the sacred Wall with animal excrement.” Similarly, “Christians in Jerusalem complained that during periods of military conflict, Muslims made a practice of defacing the figures of saints in churches.”<sup>11</sup> As the Ottoman Empire declined, Jerusalem and the land of Palestine became increasingly neglected by the central government in Constantinople, and other European powers began to assert their influence in the region. In 1917, the Ottomans lost control of Jerusalem, a sign of the empire’s imminent collapse.

### BRITISH RULE: 1917-1948

The secret 1916 Sykes-Picot agreement between Britain and France stipulated that Jerusalem and the majority of Palestine fall under international control with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. On December 9, 1917, however, Britain

<sup>10</sup> Hunt 4  
<sup>11</sup> Breger 5



violated this agreement with their successful conquest of Jerusalem. British officials claimed that under their rule, “every sacred building, monument, holy spot, traditional shrine, endowment, pious bequest, or customary place of prayer of whatsoever form of the three religions, will be maintained and protected according to the existing customs and beliefs of those to whose faiths they are sacred.”<sup>12</sup> The League of Nations confirmed this open and pluralistic viewpoint, and Britain continued to promote principles of religious access and self-governance of religious sites. In the early 1920s, “to meet Muslim concerns for autonomy in their religious affairs, the British...created a Supreme Muslim Council (SMC) thus giving the SMC ‘unqualified,’ if de facto, control of Islamic waqfs in Palestine.” However, “a turning point in Jerusalem’s Arab politics came around 1920 when the Mandatory government made several decisions that enhanced the power of the Jerusalem Muslim aristocracy led by the Husayni clan, the least moderate of the Muslim family elites.”<sup>13</sup> In the fifteen years that Amin of the Husayni clan held power, he furthered many extremist politics that led to Jewish riots and ultimately an Arab rebellion in 1936.

In the 1930s, “from the riots of 1929 to the outbreak of the Arab rebellion in 1936, Mandatory officials found themselves caught in the middle of increasingly violent hostilities between Arabs and Jews,” leading to a policy reassessment that called for a partition of Palestine in 1937 to allow for the creation of independent Arab and Jewish states.<sup>14</sup> Under this Royal Commis-

sion Report, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee was to be a *corpus separatum* detached from both states. Though this plan was never enacted due to Britain’s preoccupation with World War II, it remains an important theoretical solution to the ongoing conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians.

After World War II, British Prime Minister Clement Attlee “sought a way to extricate Britain from a situation that was costing Britain heavily in lives, money, and moral prestige. In early 1947, the decision was reached to resign the Mandate and to ask the United Nations to address itself to the future disposition of Palestine.” In November of 1947, the United Nations General Assembly voted to partition Palestine into independent Arab and Jewish states. The status of Jerusalem was “guided by the recommendation of the earlier Royal Commission, [which decreed that] the Jerusalem-Bethlehem area (with a corridor to the Mediterranean Sea) was designated a *corpus separatum* to be administered by the UN itself.” The UN Partition Plan was made obsolete by the Israeli War of Independence in 1948, but like the Royal Commission report, “proved to be an influential document for support of holy places being secured only under an international regime.”<sup>15</sup>

## DIVIDED JERUSALEM: 1948-1967

In 1948, the Jews successfully declared independence, and established the modern state of Israel. But in the Arab-Israeli War of 1948, while Israel gained the New City, it lost control of the Old City and the Jewish Quarter to Jordan. Under Jordanian rule, “the Jewish quar-

12 General Edmund Allenby, as quoted in: Breger 7.

13 Breger 7-8

14 Breger 10

15 Breger 10-11



ter was so thoroughly destroyed, according to news reporters, that it had the look of Stalingrad or Berlin in World War II. The quarter, emptied of its Jews, was turned over to squatters, mostly Arabs from the Hebron area.” Arab soldiers “looted synagogues, schools, and homes and made a fire of religious articles.”<sup>16</sup> Moreover, scholars have noted that “there is little doubt that the Jordanians flagrantly violated the provision of the truce agreement that allowed for free access of peoples between the two parts of the city when they erected a wall of concrete and barbed wire to keep Jews from re-entering eastern Jerusalem and the Old City.”<sup>17</sup> Jordan maintained its supremacy in Eastern Jerusalem for two decades after the War of Independence in 1948.

#### JERUSALEM UNDER ISRAELI CONTROL: 1967-PRESENT

In June of 1967, Israel and many of its Arab neighbors engaged in the Six Day War. As a result of this war, “Israel gained control of...eastern Jerusalem, including the Old City. Israel moved swiftly to capitalize on this ‘miracle.’ One of the first acts of the Jewish government was to tear down the wall that had divided Arab-populated eastern Jerusalem and the Old City from the Jewish New City.”<sup>18</sup> Within a month, the Israeli Knesset (Parliament) expanded the boundaries of the Jerusalem Municipality, and ordered application of Israeli law, jurisdiction and administration in eastern Jerusalem. In Israeli discourse, Jerusalem was finally “united.” Some international critics were wary of the declaration, and “spoke of annexation and

questioned the legitimacy of Israel’s policy. Israelis responded by arguing that eastern Jerusalem and the Old City were not annexed, but rather the laws of Israel were extended to eastern Jerusalem and the Old City.” In part, the sovereignty issue was dependent on “whether Jordan’s claim of sovereignty over Jerusalem was accepted under international law. If this was the case, the Israelis could be described as ‘occupiers.’... Yet, many scholars have argued that Jordan’s title to Jerusalem was itself flawed...As Jordan had no legal claim, Israel had no need to ‘return’ conquered territory to Jordan or to the Palestinians.”<sup>19</sup>

The larger and more important question to the city’s inhabitants, however, is not the legal or technical notion of sovereignty, but how the city and holy places are run and controlled on a day-to-day basis. Through the passage of the Protection of Holy Places law, Israel assured its Christian and Muslim residents that their monuments were “safe under Jewish government.” As was previously alluded, despite technically gaining sovereignty over the area, Israel allowed the Islamic waqf to continue its control and maintenance of the Temple Mount, and “Israel reversed the earlier Jordanian law that forbade Christian denominations from acquiring land or homes in Jerusalem.”<sup>20</sup>

From 1967 until the Yom Kippur War in 1973, “Israel presided over the administration of the holy places without great criticism from within the country or from abroad.” This tranquility, however, quickly dissipated after October 1973’s Yom Kippur attacks and subsequent warfare. For “whereas Israel was the clear victor, the Palestinians experienced a renewed nationalistic

16 Breger 12  
17 Breger 6  
18 Breger 17

19 Breger 18  
20 Breger 23

consciousness, which led in subsequent years to strikes, shutdowns, demonstrations and bloody riots. This unrest exploded in 1987 with the intifada, the Palestinian ‘revolt’ against Israeli occupation. Although the intifada was less strong in Jerusalem, it served to divide the city and to underscore the separation of the religious and ethnic groups.”<sup>21</sup> Today, the situation is as charged and tenuous as ever. Though Jerusalem has been discussed in multiple peace talks, there has yet to be a long-term resolution to this century-old problem, and Jerusalem remains a city that, though technically under Israeli sovereignty, is claimed as a capital by two different peoples.

#### JERUSALEM IN THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PEACE PROCESS

##### *Oslo Accords*

In the last twenty years, there have been multiple attempts to secure a lasting peace resolution between Israelis and Palestinians. President Bill Clinton’s 1993 Oslo Accords attempted to set a groundwork for negotiations. The agreement reached included “mutual recognition of Israel and the PLO” and the “introduction of an ‘interim phase’...that consisted of Israeli withdrawal from most of the Gaza Strip and a small percentage of the West Bank.”<sup>22</sup> At these talks, Israel agreed—at least in theory—to the framework of a Palestinian state in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 (which ended the Six Day and Yom Kippur Wars, respectively) calling for Israel to relinquish their conquered territories. However, the Oslo Accords

were intended as a first step, not a complete solution; they decided to postpone discussions of the controversial “final status issues,” of which Jerusalem is one (along with borders, security, water, settlements and refugees), until a later point in time.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, Yitzhak Rabin’s assassination in 1995 ended all talks, and the Oslo Accords became obsolete.

##### *Camp David Summit*

Between 1993 and 2000, little progress was made towards a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Vatican-Israel Fundamental Agreement of 1994 and the comparable Vatican-PLO Basic Agreement of 2000 set the stage for Catholic recognition of Israel and the PLO, thereby introducing the potential for Christian involvement in the peace process. Moreover, the Washington Declaration and Jordan-Israel Peace Treaty of 1994 contained clauses that included Israel’s recognition of Jordan’s special status regarding the Muslim holy places. However, the peace process, while promising, did not experience any true leaps forward until the Camp David Summit in 2000.

The principal piece of negotiation often discussed with respect to the 2000 Camp David meeting is the territory exchange proposed by Ehud Barak, in which the Israeli Prime Minister offered Yasser Arafat 95% of the West Bank and the entire Gaza Strip. With regard to Jerusalem, Israel would relinquish control over Palestinian-dominated suburbs and dissolve administration in central areas of East Jerusalem to Palestinian bodies but would, in exchange, retain sovereignty and security over East Jerusalem

<sup>21</sup> Breger 24-25

<sup>22</sup> Michael Dumper. *The Politics of Sacred Space: the Old City of Jerusalem in the Middle East Conflict*. (Boulder, CO: L. Rienner, 2002) 31.

<sup>23</sup> Menachem Klein. *The Jerusalem Problem: the Struggle for Permanent Status*. (Gainesville: University of Florida, 2003).

including the Old City. Barak suggested that the Palestinians receive the Muslim and Christian Quarters, while Israel would keep the Jewish and Armenian quarters. However, “the Israeli proposal to partition the Old City, at least administratively, caused great dismay, not only in Palestinian Arab circles but also in the Christian communities,” and Arafat ultimately declined Barak’s offer. The Palestinians demanded complete sovereignty over East Jerusalem and holy sites (particularly the al-Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock) as well as the dismantling of all Israeli neighborhoods in those areas, terms that Israel was unwilling to accept. In retrospect, it certainly seems as if “a particular sticking point in the Camp David summit seems to have been the fate of the Old City”<sup>24</sup> for Arafat’s refusal to accept Barak’s proposal led to the devolution of the summit and the stalling of the peace process yet again.

### ***Taba Summit***

The 2001 Taba Summit is still considered the closest the Israelis and the Palestinians ever came to reaching a final settlement; the two sides compromised on a return to Israel’s pre-1967 borders in accordance with UNSC resolution 242, and both Israel and Palestine accepted Palestinian sovereignty over Arab neighborhoods and Israeli sovereignty over Jewish neighborhoods. Israel even proposed that Jerusalem be considered a “Holy Basin” with separate and distinct international status. However, the Taba Summit ultimately failed, not because of any disagreement among the parties but because of domestic shakeups. Israel and the United States were both experiencing political changeovers, and the new Israeli

Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, was a staunch opponent of the Oslo Accords; he subsequently ended talks on final status issues.

### ***Today***

In 2010, under United States President Barack Obama, Israel and Palestine resumed direct talks for the first time in a number of years. These discussions, however, were remarkably short lived; Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu refused to extend the expiring 10-month freeze for settlements in the West Bank, drawing intense criticism from many in the international community, including the United States. Israel offered a renewed settlement freeze in return for the recognition of a Jewish state but the Palestinians, failing to see a connection between the two issues, refused. As a result, negotiations stalled indefinitely.

The most striking development of the recent year however was not the resumption or subsequent halting of direct peace talks, but rather a leak of sensitive information to the general public by al-Jazeera. In these top-secret government documents, it was revealed that the Palestinians had in fact been prepared to cede much more than anyone had previously thought, including Jerusalem neighborhoods.<sup>25</sup> The Palestinian leadership was even “willing to abdicate sole autonomy in the Old City of Jerusalem and keep it under special rule.” As of yet, it is unclear what impact the release of these documents will have on the peace process and on the future of Jerusalem. It is apparent, however, that Israel is not—as it had previ-

25 Akiva Eldar. “The Palestine Papers: Al-Jazeera Trumps WikiLeaks.” Haaretz. 24 Jan. 2011. Web. 25 Feb. 2011. <<http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/the-palestine-papers-al-jazeera-trumps-wikileaks-1.338875>>.

ously claimed—lacking a partner for peace, and that both sides seem to be willing to resume negotiations and compromise to achieve lasting stability.

### ***Future Proposals***

In his book “The Jerusalem Problem: The Struggle for Permanent Status,” former adviser to the Barak government Menachem Klein offers five criteria for successful peace. First, the protagonists must be prepared to negotiate in good faith. Key actors must be included in the process, negotiations must address the central issues in dispute, and negotiators must not use force to achieve their objectives. Finally, negotiators must be committed to a sustained process. Klein then notes that “except for the third item in the list, all other criteria were missing or deformed in the Israeli-Palestinian permanent status talks.”<sup>26</sup> While some of these categories are more ambiguous than others (Who are the “key actors?” What are the “central issues” in the dispute?), Klein’s guidelines touch upon the most important qualification for a successful negotiation: participants who truly want and are committed to following through to achieve lasting peace.

With this prerequisite in mind, current literature and theoretical solutions surrounding Jerusalem and the peace process align themselves with five main categories of solutions.<sup>27</sup> The first proposition places Jerusalem as an undivided capital under Israeli sovereignty with full autonomy to Palestinians and “provisions necessitated by the city’s unique character.”<sup>28</sup> Next, there is a line of thought that ad-

vocates the division of the city in one way or another. There are a few variations on this theme, some of which involve physically partitioning the city into two separate capitals (although the exact borders of this solution remain unaddressed and would undoubtedly be difficult to agree upon), while others include physically undivided but politically separated cities in which Israel and Palestine govern their respective sections.<sup>29</sup> A similar solution proposes joint sovereignty and the creation of one municipality with parity and equality, geographically and demographically, between Palestinians and Israelis, while a fourth position mixes the previous two and recommends two separate municipalities working under the umbrella of a balanced super-municipality.<sup>30</sup> Finally, the fifth solution is the one first mentioned in the Royal Commission Report almost a century ago: an internationally governed and distinct entity under neither Palestinian nor Israeli sovereignty. The approaches to governance of the holy places follow a similar pattern. Three plans have been suggested: transferring power to an interfaith committee, giving each religion control over its holy sites, or leaving matters to international guarantees like UNESCO or Hague Conventions.

Only one of the aforementioned solutions has the potential to succeed: Both Israel and Palestine should relinquish control over Jerusalem, and governance should be delegated to an international body. An undivided capital under Israeli sovereignty has proved problematic, as Muslims feel just as much of a right and claim to the Old City as Jews do, and the mutual perception of oppression—even if it is simply

<sup>26</sup> Klein 4

<sup>27</sup> Mohammad Shtayyeh. *Scenarios on the Future of Jerusalem*. (Al-Bireh: Palestinian Center for Regional Studies, 1998).

<sup>28</sup> Shtayyeh

<sup>29</sup> Breger

<sup>30</sup> Dumper

a legal semantic question of sovereignty—is too strong to allow bad feelings to fade. Shared, mixed and joint governance are good solutions in theory, but past peace processes have proven that the details are difficult to negotiate, and even slight disagreements can cause talks to fall apart. The first two “holy places” solutions are similarly faulty—an interfaith committee is untenable because religions don’t have a monolithic opinion, and it would be impossible to select just one representative to serve such complex and diverse groups. Furthermore, allowing each religion to govern its own sites would parse up the city in a way that would destroy any sort of continuity and make practical administration impossible.

Therefore, power should be ceded to an international body. History teaches that an international institution is only as effective as the people on the ground will permit so a committee comprised of multiple representatives from Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities should be a part of the power structure. That committee would be able, at least symbolically, to stand behind the decisions of the international body and help convince their constituents of the legitimacy of international rule. This dynamic would be essential to the success of this particular prescription.

This solution was best articulated in a report by scholars Michael Bell and Daniel Kurtzer, in which the authors proposed the creation of an “Old City Special Regime” (OCSR) to oversee the city. This report emphasized the importance of moving away from technical questions of sovereignty and dealt instead with practical concerns: “the most promising alternative to a street-by-street, site-by-site division of the Old City is to construct a special re-

gime that defers the issue of sovereignty and instead focuses on how to administer and manage the Old City with strong third-party participation”. Recognizing that “the key is addressing the needs of all the Old City’s stakeholders,” including not just residents but also the larger international communities and followers of both faiths, Bell and Kurtzer declared that “the involvement of an impartial third-party administrator—chosen by the Israelis and Palestinians together—is essential, as it would build confidence between the two sides and reinforce it over time.” Importantly, the question of sovereignty would be deferred until a more stable relationship between the Israelis and Palestinians was in place. The details of Bell and Kurtzer’s suggestion are well and intelligently elucidated: “the two parties would create an Old City board, consisting of senior Israeli and Palestinian representatives and a limited number of international participants selected by both sides.” This board would select a chief administrator who would oversee issues such as “the protection of holy sites, the preservation of heritage structures, archaeological excavation, the allotment of residency and construction permits, and the provision of utilities and infrastructure.”<sup>31</sup> The administrator would similarly establish an internationally staffed police force, which would in turn be responsible for maintaining order in the Old City.

Bell and Kurtzer’s nuanced suggestion addresses and solves many of the most important points of tension in negotiations over Jerusalem. It recognizes the need to focus on practical, on-the-ground issues rather than technical legal discussions.

31 Michael D. Bell and Daniel C. Kurtzer. “The Missing Peaces.” 2009. Foreign Affairs 2009: 88.2. Web.

Moreover, it admits to the necessity of a third party as an unbiased participant, yet balances this with the recognition that Israeli and Palestinian leaders must be involved in governance as well, so that their constituencies feel comfortable with and support the solution.

## JERUSALEM AS A CASE STUDY

Jerusalem is a remarkable example of the confluence of religion and politics, and serves as an excellent case study for many of the issues plaguing parts of today's world. In particular, the case of Jerusalem serves as a superb study of the role of outside decisions and the extreme difficulty involved in imposing external guidelines on peoples that do not accept them. In the period of Jordanian control of East Jerusalem, for example, "both Israel and Jordan ignored outsiders' complaints about their actions and concentrated on governing their respective halves of Jerusalem."<sup>32</sup> This realization—the fact that a solution must come from inside and won't work without the support of the affected peoples—has immense implications for the role that the United States and other countries should play in the peace process. History has repeatedly shown that "events overwhelm diplomacy"—the Royal Commission Report and UN Partition Plan were not implemented because the situation in the region precluded implementation. Therefore, the United States can—and must—learn that, while it can certainly help facilitate discussion and provide a forum for the peace process, it cannot successfully attempt to impose its own solutions on the Israelis and Palestinians.

Additionally, Jerusalem and

its residents epitomize some of the most difficult issues afflicting religious communities today. Both Muslims and Jews face the struggle of compromising between what the city's inhabitants want, and what world Islam and Jewry respectively demand. It has been stated that "from an Islamist perspective, the role of Jerusalem defines the centrality of Palestine to the Arab Islamic world," and analogous comments have been made by Jews as well. But whether or not diaspora Jews and Muslims have the right to dictate a situation that they are not directly experiencing remains unclear. Similarly, talks about Jerusalem have brought to light the immense internal divisions between individual religions, and have shattered the illusion that Christianity, Islam and Judaism are monolithic entities. Though these realizations are not "problems" that need to be—or can be—solved, they are important points that policy-makers must recognize. For when diplomats make suggestions such as an "inter-faith council" with a representative from each faith, they must understand the varying forces, within both the local and international religious communities, pulling in different directions.

## CONCLUSION

At the opening of a conference on religious freedom and political sovereignty in Jerusalem, Dr. Gerie Khoury called upon "all Jews, Christians, and Muslims to make use of their religions for the sake of peace."<sup>33</sup> The implication in Dr.

<sup>33</sup> Khoury as quoted in Proc. of Jerusalem Between Religious Freedom and Political Sovereignty: A Day of Reflection. (Jerusalem, Israel: Center for Religious and Heritage Studies in the Holy Land Publications, 1995) 5.



Khoury's words is one that is too often ignored: the realization that religion can serve as a force of good in solving Middle East peace. The above analyses of Jerusalem have sought to highlight some of the difficulties associated with balancing religious and political goals. Breger writes, "...in Jerusalem, politics cannot be separated from religion... Jerusalem is not a western European or American city that has experienced the separation of secular functions from sacred practices"; it is a simple fact that "[the] government, administration, and laws of Jerusalem are so intertwined with religious interests and parties as to render porous the traditional distinction between the secular and the sacred."<sup>34</sup> Despite this, many have attempted to tackle each of these issues in a vacuum; church (or mosque, or synagogue) and state should, in the eyes of these critics, be treated separately. This approach is wrongheaded. The true message of the study of Jerusalem and its complex history is not simply the impossibility of trying to separate religion and politics, but moreover the potential benefits of the intermingling of the two. Rarely in human history has a single city excited such passion, and rather than frame this emotion negatively, diplomats should embrace the immense love that Jerusalem elicits and use it to inspire peace and coexistence, if only for the sake of the city and its security.

34 Breger 3

SARAH KRINSKY is a senior in Davenport College majoring in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. This piece was written in conjunction with a course at the Yale Divinity School entitled "Religion, Middle East and Conflict Resolution," and is about a topic she has been interested in personally and academically for many years.

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A MONADIC PEACE FROM A SYNTHESIS OF  
METHODOLOGIES

## INTRODUCTION

In contemporary international relations (IR) theory, there is perhaps no subject more contested than that of democratic peace. The origins of democratic peace theory can be traced back to Immanuel Kant's Perpetual Peace, in which he argues that democracy has a pacific effect on states. Specifically, he argues that because the people bear the burdens of war, a state whose government is directed by the people will be more peaceful than a state whose government is autocratic. In the last twenty years, Kant's simple proposition has been debated at length. Modern political scientists have studied democratic peace using many methodologies and have come up with innumerable explanations for the supposed phenomenon. Dyadic democratic peace theory, according to which democracies are only peaceful in relation to one another, is the most prominent version of democratic peace theory. Monadic democratic peace theory has been largely rejected by analyses showing that democracies, overall, fight wars almost as often as autocracies. Most work on the democratic peace comes from quantitative studies, which are useful starting points for the formation of a comprehensive theory. At the same time, however, this methodology has major limitations. This paper will discuss the pros and cons of both quantitative methods and

historical case studies and show that the preferable methodology for studying the democratic peace is not one or the other, but a careful reconciliation of the two. The result of the discussion will be a revitalization of monadic peace theory in probabilistic terms. First, however, the paper will discuss why finding the truth about the democratic peace matters in the first place.

## WHAT IS AT STAKE

One reason that this debate is important is immediately apparent: it has profound implications for policymaking. A leader who believes in the democratic peace is likely to encourage the spread of democracy around the world. This conviction might even lead the leader to use military force. Modern American neo-conservatism is clearly grounded in notions of the democratic peace. Liberals, while disinclined from unilateral and more militant policies, also often support policies that expand democracy around the world.

Policymakers who reject the validity of the democratic peace might have very different foreign policy objectives. If democracy has no bearing on a state's peacefulness, already democratic states should not seek regime change or democratization for the sake of peace abroad, but instead only pursue their strategic interests. This thinking is characteristic of realism. In



an anarchistic global order of rational states, regime type does not matter because all states compete for the same things: relative power and security. A realist policymaker would therefore reject democratic peace theory and execute a foreign policy concerned only with ensuring her state's security and augmenting its relative power.

Here, the crux of the significance of the democratic peace is apparent. For liberalism, states are not identically rational, but distinguishable from one another based on regime type, among other factors. Moreover, states are not doomed to compete in the anarchic international system. Anarchy can be mitigated, if not overcome, by factors such as economic interdependence, international law, and democracy. Though Sebastian Rosato claims to have discredited democratic peace theory in his article, "The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory," he acknowledges that, if true, "it undermines both the realist claim that states are condemned to exist in a constant state of security competition and its assertion that the structure of the international system, rather than state type, should be central to our understanding of state behavior."<sup>1</sup> The controversy over democratic peace therefore centers on the fact that its validity would greatly discredit realism while its invalidity would strongly reaffirm realism's fundamental claims about international politics.

## AN EVALUATION OF METHODOLOGIES

Due to this debate's high stakes, an evaluation of the methodologies used to advance democratic peace

1 (Downes 2009, 9)

theory is warranted. There is not one universally accepted methodology for studying the theory, and so the task of selecting a methodology is an additional complication for scholars attempting to assess the democratic peace. On one level, the democratic peace can be presented as an empirical observation; through multiple quantitative studies conducted for the last 150 years, scholars have shown that democracies nearly never fight one another. It appears that the dyadic democratic peace is an empirical reality. Although this is not uncontested by any means, the larger debate lies in finding the true causal mechanism for this correlation. Because the very existence of the democratic peace is established based on quantitative studies, such large, statistical studies are often also favored in the search for true causal mechanisms.

## ON QUANTITATIVE ANALYSES

Quantitative studies, especially those with large sample sizes, can appear to demonstrate "laws" of social science similar to the "laws" discoverable by similar methods in the "harder" or "natural" sciences. Historical case studies, on the other hand, are by nature limited in scope, and extrapolating universal truths from them is therefore more difficult. Quantitative studies are useful for discovering trends over periods of time and finding interesting correlations between variables. They do, however, have important shortcomings one must consider. In the introduction to their book *Democratic Wars*, Anna Geis, Lothar Brock, and Harald Müller state that such "statistical tests do not inquire into causal mechanisms, they establish correlations

that can plausibly be interpreted as causation.” They point out that although “quantitative studies have produced a rich store of statistical data which spell out regularities in the behaviour of democracies; their pay-off... is limited when it comes to explaining war.”<sup>2</sup> Quantitative studies highlight correlations between independent and dependent variables but they cannot explicate how, or whether or not they are causally related. Scholars who use such a methodology must theorize about the causal mechanism based on the correlations they find, but considerable quandaries arise from this social-scientific method.

One such quandary is the controversial assumptions researchers make in order to perform quantitative analyses to begin with. In evaluating a large dataset of conflicts between states, it is necessary to make certain assumptions about the states involved and code variables in particular ways. Slight variations in assumptions and codings can make a huge difference for the findings of quantitative studies. In his article “How Smart and Tough Are Democracies?” Alexander Downes demonstrates that a relatively slight adjustment in assumptions can produce new, contradictory findings. Downes examines Dan Reiter and Allan Stam’s discovery, presented in their book *Democracies at War*, that democracies “win nearly all of the wars they start, and about two-thirds of the wars in which they are targeted by other states.”<sup>3</sup> Downes argues that Reiter and Stam’s codings and assumptions are flawed. While they code states as either targets or initiators, Downes reasonably claims that a third category of states, joiners, should be included. These are states that get involved in

wars only after initial proceedings, often a significant variation from being either the target or initiator of war. In addition, he asserts that military conflicts that end in a draw—omitted by Reiter and Stam—should be included in the dataset.<sup>4</sup> By making these changes and then computing the statistics over again, Downes arrives at an entirely new conclusion: “[I]n statistical terms the substantive effects of democracy are indistinguishable from zero, meaning one cannot reject the null hypothesis that democracy has no effect on the likelihood of victory and defeat for any type of belligerent.”<sup>5</sup> It is therefore clear that the assumptions and codings one uses to quantitatively analyze the democratic peace are of great significance. Downes’s article does not deny that democracy necessarily affects the probability of winning a war, but that quantitative studies are inherently problematic because their findings can be greatly disrupted by relatively slight adjustments in assumptions.

In addition to suffering from problematic assumptions and codings, quantitative studies can fail to describe certain important events, making the causal theories that accompany the studies less valuable. Such studies often fail to explain particular events because of simplifications in the way those events are described by the social-scientific method. For example, the democracy/autocracy dichotomy is much too simplistic to describe states in the real world. Even the sliding scale between most democratic and most autocratic that many IR scholars use can be insufficiently sophisticated. Moreover, some factors that influence outcomes, such as the magnitude of each military conflict,

2 (Geis, Brock, and Müller 2006, 4)  
3 (Downes 2009, 9)

4 (Downes 2009, 10-11)  
5 (Downes 2009, 26-28)

alliances, geographical location, access to resources, etc., are always necessarily ignored, even in multi-variable analyses. Because of such simplifications, findings are frequently prone to historical counter-examples.

Because quantitative studies seek to prove generalizations and are not particularly concerned with the details of a given military conflict, they would appear immune to individual counter-examples. Presented with a case that contradicts the finding of a quantitative study, a researcher could dismiss the challenge as an unrepresentative exception. However, Geis, Brock, and Müller assert, “if the theory has any validity, it should stand the test of ‘salient cases’ as well as random evidence.”<sup>6</sup> These authors define salient cases as “those major events involving the use of military force that have a decisive impact on the course of history.”<sup>7</sup> Importantly, most quantitative studies involving large numbers of military conflicts do not have a mechanism that weights the magnitude of each conflict. Therefore, a counter-example to a theory may be a salient case in reality while of only minimal significance to the results of a quantitative study. It seems logical that the Barbary Coast War should carry less weight than a more salient case such as World War One, in a study of military conflict. It should be more important that a theory accurately describe the latter than that it describe the former. Therefore, in a comprehensive quantitative analysis, the theory posited should be tested against salient case studies.

## ON HISTORICAL CASE STUDIES

Though extensive quantitative studies have their faults, historically specific case studies are not necessarily better. In-depth examinations of individual cases also have their limitations. Such studies are valuable in that they highlight exactly how variables interact in a given instance, so that it becomes clear how they work in reality and not just in theory. While quantitative studies are prone to over-simplification and often contain weak assumptions, historical case studies tend to be too focused on individual cases to be representative of a general trend in state behavior. It is difficult, if not impossible, to extrapolate universally valid theories of state behavior from a single or even several case studies.

Nonetheless, Robert Ivie and Oscar Giner seek to do precisely this in their article, “Hunting the Devil: Democracy’s Rhetorical Impulse to War.” The authors argue that there is a demonic side to democracy, “an impassioned ogre of mob violence...who reflects the common fear and shared anxiety about democracy,” and that this aspect of democracy is prone to exploitation by leaders desiring to go to war.<sup>8</sup> The article calls into question the pacific influence of democracy on states because it asserts that democracy has an inherently demonic quality that can make democratic states more warlike. Ivie and Giner make this argument with exclusive reference to the United States and rely almost entirely on President Bush’s war rhetoric before and during the Second Gulf War for evidence. Citing examples of Bush’s moralistic rhetoric about the war effort, the authors conclude “democracy thus served ambiguously as war’s purpose and provocation.”<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> (Geis, Brock, and Müller 2006, 5)  
<sup>7</sup> (Geis, Brock, and Müller 2006, 5)

<sup>8</sup> (Ivie and Giner 2007, 581)  
<sup>9</sup> (Ivie and Giner 2007, 584)

While this article perhaps provides some interesting insight into how democracy might permit war mongering, it is ill equipped to theorize about democracy's effect on states in general. Ivie and Giner do not give sufficient reason to believe that this phenomenon exists outside of the United States or perhaps even outside the case of the invasion of Iraq in 2003. It could very well be the case that the United States is an outlier in this case when it comes to democratic states and is therefore not a representative case.

#### METHODOLOGICAL SYNTHESIS AND MONADIC DEMOCRATIC PEACE

An ideal methodology would take into consideration the pros and cons of both quantitative and historical outlooks. It would include a quantitative study that is considerably broad in scope so that the resulting theory is widely applicable, but also be refined so that it acknowledges and accounts for the important differences between democratic states. Moreover, the theory derived from the quantitative study would need to be tested against salient cases in order to demonstrate that it can explain the most prominent instances of military conflict.

The two types of methodologies explained above, when combined, actually provide a basis for belief in monadic democratic peace theory. The most well known findings from purely quantitative analyses suggest that democracies rarely, if ever, fight one another, but that overall they fight just as many wars as non-democracies. Nevertheless, many critics of democratic peace theory doubt the existence of the dyadic peace based on individual cases that contradict the quantitative

literature's finding. For example, in his article "The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory," Rosato uses the example of American interventions against democratic countries during the Cold War as evidence against the dyadic democratic peace. He states, "American interventions to destabilize fellow democracies in the developing world provide good evidence that democracies do not always treat each other with trust and respect when they have a conflict of interest" (Rosato 2003, 590). If there were a dyadic democratic peace, the United States would not have intervened so frequently in other democracies. However, it is actually possible to reconcile these two seemingly opposed views and in doing so support a monadic democratic peace in probabilistic terms

In "The Antimony of Democratic Peace," Harald Müller reveals that only a handful of democracies account for a vast majority of military conflicts involving democracies "at a level of 7 and higher on the combined autocracy/democracy scale of Polity IV," a highly democratic rating on a commonly used sliding scale measurement of how democratic or autocratic a state is.<sup>10</sup> He finds, through a statistical study of the period 1950-2001, that "of the 283 discrete [military] involvements by...stable democracies, 75.6 percent of these were carried out by just four countries (19 percent of the whole group): Israel, the United States, India, and the United Kingdom."<sup>11</sup> His finding suggests a distinction between those democracies that do the vast majority of the fighting and those that almost never fight. His assumption that only democracies with scores above a certain level on the Polity IV scale

<sup>10</sup> (Müller 2004, 495)

<sup>11</sup> (Müller 2004, 495)

matter is perhaps assailable, but the point remains that some democracies do much more fighting than others.

It therefore seems logical to consider what differentiates democracies that fight from those that do not. Müller suggests that there are specific reasons why each democratic country is a militant or pacific democracy. This, however, fails to counter Rosato's criticism of the dyadic democratic peace. Looking carefully at each of the four warlike democracies listed above, a theoretical explanation for the distinction between warlike and pacific democracies is not forthcoming so long as democracy is the only influence on state behavior considered. The problem of American interventions against fellow democracies during the Cold War is left unresolved at a theoretical level.

A monadic democratic peace is possible if we consider democracy as only one of several influences affecting states' foreign policy. Such an understanding of the democratic peace would be more probabilistic than absolute. Instead of making an argument for how democracy can uniquely influence a state to be peaceful in a democratic dyad and potentially warlike in a mixed dyad, it is possible to accept the simpler argument that democracy has a ubiquitously peaceful affect on states while affirming the "counterexamples" to traditional dyadic peace theory by recognizing that at least a few democratic states are militarily inclined, even against other democracies in rare instances. This is true because there are other influences on a state's behavior that, depending upon the democratic state in question, can overcome the peaceful influence of democracy and cause the state to act belligerently in the international

system. This hypothesis supports a probabilistic monadic democratic peace because it asserts that democracy is always a peaceful influence on states. If democracy is the dominant influence for a state, that state will act peacefully. Moreover, this hypothesis accounts for the differences between democracies and acknowledges that, as Bruce Russett and John Oneal argue in their book *Triangulating Peace*, "it is important to situate each country within its politically relevant environment."<sup>12</sup> There are many influences on a given state's foreign policy, but there are several prominent influences that stick out in addition to regime type.

Two factors stressed by realists, geographic location and relative power, are examples of other leading influences on a state's foreign policy and may either reinforce or counteract the peaceful influence of democracy. Geographic location is significant because as the distance between two states increases, they are less likely to get involved in a military conflict with one another. Russett and Oneal give two reasons why prospects for peace improve as distances between states increase. One is that "it is hard to exert great military power at a substantial distance." The second is that "widely separated states" have little to go to war over as "the great majority of international wars arise over territorial issues, chiefly the location of a disputed border... or the ownership of valuable resources."<sup>13</sup> Relative power is also important because great powers are more war-prone than weaker states. In his article "Democracy, War and Expansion through Historical Lenses," Russett explains of great powers that, "whether democratic or autocratic,

<sup>12</sup> (Russett and Oneal 2001, 50)

<sup>13</sup> (Russett and Oneal 2001, 86)

their widespread interests and intervention capabilities allow them to be militarily effective beyond their geographical neighborhoods, and so they are more likely than small states to get into conflict."<sup>14</sup> These realist influences demonstrate that states' decisions about war and peace can be influenced by factors unrelated to regime type.

By considering influential factors affecting foreign policy besides regime type it is possible to make sense of the war-proneness of democratic states such as the four considered by Müller to be the most militant. According to the hypothesis stated earlier, the militancy of those four states does not threaten the validity of monadic democratic peace, nor does it suggest either democracy's pacific or militant influence. Instead, it implies that each of those four states have other influences that have counteracted the pacific effects of democracy on a number of occasions. For the United States, it is plausible that its status as the world's superpower for the last 65 years has had a larger influence on its foreign policy than it being democratic. Because it has interests in every corner of the world and has sought to protect them and retain its superpower status, the United States has had many more opportunities to undertake military conflicts than weaker democratic states. Perhaps of even greater significance is that the United States was engaged in the Cold War against the only other potential global hegemon, the USSR. This rivalry certainly outweighed the influence of democracy when it came to the foreign policy of the United States during the Cold War. Similarly, the United Kingdom is one of the most powerful countries in the world. For much of the twen-

14 (Russett 2009, 14)

tieth century Great Britain sought to maintain its great power status while it slowly and painfully released its colonial possessions. For Israel and India, geographic location has played a larger role in their war-proneness. Israel is surrounded by autocratic countries and militant non-state actors that have opposed its very existence. India is in a difficult geographic neighborhood with many autocratic states, as well as its bitter rival Pakistan, a nominally democratic state. India and Pakistan have had a history of fierce military conflict due to their religious differences and the virulent nature of their partition. For each of these four states, there are powerful geopolitical influences other than democracy that have counter-acted and overcome the pacific effects of democracy in many instances. From Müller's analysis we know that these four states are responsible for the vast majority of military conflicts involving democracies, which implies that for most democracies, the realist influences mentioned above either work in tandem with democracy to have a pacific influence on state behavior or are insufficiently salient to overcome democracy's influence on foreign policy. Simply put, democracy is not a deterministic factor when it comes to state behavior in relation to matters of war in peace. It is, however, a powerful pacific influence on state behavior.

## CONCLUSION

Democratic peace theory is difficult to assess. That so much attention is paid to the subject is indicative of its significance. Whether or not there is a democratic peace has grave



consequences for policymaking, but also for the equilibrium in IR theory between realism and liberalism. If there is a democratic peace, the foundational assumptions of the realist school of thought are severely undermined and liberalism should surge to the forefront of IR theory. If democratic peace theory is invalid, realism triumphs over its greatest challenge from liberalism in the last twenty years. The methodologies used to analyze the topic are therefore of great significance. Largely, studies on the democratic peace are either statistical or historical. By considering the weaknesses of each methodology, it is possible to analyze the democratic peace and conclude that there is a probabilistic monadic democratic peace in the sense that democracy will always increase the prospects for peaceful state behavior as it has a ubiquitously peaceful effect. There are, however, other influences that can overcome the effect of democracy in certain cases, causing a state to be more warlike than democracy would, by itself, allow. This way of conceptualizing the democratic peace, with democracy as one of several influences on state behavior, is more descriptive of state differences and is therefore an improvement on theories derived from simplistic quantitative models. Moreover, it is preferable to theories based on historically specific case studies because it is universally applicable and not based on an individual case that could be labeled an exception. Instead of fully flushing out a new theory, the

hypothesis presented here constitutes a proposal that both statistical and historical case studies are needed to formalize a proper theory about the democratic peace.

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DANIEL PITCAIRN is a Junior in Pierson College studying Global Affairs. His interest in democratic peace theory derives from his larger interest in the Kantian triangle of peace, which posits positive relationships between democracy, economic interdependence, international law, and peace. Daniel hopes to extend his academic interests in international relations theory and American foreign policy to a career in the State Department or at the United Nations.



## Individualizing Amnesty, Revealing the Truth

## INTRODUCTION

In 2004, the Brazilian newspaper *Correio Brasiliense* published a photograph of a man hanging in the Information and Operations Detachments and Commands (DOI/CODI), a unit responsible for carrying out torture and homicides in the Brazilian military dictatorship (1964-1985). The man in the picture was purported to be television journalist Vladimir Herzog, who died in DOI/CODI in 1975. At the time, the media widely reported this case because of Mr. Herzog's public importance, yet vehemently denied the police version, which claimed that Mr. Herzog committed suicide by hanging himself with a belt in his prison cell. Since prisoners had their belts removed before investigation, Mr. Herzog could not have killed himself in the way described by DOI/CODI. Besides, the marks on his neck pointed to clear signs of strangulation, not hanging. In 1975, Mr. Herzog's death represented the initial rejection of lies propagated by the Brazilian military; ever since then it has symbolized the beginning of the Brazilian redemocratization process.<sup>1</sup>

Almost thirty years after his death, the case of Mr. Herzog would still create uneasiness and inflame Brazilian society.<sup>2</sup> Not only did the picture provide visual evidence of Mr. Herzog's strangulation, but it

was also revealed to be part of a collection of documents that the armed forces claimed to have destroyed years before.<sup>3</sup> As in 1975, the Brazilian people were outraged by lies about the darkest chapter of the nation's history. To respond to this public indignation, the military issued a statement contending that in the dictatorship "[t]he measures taken by legally constituted forces were a legitimate response to the violence of those who rejected dialogue and opted for radicalism."<sup>4</sup> Today, twenty-five years after the end of the military era, no one knows exactly what happened to Mr. Herzog or the hundreds of individuals tortured and killed during the Brazilian military dictatorship. While Argentina, Chile, and Peru have officially investigated the deaths and torture that took place during their dictatorships, Brazil has yet to do so.<sup>5</sup> Argentina, Chile, and Peru created truth commissions to foster accountability for the crimes committed during the dictatorships, and to understand the patterns of violence by the various forces, especially their repertoires, targeting, and frequency. In these countries, where the military victimized thousands of people, the truth was urgently demanded. In Brazil, the number of deaths probably measures in the hundreds,<sup>6</sup> but

3 Rohter 31 Jan. 2005

4 Rohter, 24 Oct. 2004

5 Wiebehlhaus-Brahm 2009, 10

6 Eric Wiebehlhaus-Brahm estimates

that between 300 and 500 people were killed during the Brazilian dictatorship. Judging

1 Archdiocese of São Paulo 1985, xi

2 Rohter 24 Oct. 2004

more than 50,000 people were detained and 10,000 forced to go into exile.<sup>7</sup> Brazil's dictatorship might not have murdered as many citizens as did the governments in Argentina, Chile, and Peru, but the truth is still important as the country does not know the details of the executions, torture, and kidnappings that took place during those twenty-one years. Brazil will finally come to terms with its past: in October 2011 Brazil's Congress voted to set up a truth commission, and President Dilma Rousseff immediately signed the bill into law.

Truth commissions have been established not only in Argentina, Chile and Peru, but also in El Salvador, Uruguay, Guatemala, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, Chad, and South Africa. In the past,<sup>8</sup> truth commissions (1) provided the victims with psychological support as well as monetary reparation for crimes committed against them, (2) upheld the right of families of victims to know about the violence perpetrated

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from the experience of other Latin American countries, one might be suspicious of estimations of deaths. In Peru, for example, 30,000 deaths were estimated, yet the Peruvian truth commission concluded that more than 70,000 people were killed during the dictatorship (Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación, Peru).

<sup>7</sup> Wiebelhaus-Brahm 2009, 1  
<sup>8</sup> My methodological approach involved reviewing the literature on truth commissions in general, and, in particular, the Argentinian, Chilean, Peruvian, and South African experiences. I largely base my argument on *Truth v. Justice: The Morality of Truth Commissions*, edited by Robert I. Rotberg and Dennis Thompson, and Priscilla B. Hayner's *Unspeakable Truths: Confronting State Terror and Atrocity*. The benefits I mention were not present in all commissions, but were present in at least one of them. I will analyze such benefits more closely in the third section of this paper.

against their kin, and (3) publicly acknowledged the victims' version of events. Truth commissions were especially beneficial for the civil society at large by (4) pointing out the institutional failures that might have contributed to the gross violations of human rights, (5) making recommendations to preclude these violations from occurring again, (6) fostering a spirit of human rights, and (7) reinforcing the importance of transparent governmental institutions. As United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Kofi Annan reported to the UN Security Council:

*Truth commissions have the potential to be of great benefit in helping post-conflict societies establish the facts about past human rights violations, foster accountability, preserve evidence, identify perpetrators and recommend reparations and institutional reforms. They can also provide a public platform for victims to address the nation directly with their personal stories and can facilitate public debate about how to come to terms with the past.<sup>9</sup>*

In this paper, I will support Brazil's decision to abandon its position as a South American outlier and finally investigate the darkest chapter of its history. I contend, however, that the main impediment to the creation of a Brazilian truth commission is the Amnesty Law of 1979, which granted "total and unrestricted amnesty" to all individuals involved in politically motivated crimes during the dictatorship, including torture, kidnapping, and homicide. I will outline the current dilemma surrounding the Brazilian amnesty: while in April 2010,  
<sup>9</sup> United Nations 2004, cited in Wiebelhaus-Brahm 2009, 2

the Brazilian Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the 1979 Amnesty Law, in December 2010, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights ruled the Amnesty Law illegal. Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff must now face the decision of following either the Inter-American Court's decision or the Brazilian Supreme Court's ruling.

I propose a solution to this predicament by making the case that President Rousseff should revoke the Amnesty Law of 1979 and grant individualized amnesty for all perpetrators who will come forward to the truth commission. As a result, Brazil will be able to investigate the military-era deaths, tortures, and disappearances without having to prosecute the perpetrators that cooperate with the work of the truth commission.

The discussion of this process will proceed in four sections. First, I will present the patterns of political violence during the Brazilian military dictatorship, as well as a few of the official and unofficial attempts to investigate these acts of violence and to offer reparations to the victims. Next, I will discuss the advantages of my policy proposal. I will argue that perpetrators will not only have enough incentives to testify, but that they will also face the public disapproval of their past acts – an informal form of punishment – while the victims will remain in the spotlight. Then, I will present the main benefits of a Brazilian truth commission for the victims and their families, the civil society, and the military. I contend that these three groups have much to gain from the investigation of the atrocities committed during the “years of lead,” as the Brazilian dictatorship is commonly called. Finally, I will address the possible challenges to my approach, which

include the moral price of amnesty, the possibility of fairness of a truth commission, the military reaction, and the legality of a change in the Amnesty Law. I will conclude by suggesting that President Rousseff should adopt a compromise position between the rulings by the Brazilian Supreme Court and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

## POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN BRAZIL

Between 1964 and 1985, the government carried out repression against those who might be affiliated with communist activities and those who violently opposed the military rule. The Civil Police, the Militarized Police, and the military itself (through its special units, such as DOI/CODI)<sup>10</sup> were responsible for acts of violence against alleged communists and political opponents, including torture and homicide.

In an unofficial report published by the Catholic Archdiocese of São Paulo, which investigated 695 trials of politically motivated crimes brought before the military courts,<sup>11</sup> 88 percent of 7,367 defendants were male and 12 percent were female; 38.9 percent were 25 years old or less; and “[o]f the 4,476 whose educational level was recorded in the military court proceedings, 2,491 had a university degree, and only 91 declared themselves illiterate.”<sup>12</sup> Geographically speaking, respondents largely came from urban areas, especially

<sup>10</sup> Huggins *et al.* 2002, 30

<sup>11</sup> Although this report became a national bestseller by selling over 100,000 copies, it did not investigate the cases that had not been brought before the military courts, which seem to constitute the majority of human rights violations at the time.

<sup>12</sup> Archdiocese of São Paulo 1985, 77

São Paulo (1,517 defendants) and Rio de Janeiro (1,872 defendants). The most common charge against them (4,935 cases) was “militancy in a banned political party organization,” (predominantly leftist groups) and the next most frequent (1,464 cases) was “participation in violent or armed actions.”<sup>13</sup> The repression primarily occurred between 1964 and 1966, following the 1964 military coup, and 1969-1974, after the declaration of the Institutional Act No. 5, which allowed the president to suspend the political rights of individuals deemed subversive and to intervene in states and municipalities, among other provisions in the name of “national security.” Additionally, the report states that “1,918 defendants testified that they had been tortured during interrogation.”<sup>14</sup> According to the defendants, in an attempt to create an “atmosphere of terror,” interrogators tortured prisoners before starting the interrogation. The description of one of these incidents is in the records of the case of the teacher Luiz Andréa Fávero, 26 years old:

*The accused was taken by surprise in the home of his parents by a veritable swarm of police; that said individuals invaded the house, handcuffed his parents and, initially, took the accused to one of the rooms of the house; in said room, the police tore off the clothes of the accused and placed his feet in a basin of water, and, using, wires from an electrical apparatus, proceeded to apply shocks; ... that the accused was then taken to the door of the room where his wife was and there saw that the same process of torture was being administered to her; that the accused*

*was, immediately afterward, taken outside the house, where he saw his parents tied-up inside a vehicle...<sup>15</sup>*

Up until now, no perpetrator has ever been put on trial in Brazil. Despite the lack of facts about the perpetration of political violence in Brazil, a few families and victims have already received reparations. In December 1995, President Cardoso signed Law No. 9,140/95 (Law of Political Assassination and Disappearance), which recognized the deaths of 136 people who were part of a list of the Brazilian Armed Forces. The law “allowed their families to obtain death certificates, and created a reparations program for those identified in the law as murdered or disappeared by the military government.”<sup>16</sup>

In 1996, the special commission Comissão de Familiares de Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos (Commission for the Family Members of the Persons Killed or Disappeared for Political Reasons) was created to investigate the crimes committed during the dictatorship and to grant reparations for families who could prove to have been victims of violence. In 2007, the commission, which relied solely on information provided by the victims, published the report *The Right to Memory and to Truth*, accusing “federal agents of rape, torture, executing prisoners, and concealing bodies of victims,” and noting that “opponents of the regime resorted to bank robberies, kidnappings of foreign diplomats and attacks on military bases, which it says produced countless victims.”<sup>17</sup> According to this report, more than 400 people were killed and more than 160 people are be-

13 *Ibid* 78  
14 *Ibid* 79

15 *Ibid* 69  
16 Wiebelhaus-Brahm, 2009, 11  
17 Duffy 30 Aug. 2007

lieved to have disappeared during the military dictatorship. No commission in Brazil has ever had full access to the military documents or benefitted from the cooperation of military and police officials.

In December 2009, President Lula announced the creation of the National Human Rights Plan (PNDH), which proposed the revision of the 1979 Amnesty Law and the creation of a truth commission to investigate the military era crimes. PNDH led to outrage within the government. Minister of Defense Nelson Jobim, along with the three senior officials of the armed forces (army, navy, and air forces), threatened to write a joint letter of resignation. PNDH was accused of one-sidedness for focusing on the crimes by the military rulers and excluding those by the armed resistance. President Lula promised to reevaluate the one-sided aspect of a truth commission. But, in his eight-year term, PNDH was never reviewed or submitted for voting in Congress.

On January 1, 2011, President Dilma Rousseff, Lula's protégée and former chief-of-staff, was sworn into office. During the military dictatorship, President Rousseff was imprisoned for almost two years and was tortured with electric shocks. A former Marxist guerilla, Ms. Rousseff was part of the resistance to the military government. In her inauguration speech, she said, "I gave my youth, as did many of you present, to the dream of a just and democratic country. I bore the most extreme adversities inflicted on all of us who dared to stand up to oppression. I have no regrets, no resentment or rancor."<sup>18</sup> During her political campaign, she promised to

18 Official translation provided by the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "Address of President Dilma Rousseff in the Brazilian Congress on January 1, 2011

bring violators of human rights to justice. And now she has the chance to fulfill her promise and create a truth commission.

## POLICY SUGGESTION

The main impediment to the success of a truth commission in Brazil is the Amnesty Law of 1979. In April 2010, the Brazilian Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the law in a landmark case and maintained that the law prohibits the prosecution of perpetrators both from the state forces and the armed resistance. In December 2010, however, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights denied the legality of the law and ordered the government to investigate "the killing, torture and disappearance of 70 people, including farmers and members of the Communist Party of Brazil, during military operations to crush resistance to the dictatorship in the early 1970s."<sup>19</sup> As the Inter-American Court of Human Rights ruled,

*the Court analyzed the compatibility of the Amnesty Law No. 6.683/79 with the international obligations assumed by Brazil under the American Convention on Human Rights. Based on international law and its constant jurisprudence, the Inter-American Court concluded that the provisions of the Amnesty Law that prevent the investigation and punishment of serious human rights violations are incompatible with the American Convention and lack legal effect, and as such, cannot continue to represent an obstacle for the investigation of the facts.<sup>20</sup>*

19 Van Auken 2011  
20 Inter-American Court of Human Rights



Although the Brazilian State defended its position by arguing that the country had provided general amnesty to all perpetrators of politically motivated crimes and thus was not legally able to conduct formal investigations against individuals pardoned by the state, the Court contested the validity of the Amnesty Law and concluded that the crimes perpetrated against civilians violated fundamental rights, such as the right to juridical personality, right to life, right to human treatment, and right to personal liberty – all of which are protected by the American Convention on Human Rights. The Court ruled that the Brazilian must investigate gross violations of human rights.<sup>21</sup>

To resolve this legal stalemate, President Rouseff should revoke the Amnesty Law of 1979, which provided general amnesty for all of those involved in crimes with political motivations, and grant individualized amnesty for all perpetrators who will come forward to testify in the Brazilian truth commission. Accordingly, the government will not prosecute state agents or members of the resistance as long as they cooperate with the work of the commission. The state does not deny the historical importance of the Amnesty Law, nor does it ignore the violations of human rights that occurred in Brazil. This approach has three main advantages:

#### (i) INCENTIVE TO SPEAK

Under the general amnesty granted by the 1979 Amnesty Law, perpetrators have very few incentives to come forward. Indeed, why

would one decide to recount acts of violence more than two decades later? Even if perpetrators are assured that the general amnesty of 1979 precludes any sort of prosecution, they might still doubt that this amnesty can protect them.<sup>22</sup> In Argentina, the National Commission on the Disappeared provided the authorities with the names of perpetrators that the commission deemed to deserve prosecution, as well as evidence against them,<sup>23</sup> as soon as the state decided to revoke the general amnesty the military had granted itself.<sup>24</sup> In Brazil, perpetrators might fear this outcome – even if prosecution is currently illegal in accordance with the Amnesty Law of 1979. In the context of a general amnesty, a truth commission would have limited investigative power, as perpetrators would not be willing to offer their version of the story. By offering individualized amnesty, however, the government will emphasize that perpetrators will not be prosecuted if they choose to cooperate with the truth commission. The government will address the question of amnesty right from the beginning and will erase doubt that the Amnesty Law will disincentivize perpetrators' cooperation. It will be in the perpetrators' best interest to testify so as to avoid criminal prosecution – and it will also be in the state's best interest. As Kent Greenawalt explains, "If a truth commission can draw testimony from those to be granted amnesty, much more will be revealed about past abuses than would be possible in a series of criminal trials. And the process will take much less time."<sup>25</sup>

Although one might agree with the positive outcomes of this policy, one might still wonder how the

2010

<sup>21</sup> *Gomes-Lund et al. (Guerrilha do Araguaia) v. Brazil*, 24 Nov. 2010.

<sup>22</sup> Huggins 2000

<sup>23</sup> Crocker 2000, 104

<sup>24</sup> Hayner 2001, 34

<sup>25</sup> Greenawalt 2000, 204.

terms of the individualized amnesty will work, in particular, what “cooperating” with the truth commission means. In South Africa, individual amnesty was granted for politically motivated crimes between 1960 and April 1994.<sup>26</sup> “Amnesty was granted only to those who fully confessed to their involvement in past crimes and showed them to be politically motivated. For gross violations of human rights (...) the applicant was required to appear in a public hearing to answer questions from the commission, from legal counsel representing victims or their families, and directly from victims themselves.”<sup>27</sup> In Brazil, the government must also grant individualized amnesty to the perpetrators that choose to cooperate with the truth commission. The specific conditions must be discussed in the mandate of the commission, but cooperation must involve not only testimonials of what happened in the military era, but also perpetrators’ help in identifying other perpetrators and in truthfully answering all of the questions of the commission. Put simply, the role of a cooperative perpetrator might be compared to that of an informant in a criminal investigation - a person who will receive a benefit (in the Brazilian case, amnesty) in exchange for valuable information. As in South Africa, perpetrators must give a complete account of the perpetrated violence, and no apology or sign of remorse will be necessary.<sup>28</sup>

## (ii) INFORMAL PUNISHMENT FOR PERPETRATORS

Perpetrators who testify will not be tried, yet they will indirectly

be punished. Although the government will have no power to penalize the perpetrators who choose to testify, these perpetrators will still be subject to public opinion, as they will publicly talk about the atrocities they committed. As in the South African Truth and Reconciliation Committee, perpetrators’ testimonies will disclose information at a national (and even global) level - and if their revelations had been unknown to their families and friends, the “darker side of their lives” would be “exposed in public.”<sup>29</sup> In this specific way, a truth commission might work similarly to the criminal justice system, since both produce a record with the names of the victims and the perpetrators. If the Brazilian truth commission releases the names of the perpetrators, the “record can form the basis for informal social sanctions of public disapproval or ostracism, and of related shame, embarrassment, and disadvantage for the criminal.”<sup>30</sup> This “informal social sanction” can ensure that perpetrators face some sort of punishment for their past actions or omissions. Certainly, to name the guilty is not the same as to make them formally pay for their crimes - but Brazil must accept this tradeoff if it wants to paint a full, detailed picture of those twenty-one years.

## (iii) FOCUS ON THE SURVIVOR

Revoking generalized amnesty and individualizing amnesty will ensure that the truth commission will focus on survivors rather than on perpetrators. Since the amnestied cannot be judged, the spotlight will soon shift from the perpetra-

26 Hayner 2001, 43

27 *Ibid*

28 Hayner 2001, 43

29 Ntsebeza 2000, 164

30 Greenawalt 2000, 190



tors to the survivors. If the government revoked the Amnesty Law of 1979 and did not grant individualized amnesty, perpetrators would be tried, and the survivors would soon occupy a secondary place. As Martha Minow simply puts it, “Trials focus on perpetrators, not victims. They consult victims only to illustrate the fact or scope of the defendants’ guilt. Victims are not there for public acknowledgment or even to tell, fully, their own stories.”<sup>31</sup> In the Brazilian truth commission, as in the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, there is a “need for reparation but not for retaliation.”<sup>32</sup> The goal of the commission is not to seek revenge against wrongdoers; in fact, retaliation is not possible under the aegis of amnesty. Individualizing amnesty will provide perpetrators with incentives to testify and informal punishment for their actions or omissions, while also ensuring that the survivors remain in the spotlight.

#### BENEFITS OF A TRUTH COMMISSION IN BRAZIL

Today, Brazil has very little to lose from creating a truth commission. Truth commissions often work immediately after the perpetration of political violence, such as in the case of South Africa, because their work might be indispensable for the peaceful transition to a democratic system. In Brazil, on the other

hand, since the military dictatorship ended more than twenty-five years ago, the truth commission does not pose a threat to redemocratization. Setting up a truth commission in Brazil today is much less risky in terms of political stability than it would have been in 1985. In addition, Brazil “is not a war-shattered society in which most medical personnel have fled the country or died in the conflict.”<sup>33</sup>

Rather, Brazil is the seventh largest economy in the world and a stable democracy which has the means and the capacity to create a well-funded, well-organized truth commission. Compared to other countries that experienced political violence in the past, Brazil has sufficient wealth to fund a commission and provide financial as well as psychological support for the victims.<sup>34</sup> The country has the personnel necessary to conduct investigations and offer medical and emotional guidance for victims and perpetrators. In other words, a truth commission is a feasible project for Brazil – and it can offer great benefits for (i) the victims and their families, (ii) the civil society at large, and (iii) the military. In the first group to benefit will be the victims, who will enjoy not only having their version of the story publicly acknowledged, but who might also experience healing<sup>35</sup> from past abuses and receive

33 Wiebelhaus-Brahm 2009

34 Wiebelhaus-Brahm 2009

35 In analyzing the psychological effects of Rwandan gacaca trials on witnesses, Karen Brounéus (2010) challenges the idea that truth telling can be healing. She argues that “[w]itnesses in the gacaca reported higher levels of depression and PTSD than nonwitnesses, also when controlling for important predictors for psychological ill health such as gender or cumulative trauma exposure” (409). Her conclusions, however, are based upon

31 Minow 2000, 238  
32 Boraine 2000, 153.

reparations for the crimes committed against them. The government and the civil society will recognize their accounts of the events that inflicted pain on – and caused harm to – them and their families. In this way, victims’ suffering and endurance will be publicly recognized, enabling “the audience to share in the process of acknowledgments, mourning, and sympathetic listening.”<sup>36</sup>

While truth commissions’ capacity to provide healing might be a contentious issue, Thomas Buregenthal, who worked as one of the three commissioners in the United Nations Truth Commission for El Salvador, argues that many of the victims who came forward to testify in the Truth Commission had never spoken about those atrocities to their parents or relatives, and that as they were finally able to recount the violence they had endured, “one could not listen to them without recognizing that the mere act of telling what had happened was a healing emotional release.”<sup>37</sup> Martha Minow also believes that recounting one’s suffering has an important healing effect. As she simply puts it, “Coming to know that one’s suffering is not solely a private experience, best forgotten, but instead an indictment of a social cataclysm,

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the *gacaca* trials, in which witnesses would speak in front of dozens of people, including their close neighbors. Some of these trials were also marked by partiality and informality, which might have limited the capacity of victims and witnesses to fully convey their stories. Whether Bronéus’ argument can be applied to Brazil is uncertain. The Brazilian truth commission will not be a massive trial of perpetrators, but rather will focus its attention on the survivors. And the commission will provide psychological support for those who testify.

36 Minow 2000, 248  
37 cited in Minow 2000, 257

can permit individuals to move beyond trauma, hopelessness, numbness, and preoccupation with loss and injury.”<sup>38</sup>

Even if healing does not substantially occur in the Brazilian truth commission, victims will nonetheless receive compensation through lump-sum payments and/or pensions, as well as educational and health programs, as happened in Chile’s National Truth and Reconciliation Commission, for example.<sup>39</sup> Descendants might finally learn what happened to their family members during the dictatorship, locate their remains, and exercise the fundamental right of burial. Thus, the Brazilian truth commission will stand behind the critical idea that “victims and their descendants have a moral right to know the truth about human rights abuses.”<sup>40</sup>

The Brazilian civil society at large will also reap benefits. Truth commissions point out the institutional failures that might have contributed to the gross violations of human rights, and also make recommendations in order to prevent these violations from occurring again. Even more important, they can foster a spirit of respect for human rights in the society, because during and in the aftermath of the work of truth commissions, people often write memoirs, direct theatrical productions and movies, and recount events in light of the testimonies and facts.

Truth commissions end up stimulating discussions on television, radio, and the Internet, thereby increasing public awareness of human rights. They also reinforce to the civil society the importance of transparency in the government.

38 Minow 2000, 244  
39 Wiebelhaus-Brahm 2009, 12  
40 Crocker 2000, 101

As David Crocker states, “[i]t is not enough to discern the truth; the truth also should be accessible to the public.”<sup>41</sup>

By performing its activities, inquiries, and deliberations with transparency, the Brazilian truth commission will become an important example of a fair and transparent institution, and will highlight the significance of transparency in a democratic government. In other words, “If conducted in an open, evenhanded manner, a truth commission may... provide a demonstration of how a democratic body operates.”<sup>42</sup>

Most important, the truth commission can reconcile the Brazilian society to this dark episode in its history. Brazil will be unable to pretend that the military dictatorship never took place, or that state agents and civilians never committed gross violations of human rights. The society will know about the atrocities, deaths, torture, and kidnappings of the military era. “In collating personal memories of the past, they [truth commissions] hope to establish a redemptive narrative, a collective memory that might provide the basis for a new civic identity that could encompass both victims and perpetrators.”<sup>43</sup> The truth will encompass the stories of victims and perpetrators, and thus civil society itself will have the power to give the final verdict.

Even for the military, a truth commission might be beneficial. Military cooperation with the investigations of the truth commission might provide a chance to enhance military reputation<sup>44</sup> and to reveal the military side of events. Military officers will be able to show Brazilian civil society that the armed

forces are interested in disclosing the truth and willing to accept the responsibility for past acts. They will have the chance to explain - and justify - their behavior, and, because the violent members of the resistance will also testify, will be able to prove that violence was not unilateral. Ultimately, the truth commission can recommend reforms to the military in terms of civilian oversight and training.<sup>45</sup> Huggins et al. demonstrate that, similar to the Greek training, the instruction of the Brazilian cadets “desensitized men to pain and suffering, promoted total obedience to authority, engendered acceptance of the system’s ideology, and energized their resolve to destroy designated enemies of the state.”<sup>46</sup> The Brazilian truth commission might point to the possible causes that led to police brutality as well as torture and excessive use of force. The police and the military can improve their training and take measures to prevent excessive use of violence from occurring again.

## CHALLENGES

Critics of my approach might not agree about all the potential benefits a truth commission could create for Brazil. Indeed, even though the benefits I have outlined were based on the results of previous truth commissions, they were not present in every single one of them - the ultimate outcomes of a truth commission are connected to the objectives in the commission’s mandate. While not all of the benefits might be realized, the seventh largest economy of the world can afford the costs of a truth commission. And the Brazilian government will unquestionably show its soci-

41 *Ibid.* 101

42 Wiebelhaus-Brahm 2009, 15

43 Schaap 2005, 134

44 Wiebelhaus-Brahm 2009, 8

45 *Ibid.* 12

46 Huggins et al. 2002, 237

ety and the world that violations of human rights are not tolerated in a democratic state. Beyond the uncertainty of benefits, more profound questions about my proposal remain:

*The Price of Amnesty:* Critics might argue that amnesty is a high price to pay for the revelation of the truth, but they disregard that the price of amnesty was paid when the Brazilian state decided to pardon all offenders in 1979. One might still argue that perpetrators should be put on trial, and face the legal repercussions of their crimes. This argument does not consider that perpetrators would have few incentives to come forward, and that the truth commission would end up offering a partial truth, primarily based on victims' testimonies. Amnesty was the price that other countries paid in order to accomplish the goals of their truth commissions, and it was already paid in Brazil. "Amnesty was a price that South Africa had to pay for a relatively peaceful transition. It was also a price many victims had to pay in order to know some of the truth of their horrendous past."<sup>47</sup> If Brazil wants to discover the truth of its "horrendous past," it must grant individualized amnesty to the individuals who choose to testify.

*One-Sidedness:* A very likely criticism is that the truth commission would mostly reveal the facts about crimes committed by the security forces, not by the resistance. In this way, the truth commission would benefit victims of state-led violence, and would not point to the atrocities that civilians themselves committed against private and public property, which also produced victims. However, it is important

47 Boraine 2000, 151

to note that the amnesty would be revoked for everyone - military officials and members of the resistance. All of them could be subject to prosecution unless they testified before the commission. Investigating the resistance might even offer greater political legitimacy to the work of the commission. If crimes committed by the state forces dominate the discussion, the case is not that the resistance is immune to scrutiny, but rather that violence perpetrated by the state might prove to be larger than violence perpetrated by civilians, as occurred in Peru and Colombia. Also, one must note that the State has a special responsibility to investigate abuse by itself. As Judge Cançado Trindade argues in the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, "It is never to be forgotten that the State was originally conceived for the realization of the common good. The State exists for the human being, and not vice versa. No State can be considered to rest above the Law, whose norms have as ultimate addressees the human beings."<sup>48</sup> After violating legal norms it created, the State must investigate its abuse of force.

*The Military Reaction:* One might foresee an incendiary reaction from the military, as occurred in the launch of the National Human Rights Plans in December 2009. However, even if the Minister of Defense and the senior officials threaten to resign from their positions, it is imperative that President Rousseff take on her constitutional role as the supreme authority of the armed forces.<sup>49</sup> The Presidency of

48 Inter-American Court of Human Rights. *Barrios Altos v. Peru*. Judgment of March 14, 2001.

49 Federal Constitution of Brazil of 1988, Art. 142, *caput*

Brazil cannot be subordinate to the Ministry of Defense, the army, the navy, or the air forces - the military dictatorship has already ended. Furthermore, “[a]s military and police officials responsible for past human rights abuses retire, there is the potential to work with the younger generation of officers.”<sup>50</sup> Today’s military officers might be more willing to cooperate with the government’s initiative to investigate abuses of human rights.

*Legality:* Is it legal to revoke the Amnesty Law of 1979? Although the Brazilian Supreme Court upheld its constitutionality in April 2010, the nation has the obligation to revise the scope of the amnesty in the face of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights’ ruling. Brazil has not only ratified the American Convention on Human Rights, but is also a signatory of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Convention against Torture. Latin American countries, such as Peru and Argentina, also revoked the amnesty laws that had pardoned crimes committed during their dictatorships. In Argentina, the decision to revoke these laws was initiated in the government itself.<sup>51</sup> In Peru, the Inter-American Court of Human Right found the Peruvian Amnesty Law illegal - and the government followed the ruling. If Brazil aspires to become a world power and to assume a major diplomatic role, Brazil must respect international law. As Supreme Court Justice Cesar Britto (who voted against the constitutionality of the Amnesty Law of 1979) wrote, “Amnesty is not amnesia.” Perpetrators will not have to face prosecution if they

testify about what they witnessed and committed during the military dictatorship. Amnesty will become individualized and conditioned to the performance of the moral and legal duty to testify before the commission. President Rousseff will adopt a position of compromise: she will acknowledge the role of amnesty in the redemocratization process by offering individualized amnesty to cooperative perpetrators while simultaneously proclaiming the government’s intolerance for gross violations of human rights.

## CONCLUSION

I have defended Brazil’s decision to set up a truth commission to investigate the acts of violence that victimized hundreds of individuals during the twenty-one years of the military dictatorship. I have presented a few of the benefits that a truth commission can bring to the victims and their descendants, the Brazilian society, and the army. And I have contended that a truth commission will have greater investigative power if the government revokes the general amnesty granted by the Amnesty Law of 1979 and concedes individualized amnesty for perpetrators who cooperate with the commission’s investigations. Certainly, the Brazilian truth commission will have more investigative power if it can subpoena government records, but I have not weighed the arguments for or against the declassification of military files. In this paper, I have addressed the Amnesty Law of 1979 because this law is the most commonly cited impediment to the success of a Brazilian truth commission. My policy suggestion consists of a compromise between two

50 Wiebelhaus-Brahm 2009, 8  
51 Rohter 14 Aug. 2003.

## opposing rulings by two sovereign tribunals: the Supreme Court of Brazil and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

Although we know that Vladimir Herzog could not have hanged himself in DOI/CODI's prison cell, we still do not know the circumstances that led to his execution. We do not have a full picture of the pressures to which policemen were subjected in the special units, nor do we understand why and when violence became an option for the armed forces. A truth commission might enlighten the millions of Brazilians who still come across darkness when turning to the "years of lead," twenty-one years of repression, censorship, torture, and gross violations of human rights. Mr. Herzog's voice against the dictatorship atrocities – along with hundreds of others – can be echoed in a society's attempt to look for the truth, a concept that philosophers have long struggled to define, but whose lack is evident in the picture of a man who "was hanged."

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**PAULO COELHO FILHO** is a senior in Ezra Stiles College, majoring in Ethics, Politics, and Economics. Originally from the south of Brazil, Paulo is interested in pursuing a career in international law. He would like to thank Yale University Political Science Professor Elisabeth Wood and Ph.D. candidate Meghan Foster Lynch for their critical comments on this essay.



# LEBANON: PARODY OF A 'NATION'?

A closer looks at Lebanese confessionalism

## INTRODUCTION

*"A nation is a guarantee for confessions but confessions are not a guarantee to the nation." Michel Chiha<sup>1</sup>*

Lebanese politics are very complex. Lebanon is a country that, despite its small size, displays many of the problems apparent in Middle Eastern politics: sectarian divisions, religious fundamentalism, nationalism, and the clash of secularism and religiosity. While there is a plethora of questions one can ask about Lebanon, I will limit my analysis to the topic of Lebanese sectarianism, and more specifically to confessionalism, a system of consociational government which distributes political and institutional power proportionally among religious subcommunities.

Some scholars define Lebanese confessionalism as the "system of checks and balances"<sup>2</sup> while others say "confessionalism is what makes Lebanon, for better or worse, what it is."<sup>3</sup> I will argue that along with the civil war and the corruption of internal and external political actors, confessionalism is what hurts Lebanon more than anything else. To that end, I will address first the history of confessionalism and then the current state of confessionalism in Lebanon and the relationship between confessionalism and Lebanese nationalism. By doing so, I will

try to understand whether these two entities are mutually exclusive or to what extent confessionalism prevents the development of Lebanese nationalism. I will conclude by taking a glance at why confessionalism survives in Lebanon despite years of sectarian violence and what could be done to abolish it.

## HISTORY OF CONFESSSIONALISM IN LEBANON

Though the official foundation of confessionalism is dated to the 1943 National Pact, most scholars and historians of Lebanon trace it back to the millet system of the Ottoman Empire, and more specifically to the declaration of the qa'im maqamiya in 1843 dividing Mount Lebanon into two administrative regions ruled by the Druze and the Christians. The declaration required that a Druze be appointed qa'im maqam (governor of a certain district in the Ottoman Empire) of the mixed southern district and a Christian be appointed as the qa'im maqam of the predominantly northern district. In 1845, both the Maronites and the Druze protested this new regulation, and the Ottoman Sultan sent Shekib Effendi to establish order, confirm Ottoman occupation of Lebanon, and disarm its inhabitants. "The reorganization of the qa'im maqamiya, known as the reglament of Shekib Effendi, should be remembered as the legalization of sectarian political representa-

<sup>1</sup> (Cited in Obeid, 2009)

<sup>2</sup> (Hess and Boodman 1954: 24)

<sup>3</sup> (Muhanna 2010: 3)

tion [emphasis added] in Mount Lebanon."<sup>4</sup>

The reglement endowed each qa'im maqamiya with a representative council composed of 12 members, a councilor and a judge for each of the six religious communities: Maronite, Druze, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Sunni Muslim and Shi'i Muslim. However, because all Muslims living in the Ottoman Empire were subject to Sunni jurisdiction, Shi'i Muslims did not have the right to be represented by a judge in the council. Thus, the empty seat of the Shi'ite judge was assigned for the vice-qa'im maqam who was to be a Maronite in the North and a Druze in the South.

Rather than soothing the sectarian tension, Shekib Effendi's settlement only served to worsen the crisis in the region. As a result, the so-called unfortunate 'events of 1860' broke out. Mainly taking place between the Druze and the Maronites it was actually 'sectarian cleansing' practiced by both camps. Moreover, "Christians and Druze, all the while fighting each other, profited from the occasion to get rid of Shi'i pockets in 'their' respective territories."<sup>5</sup> These events not only fueled animosities between the sects, but also provided France with an excuse to invade in order to restore peace, contribute to the reconstruction of Lebanon, and help create an autonomous Christian enclave in Mount Lebanon.

Eager to deport the French from Lebanon, the Ottomans founded the Mutasarrifiya in 1861 to replace qa'im maqamiya. Under this new regulation (also known as Reglement Organique), Lebanon became an autonomous Ottoman province with an Ottoman Christian governor and a central administrative

council of twelve members, each representative of the population ratio of the various religious sects. The reglement organique stayed in effect until November 1914 when the Ottomans entered the war and annulled the special status granted to Mount Lebanon, which was reincorporated into the Ottoman Empire and governed by a Muslim Turk. Though breeding sectarianism, this period between 1861 and 1914 was also to witness the birth of ideas of independence, Lebanese nationalism and reformism, however weak these ideas were.

World War I and the end of the Ottoman Empire, the Middle East was more or less divided between England and France. In September 1920, the French officially declared the creation of Greater Lebanon under French mandate. Neither the Muslim population nor the non-Maronite Christians were happy with the French mandate and the majority of the population opted for annexation to Syria. Though most of the Maronites were in favor of the French mandate they were divided among themselves as well. There were even independentists who imagined Greater Lebanon as an independent, democratic and multi-sectarian republic where Christians would coexist with Muslims. However, this was not to happen.

The enlarged Lebanon once again presented a problem for which a confessional solution was adopted. France enlarged the boundaries to include the areas around the coastal cities of Saida, Sour and Tripoli as well as the Bekaa Valley. Philip Hitti claims that "the addition...almost doubled the area of the country and increased its population by about one-half, over 200,000, predominantly Muslims...What the country gained in area it lost in cohesion. It lost its

<sup>4</sup> (Traboulsi 2007: 26).

<sup>5</sup> (Traboulsi 2007: 35)

internal equilibrium.”<sup>6</sup> Under the mandate, the distinction between Christian and Muslim grew more important and the distinction among various kinds of Christians and Muslims less important. As put by Enver Koury, “even so, a sense of community was in the making and the basic Lebanese problem, which is still with us, was not simply Christians against Muslims but the reshaping of the balance of power among all the subcommunes.”<sup>7</sup>

With the promulgation of the first Lebanese constitution, greater Lebanon was renamed the Lebanese Republic on May 23, 1926. The Representative Council was renamed the Chamber of Deputies and a senate was set up to represent the sects and regions. Article 95 of the Constitution provided for the fair distribution of government and administrative posts among the various sects. According to Article 9, the state relinquished to the religious communities its legislative rights and rulings on personal affairs such as marriage<sup>8</sup>, divorce, and adoption. From 1929 onwards, the Chamber of Deputies was elected on a sectarian basis.

It was, however, the unwritten National Pact of 1943 that truly shaped the structure of the confessional political system in Lebanon. Because the Christian commune was the majority<sup>9</sup> in 1943, the Pact provided a fixed ratio of six Christians for every five Muslims and set up a parliament of 55 seats: 30 for Christians and 25 for Muslims. The president of Lebanon would be a Maronite Christian while the prime minister would be Sunni and the

speaker of Chamber of Deputies a Shi’ite. The intention of the pact was to promote an equitable balance among the various sects according to the proportions of the communal population in 1943. Problems arose, however, when the fixed ratio did not change as the ratio of the Christians to Muslims in the population decreased. This was so problematic that, according to Enver Koury, “the fixed ratio is one variable that is responsible for the 1975-1976 crises in Lebanon,”<sup>10</sup> which were to last until 1990 in the form of civil war.

The ratio of 6/5 remained the guideline for Christian-Muslim sectarian quotas until 1989, when it was replaced by parity according to the Ta’if Agreement. Even though one of the main articles of the agreement stated “the abolition of political communalism is an essential national priority,”<sup>11</sup> the Ta’if agreement only diminished confessionalism to the extent that it produced a different, more complex type of confessionalism in the form of consociationalism: parity between the Christians and Muslims replaced the previous 6:5 ratio, giving Muslims an equal right to representation. Sectarian quotas were abolished in civil service posts, the judiciary, the army and the police with the exception of Degree One posts (general directories of ministries) where parity and rotation were to be applied. More importantly, the prerogatives of the president of the republic were severely curtailed in favor of the prime minister, the cabinet, the parliament and its speaker, which meant the loss of Maronite dominance. However, as claimed by Hanna Ziadeh, “within this participatory consociationalism, there developed the Orwellian

6 (1956: 490-91)

7 (1976: 4)

8 To this day, civil marriage is not allowed in Lebanon.

9 According to the 1932 census, the last to be held in Lebanon up until now, Maronites were the largest minority, hence the 6:5 ratio in favor of them.

10 (1976: 5)

11 Taken from the reproduction of the Ta’if Agreement articles in Ziadeh 2006: 128.

phenomenon of those who are more equal than others. Ta'if replaced the hierarchy of communal rights and privileges of the three major communities with the troika of the three Presidents."<sup>12</sup>

Because Taif assigned the presidency to a Maronite, prime ministry to a Sunni and the speakership of the cabinet to a Shi'ite, the remaining sects, especially the Druze, felt excluded. Even the Shi'ites felt they were being undermined as they only got the speakership of the cabinet even though they are supposedly as big as the Sunni community.

Ziad Rihbani provides a satire of the Taif equation for intercommunal representation that aptly summarizes the situation: "One Lebanese nation divided into two equal parts, which in turn are divided into three, more or less, equal parts, supplemented by a row of equally un-subtractable parts of the One Lebanese People, who in turn are divided equally on un-relinquishable regions of the One Lebanese Land."<sup>13</sup> This arrangement created another system of discord, one of the most unstable power relations imaginable that in turn became an excuse for Syrian intervention, by Hafez al-Assad, in Lebanese politics. After the Ta'if, Syria also established the headquarters of its Army Military Intelligence in Anjar, Lebanon, near the Syrian border. The headquarters were the true seat of Lebanese political power until 2005 when the UN Security Council decision requiring Syria to withdraw its troops from Lebanon was put into practice.

## CONFSSIONALISM AND LEBANESE NATIONALISM: MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE?

Twenty-one years after the Ta'if Agreement, Lebanese society is still not happy with confessionalism. A January 2010 poll conducted by the Lebanese polling and research firm Information International displays that 58% of those surveyed are in favor of abolishing confessionalism.<sup>14</sup> 75% of all Muslims are in favor of the abolition of the confessional system while only 35% of the Christians support it. The majority of Christians in favor are Catholic (54% of all Catholics support confessionalism) while among all the Muslims, Shi'ites have the greatest number of supporters (89% of the Shi'ites surveyed expressed approval for abolition). With the continuing Palestinian-refugee problem, the growing influence of Hizb'allah (and its Iranian connections), continuing tensions with Israel and the shadow of Syria, the Lebanese political arena is persistently bleak. In such an atmosphere, scholars and politicians express concern about the persistence of confessionalism and its damage on Lebanese unity and Lebanese nationalism.

When asked why the positive atmosphere following the withdrawal of the Syrian army disappeared so quickly and why Lebanese society went into despair only five years after the withdrawal, Elizabeth Suzanne Kassab, a Lebanese philosophy professor, responded: "confessionalism sucks up all the positive and optimistic energy in the Lebanese

14 The survey was conducted by phone. A total of 500 people were surveyed. The full text of the publication resulting from the survey may be accessed at <http://qifanabki.files.wordpress.com/2010/02/abolishing-confessionalism-poll.pdf>. The findings were also published in the Lebanese daily Al-Safir. Even though some people express concern about the representativeness of the sample, for lack of a better source this poll has been used in most of the recent articles on the subject.

12 (2006: 143)  
13 Quoted in Ziadeh 2006: 143.

society.”<sup>15</sup> According to A.J. Abraham, who is a professor of History and Middle Eastern Studies at John Jay College, “Lebanon’s communal organization had produced an identity problem in the tiny republic. (...) Thus, they [the sub-communities] act as independent mini-nations within a larger national entity called Lebanon making it very difficult for a citizen to be ‘just Lebanese’.”<sup>16</sup> This concern is voiced also by Traboulsi, when talking about how, as early as 1917, America and Europe used a policy in Lebanon based on religious and ethnic differences: “...Arabs were negatively defined by their non-Jewishness and reduced to the status of religious communities (Muslim and Christian) whose only rights were civil and religious, that is, neither national nor political.”<sup>17</sup> As such, Lebanon was seen as “merely a plurality of peoples having little, or nothing, in common to warrant the establishment and maintenance of a viable state.”<sup>18</sup>

Others are more optimistic and believe a distinct Lebanese nationalism is possible and flourishing despite sectarian dispute. Kamal Salibi, a Lebanese Professor of History, claims “the recurring internal and regional crises which, on the surface, have so frequently made the Lebanese system seem precarious and its continued existence questionable, have, at a deeper level, served to sharpen the sense of Lebanese nationality by forcing the Lebanese to redefine their internal and external relationships.”<sup>19</sup> It might be claimed that Salibi’s perspective is outdated because he is writing before the civil war. However, the same argument is

embraced by Hanna Ziadeh, writing thirty-six years after Salibi, in 2007: “The catharsis of the Hariri assassination and the subsequent enormous Christian-Sunni-Druze popular mobilization during the Independence Uprising...gave a new lease of life among the Christians to the idea of a Christian-Muslim consensus...a consensus on a supra-communal national identity, which encompasses communal affiliations and allegiances and rejects non-Lebanese ones.”<sup>20</sup> History has shown Lebanon to be an amazingly resilient country and, while Lebanese nationalism seems like a distant utopia, it is not impossible. In order for this distant utopia to become a reality, the impact of confessionalism needs to be diminished drastically, if not abolished totally.

## A MUCH CLOSER LOOK AT CONFSSIONALISM

History sometimes repeats itself. As Traboulsi explains: “For the contemporary Lebanese who have lived through the wars of 1975-90, a chronicle of the events of 1860 would be an occasion to review scenes that seem quite familiar.”<sup>21</sup> To understand the recurrence of history in Lebanon and the persistence of confessionalism one needs to ask the following question: If confessionalism has been hurting Lebanon since the 19th century, if most scholars believe that confessionalism is an obstacle for the formation of a distinct Lebanese nationalism and that it sharpens the divisions in the country and if 68% of the Lebanese are in favor of abolishing confessionalism now or in the near future, why does confes-

15 Elizabeth Suzanne Kassab, 20 October 2010, at her talk at the CMES Colloquium Series, Yale.

16 (2008: 176).

17 (2007: 76).

18 (Khashan 1992: 1).

19 (1971: 86)

20 p. 165

21 (2007:39)

sionalism still survive?

To answer this question, one needs to look at the immediate aftermath of the Ta'if Agreement and its effect on the Lebanese politics. Ta'if was considered an important agreement in that it put an end to a 15-year-long civil war and "if properly handled, would have provided an appropriate agenda for constitutional alteration,"<sup>22</sup> paving the way for national unity. Unfortunately, this did not happen: rather than healing the wounds of Lebanon it led to an increase in discord in a highly segmented Lebanese society. Ta'if succeeded in destroying old allegiances but only replaced them with new ones: it put an end to Maronite hegemony only to create new hegemonies.

Moreover, Ta'if was tailor-cut according to Syrian demands: the Agreement increased the influence of Damascus in Lebanon, giving Syria the opportunity to manipulate Lebanese politics. With growing restlessness against Syrian 'protection' and Hezbollah's increasing influence, the country was already in a state of turmoil when, in February 2005, Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri was assassinated. The assassination resulted not only in the retreat of Syrian forces from Lebanon but also in the formation of inter-bloc alliances, in turn leading to a new 'internal balance' in the Lebanese political structure that created a more strained atmosphere and increased political tensions. As Asad Abu Khalil, Professor of Political Science at California State University, puts it, "no more [was] the classic Christian-Muslim divide relevant, nor the narrow Sunni-Maronite divide which dominated the squabbles of Lebanese pre-war political elite."<sup>23</sup>

The pro and anti-Syrian demonstrations held after the Hariri assassination divided Lebanese confessional groups into a two-party alliance system. On March 14, 2005, those who marched against Syrian dominance: the Sunnis, Druzes and Maronites, became known as the "March 14 Alliance" while those who were pro-Syrian: Hezbollah, Amal and the Free Patriotic Movement formed the "March 8 Alliance". These alliances were not homogenous by any means, and parties changed sides and positions. Groups who had supported Syrian presence in the 1990s, such as the Sunni Future Movement and the Druze Progressive Socialist Party, now marched against it. Free Patriotic Movement was part of the March 14 Alliance to begin with and then it signed a Memorandum with Hezbollah and thus started to be considered as part of the March 8 Alliance.

This turbulent re-structuring of the political scene led to a growing conflict between the two alliances. Despite all attempts at easing the situation, the 'talks' between two fronts had already come to a dead end before the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war. Hezbollah's victory against Israeli forces led to its solidification as the 'sole protector' of the Lebanese people, again complicating and shaking the fragile 'political equilibrium' of the country. Hezbollah and its allies demanded an early legislative election and the formation of a representative national unity government. However Pierre Amin Jemayel, an active member of the anti-Syrian March 14 Alliance and the Minister of Industry at the time, was assassinated on November 2006, and this caused some turbulence in Lebanese politics again. The Members of March 14 Alliance accused Syria for the killing and the rift between March 8 and

<sup>22</sup> (Haddad 2009: 13)  
<sup>23</sup> (2008: 360)



March 14 Alliances deepened. On May 2008, after having protested for 17 months Siniora government's alliance with the U.S. (and hence with Israel), Hezbollah and Amal militiamen launched an armed uprising in Beirut and overtook the Sunni parts of the capital. Fearing another civil war, the Arab League intervened and Lebanese political leaders signed the Doha Agreement on May 21, 2008 in Doha, Qatar.

The Doha Agreement called for the election of a consensus president, General Michel Sulaiman, revised the country's electoral formula, revived its parliament and other state institutions and gave Hezbollah veto power over the new national government. Even though Doha created an ephemeral state of optimism, only a year after Doha, in the summer of 2009, Michelle Orange would write that "it's a stalemate in the parliament, with none of the parties able to agree on a national unity government, each group stubbornly holding to their bids for prevalence, for power, while the people pay the price in the streets...the cabinet is unwilling, in other words, to stay together for the kids. They won't even share custody."<sup>24</sup> This idea of groups refusing to cede any power and not letting go of their positions is one of the most difficult problems in Lebanese politics. Apart from causing inter-sect conflicts, this attitude results in intra-sect conflicts and power struggles as well.

### WHY NOT ABOLISH CONFESSIONALISM?

As can be seen, even though both Ta'if and Doha tried to ameliorate the situation, the strength of sectarian conflicts still plagues

24 (2009: 6)

Lebanese politics. Lebanon's Christians (especially the Maronites) are well aware of the decrease in their population and do not want to give up their privileges by approving the abolishment of confessionalism. In addition, Muslim opposition to confessionalism does not necessarily mean sectarian conflict will disappear once confessionalism is officially abolished. The idea of belonging to a sect or confession has shaped the identities of Lebanese people for hundreds of years, be they Muslim or Christian, and the more entrenched they are in a confessional society the more solidified these prejudices become. In this context, the problem of abolition should be seen as much deeper than Maronites' disapproval: confessionalism is linked to how people define themselves, the way they situate and form their identities in relation to other groups: "Even during periods of relative stability, confessional allegiances have almost always operated, touching virtually all dimensions of everyday life. All the momentous events in a person's life cycle continue to be shaped by sectarian affiliation. It is a reality one cannot renounce."<sup>25</sup> Moreover, allegiances have undergone drastic transformation since the Hariri Assassination, and the conflict is not only between Muslim sects and Christian sects.

First of all, one's sect is almost equivalent to one's nation. Every sect has the right to regulate its own rituals (wedding, divorce, baptism) according to respective religious beliefs, and this 'autonomy' makes the formation of a broad national identity much harder. The stratified structure of the current education system also helps perpetuate sectarian autonomy as a primary tool in shaping people's identities and

25 (Shehadi and Mills 1988: 195)



feeding prejudices towards other sects. Because inter-sectarian trust is so rare everyone is suspicious of 'the other'. As P. Salem says: "The Christians are afraid because they live in a Muslim Middle East. The Shiites are afraid of the Sunnis and vice versa. And the Druzes are afraid of everyone. Everyone is afraid, everyone perceives himself as a victim."<sup>26</sup>

Secondly, there is a general disagreement among the Lebanese people regarding who is representing whom, to what extent, with what power and the legitimacy of that representation. The fact that Maronites denied Muslims equal representation till the Ta'if Agreement is a good example of this. Moreover, Lebanon is governed by a power elite unwilling to share power with the rest of society. Even though they are deemed to be the representatives of their respective sects, the up-down structure of many regulations and legislations do not generally reflect public will or public consensus but instead reflect an 'elite will'. Politicians are not trusted by the Lebanese people and are usually associated with corruption and selfishness. Even if the ruling elite agrees on a resolution, it is doomed to fail without public support. Under current conditions, it is not likely that the gap between the public and the rulers will be bridged easily.

In addition to internal hindrances, Lebanon is also prone to regional conflicts. With a small population of four million people, Lebanon is a miniature model of the Middle East region as a whole in that conflicts that occur in Middle East can be found in Lebanon on a smaller scale. Located between Israel and Syria and home to thousands of Palestinian refugees, Lebanon is

26 (quoted by Kaspar, 2010)

subject to conflicts related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict while at the same time having constant troubles with Syrian power in the region. Furthermore, because Lebanon is home to members of almost every single ethnic and religious group in the region, Middle Eastern countries see justification to intervene in Lebanese internal politics. As put by Salem: "every group in Lebanon has at some point committed the sin of relying on extensive outside support: the Maronites allied with Israel and the Sunnis with the PLO and everyone used -and was used by- the Syrians."<sup>27</sup>

No Lebanese internal conflict has come to an end as a result of direct and unmediated negotiations by the parties concerned but instead with strong third party intervention. The two most important agreements in recent Lebanese history, Ta'if and Doha, were signed in Saudi Arabia and Qatar, respectively. The fact that a peace agreement cannot be signed on Lebanese soil but in other Middle Eastern countries shows not only the intensity of the animosity between the internal parties involved but also the connectedness of the third parties to the whole process. In such an environment, it is not up to the Lebanese themselves to abolish confessionalism, as numerous Middle Eastern countries involved in the Lebanese puzzle try to manipulate the situation to their own benefit.

## CONCLUSION: WHAT CAN BE DONE?

As should be clear by now, confessionalism is a very big part of the Lebanese puzzle. More specifi-

27 (2006: 21)

cally, peace in Lebanon is to a great extent dependent on the abolishment of confessionalism. On the other hand, keeping in mind all the aforementioned problems, defining the confessionalist system as the sole reason for Lebanon's suffering is too naïve. Confessionalism is linked to larger internal and regional problems. However, even if abolishing confessionalism would not resolve the conflict in Lebanon entirely, it would at least prevent the deterioration of other political problems and make possible the formation of a more stable atmosphere.

At the very heart of the discussion lies a crucial question: What would confessionalism be replaced with? What would happen to Lebanese politics if confessionalism was no more? When asked whether they support the abolition of confessionalism 24% of the participants surveyed in the Information International poll said that they did not know what 'abolishing confessionalism' even means. This summarizes very well the complexity of the issue at hand. In the same vein, as much as scholars of Lebanon agree that confessionalism is a big obstacle for political stability, they also agree that it would be more dangerous to abolish it without an alternative system. In a 2007 article, after warning us that the inter-confessional differences can completely destabilize a Lebanon already bordering on the critical, historian P. Rassadin goes on to say that "even more dangerous seems to be the changing nature of the political conflict inside the country, the falling apart of peaceful coexistence mechanisms and possible demolition of the confessional representation system without offering an alternative that can be to the liking of

both sides."<sup>28</sup> Because no one knows what kind of a system will replace confessionalism, at some point even the heated debate about de-confessionalism becomes meaningless. "Rather, the challenge is how one goes about building a viable, democratic, secular state that is more inclusive than any intrastate grouping, be it ethnic, tribal or religious" (Muhanna 2010: 1).

While the Lebanese public is not very clear about what would replace confessionalism, researchers have come up with some alternatives. Emphasizing the increasing power of Hezbollah and the Shiite community Paul Salem puts the options for Lebanon as 'a united and independent Lebanon' and a 'two-state solution'<sup>29</sup> and goes on to add that because the latter option would lead to further violence and unrest in the region the former option must be made viable. The solution, according to him, is a bicameral legislature, with a lower house free of confessional quotas, allowing Shiites better representation. This idea is seconded by Maurice Obeid, albeit in a different structure. Obeid suggests that a bicameral transition government be established, "one chamber based on the current confessional framework, the other elected without confessional quotas and that they work jointly -- and serve as a check and balance for each other - on a strategy for national reconciliation to reaffirm the Lebanese identity. They would then present proposals for a sustainable, secular framework that upholds meritocracy and purges religious discrimination."<sup>30</sup> Another possibility voiced by Enver Koury as early as 1976 is a communal federal system and a cantonal government. Claiming that "Lebanon is not yet ready

<sup>28</sup> (2007: 88)

<sup>29</sup> (Muhanna 2010:1)

<sup>30</sup> (2009)

for secularization,"<sup>31</sup> Koury argues that a cantonal government would be an ideal solution in between secularism and partition. However, this suggestion raises the question of when Lebanon will be ready for secularization, whether it will ever be ready, and how the right time will be determined.

A transitional bicameral government would be hard to put into practice, not only because confessionalism is a structure at the heart of the Lebanese society that would persist even after legal abolishment, but also because politicians would not be willing to share power that easily. No matter how much one talks about this issue, no matter how much time one spends on coming up with new ways of governance, the fact that no census has been held since 1932 displays very clearly how reluctant politicians or the power elite are to resolve this issue. In the absence of an up-to-date census tensions between sects keep exacerbating as everyone has their own assumptions about the size of their particular sect and about the number of seats they need to be assigned in the Parliament. Thus, I believe that the solution to the whole problem lies first in an updated census. A census would put an end to unending speculations about the current make-up of the population and would clarify how to change the Taif articles allocating certain seats in the Parliament to certain sects. Then the politicians must be persuaded to prioritize Lebanon's well being rather than their own well being and to persuade sect leaders to prioritize every citizen of Lebanon rather than only members of their own sects. Regional actors, the countries that keep intervening in Lebanese politics, need to be convinced that leaving Lebanon alone

31 (1976: 65)

rather than 'protecting it' is a better approach to assure the well-being of it.

Peace is possible in Lebanon but the road to peace is long and demanding. Confessionalism is a major obstacle blocking that road and therefore must be abolished. Even though the odds of this happening in the recent future seem as low, if Lebanon is freed from regional interventions, if comprehensive regulations transforming education -which in turn would transform sectarian identities- could be made, if inter-sectarian dialogue could be buttressed and if inter and intra-sectarian trust secured, then confessionalism could be discarded and a big step towards a secular democratic country taken.

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GULAY TURKMEN-DERVISOGLU is PhD student at the Department of Sociology at Yale University. She is a junior fellow at the Yale Center for Comparative Research and the Yale Council on Middle East Studies. Her research interests include sociology of religion, comparative-historical sociology and cultural trauma and collective memory in the context of national identity formation. She is specifically interested in the ways religious and nationalist identities intersect, intertwine and compete with each other, especially in the Middle East. Her dissertation project focuses on Islam as a supra-national identity in Turkey.

## Charting Gang-Violence in Mexico

### ABSTRACT

This study seeks to understand more fully the most recent spike in drug-related violence in Mexico that began in 2006 and continues to this day. This research began with the hope of uncovering discernable patterns in the spatial distribution of the violence that has erupted over the last five years. Specifically, the goal of this study is to uncover those variables most relevant to the number of executions observed at the municipal level among the different cartels operating in Mexico. Thus, this study will analyze micro-level literature on civil war faction violence in conjunction with economic theory on firm behavior, framing the cartels as little more than revenue-maximizing drug entrepreneurs.

Indeed, many insights into this conflict and reasonable predictions regarding its future direction derive from the body of civil war literature. Although this particular struggle is not considered a civil war by the traditional definition, the existing literature on civil wars informed the author's decision to incorporate specific variables into the study—namely the frequency and locations of the executions. These variables were tested using a new data set that holds the geographical coordinates and population statistics for 1,147 municipalities in Mexico, covering a population of 99 million people out of the nation's 114 million total. The data set spans a period of five years between 2006 and 2010.

### INTRODUCTION

In December 2006, Felipe Calderon assumed the office of the Mexican presidency. As his first major act, he declared war on Mexico's drug cartels, immediately instigating rampant violence across the country. Since Calderon's declaration, drug-related violence in Mexico has skyrocketed, claiming the lives of over 36,000 Mexican citizens, including such high profile government officials as the acting director of Mexico's federal police force.<sup>1</sup> The vast majority of these victims are involved in the drug trade themselves, but the number of

uninvolved civilians dead and missing continues to rise precipitously. Even within the context of Mexico's long history as a smuggling route to the United States, the recent rise in drug-related violence is an unprecedented phenomenon.

Mexico's role in international trafficking has traditionally been that of a 'bootlegger,' moving contraband from other Latin American countries to U.S. consumers using routes that have been developed since at least 1910.<sup>2</sup> Eventually, the nation's northwestern states would become the most important distri-

1 "Mexico's war against drugs is killing its police." New York Times, May 26, 2008.

2 Gabriela Recio, "Drugs and Alcohol: US Prohibition and the Origins of the Drug Trade in Mexico, 1910-1930," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Feb., 2002), pp. 22 (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3875386>)

bution network of narcotics headed to the United States.<sup>3</sup> Gabriela Recio credits prohibition in the United States as the primary reason for the establishment of these illegal markets and Mexico's long record of professional smuggling and enduring drug distribution networks. More importantly, Recio highlights the fact that the northwestern states of Mexico now have approximately 100 years of experience developing and improving these drug distribution networks.<sup>4</sup>

These long-lived narco-networks have begun to pose a serious security threat to the most basic functioning of Mexico's government across a broad swath of the country and is not only confined to the northwest. Perhaps the application of comparative analytics, using lessons from a different country with a very similar plight, will help to illustrate the nature of the drug-related security threat facing Mexico. Johan Engvall, developing further upon the security framework of Buzan (1991) and Buzan, Waever and De Wilde (1998), presents the case of Tajikistan to explore the impact of the drug trade on national security and stability.<sup>5</sup> Tajikistan shares many similarities with Mexico in terms of the drug trade. Tajikistan is home to some of the most lucrative drug routes in all of Asia, due to its geographic position between Afghanistan (the world's largest grower of opium) and Russia (one of the largest global consumers of heroin). In short, Tajikistan is the Mexico of Central Asia, situated perfectly between the growers and consumers of narcotics, acting purely as the distribution network

for these two groups. Insight into the relation between criminal drug gangs and state-ensured security in Tajikistan therefore can offer a lens with which to view Mexico's drug war.

Using Engvall's framework, drug trafficking poses a security threat to governments through several mechanisms. Those mechanisms most relevant to this discussion refer to the security of the population and the legitimacy of institutions. In a democratic society, the state relies on the population for stability and revenue in most scenarios, so a physical threat to this base of support threatens these needs. In Mexico, President Felipe Calderon has stated publicly that cartels have levied taxes on locals in areas they control.<sup>6</sup> Clearly, this conflicts with the general definition of a state where the government is the only body to oversee taxation. It also has been estimated that the drug violence in 2008 reduced the country's GDP by 1% from increasing the cost of doing business due to the need for more security, as well as reduced investment because of a weakened rule of law.<sup>7</sup> Thus drug violence clearly can act through economic channels to undermine the capacity of the state to govern by reducing its revenues and the incomes of the population. The most relevant danger to Mexico of Engvall's institutions is the institutional decay that arises from strong organized drug gangs. The prevalence of cartel drug-money in Mexican politics undermines the democratic and political institutions of Mexico, and ultimately reduces the legitimacy of the Mexican state.

3 *Ibid*, pp. 36

4 *Ibid*, pp. 42

5 Johan Engvall, "The State Under Siege: The Drug Trade and Organised Crime in Tajikistan," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 58, No. 6 (Sep., 2006), pp. 827, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20451264>

6 "Calderon: Mexico drug gangs seeking to replace state," BBC, Aug. 5, 2010. These taxes are likely considered to be "protection" fees that keep gang members from vandalizing property.

7 "Crime 'damages' Mexico economy," BBC, Sept. 3, 2008.



When organized criminal gangs can effectively infiltrate governmental institutions and exert influence, the functions of government are necessarily distorted—diminished in their capacity to distribute public goods, especially security.<sup>8</sup>

Despite these tangible threats to the public's security and the intensity of the drug violence in Mexico, academic researchers have, with a few notable exceptions, largely ignored the conflict.<sup>9</sup> The civil war literature could be of significant value in helping to uncover patterns in the cartel violence but, as of yet, has not been considered in current discussions. The recent episodes of violence affecting Mexico are observed quite frequently in the world at large. The lessons from other episodes of conflict, specifically those regarding the geographical distribution and the intensity of the violence, are equally applicable to Mexico's recent unrest. Some may argue that the units of interest between Mexico's conflict and other civil wars are characteristically different. But, a host of civil war literature argues that many rebel groups are composed wholly of profit-maximizing opportunists, not unlike Mexico's cartels.<sup>10</sup>

Part of the reason conflict researchers have not thoroughly studied the violence in Mexico is because Mexico's violent organized elements are criminals who lack obvious political motives. And, though they may target political figures

8 Johan Engvall, "The State Under Siege: The Drug Trade and Organised Crime in Tajikistan," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 58, No. 6 (Sep., 2006), pp. 847, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20451264>.

9 Viridiana Rios and David A. Shirk, "Drug Violence in Mexico, Data and Analysis Through 2010." Trans-Border Institute, University of San Diego (Feb., 2011). This is one of the few academic reports on the drug-violence in Mexico that draws on the same data and databases as this report.

10 Stathis N. Kalyvas, "New and Old Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction?" *World Politics*, Vol. 54, No. 1 (Oct., 2001), pp. 100, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25054175>.

and institutions with violence; their motives are purely profit Engvall points out that issues concerning drugs and crime are traditionally not considered security issues and are not studied in political science or security studies.<sup>11</sup> The majority of civil wars have stopped far short of the 36,000 battle deaths observed in Mexico. With the violence so out of hand, officials in the United States, including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton<sup>12</sup> and the Undersecretary of the U.S. Army, Joseph Westphal,<sup>13</sup> have even begun to refer to the conflict in Mexico as an 'insurgency'. Indeed, many similarities may be found between Mexico's recent spike in violence and observed civil wars and insurgencies (defined here as armed rebellions by an unrecognized sovereign entity that engages in organized and coordinated acts of violence against a recognized sovereign authority).

The goals and motivations of the participants mark the key distinction between drug wars and civil wars. Participants in drug wars, unlike civil wars, lack political goals and motivations, seeking only material profits from their illicit activities. Though achieving the maximum amount of drug profits may necessitate coercive acts against the state, in the form of bribes or violent intimidation, drug dealers do not advocate the wholesale destruction of the state or the

11 Johan Engvall, "The State Under Siege: The Drug Trade and Organised Crime in Tajikistan," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 58, No. 6 (Sep., 2006), pp. 828, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20451264>.

12 "Clinton says Mexico drug crime like an insurgency" BBC, Sep. 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

13 "Mexico Condemns Comment that U.S. Might Have to Send Troops to Fight Cartel 'Insurgency'." Fox News Latino, Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Speaking at a University Audience, Undersecretary of the U.S. Army, Joseph Westphal, the second highest-ranking civilian official in the U.S. Army, referred to the most recent drug-related violence in Mexico as an "insurgency". Undersecretary Westphal has since retracted his comments and apologized for misspeaking.



creation of a new state.

One obvious similarity is the factional nature of civil wars and drug conflicts. In civil wars, government and various rebel factions violently contest each other for territorial gains that hold political and material benefits. The underlying logic of territorial contestation in civil wars—that factions compete violently for territory that has value to the participants—also applies to drug conflicts.<sup>14</sup> In this study, micro-level civil war literature on territorial contestation and faction violence is leveraged in order to understand the spatial distribution of violence as well as its intensity throughout Mexico.

Additionally, in the study of civil wars, political scientists and theorists have traditionally stressed normative grievances as the impetus for political upheaval and civil violence. With the work of developmental economists Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler explanations regarding the onset of conflict have tended to focus on the opportunities afforded to rebel organizations to violently oppose states.<sup>15</sup> Though political grievances such as frustrations involving ethnic divisions (that precede the onset of conflict), have proven generally necessary for conflict onset, the environmental contexts in which civil wars occur, and which delineate opportunities for rebels to organize, have dominated scholarly discussions. Further research by economists has stressed a correlation between “greed” and “conflict onset” to argue that rebels are motivated mostly by private gain, suggest-

ing that these actors are little more than common criminals or run-of-the-mill bandits.<sup>16</sup> This framework fits perfectly into discussions of drug conflicts in general and Mexico’s recent spike in drug-related gang-on-gang violence in particular. This similarity relaxes the distinctions between civil wars and drug wars regarding the motivations of actors and contribute further to understanding drug conflicts using the literature on civil wars. The literature on civil wars has also extensively addressed questions of violence and their spatial diffusion. The following works present several theories to the geography of violence in conflict as well as their intensity that apply to the recent case of gang violence in Mexico.

## THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

When applying economic models of civil war, rebellion is considered a criminal act where the actors seek only economic gains. In the case of Mexico, the actors are exactly these sorts of criminals that are motivated purely by economic benefits. In Mexico, it is estimated that the drug trade produces between \$6 billion and \$15 billion annually in revenues.<sup>17</sup> These revenues finance and sustain the criminal enterprises throughout Mexico and provide the cartels with few if any reasons to cease their efforts to extract rents from the drug-trade. In this way, the presence of drug markets in America and an abundant supply of drugs from South America creates ample opportunity for cartels to form. Thinking of this interac-

14 Nils B. Weidmann, “*Geography as Motivation and Opportunity: Group Concentration and Ethnic Conflict.*” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 53, (Aug., 2009), pp. 487-495.

15 Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, “*Greed and Grievance in Civil War.*” *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, (2004), pp. 563.

16 *Ibid.* pp. 103.

17 Jorge Chabat, “*Mexico’s War on Drugs: No Margin for Maneuver*” *Annals, AAPSS*, 582, (July, 2002), pp. 137. That revenue figure represents between 1% and 3% of Mexico’s GDP.

tion in terms of a typical business decision, the cartel, acting like a firm, enters the illicit drug distribution market because the profits are greater than zero. And so long as there is profit to be made, a cartel will exist to facilitate the exchange of materials across borders. Firm theory also holds that profits will only approach zero with the introduction of new competitors in the market. But, given the peculiarities of this particular business and the actors involved, competition between cartels assumes the form of gang-on-gang violence rather than price competition. Given this unique model of competition, it is likely then, that the presence of multiple gangs within a region should be correlated with higher levels of executions. Conversely, the presence of only one gang, without competition, should suggest fewer instances of gang-on-gang violence.

Much of the literature linking resources and civil conflict seeks to understand the implications of the links between resources, conflict geography and intensity. In his study of the relevance of resources to thirteen civil wars, Ross notes that resource presence increased the casualty rates in several of the cases, while showing mixed effects in the majority.<sup>18</sup> Ross hypothesizes several mechanisms by which resource presence may have increased the intensity of these conflicts. The most relevant to Mexico holds that resource wealth tends to increase the casualty rate in civil wars as the value of the resource-rich land is much higher than other parts of the country that lack resources.<sup>19</sup> Applying Ross's theory to Mexico shows a higher concentration of

executions and violence in the areas where land is more valuable. In this particular case, value derives from the drugs that are smuggled and the routes that transport them. These drug routes tend to span the coastlines of Mexico's Pacific and Gulf States as well as its international borders. As a result, municipalities that are located nearer Mexico's coastlines and borders should experience higher levels of gang violence and executions.

*Hypothesis One: Municipalities closer to the US border should exhibit more executions than those farther from the US border.*

*Hypothesis Two: Municipalities closer to the Guatemalan border should exhibit more executions than those farther from the Guatemalan border.*

*Hypothesis Three: Municipalities closer to Mexico's Pacific and Gulf coasts should exhibit more executions than those farther from Mexico's coasts.*

Furthermore, if the price of the drugs transported increases, the value of controlling these routes should increase as well, resulting in even more gang competition for these routes.

*Hypothesis Four: The price of the drugs being transported should be positively correlated with the levels of executions in a municipality.*

In addition to Ross's work on the location and intensity of vio-

18 Michael L. Ross, "How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases." International Organization, Vol. 58, No. 1, (Winter, 2004), pp. 55, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3877888>

19 *Ibid* pp. 45.

lence in civil wars, Stathis Kalyvas has produced several hypotheses regarding the implementation of targeted violence in towns during the Greek civil war that may very well apply to Mexico. Kalyvas argues that selective violence will occur where one actor exercises a dominant but incomplete control over the area or town in question. In areas where control is dominant and complete, however, selective violence will be less common because there is no competition and no defection from the existing order.<sup>20</sup> This framework produces a rather counterintuitive finding that suggests levels of violence are reduced where sovereignty is shared between violent actors and also where one actor retains a dominant position of complete control.

From Kalyvas's theories we can hypothesize a story regarding the spatial diffusion of gang violence in Mexico that complements our conclusions from the previous application of firm theory. First, we expect to see that where there is sole control over a territory, gang-on-gang violence should be limited and the levels of selective violence in the form of executions lower than for regions that support multiple gangs. But, where multiple gangs are present the impact is less certain because there is no obvious way to code for the relative strength of gang dominance. Because sovereignty is unlikely to be shared between cartels, where there are multiple gangs and there is no sole dominance of one gang in particular, we should see an increase in the levels of violence in a community. Using the language of Kalyvas's paper, cartels in Mexico then either exhibit dominant and complete control over a territory, suppressing

violence; or a dominant but incomplete control, encouraging violence.

*Hypothesis Five: The presence of multiple drug gangs should increase the levels of executions observed in a city. Similarly, the presence of one gang should have a calming effect on the levels of executions observed in a city.*

These two hypotheses by Ross and Kalyvas in a large sense inspired the following investigation in charting and discerning the patterns of violence throughout Mexico over the last five years. Though the wealth of literature regarding "greedy rebels" and the effects of resource presence on conflict also informed this investigation deeply, the following model sought to capture many of these relationships Ross and Kalyvas discuss regarding the location and intensity of violence.

## METHODS

The data to test these hypotheses combines several other unrelated datasets that held information relevant to this discussion. The dataset covers 1,147 different municipalities out of a total of 2,450 within the 32 States of Mexico. The dataset only includes those 1,147 municipalities provided by the Mexican government in their new database covering gang-related deaths in Mexico. Nearly 99 million persons live within these municipalities covered by the dataset out of a countrywide population of about 114 million persons in 2011.<sup>21</sup>

The data on gang-related

20 Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge University Press (2006), pp. 174.

21 CIA World Factbook, Population of Mexico. Estimates of the population of Mexico by July 2011.

murders was compiled by Mexican Federal Government agencies concerned with gang-related homicides.<sup>22</sup> An interagency working group was developed to collect and integrate the information into a countrywide database so that organizations and researchers might perform further analyses regarding the drug violence as this paper does.<sup>23</sup> A new indicator on “alleged deaths during criminal rivalry” was developed for the purposes of just such an investigation. In the government’s data, an execution is defined as a homicide where the perpetrator is a member of a criminal gang and when extreme violence was used against the victim, for example: decapitation, dismemberment, mutilations, or burns. The victim’s corpse must also satisfy two defining features in order for a violent death to be considered an execution: signs of torture or severe injury as defined earlier, and whether the corpse was found at a separate drop-site, or displayed some form of restraint. The use of a blanket is another indicator as this suggests concealment while transporting or dumping a body at an off-site location. Finally, the new standard includes individuals with ties to a criminal group, and messages left claiming responsibility from rival criminal gangs. Using this working definition, the database has recorded some 30,821 executions between December of 2006 and 2010.

This dataset is the first tool exclusively covering the drug-related violence in Mexico and is the foundation for this investigation. In analyzing the data, there are many stages of validation and confirmation to eliminate errors and overlap

22 Dr. Alejandro Poire, “Presentacion de la Base de Datos de Presuntos Homicidios Relacionados con la Delincuencia Organizada.” (Jan., 2011). A Speech presenting the new database on drug-gang-related murders.  
23 Ibid.

as the collection and coding efforts span several government bodies.<sup>24</sup> The database is also updated as new information arises on particular episodes of violence, typically when mass graves are discovered. This constant updating ensures that the numbers of homicides presented in this investigation will not be exactly the same, but will unlikely be so wildly different as to undermine the significance of the statistical results. The database, however, also includes the violent deaths of individuals at a statewide level that could not be classified as occurring in a municipality or necessarily as a gang-related execution. These deaths were coded as “No Specific” location and were dropped from the dataset used in this study. Again, these unspecified deaths numbered too few to significantly alter the results of this investigation. Also, missing from most of these related datasets is the numbers of missing persons that has risen as the violence progressed. For obvious reasons these “missing persons” are not included in the tally of drug-related homicides, but there appears to be a strong relationship between their numbers and the frequent unearthing of mass graves throughout the country.

The rest of the investigation was based on the format of this government database that is organized by state and municipality. The data on the latitude and longitudinal coordinates of the municipalities was provided by using Google Earth. Google Earth allowed filtered searching by municipality, state and country, which limited the duplicate recording of locations for municipalities. The information on population was compiled by The National Institute of Statistic and Geography or INEGI. INEGI is an autonomous

24 Ibid.

agency of the Mexican Government that records the country's census every ten years. The population statistics for this investigation were from 2010, except for a few cases in the Mexican state of Oaxaca where population estimates in 2005 were recorded.

Once the geographic locations of the municipalities were identified, a program was used to calculate the distance between that municipality and the US, Mexican and Guatemalan border. The program works by identifying the closest distance between the municipality and the international border of interest. These distances could then theoretically produce some problems or inconsistencies as the shortest distance between the Yucatan and the US would be a line going through the Gulf of Mexico as opposed to the length of Mexico's coastline, which is a more likely transportation route to the United States. The extent of this problem is uncertain, and presumably not so large that it undermines the findings, but it is present.

The data on gang presence, unfortunately, is less precise. In the dataset, gang presence is coded as 1 for the presence of a single gang, 2 for the presence of multiple gangs, and 0 for disputed territory where dominance is unclear for a particular set of gangs. For example, a BBC report included a chart mapping the presence of the top seven cartels in Mexico in 2006.<sup>25</sup> A large problem recognized by this investigation regards the coding of gang presence. Gang presence was mostly coded at the state level even if certain municipalities within larger states

25 "Q&A: Mexico's drug-related violence." BBC, February 1, 2011. This map was provided by Stratfor Security, a private global intelligence firm and published on the BBC's website. The company is well respected as a security consultant with client lists that include governments.

might exhibit only single gang presence. In addition, a considerable amount of "eye-balling" was used to estimate gang presence at the state level. Given that state lines are not delineated in the BBC map, it was hard in several cases, namely the Gulf States and particularly in the state of Tamaulipas, to determine at which point the Zeta's area of control began and the Gulf Cartel ended. Also, a gang was typically not present every part of a state, yet if the majority of the state hosts a gang, then the entire area is coded as its territory. Furthermore, one problem with using this map is the necessary assumption (for this study) that these lines of presence are fixed and do not shift. Given that so much violence has erupted, however, it is extremely unlikely that this map of gang presence in 2010 is the same as in 2006, but at least between 2006 and 2008 these lines were rather static.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, though this category of "disputed territory" was recorded in this report's dataset, it was not used in the statistical analysis to compare the extent of gang violence because it was unclear what "disputed" territory constituted. Most likely the territory was "disputed" by multiple gangs, but without a definition, the data was recorded with the hopes that one day, the status "disputed" will be clarified. This is also not the only map available charting gang presence throughout Mexico. There are many other maps that chart this similar layout as found on the BBC's website, even those that delineate state lines. These maps charting gang presence also include different sets of cartels and minimize the extent of this "disputed territory" indicator. Nevertheless, the other

26 "Mexican Drug Cartels: Two Wars and a Look Southward." Stratfor Global Intelligence. December 17, 2009.

FIGURE 1: ORGANIZED CRIME KILLINGS RESULTING FROM  
SPECIFIC CONFLICTS AMONG DRUG TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATIONS, 2006-2011

Groups in Conflict	Killings	% of total
Sinaloa vs. Juárez	8,236	23.8%
Sinaloa vs. Beltran-Leyva	5,864	16.9%
Sinaloa vs. Gulf-Zetas	3,199	9.2%
Sinaloa vs. Tijuana	1,798	5.2%
La Familia vs. Zetas	1,744	5.0%
Gulf vs. Zetas	1,328	3.8%
Other	12,442	35.9%
Total	34,611	100%

Source: Government data tracking cartel conflicts as reported by Jorge Ramos, "Gobierno revela mapa de guerra entre cárteles", *El Universal*, August 28, 2010 and Milenio, "28 mil 353 ejecutados en el sexenio. Radio-grafíadel crimen organizado" *Milenio*, August 28, 2010

charts mostly appear to derive from the map offered in this report.

Similarly, the Trans-Border Institute has published a chart in their 2010 report on the drug violence in Mexico (Figure 1).<sup>27</sup> This chart records the gang-on-gang violence in Mexico by group and fits well with the gang competition framework established earlier in this report. The chart is particularly telling and highlights how the presence of multiple gangs is responsible for some 63.9% of all the killings within Mexico between 2006 and 2010.<sup>28</sup>

The information on the US street price of a gram of marijuana and cocaine were compiled from different websites. The data on the price of a gram of marijuana came from *High Times* magazine's online price index of marijuana. There are few if any sources that consistently index the US street price for Mari-

juana and likely none disaggregate the data by the quality of the Marijuana. Given the notoriety of *High Times* and their trust by growers nationally and internationally, it was selected as the study's primary source. The fall price averages for an ounce of Marijuana between 2006 and 2010 were used.<sup>29</sup> Because the price of marijuana seems to fluctuate with the seasons like most agricultural products, the prices compiled are not the best indicators. The average US street price of cocaine on the other hand, is readily available and regularly posted by the Drug Enforcement Agency of the United States. The 2010 National Drug Threat Assessment records the price movements of a gram of cocaine between March of 2006 and September of 2009. The average of these prices for 2006 through 2009 was used to register the average price for the years spanning this investigation's dataset. For 2010 the assumption was made that the

27 Viridiana Rios and David A. Shirk. "Drug Violence in Mexico, Data and Analysis Through 2010." *Trans-Border Institute*, University of San Diego (Feb., 2011). pp. 22.

28 *Ibid.* pp. 22. I arrived at the number 63.9% by adding the figures from % of Total for all rows except "Other". It is unclear why adding the "Other" row, however, still leaves the summation .2% short of 100%.

29 "June 2008 THMQ" *High Times*, Market analysis, Current MIDS Index. This price index covers the average price of an average quality of marijuana by the ounce. From here I converted the ounces to grams to match my measurement unit for cocaine.



FIGURE 2

Period	Price per Pure gram	Purity, in percent (mean)
Jan - Mar 05	\$94.65	68.6%
Apr - Jun 05	\$94.96	68.9%
Jul - Sep 06	\$94.73	68.1%
Oct - Dec 06	\$90.18	69.8%
Jan - Mar 07	\$99.24	67.4%
Apr - Jun 07	\$119.08	59.3%
Jul - Sep 07	\$130.34	57.1%
Oct - Dec 07	\$115.26	61.2%
Jan - Mar 08	\$122.81	57.6%
Apr - Jun 08	\$126.06	57.4%
Jul - Sep 08	\$183.63	46.4%
Oct - Dec 08	\$198.47	44.8%
Jan - Mar 09	\$174.38	48.1%
Apr - Jun 09	\$173.19	48.6%

price of cocaine did not change which is highly unlikely. This index also includes the average purity of the cocaine, which should impact the price of the cocaine. Purity was not included in this investigation however. Figure 2 presents the DEA information.<sup>30</sup>

With this information the dataset is now complete and we may begin to test these hypotheses. Using this model, four different regressions were run using executions as the dependent variable in all four of them. Tables 1-4 are simple OLS regressions. Table 1 tests how the presence of gangs influences the levels of executions in a municipality. Table 2 adds geographic variables, including latitude and longitude. Table 3 adds the price of marijuana and cocaine as independent variables. Table 4 gauges how gang competition impacts the levels of violence as opposed to situations where only one gang is present - a test of Kaylvas's hypothesis. To do

this, dummy variables for states were created where there was one gang present and states where at least two gangs were present. As mentioned earlier, the indicator for "disputed territory" was not included as the definition for this term was unclear. Population was used as a control variable throughout Tables 2-4.

The results are recorded below. The results for all of these variables are significant in the 99th percentile, but do not always point in the expected direction.

## RESULTS

Table 5 summarizes the results across the different hypotheses.

H1 This matrix should present the findings in a way that is most accessible to the reader. Looking to the first hypothesis—that cities closer to the US border should exhibit more violence—surprisingly, we find negative results. We see that the hypothesis is not confirmed and

30 National Drug Threat Assessment 2010, US Department of Justice, National Drug Intelligence Center, 2010.



TABLE 1

Variable	Executions1	Executions2	Executions3	Executions4
<u>gangs</u>	1.291867	-2.8170182	-2.8136921	
<u>population</u>	.00007818	.00008279	.00008272	.00008265
<u>distborder</u>		-.04222502	-.04233203	-.04268322
<u>distusa</u>		.0403162	.04038155	.04074405
<u>distquatem~a</u>		.01155845	.00934688	.00910484
<u>longitude</u>		1.2320695	1.0371911	1.0443679
<u>latitude</u>		4.3410092	4.4601582	4.5179709
<u>marijuana</u>			-3.4816897	-3.4830715
<u>cocaine</u>			.10082432	.10082976
<u>gangs1</u>				-4.4467117
<u>gangs2</u>				-5.5058706

Number of observations = 5720

TABLE 2

Executions1

<u>homicides</u>	<u>Coef.</u>	<u>Std. Err.</u>	<u>t</u>	<u>P&gt; t </u>
<u>gangs</u>	1.291867	.5854125	2.21	0.027
<u>population</u>	.0000782	3.48e-06	22.45	0.000

Number of observations = 5720

Executions2

<u>homicides</u>	<u>Coef.</u>	<u>Std. Err.</u>	<u>t</u>	<u>P&gt; t </u>
<u>gangs</u>	-2.817018	1.078084	-2.61	0.009
<u>distborder</u>	-.042225	.0080881	-5.22	0.000
<u>distusa</u>	.0403162	.0078879	5.11	0.000
<u>distquatem~a</u>	.0115585	.0023459	4.93	0.000
<u>population</u>	.0000828	3.67e-06	22.56	0.000
<u>longitude</u>	1.23207	.2144801	5.74	0.000
<u>latitude</u>	4.341009	.7940334	5.47	0.000

Number of observations = 5720

TABLE 3

## Executions3

<u>homicides</u>	<u>Coef.</u>	<u>Std. Err.</u>	<u>t</u>	<u>P&gt; t </u>
<u>gangs</u>	-2.813692	1.075044	-2.62	0.009
<u>distborder</u>	-.042332	.0080659	-5.25	0.000
<u>distusa</u>	.0403816	.0078659	5.13	0.000
<u>population</u>	.0000827	3.66e-06	22.60	0.000
<u>marijuana</u>	-3.48169	1.675852	-2.08	0.038
<u>cocaine</u>	.1008243	.0216514	4.66	0.000
<u>distguatem-a</u>	.0093469	.003057	3.06	0.002
<u>longitude</u>	1.037191	.2752904	3.77	0.000
<u>latitude</u>	4.460158	.7989491	5.58	0.000

Number of observations = 5720

TABLE 4

## Executions4

<u>homicides</u>	<u>Coef.</u>	<u>Std. Err.</u>	<u>t</u>	<u>P&gt; t </u>
<u>gangs1</u>	-4.446712	1.823674	-2.44	0.015
<u>gangs2</u>	-5.505871	2.152837	-2.56	0.011
<u>distborder</u>	-.0426832	.008072	-5.29	0.000
<u>distusa</u>	.0407441	.0078726	5.18	0.000
<u>population</u>	.0000826	3.66e-06	22.58	0.000
<u>marijuana</u>	-3.483072	1.675819	-2.08	0.038
<u>cocaine</u>	.1008298	.0216509	4.66	0.000
<u>distguatem-a</u>	.0091048	.0030647	2.97	0.003
<u>longitude</u>	1.044368	.275361	3.79	0.000
<u>latitude</u>	4.517971	.8006335	5.64	0.000

Number of observations = 5720

is consistent throughout all tables. The level of significance remains constant in the 99th percentile. Thus we observe that cities closer to the US border should experience relatively lower levels of executions. This finding is rather puzzling however given that some 50% of the drug related deaths in 2010 occurred in the states of Sinaloa, Tam-

aulipas and Chihuahua where Chihuahua and Tamaulipas both border the United States. In addition, the most violent city in Mexico for 2008 through 2010 is without question Ciudad Juarez in Chihuahua. It is possible that the relative levels of violence are increasing country wide throughout these 5 years and rising faster in those municipalities

TABLE 5

<b>Hypothesis and Table Matrix of Results</b>	<b>Executions1</b>	<b>Executions2</b>	<b>Executions3</b>	<b>Executions4</b>
H1	NA	No***	No***	No***
H2	NA	No***	No***	No***
H3	NA	Yes***	Yes***	Yes***
H4	NA NA	NA NA	No*** Yes***	No*** Yes***
H5	Yes***	No***	No***	No/Yes***

\* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001

This matrix illustrates whether the hypotheses were confirmed by the table as well as the level of statistical significance of these results.

further away from the US border. Perhaps the second hypothesis may confirm this explanation as it measures the influence of the Guatemalan border at the opposite end of Mexico. In the future, robustness checks may be instituted into this model to measure at what distance from the US border are executions in a municipality positively correlated with the distance and provide some measure of significance. In a future study, it might be hypothesized that municipalities that fall within the mean distance of cities from the US border, throughout all of Mexico, confirming the hypothesis that executions increase as you approach the US border. In addition, the US border may be characteristically different from other borders with Mexico given the strength of US law enforcement agencies that

monitor the border.

H2 The second hypothesis, that as one approaches the Guatemalan border the levels of violence increase, is not confirmed for any tables that apply. The coefficients point in the unexpected positive direction (that is as distance from the Guatemalan border increases, the level of executions increases) and are significant in the 99th percentile. This result also does not necessarily confirm the possibility that throughout the 5 year period violence has spread further south as a percent of overall drug related violence within Mexico, which I argued might be a reason we observe a positive relationship between the levels of executions and distance to

the US border. This finding should relieve Mexican citizens nearest the Guatemalan border, whom we read from newspaper reports are currently experiencing higher levels of cartel and drug-related violence.<sup>31</sup> This conclusion, however, may not bode so well for Guatemalans on the other side of the Mexico border who are not recorded in this study.

H3 The third hypothesis—that as one approaches the Mexican border the levels of violence should increase—is, on the other hand, completely confirmed by the results of the tables. All relevant tables confirm the expected negative relationship between the distance between a municipality and the observed levels of executions. The explanatory power of this measure of distance to the Mexican border, however, may be understated for this investigation. In addition to capturing the Pacific and Gulf coasts, this variable will also capture the same interactions of the US and Guatemalan borders captured in the previous two regressions which found the opposite relationship. Without the inclusion of these two borders in the variable it is likely the coefficients would have been even more negative. Perhaps in the future, one might try to only capture this interaction for states that do not share a border with the US or Guatemala, but that might restrict the sample and obviously bias the information too much. Either way, the results are highly significant and confirm the third hypothesis.

H4 Hypothesis four held that as the price of drugs increased so should the levels of violence. There were

31 “Guatemala ‘drug lord’ Juan Ortiz Lopez captured by US.” BBC News, March, 30 2011.

two types of drugs used in this investigation, marijuana and cocaine. In the matrix of results presented earlier, the first result refers to marijuana and the second to the results for cocaine. Here too we observe different effects. Throughout every relevant table the price of cocaine is positively correlated with the levels of violence in a municipality and is highly significant. The price of marijuana on the other hand does not seem to be negatively correlated with the levels of violence and is not significant at all for the levels of executions in a city. Considering that the price of marijuana has not fluctuated too much throughout the course of this conflict, this may not be so unsurprising. If it were possible to include the volumes of marijuana and cocaine transported between the borders perhaps we could see why the prices of marijuana have remained so stagnant while cocaine has increased so precipitously. Perhaps given the lower quality nature of marijuana trafficked from Mexico, there is some consumer substitution effect in favor of higher quality marijuana trafficked from Canada; it is unclear. More likely, the alternative methods of sourcing the price of marijuana conducted by this paper are to blame for the mixed and counterintuitive results considering that the volume of marijuana trafficked across the border, as derived from drug seizures at the US border, is much higher than the volume of cocaine trafficked.<sup>32</sup> Further, there is an endogeneity problem with the price of drugs and the number of deaths observed in a city. As the conflict progresses and the num-

32 The Department of Justice on their website details the quantity of various drugs seized at the US border annually. The volume of marijuana seized at the border is typically 50 times that of cocaine. <http://www.justice.gov/ndic/pubs38/38661/movement.htm>

ber of deaths increases, necessarily the price of cocaine reflecting this increased cost of business should push higher. And if, as this paper argues, as the value of cocaine increases so does the level of violence, we uncover a positive feedback mechanism whereby violence increases the price of cocaine and therefore increases the likelihood of violence. In this undesirable scenario, violence and government pressure increases the value of these routes by pushing the price of cocaine higher thus incentivizing more violence. Either way, from these particular results it appears the higher the price of cocaine the more violence will be observed, whereas the price of marijuana matters less or is negatively correlated with drug related violence.

H5 Hypothesis five holds that the presence of multiple gangs should increase the levels of executions in a municipality whereas municipalities with one gang present should have relatively fewer executions. As expected, before instituting more variables, we observe that as the number of gangs increases the levels of executions rises. This interaction is captured in the “gangs” variable in table one. These findings are also significant in the 99th percentile. The rest of the tables, however, do not confirm Hypothesis 5 and are also significant in the 99th percentile. After instituting more variables the “gangs”, and “gangs2” variables, exhibit strong and significant negative correlations with executions. In an almost complete reversal, the coefficient for “gangs” and “gangs2” dives lower, disproving that portion of Hypothesis 5. Given model one, the results are somewhat mixed with the relationship between multiple

gangs and the levels of violence, but trusting more in the quantity of results displayed in models 2-4 that introduce more than one variable, it appears multiple gangs do not increase the levels of violence. The coefficient on the “gangs1” variable, on the other hand, points in the expected negative direction suggesting the presence of only one gang reduces the levels of executions in a municipality. These results are also incredibly significant as well, in the 99th percentile, confirming that portion of Hypothesis 5. The poor coding methods of gang presence of this investigation, however, heavily influenced these conclusions regarding Hypothesis 5 and it is this poor method that likely provides these counterintuitive results. Whereas gang presence is coded at the state-level executions are coded at the municipal level. The result is many cities and towns that experienced no executions, likely because of the low population size and little strategic importance of the town, were coded as harboring at least one gang, when these towns in reality did not. A future paper with a better method of coding gang presence at the municipal level would go a long way to empirically proving this positive association between multiple gang presence and the levels of executions. But until then, the results of this investigation seem to generally illustrate the dominance of more permanently fixed geographic factors, like city location, than the more fluid, less permanent factors like gang-presence.

## POLICY IMPLICATIONS

These results confirm several of the five hypotheses offered earlier in the examination. Aggregated,

this empirical evidence illustrates that municipalities closer to the Mexican border, but not the US or Guatemalan border, are much more likely to experience higher levels of drug related violence in the form of executions. This finding is further exacerbated so long as the price of cocaine rises, which it has precipitously and is expected to continue to do so. These price increases will make most cities vulnerable to higher levels of violence, though the effect will be disproportionate depending on whether someone lives near the Mexican border, but not necessarily the US or Guatemalan border. These findings mostly confirm the theoretical contributions of Ross's work that hold violence will occur in more valuable regions. In Mexico, cities near smuggling routes on the coasts are more valuable to the cartels and so these cities experience more violence as expected under Ross's framework. Though the results for these two international borders related variables do not confirm Ross's hypotheses, this may simply illustrate that the US and Guatemalan international borders are not as valuable as hypothesized by this paper. The evidence regarding gang presence was not definitive either, but mostly suggested that the presence of multiple gangs did not have the expected positive impact on the levels of executions. Municipalities that host only one gang will experience suppressed levels of executions as hypothesized. Ultimately, this evidence might confirm the original Kalyvas hypothesis that when sovereignty is shared the levels of selective violence are lower. The investigation disregarded that notion, arguing that it did not apply to gang violence in Mexico between cartels that have few incentives or opportunities to share market control and

access. Perhaps this restriction of the Hypothesis 5 was incorrect. As Kalyvas might argue, it may be that the amount of information made available to cartels when they are contesting a territory is sufficiently diminished that executions are less common. However, as mentioned earlier and in light of the table produced by the Trans-Border Institute that illustrates the quantities of the group-on-group violence, the different methods of coding for gang presence and executions is likely to blame for the negative correlations between multiple gang presence and the level of executions. Turning back to the literature on civil wars, though, hopefully this study might be able to derive some policy implications from these results that may reduce the levels of executions mapped in this study.

Given this realization that resource-financing opportunities substantially increase the likelihood of conflict onset, many new authors have sought to uncover the mechanism by which financing results in rebellion. Within the "greedy rebel" framework, the looting of local resources appears motivated purely by financial gain. This method of financing, however, impacts the nature of rebel-recruitment within the organization, impacting membership, structure and behavior.<sup>33</sup> Jeremy Weinstein points to a sort of rebel "resource curse" whereby the strength of rebel groups is undermined by resource abundance. Over time, the recruits join these resource abundant groups for the rents and not the cause, poisoning the ideological quality of the recruits. Weinstein's interpretations of

33 Jeremy M. Weinstein, "Resources and the Information Problem in Rebel Recruitment", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 49, No. 4, *Paradigm in Distress? Primary Commodities and Civil War* (Aug., 2005), pp. 598, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30045132>.



the interaction between resources and rebel group structures fits well with this discussion considering Weinstein focuses exclusively on material motivations—the only motivations that exist within Mexico’s drug-gangs. As such, much of the cartel labor force consists of low skill drug-mules, transporting drugs to and from the United States. These mules are involved with these cartels for the opportunity to make high sums of money in very short periods of time with minimal effort exerted, though admittedly the risks are quite high. The mules are likely to be poorer than the average Mexican and less skilled. They are also a fluid source of labor, resembling something close to migrant workers.

All these characteristics point to a low level of commitment from these recruits and may explain the recent setbacks of many of these cartels throughout Mexico in the face of government intervention by the highly motivated, trained and equipped military forces. The relative strengths of these two organizations, the cartels and the state, are skewed in favor of the state. In a military confrontation the state has the advantage in terms of expertise, resources, and hardware. With a continued sustained crackdown on the cartels the government should be able to dismantle their networks in the same way the Medellin Cartel in Colombia was eventually disbanded, but as Jorge Chabat, Mexican counter-narcotics policy expert, reminds us, the most sinister weapon the cartels have is the power to corrupt.<sup>34</sup> Even so, already there is evidence that La Familia, one of the most prominent drug gangs in Mexico, has disbanded after continued pressure from the Mexican

military. With the leadership of La Familia either killed or in jail, in 2011 signs were posted notifying the authorities and the communities of Michoacán that the gang has begun to dissolve itself.<sup>35</sup> This success is noteworthy and commendable, but also disappointing in one large sense; there are no alternative solutions to the application of force between the state and drug gangs.

The unique illicit nature of drugs introduces peculiar constraints on the termination processes of civil conflicts. Empirical analysis of the relationship between resource-financing and conflict duration tends to validate this notion of rebellion as a criminal enterprise or business venture, whereby rebels continue to oppose the government because of the high rents they collect.<sup>36</sup> In addition, the low opportunity costs of recruitment, given the relative poverty, the low skill and low commitment status of these recruits ensures an almost endless supply of traffickers and an extension of the conflict in Mexico.<sup>37</sup> These two tendencies, high rents and cheap labor, only serve to increase the duration of conflict. Studies by Fearon and Collier both confirm that conflicts tend to be longer where rebels have access to illicit financing.<sup>38</sup> Using thirteen case studies, Michael Ross also confirmed this positive relationship between resource wealth and the duration of conflict that included drug resources.<sup>39</sup> Svante

35 “*La Familia drug gang: Mexico says cartel ‘in retreat’*,” BBC, Jan. 26, 2011.

36 “*The Duration and Termination of Civil War*” Harvard Hegre, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (May, 2004), pp. 245. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4149743>.

37 *Ibid.*, pp. 246.

38 *Ibid.*, pp. 247. Cites Fearon (2004) and Collier (2004).

39 Michael L. Ross, “*How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases.*” *International Organization*, Vol. 58, No. 1, (Winter, 2004), pp. 52, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3877888>.

34 “*Mexico’s Narco-Insurgency*”, *Time Magazine*, Jan. 25, 2008.



Cornell estimates that where rebels relied on contraband for financing, the mean duration of conflict was 48.2 years.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, the increases in the price of the commodities that finance rebel activity tend to prolong conflicts as well. This last point regarding commodity prices is very important in the case of Mexico as the price of cocaine has increased some 75.4% between January, 2007 and September of 2009.<sup>41</sup> These higher prices of cocaine can extend duration of the conflict in Mexico through several channels. Higher rents on cocaine increase the economic benefit of distributing those illicit substances and, as a result, cartels are much less likely to forego such profitable opportunities. In addition, higher prices of cocaine not only increase the motivation for rebel groups to continue opposing the government, but also increase their relative capacity to resist. Interdiction efforts, the preferred method of policing the supply of drugs, raise the price of drugs, which only increases the value of the routes and the level of violence. Without such high rents the cartels could not expect to resist the government, or each other for that matter, as much as they have already.

## CONCLUSION

This research set out to explain the patterns of the gang-on-gang violence experienced in Mexico between 2006 and 2010 following President Felipe Calderon's dec-

laration of war on Mexico's drug cartels. Utilizing the relevant civil war literature on greedy rebels, the influences of resource presence on conflicts, and the spatial diffusion of violence and its intensity, this study has yielded several hypotheses to understand the patterns of Mexico's gang violence. It appears that the levels of executions within Mexico are positively influenced by rising drug prices as well as proximity to the smuggling routes at the Mexican border. However, executions do not seem to be positively correlated with proximity to the US or Guatemalan borders. Seemingly, these results may contribute to law enforcement efforts in countries or even municipalities facing similar gang driven drug-violence. In an immediate sense, these results do not point definitively to a more general southward migration in drug-related violence that would otherwise threaten Mexicans near Guatemala, though the majority of violence is concentrated on the Guatemalan side of the border already. Unfortunately though, the policy conclusions we derive from these results are damning for traditional US and Mexican counter-narcotics efforts, which focus mostly on drug interdiction efforts. These seizures of narcotics increase the price of drugs by decreasing their supply on the market as well as the costs associated with trafficking. Given the highly significant and positive impacts the price of drugs has on the levels of executions in Mexico's cities, a new approach to fighting narcotics traffic seems necessary to avoid the collateral damage of heightened gang competition and the subsequent flurry of executions.

40 Svante E. Cornell, "The Interaction of Narcotics and Conflict", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 42, No. 6 (Nov., 2005), pp. 753.

41 U.S. Department of Justice, National Drug Threat Assessment, 2010, National Drug Intelligence Center, (May, 2010), pp. 28.

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JESSE HASSINGER graduated in the Yale Class of 2011, having double majored in Political Science and Economics. He took interest in this particular conflict to raise awareness about the gross levels of violence in Mexico. Jesse wrote this piece as his senior essay project and continues to work towards eventually publishing the piece in a major political science journal.

## Analysis of Three Explanations for the Recent Upsurge in Nationalist Mobilization

The return of populist, xenophobic and racist movements to the Netherlands has signified the resurgence of neo-nationalism in a country known for its multiculturalism and tolerance. The acceptance of neo-nationalist agendas is a recent phenomenon in the Dutch political scene. When the Centre Party (CP), a nationalist right wing party, secured its first seat in the House of Representatives in 1982 under the banners of “Full is full,” “Our own people first,” and “The Netherlands is only for the Dutch,” the electorate was shocked. The party was accused of fascism and discrimination, and faced violent protest. Other political parties imposed a cordon sanitaire on the CP, and the party was confronted with legal proceedings accusing it of racism. Twenty years later, in the 2002 elections, Pim Fortuyn, an extravagant politician who advocated closure of borders and claimed “Islam is a backward culture,” led his party to receive twenty percent of popular vote.

Dutch liberals Geert Wilders and former-immigration minister Rita Verdonk have continued this trend, winning over twenty percent of the electorate by arguing that “immigrants have to assimilate to our culture,” “Muslims have to reject the Koran,” and “everybody has to learn Dutch history, culture and the anthem.” The media has provided neo-nationalist politicians a powerful platform, lifting the taboo on the discussion of ethnic differ-

ences. Other mainstream parties have also become more nationalistic and gotten tougher on immigration.

Although questions of national unity and nationalism are not new to the Netherlands, the current neo-nationalism represents a fundamental shift in Dutch politics. How did these nationalistic movements gain momentum in a country known for its tolerance, independence and open-mindedness? Why did neo-nationalism become popular in a country once known for its support of multiculturalism?

This essay will analyze the recent upsurge in Dutch neo-nationalist mobilization through different theories of nationalism. It will first consider the nationalistic components of the recent upsurge, before examining Benedict Anderson’s imagined community theory and Roger Smith’s stories of a peoplehood, Andreas Wimmer’s theory of nationalist exclusion, and Roger Gould’s theory of critical events and participation identities. While none of the theories fully explain the upsurge, all are complementary and offer important explanations to parts of the puzzle of resurgent Dutch neo-nationalism.

Nationalism has generally been described as a “willed construct,” brought into being for various purposes, such as mobilizing labor, and arising out of certain structural or historical conditions. Politically, nationalism is the principle that state and nation should coincide, thus members of a nation should

share a culture. The relation between nationalism and immigration is the threat immigrants can pose to the cultural and national identity. Neo-nationalism is defined as “the re-emergence of nationalism under different global and transnational conditions.” Dutch neo-nationalism differs from earlier forms of Dutch nationalism, in that it has less to do with praising of Dutch culture, than with hostility to outsiders. This form of nationalism is often closely affiliated with racism or discrimination. In this paper, nationalism is considered to be a political phenomenon, traceable through political party’s ideologies and their supporters.

Nationalists are characterized as the supporters of parties with widely acknowledged nationalist agendas, such as the Centre Party, Fortuyn’s ‘Livable Netherlands’ (LPF), Verdonk’s ‘Proud of the Netherlands’ (TON) and Wilder’s Party for Freedom (PVV). However, LPF, TON and PVV are not the only representatives of Dutch neo-nationalism as other political parties have expressed strong nationalist sentiments, for example, the PvdA’s (Labour Party) wish for a ‘decent form of nationalism’ and the Christian Democratic Party’s desire to address the lost public awareness of Dutch culture, history, and ancestry.

The nationalistic component of political movements is often overlooked by the Dutch media, which focuses on their populist, fascist and extremist tendencies. Isolating and focusing on their nationalist components can offer new insights. For example, neo-nationalism contradicts the belief, held by some, that nationalism solely manifests itself in new nation states. Also, neo-nationalism uniquely depends on specific rhetoric that manipulates existing notions of culture

or the “imagined community.” Nationalism in liberal states can easily lead to illiberal practices due to its exclusionary implications with regards to membership. It is therefore important to check if the current neo-nationalism is in line with liberal values to shield society from falling into discriminative and racist practices such as demanding immigrants assimilate not only linguistically but also culturally. An illiberal form of nationalism can result in forms of cultural apartheid, depriving newcomers of equal status and enforcing its own identity, or becoming a more liberal society with a new, pluralistic identity. Nationalists have a tendency for collectivism, which stands at odds with human rights. Understanding these complications and problems in this discourse is the first steps to solving the crisis.

#### REIMAGINING COMMUNITIES

Benedict Anderson defines the nation as “an imagined political community,” which is sovereign and limited because of its finite, yet elastic boundaries. The community is sustained by the faith of members that there are other members, whose identity remains unknown to us. Neo-nationalism can be explained as members having lost the confidence of the existence of imagined others, engendering a need for a “reimagining” of the community or nation building. Dutch cultural feeling of natural belonging had been natural and needed no strengthening until the threats of the 1990s when the immigrants from Mediterranean and African countries as well as the Antilles became a part of the permanent population.

From the beginning of the 20th century, the Dutch society was segmented into vertical categories (or pillars) under political and religious denominations to keep a strongly divided society together. Each of these pillars—a Catholic, Protestant, and Socialist—had separate social institutions including press, trade unions and universities. During the ‘de-pillarization’ of Dutch society in the 1960s, traditional strong religious and socio-political barriers were broken down and segments of society lost their original identity.

Secularization went hand in hand with individualization and people started choosing based on their own values. In the pillarized society, the national identity had been preserved above these identities within the pillars, which were strong and homogenous. However, during de-pillarization, people started to give the national identity their own interpretation and meaning, weakening the strength and unity of the national imagined community.

Immigration accelerated the integration of the Netherlands into a globalizing world and challenged beliefs that were at the core of the Dutch identity. In the 1970s the Dutch faced a growing stream of immigrants coming from Mediterranean and African countries. In the 1980s the Dutch received a stream of refugees from all over the world, while simultaneously receiving families of guest workers, prompting discussions on their integration policy. In the 1990s many Antilleans came to the Netherlands to study or work when the Islands became independent. The Dutch looked with Argus eyes at the immigrant stream and slowly lost confidence in the existence of their nation as a community. They felt threatened “with exclusion or marginalization

in popular imagined communities.” This process was accelerated by globalization and Europeanization, which also threatened the uniqueness and strength of the Dutch national identity.

In reaction to these trends, politicians of mainstream parties have argued that it is as if the Dutch no longer have a common identity. Neo-nationalists like Wilders drew public attention to current and future insecurities, propagating national cultural reinforcement against new “enemies” or immigrants. Furthermore, parties promoting popular “linguistic-nationalism” such as LPF and PVV rose to protect people who felt threatened with exclusion from popular imagined communities. The Dutch reacted to the threat in the manner Anderson had predicted them to: the nationalism will have a “populist” and “pathological” character and is rooted in “hatred and fear of the Other”—in this case Islam—and has “affinities with racism.” Fortuyn was the first politician to be widely supported for expressions such as “our original culture is in danger of perishing.” Later Wilders and Rita Verdonk became part of the same trend by forming populist parties that explicitly stated their aversion to Muslims, focused on the loss of the national identity and demanded that immigrants assimilate.

The success of the neo-nationalist politicians can also be explained by their efforts to restore the old sense of community and source of identification. In 2008 politicians decided to build a national historical museum to increase historical awareness and to help solve the identity crisis or to “appear as guardian of tradition.” Roger Smith, like Anderson, emphasizes the importance of engineering a “narrative of identity” or



telling “ethnic stories of peoplehood” in re-imagining communities, which explains recent developments such as the museum as well as the institutionalization of a common canon of Dutch history to be taught in schools. The new integration policy, which obliges migrants to enroll in a citizenship course to learn the Dutch language, history, culture and norms, also ensures the creation of a common identity. Smith furthermore emphasizes the importance of leaders and elites in constructing a ‘peoplehood’.

Their successes depend on their use of the modern form of “print-capitalism.” More than any other politician, publications strengthen the national community by targeting a mass audience. They pursue “people-building” by telling “ethnically constitutive stories” about Dutch culture, celebrating its Humanistic-Judeo-Christian tradition. Moreover, the media nurtured traditional Dutch values, religious norms and history with high esteem. The stories in the media are effective for nationalist mobilization, as proven by the electoral support for PVV and LFP, because their rhetoric addresses the identity crises of native Dutch people, highlighting the unspoken worth of their national identity while concealing their lack of tangible supporting evidence.

The LFP, TON and PVV tailor their messages to a particular demographic. These parties mobilize people who score high as ‘conservative’ in the social dimension, meaning they support preservation of familiar values and the accomplishments of the welfare state. Furthermore their supporters are less internationally orientated, rejecting globalization and Europeanization. In general their supporters characterize themselves as anti-cosmopolitanism, and believe politicians and

Dutch elites have imposed cosmopolitanism on them over the past years to the county’s detriment. The voters are very dissatisfied with previous governments (in the PVV 45% dissatisfied, 37% very dissatisfied) and distrustful of government in general, further showing their aversion to the current state of affairs.

Distrust of Muslims can be perceived all across Dutch society, showing that the threats to the imagined community are not unique to supporters of explicit nationalist parties. In the other mainstream parties, 30% to 40% of the constituents agree Muslim immigration should be fully stopped. The only exception to this trend is the cosmopolitan green party (GroenLinks). Amongst voters of nationalistic parties, 96 to 98% of their voters find that the Netherlands must become more selective in admitting immigrants. Over 70% of their constituents believe that Muslims should be entirely forbidden from entering the Netherlands. Furthermore, 25% of Dutch electorate finds that EU integration has already “gone too far,” showing the perceived threat posed by Europeanization.

Thus, Dutch nationalist mobilization can be explained by a perceived threat to Dutch national identity. This theory explains the current emphasis on border closures, teaching historical canon in schools, instituting citizenship courses and media attention of nationalist leaders. Furthermore, the theory accounts for the focus on Muslim immigrants, because this group is believed to pose the most significant ‘threat’ to Dutch national identity due to their different values of which the Dutch became aware through incidents such as 9/11.

## NATIONALIST EXCLUSION AS NEGATIVE SIDE EFFECT OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE STATE

Andreas Wimmer offers another explanation for the intensity of the nationalist mobilization, focusing on its origins in the inevitable tension between globalization and nation state ideologies. Wimmer shows how nation-states are the product of different ways of “institutional closure” as defined along the lines of a “cultural compromise.” He argues that in strong nation states, exclusion along national and ethnic lines is unavoidable. In the Dutch state, modern institutions of inclusion such as citizenship, equality before the law, and protection from violence are tied to nationality. Furthermore the Netherlands is a fully nationalized state with a strong civil society. The 2010 Civil Society report has shown that overall the civil society is large and “well-developed” existing in a “positive environment.” The Dutch have made their unique cultural compromise in the arrangement of society along certain values. As Wilders and Verdonk expressed, many Dutch believe that “their culture is better than those of many immigrants.” Judging from the mainstream political parties, the Dutch cultural compromise is founded in the Christian-Humanistic tradition, which also constitutes the norms and values that are passed on the migrants taking a citizenship course.

Wimmer shows that the cultural compromise is closely connected to community building, which aims to close or institute the compromise through controlling access to the group and defining borders as constituted by the cultural com-

promise. The process of social closure occurs through political, legal, military and social means. In the Netherlands three processes have been completed: politically, “democracy is tied to national self-determination”; legally, citizenship is tied to nationality; and militarily, only Dutch citizens can join the army and are taxed to maintain the army. Lechner shows that the Netherlands is currently in the process of social closure by closely linking the welfare state to the close control of immigration of foreigners.

Wimmer’s note on the inevitable tension between globalization, migration and national state ideologies offers a convincing explanation for the recent upsurge of nationalism in the Netherlands. Wimmer argues that in fully nationalized societies such as the Netherlands, conflict will occur not between different ethnic groups, but between “the legitimate owners of the state and those excluded from the national ‘we.’” Similarly, André Gingrich explains neo-nationalism as an effort of the Dutch to “reclaim ‘their’ state” when confronted with the large number of immigrants. The Dutch are dealing with a threat not only to their national identity and imagined community but also experience the “fear of having to share jobs and welfare benefits” with new migrants. The native Dutch see themselves as the “legitimate owners of the collective goods of the modern state.” This general sentiment can be proved by the popularity of political statements such as “The Netherlands is only for the Dutch” by Fortuyn and references to the “native people first” movements in the media. Furthermore, it is supported by the fact that LPF, PVV and TON have primarily ‘autochtoon’ or native Dutch people vote for them.

Wimmer's theory explains how the nationalist sentiments can legitimize xenophobia and racism. Wimmer focuses primarily on those who speak about the immigrants, rather than the characteristics of immigrants themselves. In the Netherlands, ethnic minorities are dealt with as a separate category through integration policies and integration reports. Xenophobic and racist policies can become legitimized through separate policies for ethnic minorities, because they can blame the different 'culture' of the migrants as a reason for their exclusion, not as a xenophobic cultural conflict. Against a growing stream of Muslim immigrants, the multicultural society to which the Dutch were committed ever since WWII can be renegotiated in an attempt of native Dutch to defend their culture against a perceived threat to their imagined community and welfare.

Furthermore, the Dutch have especially tried to protect their nation from Turkish, Moroccan, or Muslim influences. This phenomenon can be explained by the fact that Muslims have the highest unemployment rates, lowest income, highest crime rates, and receive social welfare payments more often than nationals or other major immigrant groups, such as Surinamese or Antilleans. They face the most racism, because the natives believe these groups are hindering the state in her task to protect its members. The fact that nationalist mobilization by political parties has so far mainly found resonance with autochtoon, low educated whites as shown above, can then be explained by the fact that they are most directly faced with allochthons competing for their jobs.

Furthermore, the theory explains why both Fortuyn and, even more so, Wilders have enjoyed

support from the Dutch educated elite. Hoffman-Nowotny's study has shown that support for nationalism primarily depends on people's "estimated future opportunity," thus the higher a person sees the future chances of his group, the less likely he is to support xenophobic attitudes. As a result, higher educated autochthons can also perceive threats to their welfare and support nationalistic parties.

Thus, Wimmer's theory offers significant explanations for the recent upsurge in Dutch nationalist movements. The theory explains why mobilization has occurred along national lines, rather than cultural, ethnic or religious. The racism and xenophobia that are occurring as a consequence can be explained as the result of the creation of a fully nationalized state in which the interest and ideas of its members are confined. They are fully legitimized because the job of the state is solely to represent the interests and opinion of its members and they are fundamentally tied to the idea of a national community. Wimmer's theory does not contradict the imagined community perspective; rather it reinforces and strengthens the theory. In addition to an imagined community, the Netherlands is also a community of interests, such as equality before the law, welfare benefits and freedom. In order to guarantee and protect those interests in a highly globalized and modernized worlds and faced with a stream of immigrants, the Dutch have mobilized along nationalistic lines

CRITICAL EVENTS REASSIGN  
PARTICIPATION IDENTITIES

In Insurgent Identities, Roger

Gould offers an additional perspective on the nationalist mobilization, explaining why the nationalist mobilization has been so successful in the past ten to twenty years but was widely condemned in the past. Gould argues that all people have various “participation identities” which constitute the kind of “normative and instrumental appeals” they will respond to in instances of social mobilization or national protest. Gould argues that circumstances define which of these different identities will be activated or become salient. The most salient identities assign individuals to collectivities, such as allochtoon-autochtoon, worker-unemployed and mother-single.

Based on the similarity of their position in the system of social relations, people relate to each other or mobilize as that specific group. Gould then argues that a mobilization rhetoric must appeal to people with “(1) similar patterns of social relations to others, and (2) a sufficient level of internal social contact to ensure mutual awareness of this similarity.” The priority ranking of people’s social identities can be rearranged by “critical events,” which are defined by Gould as “imminent changes in taxation, political rights, or property rights, generate confluences of interest among people who may have preexisting, though relatively inactive, social ties to one another.” The “critical events” of the past ten to twenty years important to the Dutch can offer a significant explanation for neo-nationalism.

There have been a series of critical events that have enhanced the threat native Dutch perceived to their cultural identity and welfare. In 1989 Dutch people saw the violence and intolerance of Muslims when Iran issued a fatwa against British-Indian novelist Salman Rush-

die. On the 11th September 2001 the bombings of the World Trade Center by Muslim fundamentalist, again seemed to show the anti-modern characteristics Islam. Later the Dutch faced their own 9/11 when Pim Fortuyn was murdered in 2002, and again when filmmaker Theo van Gogh was murdered by a Muslim fundamentalist in 2004.

At the same time politicians arose who were able to instrumentalize and enhance the new fears and concerns these events inspired, expressing clear truths other politicians had not dared to express and in that way finding the right medium and response. The events, together with the rise of politicians, isolated group concerns, defined minorities and activated different participation identities. These events primarily activated the Muslim/non-Muslim identity, isolating Muslims as a clear group against which non-Muslims could mobilize.

Another critical event that specifically activated the national identity and gave it salience in social relationships is the changing immigration policies of the past 20 years. In 1991 Frits Bolkestein was the first widely respected politician to openly place integration on the political agenda. Although he was met with resistance, open discussion of the considerable arrears of migrants in education, work, and society, and changing policies to improve their welfare, activated autochthon-allochtoon participation identities. The native Dutch became more critical of their multicultural society. The salience of the national identity was further increased with the introduction of mandatory citizenship courses and changes in admission procedures for refugees.

The insurgent identity theory is further supported by the fact that LFP, TON and PVV voters live

in 'white' rural communities. PVV's support is significantly higher in the Southern and Eastern part of the country where fewer foreigners live. Lastly, the level of residential segregation in Dutch society has been found to be "very high." Even in urban multicultural neighborhoods, people mostly socialize with people of their own culture. There is thus sufficient internal contact to activate the national identity.

## CONCLUSION

The three theories discussed above all offer important perspectives on the recent upsurge in Dutch national mobilization. The explanations are not mutually exclusive; rather they reinforce each other and explain different aspects of the mobilization. The imagined community theory explains the current threat the native Dutch perceive to their national identity, which makes them favorable to efforts to reimagine their community in a rapidly changing and globalizing world. The theory also explains the success of politicians such as Fortuyn and Wilders, who have understood how to effectively engage in and lead the process of community building. Wimmer's theory explains why in reaction to this perceived threat the Dutch mobilized based on their national identity and not on other characteristics such as ethnicity. He explains how in fully nationalized states with a strong civil society the nationals consider

themselves to be the owners of the welfare state. Racist and xenophobic sentiments arise when immigrants start posing a threat to the welfare of the natives, and to secure their interests, the natives mobilize based on the identity that constitutes those interests: nationality. Lastly, Gould's theory explains why neo-nationalism only became popular the last ten to twenty years. The critical events such as 9/11, the murder of van Gogh and changes in integration policy have activated the non-Muslim, autochthon identity, which mobilizes people in favor of nationalistic movements.

Although these theories offer insightful explanations of Dutch neo-nationalism, they cannot fully explain the fully complexity of the situation. There are many other factors, especially economic factors, which deserve further attention. This paper has hoped to provide a foundation, though, for further investigation into the puzzling phenomenon of Dutch neo-nationalism.

**ANNE VAN BRUGGEN** is a second-semester sophomore in Saybrook college studying political science and philosophy. Anne grew up in the Netherlands. Her studies focus on immigration and conflict transformation and in the future she hopes to build bridges between different cultures.

# BOOK REVIEW



## BUT ARE WE HEADED FOR FAILURE?

Book by Daniel Yergin

Daniel Yergin's *The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Remaking of the Modern World*<sup>1</sup> is his eagerly anticipated follow-up to *The Prize*, his 1992 Pulitzer-Prize winning account of the rise of the oil industry. Yergin largely justifies the anticipation, and *The Quest* is an encyclopedic survey of the many quests to find, produce, and secure sources of energy. But like an encyclopedia, Yergin's narrative can sometimes seem to neatly assemble a mass of facts but leave the reader unsure of how to make sense of them. The confusion is most evident and most disappointing in Yergin's silence on the appropriate energy policies and efforts in a world where continued use of fossil fuels risks tremendous environmental damage and human costs.

Though few doubt the importance of energy to the modern world, the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disaster in Japan this spring and the simultaneous tensions and later uprisings in the 'Arab Spring' were reminders again of the fragility of global supply and interconnectedness of global energy and trade markets. Yergin tries to explain that importance, and the book's ambitions match its title:

*[The book] is the story of the quest for the energy on which we so completely rely, for the position and rewards that accrue from energy, and*

*for the security it affords. It is about how the modern energy world developed, about how concerns about climate and carbon are changing it, and about how different the energy world may be tomorrow.*<sup>2</sup>

Yergin tries to answer three questions:

*Will enough energy be available to meet the needs of a growing world and at what cost and with what technologies? How can the security of the energy system on which the world depends be protected? What will be the impact of the environmental concerns, including climate change, on the future of energy—and how will energy development affect the environment?*<sup>3</sup>

He is strongest on the first question and weakest on the third.

Yergin begins by tracing the complex world of oil since the collapse of the Soviet Union. He opens with the first Iraq War, and he quickly establishes the style of his chapters: stuffed with short, 2-page accounts that emphasize dramatic, telling anecdotes from leaders and CEOs intermixed with fast-paced narrative and big-picture comments. It works, and the reader always feels that something important is happening, but the drama can sometimes overwhelm sophisticated analysis.

1 Daniel Yergin, *The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Remaking of the Modern World*, 1st ed. (Penguin Press HC, The, 2011).

2 *Ibid.*, 2.  
3 *Ibid.*, 2–3.

The other major event at this time was the collapse of the Soviet Union and the opening up of Russia to the world. Here, I find Yergin insufficiently inquisitive into the corruption of the era and the gobbling up of state assets. Yergin does appropriately focus on the three largest Russian oil companies—Lukoil, Surgut, and Yukos—and others, such as TNK, which had complicated relationships with Western giants (in this case BP), but he could have done more to explain the opaque maneuverings of the Russian state. He is a little too quick to adopt the Westerner’s easy characterization of a “rule of law problem” in Russia and leave it at that.<sup>4</sup>

Yergin hits his stride in the next chapters which detail the second “great game” in Central Asia over oil and the delicacy of pipeline politics in the newly created post-Soviet republics of the region. While this is largely a story of success—Kazakhstan’s discovery of the Kashagan field, Azerbaijan’s pipeline independence—Yergin also pays attention to the failures: Turkmenistan’s stunted efforts to pipe out its huge reservoirs of natural gas to Pakistan, India, and, from their ports, to the rest of Asia.

Yergin next moves to Western boardrooms and golf courses to tell the story of the mega-mergers of the late 1990s when six Western giants—BP and ARCO, Exxon and Mobil, and Chevron and Texaco—ended as three super-giants. Yergin does a decent job explaining the motivation for such moves: the increasing cost of large projects, the benefits from consolidating existing operations, and the pressure from other mergers. Still, he gets to them through the secretive lunches and phone calls among rival CEOs, in their words or in their thoughts

(from his incredibly extensive and impressive list of interviews conducted for the book), a style that some readers might find engaging but that continues Yergin’s habit of over-personalizing the story.

Yergin next covers the complicated and largely sorry stories of petro-states and their politics, focusing particularly on Venezuela and Nigeria. He does a good job capturing the decaying infrastructures and many supply risks, such as the MEND guerrillas in the Niger Delta. A more recent supply shock came after the U.S. invasion of Iraq and Yergin tells of the difficulty of getting the oil production running again. As we now have heard from many other accounts of reconstruction in Iraq, it is a story of miscommunication, mismanagement, and many failures. Following Phil Carroll, the first oil adviser to the country, Yergin pulls up this damning anecdote after Carroll’s frustrating tour of duty: “He was taken in to see Defense Secretary Rumsfeld. The secretary mainly had two questions for Carroll: ‘Did you enjoy it?’ And, ‘What did you learn?’ There was not much more to the discussion than that. Carroll headed on home.”<sup>5</sup> And one can sense the string of failures to follow: “It would take Iraq until 2009 to once again reach its prewar production levels from 2001.”<sup>6</sup>

Yergin is good but incomplete on the impact of the financial markets on oil. He captures well how the price run-up in oil starting in the mid 2000s caught most of the world unaware, and he documents the many different changes to the oil markets: the use of oil as a hedge against the dollar, the increase of oil trading and freer energy markets, the beginning of oil futures contracts on the New York

4 Ibid., 33.

5 Ibid., 158.

6 Ibid.

Mercantile Exchange, and the appetite of investors for opportunities in the BRIC countries. But Yergin does little to sort out these financial effects from ‘real’ effects. Typical is the following line: “After the meeting, the president’s national security assistant Steven Hadley ruefully commented, ‘There is something going on in the oil market that is much more complicated than just turning on the spigot’.”<sup>7</sup> First, Yergin could do more to explain the appeal of commodities as an alternative asset class and the rise of huge commodities traders such as Glencore. Second, besides throwing all these factors together, it would be more helpful if Yergin tried to make an argument for their relative importance and what might be done to tame some of the more volatile and least helpful instruments. Though Yergin is chronically averse to policy advice and loves capturing multi-factor, muddled uncertainty that big men must slog through, he misses a real chance to help his readers think through a controversial and very relevant problem. And it is a deep problem, not only for consumers subject to wild swings in price but also for large producers who face greater difficulty financing the huge, multibillion dollar mega-projects of the future.

However irrational their enthusiasm, the financial sector was right in noting the huge growth in demand coming from the booming economies of the emerging world. In two neat chapters, Yergin recounts China’s quest for self-sufficiency—the development of the Daqing field, the trials of which are marvelously captured by the story of ‘Iron Man’ Wang—and their expansion into foreign oil markets as they look for new oil to lubricate their export machine. I think Yergin a little san-

guine about China’s efforts abroad. He is inclined to view the rise of China’s INOCs (international national oil companies) as market-driven machines, but he never quite sorts out their complicated responsibilities and how that might affect their behavior abroad. As an executive at one of the companies puts it: “As a national oil company, we have to meet the responsibilities of guaranteeing oil and gas supply to the domestic market. As a public company listed in New York, Hong Kong, and Shanghai, we must be responsible to our shareholders and strive to maximize shareholder value. And, of course, we have a responsibility to the 1.6 million employees of our company.”<sup>8</sup> What happens, though, when those responsibilities come into conflict? Yergin is too dismissive of outside worries that the first responsibility will come ahead of the others.

In the second section of the book, Yergin turns to the quest to find and secure more energy. That first involves responding to the much-ballyhooed claims of peak oil. Yergin is sufficiently respectful of M. King Hubbert’s insights while rightly insistent his far-out projections have been way off. That is partly because of Hubbert’s too-static view of current reserves. But, “according to one study of the United States Geological Survey, 86 percent of oil reserves in the United States are the result not of what is estimated at time of discovery but of the revisions and additions that come with further development.”<sup>9</sup>

The further reason to rest easy about peak oil is the tremendous growth in unconventional—Canadian oil sands, oil shale, and tight oil—and Yergin is helpful on the various new technological break-

7 Ibid., 175–176.

8 Ibid., 206.

9 Ibid., 238.

throughs that have made these possible. But these advances, and even other advances that push the boundary of more conventional deepwater drilling, carry risks, and the Deepwater Horizon disaster last year is a stark reminder of those. Yergin notes that in its aftermath several companies have coordinated efforts to deal with these disasters—the Marine Well Containment Corporation and the Helix Well Containment Group. Yergin correctly insists that the disaster was the result of many different factors, but in his hands that comes off as exculpation. He is insufficiently harsh in his critique: the failures by BP and Halliburton were many, and symptomatic of broader ills in the industry. His analysis of the response is mostly limited to President Obama’s moratorium and the impact on the Gulf, but he could have asked more piercing questions about the tangled web of multinationals, drilling operators, and service contractors, the corruption of regulatory agencies by industry, and better ways to incentivize good behavior and hold companies liable when they err.

At higher geopolitical heights, Yergin charts OPEC’s rise and increasing power from the 1970s and the response of oil-consuming countries to its market control. That response has often taken the form of generally illusory promises of energy independence, and while some countries—notably Brazil—have been able to reach it, it remains far off for most. And that’s maybe because energy independence is the wrong goal: “As one senator put it, ‘Energy independence really means energy security,’” which is not self-sufficiency in energy consumption but rather a diversified and flexible energy supply.<sup>10</sup> But besides strategic reserves, Yergin is a little thin

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 268.

on how countries might achieve energy security and what might be appropriate benchmarks for thinking about energy security.

And that’s important, because there are no shortage of risks to it. Yergin compacts a lot of them into one sobering chapter on challenges in the Middle East: Libya’s cut-off production, risks of terrorist attacks and blockage of the Strait of Hormuz, Iran’s militancy and pursuit of a nuclear weapon. These briefs serve as reminders of how closely the question of fossil fuels interacts with other geopolitical risks. It may be asking too much in an already tome-like book, but Yergin could have expanded on how Iran’s generally nefarious influence in the region might destabilize future-fossil fuel production.

Yergin next moves into what is probably the biggest theme in the book: the rise of natural gas. Yergin focuses on Qatar’s efforts to capitalize on its huge natural gas reserves and get them to Asian and European markets. Using LNG which requires a fleet of custom ships and depot terminals, Qatar is able to make inroads into the Asian market and partial ones into the European market, where the always precarious pipeline politics of the continent leaves many countries desperate to diversify away from their dependence on Russia. America, though, proves to be a false promise for LNG exports with its shale gas reserves and the use of fracking re-writing the energy map.

The promise of natural gas is that it is a “cleaner” fossil fuel that results in fewer pollutants than coal or oil. While natural gas was once regarded as too precious for electrical generation, its new supplies are increasingly being used for that purpose. Nonetheless, coal will still be a huge part of the electrical

story. To lessen its impact, some propose sequestering the carbon its plants emit, but here the challenges are legion: “What happens if there is a leak? Who is legally responsible to fix it? Who is legally liable? Indeed, who owns the CO<sub>2</sub>? Who manages it and monitors it—and how?”<sup>11</sup> Indeed, if only 60 percent of the CO<sub>2</sub> from today’s coal-fired plants were captured and injected into the ground, it would be a volume equal to the 19 million barrels that the United States consumes every day.

The scale and urgency of those challenges has never felt so intense as now with emerging consensus on the harms of global warming. As is his style, Yergin recounts the history of climate change science and its move to the center of politics—profiling early climate change scientists such as James Hansen, recounting George H.W. Bush’s decision to go to the chaotic 1992 Rio Summit, and tracing the dynamics of the the Kyoto Treaty—but leaves the topic with little specific to say about how climate change should influence future energy decisions besides acknowledging that they already are.

Yergin is excited by the prospect of renewables, but he largely centers the discussion around the effort of venture capitalists to find disruptive technologies. Though perhaps trying to bask in the tech halo around venture capital and the excitement of all things coming from Silicon Valley, Yergin’s emphasis on VCs in the renewable space makes little sense. To his credit, Yergin quotes dissenters to his view, especially this forceful argument from Ray Lane, a partner at venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins:

*I see few similarities between the digital world and the energy world.*

11 Ibid., 402.

*There is no Moore’s Law. In fact, there are different laws like thermodynamics, physical relationships, chemical reactions, and biological systems. It is a policy-influenced, low-cost, mature, capital-intensive industry, which investors must understand. I recommend leaving most of the digital lessons learned at home.*<sup>12</sup>

Yergin goes into some detail about the potential renewable technologies, and his scientific explanations are lucid. However, he is too in thrall to documenting new policy initiatives, especially in the United States, without making more substantive points about their effectiveness. Additionally, Yergin concentrates the bulk of his focus on the amount of R&D funding spent by governments, whereas in practice a lot of learning and cost reductions come from learning-by-doing in the field and manufacturing improvements.

Yergin does include an insightful chapter on the push for efficiency and conservation, two efforts that offer dramatic room for improvement and that are all too often missing from books about energy policy which concentrate on the supply story. He discusses new efficiency standards in appliances and building codes, but he could have focused a bit more on transport policy, home energy audits, and more transparent pricing of electricity.

As this wide-ranging review testifies, Yergin’s *The Quest* is a sprawling and whirlwind book which, in what it covers and in what it is forced to leave out, captures well the large and varied challenges of energy production and consumption in the past years. Yergin does an impressive job bringing his

12 Ibid., 559.

account up to the very recent present—discussing the effect of the Arab Spring, new American auto standards, and Japan earthquake. But, and this is the major flaw in his account, Yergin provides too few signposts for how the future might play out, and perhaps more importantly, how we should hope it does. The worry, then, is that as climate change grows increasingly unsustainable and harmful, Yergin will be able to return in 20 years to write another sprawling book: *The Failure*.

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